

Papua New Guinea \*\*\* Volume 14- No. 01 (Jan, Feb, March 2021)



#### **Excerpts from the Pope's Lenten Message 2021**

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem" (Mt 20:18) Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love

o experience Lent with love means caring for those who suffer

or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord's word to his Servant, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you" (Is 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters.

"Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledge and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society" (Fratelli Tutti, 187).

Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us—as communities and as individuals—to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father.

May Mary, Mother of the Saviour, ever faithful at the foot of the cross and in the heart of the Church, sustain us with her loving presence. May the blessing of the risen Lord accompany all of us on our journey towards the light of Easter.

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## Editor's Message

To "Lagatoi" Readers and Subscribers"

#### Blessings of Peace and Love to you all!

New is the year, new normal life, new are the hopes, new is the resolution, new are the spirit, and new are our warm wishes just for you all. May you have a promising and fulfilling new year 2021!

As always, with so much gratitude in our hearts, we take time to look back at the year behind us, the twelve months of the year, the 365 days of the year and the year ahead, with great anticipation as to what will come in the future with a wish of new year full of achievements and God's marvellous blessings. We carry the lessons of the past, the crisis of Covid 19 pandemic, the many wonderful events in our family, in the Church and in the world, all the blessings and merits we have received and look confidently forward, as we always do, secure in the knowledge that a Child Jesus was born for us, suffered and died for us and that we are God's children and we can do anything to which we set our minds. Together, we demonstrate our confidence in the future and our solidarity as God's faithful ones, both with our loved ones at home and abroad. With our united effort, support and trust in God we can accomplish great things for the good of our family, of our community, of our nation and of the Church.

Each day brings new challenges and each day we meet these challenges with grit and zeal and thus overcome them with ease. Let us then have a positive vision of the future and pursue that vision everyday and to reinvigorate our enthusiasm for chasing goals and dreams.

And so as we begin a new year, a new normal way of life as they said, as well as our Lenten journey to prepare for Easter, we do so with confidence. May we change our direction and not dates, change our commitments and not the calendar, change our attitude and not the actions, and bring about a change in our faith, our force, and our focus and not the fruit. May we live up to the divine promise: "If anyone serves me, my Father in heaven will honour him", thus, in the promise we have made and may we create for you and your loved ones the happiest New Year ever and a joyous Easter to come. So let us congratulate each other and wish each one, love, peace and joy of New Year 2021 and Happy Easter! Let all our dreams come true and all our hopes be fulfilled!

God's blessings!

Sr. Virgie and The "Lagatoi" Staff



## **LENTEN 2021 MESSAGE**

By His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat, MSC, DD, KBE

ASH WEDNESDAY begins the season of Lent. It is when our fore-head is marked with a cross using the blessed ashes. This reminds us that we are dust and unto dust we shall return. *Today, "Repent and believe in the Gospel of Christ" (Mark 1:3)* resounds in our Churches as we enter the Lenten season.

Up to this time, we will continue to experience the adverse effects of the pandemic COVID 19 virus. Many have died while others have recovered. There is still so much uncertainty even with Covid

vacinnes in many countries are already available. Many have lost their jobs and still many more would be affected due to the global economic downfall.

We do not have to go far. In our families and communities, we see people struggling to make a living on a daily basis in order to feed their family, pay the school fees, bring sick to Hospital and provide other basic needs. All these make us suffer.

Yet, in all these, Jesus who suffered and died on the cross in Calvary is with us. This is the time to repent, the time to believe! Let us remember the "One who humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8) is with us. Pope Francis wrote in his 2021 Lenten Message; He invites us to "open our hearts to God's word, which the Church passes on to generation to generation"... "By taking on our humanity, even to its very limits, Christ has made himself the waydemanding, yet open to all that leads to the fullness of life."

From the message of Pope Francis, these are invitations for us on how we regard our Lenten journey towards Easter:

- \* Lent is a time for believing, welcoming God into our lives and allowing Him to 'make His dwelling among us' (cf. Jn 14:23)."
- \* "Lent is a season of hope, when we turn back to God, who patiently continues to care for his creation which we often mistreated (cf. Laudato Si, 32-33; 43-44)."
- \*Lent, in hope entails growing in the realization that, in Jesus Christ we are witnesses of new times, in which God is making all things new" (cf. Rev 21:1-6)."

