**News Compilation for Catholic Church News**

**Broadcast date: 8/03/2020- Radio Maria**

**Headlines:**

1. **Pope Francis: Palm Sunday Homily**
2. **CBCPNGSI Secretary’s Easter Message**
3. **Celebrating the life of Emeritus Bp Henk Kronenberg**
4. **SOCOM smart meeting**
5. **Holy Week Preparations**

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**News Item 1** – **Pope Francis: Palm Sunday Homily**

For the first time in history, Pope Francis celebrated Palm Sunday Mass without a congregation in St Peter’s Basilica, out of respect for Covid-19 regulations limiting large gatherings.

The Mass was held without a congregation; however, millions of people joined the Holy Father via the internet, radio and television.

The Pope based his homily on St Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, where the Apostle describes Jesus as emptying Himself and “taking the form of a servant” (*Phil* 2:7).

“Let us allow these words of the Apostle Paul to lead us into these holy days”, said Pope Francis, “when the Word of God, like a refrain, presents Jesus as servant”.

The Pope then addressed young people, “on this Day which has been dedicated to them for thirty-five years now”. He invited them to consider what he called “real heroes”: not famous, rich and successful people, but “those who are giving themselves in order to serve others”. His final words were for them:

*“Feel called yourselves to put your lives on the line. Do not be afraid to devote your life to God and to others; it pays!  For life is a gift we receive only when we give ourselves away, and our deepest joy comes from saying ‘yes’ to love, without ifs and buts.  As Jesus did for us.*

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**News item 2 – CBCPNGSI Secretary’s Easter Message**

In his Easter Message, the General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI, Fr Giorgio Licini says it won’t be easy to celebrate life and resurrection this time at Easter, unless we see it the way Jesus saw it: the gift of self; as nurses, doctors and in general medical staff are doing right now around the world.

Fr Giorgio stated that the true challenge is seen in the Gospel. At the news of Lazarus’ deteriorating health, Jesus resolved that “this sickness will end not in death but in God’s glory’ (John 11). Eventually Lazarus’ death was a cause of great distress for Jesus and others. But we know there was a following. The world is brought to a standstill by an extremely small and invisible organisim attacking our respiratory system. It’s painful. But this also stirs our spasm for deeper and Vater spiritual horizons.

The lockdown from the COVID 19 pandemic, has affected schools and offices, shops and churches. Our plans for trainings, meetings and travels have been trashed. The damage has been relevant. But somehow