My brothers and sisters, let us allow ourselves to be converted to God who loves us tenderly and deeply. During this Lenten season, let us walk with our Lord through fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

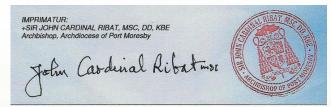
FASTING helps us to discipline our mind and body. There are many things we like to have and to enjoy, thus, we spend a lot of things that are unnecessary. Let us look at Jesus as He sacrifice his life to save us because of love, "Fasting helps us to love God and neighbour." This makes us share the blessings and our resources that would bring us to unity and harmony.

PRAYER makes ourselves attune to God. Jesus was a man of prayer, he prayed to God, his Father. He invites us to enter into a relationship with God, our Father through our prayers together with our families and communities. This then deepen our being brothers and sisters in Christ that would eventually lead us to care for each other.

**ALMSGIVING** directs us towards being concerned for those who are needy and suffering. It is a gesture of making sacrifices and reaching out to them, to give them comfort and make them smile. Through these gestures we become the face of the compassionate Christ to them and an easter people to them.

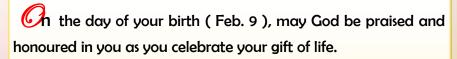
This Lenten season I encourage all of you to be united with Jesus Christ in his suffering and death, be converted to become Easter people—a witness of Christ's resurrection in our world today. May God be our source of strength, peace and healing in this time of pandemic. God's blessings!





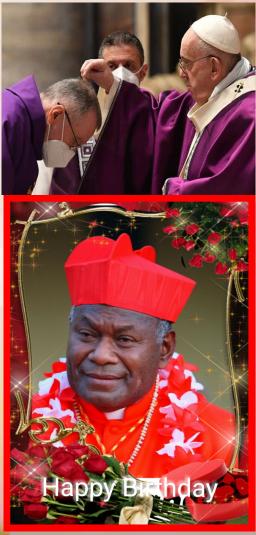






May you have a day of blessings for you are a precious and wondrous gift: you bear within yourself God's own image and likeness. God's love, your origin, and His love, your destiny.

Happy Birthday His Eminence!



#### **ARCHDIOCESE OF PORT MORESBY**

2021 Pastoral Plan and Program of Activities

## Theme: Journey Together in Faith as People of God

The Archdiocesan Pastoral Team of Animation (APTA) is conducting an on—going Orientation on the Pastoral Renewal Program of the Archdiocese. The Theme is- "Journey Together in Faith as People of God". This theme was brought about when His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat, MSC was installed as Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Port Moresby in 2007. His dream was to come up with a Pastoral Plan that would unite all pastoral workers and collaborators in the Archdiocese together with all the Catholics and people of goodwill. The spirituality is the *Church of Communio* following the inspiration of the Second Vatican Council. The role of each one in the Archdiocese is vital as we share this dream and commit ourselves through active participation in the activities of the parishes, of the Archdiocese and of the wider Church.

The General Objective of the Pastoral Plan and Renewal Program of Activities are as follows:

- 1. All the pastoral agents and collaborators: priests, religious, and lay leaders of the Archdiocese; guided by the Pastoral Plan, have undergone the Orientation of the Pastoral program and the teaching of Vatican Council II on Spirituality of Church Communion.
- 2. APTA have conducted ongoing education-formation to all Catholic people to live by the Kingdom values and their life-giving cultural values; united together as people of God; have deepened their faith, strengthened by a life of prayer and worship; and
- 3. Have reviewed the current structure and evolved a structure that promote dialogue, collaboration, teamwork and participation with clear flow of communication in all levels.

Our attendance at this Orientation Program is vital. This is an opportunity for us to reflect together on the pastoral needs and be one in the Archdiocese's journey to face the challenges of the "new normal" as Sr. Josefa, OND quote, as we talk and walk together with our people. And eventually our responses to the Archdiocese program would be more valuable and promising.

#### **PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES 2021**

January 21-23	New APTA Study and Training Formation	SNPC
February 9	APTA Meeting with Frs. Justin, Emilio, Cosmas: re. Structure	Chancery
February 23-24	APTA Study and Finalization of the Orientation Program for Priests	SNPC
March 9-12	Pastoral Orientation for all the Priests	SNPC
March 13	APC Meeting	Chancery
March 26-27	Archdiocese Women Religious Association	Chancery
April 9-11	Parish Pastoral Team of Animation Formation (Deanery 1 & 2)	SNPC
April 16-18	Parish Pastoral Team of Animation Formation (Deanery 3 & 4)	SNPC
April 23-24	All Program Coordinators	SNPC
May 3-4	President/ Chairperson of Movements, Devotional Groups	SNPC
May 21–22	APC/ PPC Orientation / Formation	SNPC
June 7– 12	Priests' Retreat	SNPC
November 19-20	Annual Evaluation 2021/ Planning 2022	SNPC

# \*\*Catholic Diocese of Townsville

Reference: facebook.com/TSVdiocese

## **CatholicNEWS**

Bishop Tim Harris of Townsville Diocese launched a Project Compassion in Proserpine at St. Catherine's Catholic College on February 17, 2021. The students how they can **'Be More'** during Lent and support the work of Caritas Australia is doing around the world. St. Mary's Catholic School, Bowen attended the launching.







Bishop Tim Harris invites the people of Townsville to enter into conversation amongst Parish. He said, "The season of Lent calls to the adventure of 'becoming new'. I wonder: how many of us actually take that journey? This year I want that we take together this journey..."

To find out how to be involved, contact your Parish Priest and keep an eye on your Parish Bulletin. More information is available here—

www.tsv.catholic.org.au/becomingnewinchrist

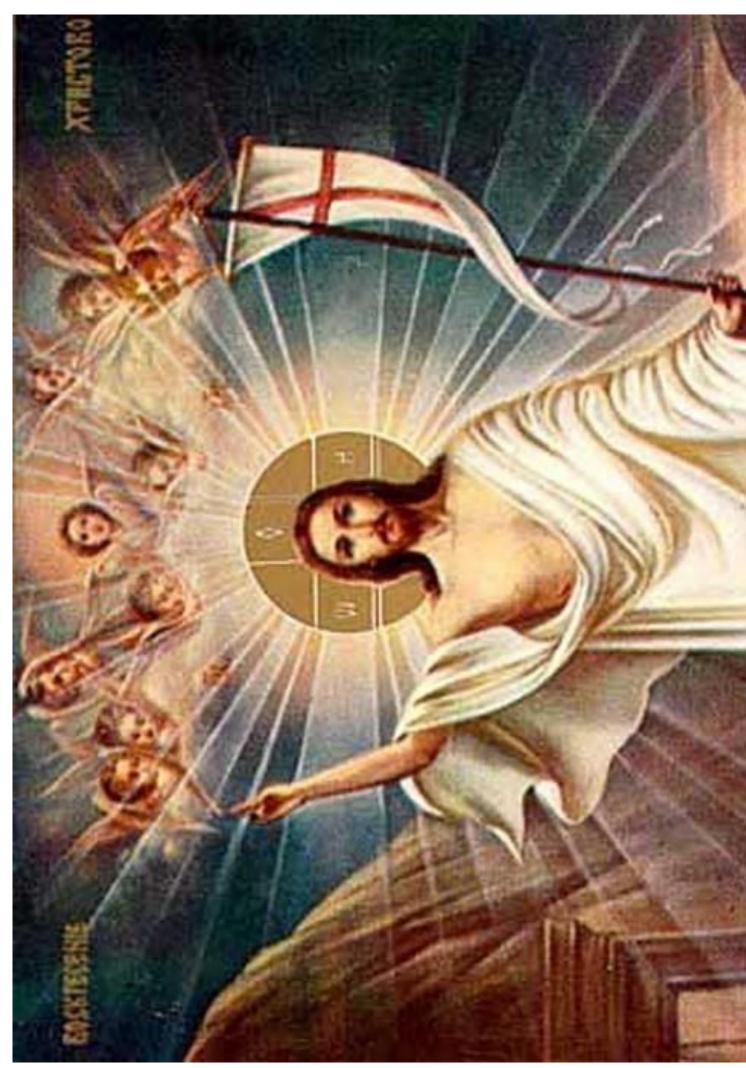
#### **Becoming New in Christ Parish Consultation 2021**

2021 for the Diocese of Townsville is a year of consultation, in parishes and at diocesan level, after that, Bishop Tim Harris is not asking the parishes to jump into action straight away except for the action of reflecting on and discussing aspects of renewal in Christ that are key to a parish's mission today. Using the wisdom emerging from the parishes and elsewhere Bishop Tim will put together a diocesan framework for revitalising the mission of the parishes. That will lead to action in 2022.

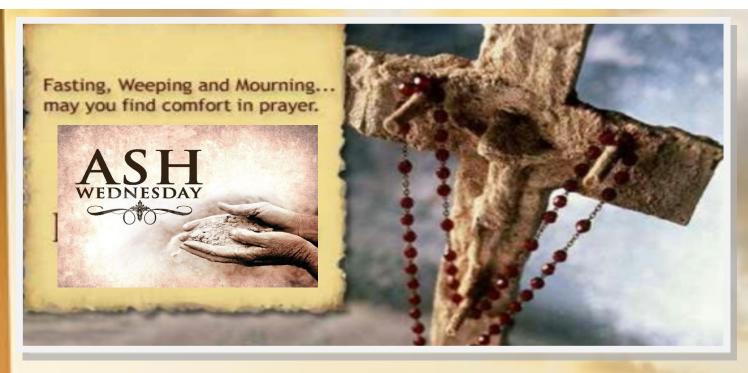
The parish consultation will include three themes:

**BELONG**, **BELIEVE** and **BECOME**, to explore of 'becoming new in Christ' with the following reasons;

Each word captures an important part of the mission of a Catholic parish. The words are positive and easily understood immediately— they are not Church jargon; yet, they have great depth. They lead on to other important key words and concepts along the journey. It's not only about the individual words but sequence in which they are applied; the sequence Belong, Believe and Become is necessary for the mission of a Catholic parish today...







#### What is ASH WEDNESDAY?

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of LENT. Often called the Day of Ashes. We start it by putting on ashes in the sign of the cross on our foreheads. The priest then say as a reminder for us. "You are dust and to dust you shall return." Or he imparts these words as a challenge for us to "turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel."

Ash Wednesday starts Lent by focusing the Christian's heart on repentance, prayer, fasting, reflection and confession. Lent is a 40-day season (not including Sundays) representing Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice and resurrection.

## Where do the Ashes Come from and What do the Ashes Symbolize?

The ashes are prepared by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday, Churches bless and hand out palm branches to attendees, a reference to the Gospel's account of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when onlookers lay palm branches on his path.

The ashes of this holiday symbolize two main things: death and repentance. "Ashes are equivalent to dust, and human flesh is composed of dust or clay (Genesis 2:7 (https://www.christianity.combible/bible.php...)And when a human corpse decomposes, it returns to dust or ash."

When we come forward to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, we are saying that we are sorry for our sins, and that we want to use the season of lent to correct our faults, purify our hearts, control our desires and grow in holiness so we will be prepared to celebrate Easter with great joy.

Lenten Fasting

**Fast from hurting words** and stay kind words. **Fast from sadness** and be filled with gratitude. Fast from anger and be filled with patience. **Fast from pessimism** and be filled with hope. Fast from worries and trust in God. **Fast from complaints** and contemplate simplicity. Fast from pressures and be prayerful. **Fast from bitterness** and fill your heart with joy. **Fast from selfishness** and be compassionate to others. Fast from grudges and be reconciled. Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

(Pope Francis)

With this focus on our own mortality and sinfulness,

Christians can enter into Lent season solemnly, while also looking forward in greater anticipation and joy of the message of Easter and Christ's ultimate victory over sin and death. \*\*\*

#### STATE FUNERAL MASS FOR HIS LATE GRAND CHIEF SIR MICHAEL THOMAS SOMARE

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 12 March 2021 at 1:00 in the afternoon. A concelebrated Requiem Mass was held at Sir Hubert Murray Stadium for the state funeral of Grand Chief Sir Michael Thomas Somare. The main celebrant was His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat, MSC, DD, KBE, upon request of the Government and of his family. The Holy mass followed the full Catholic Rite of the Church.

The theme of the celebration is "UNITY", something that Grand Chief stood for to bring and keep together a nation of thousand tribes, cultures and over 800 languages and the different Churches. Sir Michael was a symbol of unity amongst Pacific and Melanesian people. He played a big role politically for the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) and Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG).

Grand Chief Somare was a devout and committed Catholic and will remain as a role model of national leadership, dignity and integrity, strong marriage and family life, and strong life of faith in God. He truly lived and practiced his catholic faith. He is a great man, a founding father of the Nation, Papua New Guinea.

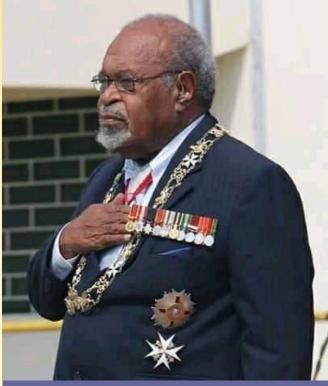
The legacy of the life and work of Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare became a national treasure and symbol for the people and nation.

The entire celebration was broadcasted live through radio and television, as well as social media and print media came over to cover the historical event.

**Dulciana Somare-Brash:** 

#### **Today A Bittersweet Day**

By: Gorethy Kenneth



Grand Chief Sir Michael Thomas Somare Died: 26 February 2021

Thousands of people attended the celebration to pay their last respect to the first Prime Minister, the Leader of the BullyBeef Group of Leaders (led by Sir Michael himself), brought Dawn of the New Era, thus, concluding and complementing the Era of Catholicon Mission work and creating a New Nation to God's people in leading Melanesian Nation on earth, Papua New Guinea.

References: From Facebook \*Catholic Bishop Conference of POM & SI \*Mary Queen of the Angels-HNJP

Youngest daughter of the

Somare family, Dulciana Somare-Brash said, "Today was a bittersweet day for my family, we come here to farewell our patriarch, our protector, and our human shield in a place where he stood to raise our flag years ago for our nation. It was here that he made his mark on this land with plenty, beaming with resources that require for our care now."

"Late yesterday afternoon I watched my father the great Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare left the Parliament for the last time. I wept bittersweet tears for all that he had left behind and all he had abruptly left for us to do. It was a hard day sitting in Parliament, a building so familiar to me, to my Mom Veronica and my siblings."



"I heard wonderful tributes from my father's peers, papa Chan spoke of a lifelong friendship, Papa Wingti lamented over a mentor and a friend he treasured. Prime Minister James Marape referred him as a bulldozer which makes perfect sense actually as we've always joked that our mother was the handbrake without ever referring to our father as a bulldozer." *Reference: postcourier.com.pg* 

28 March 2021 ... Reading: Mark 14:1-15:47

#### THE LORD'S PASSION

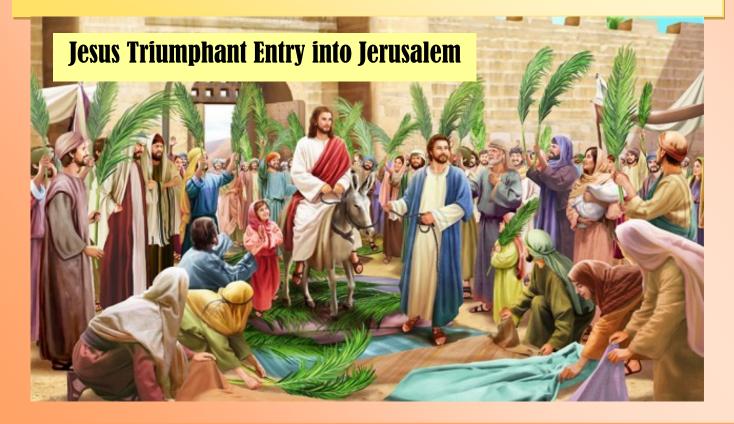
#### Let us shout, Hosanna!

oday's celebration of Jesus' entry into the city of Jerusalem is popularly called *Palm Sunday* or *Passion Sunday*, the beginning of the Holy Week. Our attention is focus on the sacrificial death of Jesus. The Gospel (Mk 14:1-15: 47) narrates the humiliation, passion and crucifixion of Jesus. Jesus fulfills to the letter the will of the Father and translates into reality his preaching. He shows in his passion what true love is and reveals in his passion what real forgiveness is. There is no bitterness in his words, no hatred or anger in his heart, There is no frustration or resentment in his feelings. Jesus willingly and openly accepts the cross and crucifixion on our behalf.

Passion Sunday recalls the joyful aspects, the memorable events and high moments of our faith. It describes the grand moments of our baptism, ordinations or weddings and even first communion or first profession. We celebrate! We are proud of the sacraments. We shout, "Hosanna!" It means "Save us!" But when our faith is tested and we are asked to carry our cross, we stop. We become sad. We rebel. When our faith and sacraments demand service, that we stoop down and tell the truth, we complain. We shout back, and we cry out, "Crucify him!"

From today's Gospel, we observe three classes of people. First, the enemies of Jesus. They wanted him to die. They accused and discredit him, and did everything to destroy him. Second, those who were indifferent. They did nothing. They were just observers, no care. It was not their business to be of help and to get involved. Third, were those who became witnesses of Jesus. They were moved and touched. They believed, accepted Jesus and confessed, "Truly, this man is the Son of God". They chose Jesus, and they followed him. Now, who are we among the three?

Reference: Jesus Serves and Saves Us By: Msgr. Ruperto C. Santos, STL



#### **GOOD FRIDAY**

#### Jesus is our Sacrifice, He is our Saviour!

The hour has come. Jesus was to fulfil the plan of the Father. Jesus did everything with dignity. He was master of himself. He was calm. He was not bitter. There was no trace of disappointment and discouragement in his words. There was no resentment and rejection in his actions. Jesus was indeed sure of himself. His answers were straightforward, honest and truthful.

It was Jesus adversaries who were confused and disoriented. They did not know how to conduct themselves. The chief priests were in disarray as they levelled their accusations against Jesus. Pilate was lost for words when faced by Jesus. He asked, "What is truth?(18:38). The Jews made an open and public denial of God when they proclaimed, "We have no king but Caesar" (19:15).

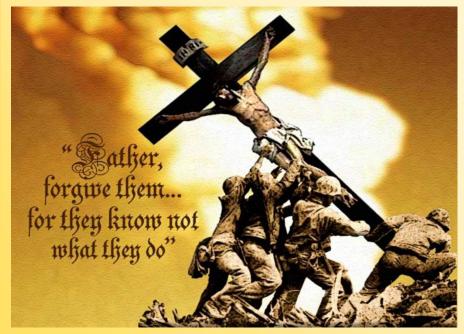
Today's Gospel presents the concept of fidelity and being true to one's vocation. How? Jesus was true to Himself. He was true to the Father. He obeyed. The chief priests were unfaithful to their mission. They fabricated stories and told lies. They did not promote life but instead became instruments of death. They did not defend the innocent but instead became oppressors of the just. They should lead people to God yet they brought God to death.

Pilate was not true to his public duty. He wanted to save his public power and position. He was swayed by public opinion and wanted to stay ever popular. He lost a rare chance to make a difference. He wasted an opportunity to do something good. He let himself carried by public sentiments and opinion. While, the Jews had betrayed their covenant with God. Again, they manifested their infidelity to Him. They rejected His Kingship. They professed and accepted Caesar instead of God.

Good Friday recalls the fidelity of Jesus to the Father. He proved his faithfulness to the Father no matter what it cost and wherever it led him. Good Friday projects the quality of Jesus love to us. He extremely loves us to the point of shedding his own blood and life for our salvation. His obedience to the Father's will and his love for us are unconditional, total and complete.

Can we be faithful to the Father till end? Can we be true to ourselves in spite of the cost and consequences?

Reference: Jesus Serves and Saves Us By: Msgr. Ruperto C. Santos, STL





#### THE LORD'S RESURRECTION

#### Jesus Has Risen, Alleluia!

**he** burial stone is removed. The tomb is empty. The burial cloths have been rolled up in a separate place (v 7). Jesus has risen! He is alive! Jesus has triumphed over sin and death. Jesus has conquered satan. It is victory. It is good news. What Jesus has foretold is realized. What the Father promised is fulfilled. Jesus comes back to life, He will lead us back to the Father. And he will bring us to heaven.

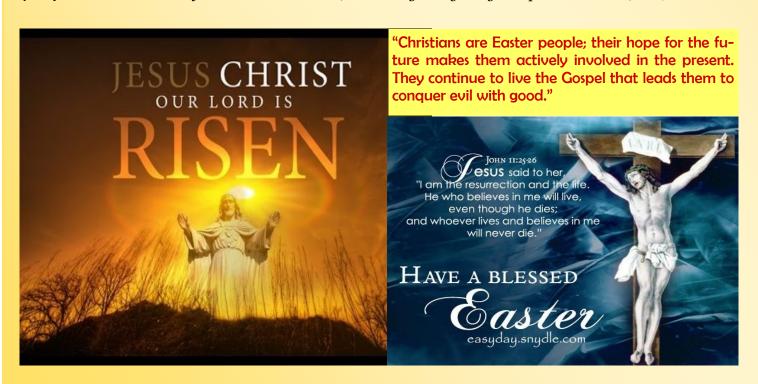
It is indeed fresh hope. It is new life for us. This is anew day for all of us.

Today's Gospel calls us to do two things. First, we are called to believe (v 8). The body of Jesus was not stolen. There was no robbery. The cloths were left in proper order. The burial place was not destroyed. There was no forcible entry. Thus, there was no need to investigate, no need to examen. Jesus has truly risen. So let us turn our doubt into faith, anxiety into joy, question into trust. Yes! Jesus has truly risen.

Second, we are called to be witnesses. The apostles did not preach about the empty tomb. They proclaimed the good news of Jesus' resurrection. And they bore witness to it by changed lives. They backed up their preaching with their conversion. They showed their witnessing by their reformed lives.

Easter invites us to a life of hope, of commitment, of fidelity to God and to our fellow—Christians. Easter challenges us to rise from a life of negativity, cynicism, and mediocrity. And so, let us now rise with Jesus. Let us walk like Mary, Peter and John from the darkness of grief and doubt to the morning of joy and hope.

Prayer: Praise to you, O lord Jesus Christ, my risen Saviour, for your forgiveness, for your love, for your goodness, much more for your resurrection. With your resurrection, you give hope and meaning to my life. You give me a new chance, a new beginning. You re-created me. Praise to you, lord Jesus, for you rose as you foretold. Amen. (Reference: Jesus is Risen, Jesus Reigns! By: Msgr. Ruperto C. Santos, STL)





#### The Meaning of the "LAGATOI" Newsletter

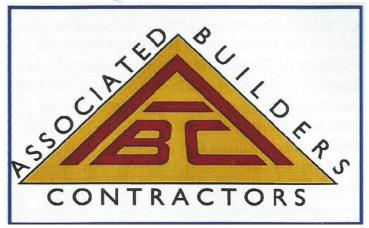
The "LAGATOI" is the Archdiocese of Port Moresby's Newsletter. The name Lagatoi has both historical and symbolical significance. The Lagatoi was the means for trading activities between places in Port Moresby, thereby becoming the instrument for friendships and better understanding among tribes, besides helping each other economically.

So, too, in the Church, the "LAGATOI" becomes a symbol for connecting the different Parishes in the Archdiocese of Port Moresby by sharing news of the happenings in every parish, schools and communities. And even what is going on in the Church at large, at the Vatican where the Pope lives.

To be informed of each others' activities will encourage bonding of parishioners of different parishes. This helps towards harmony and unity of the whole Archdiocese.

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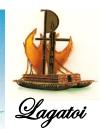


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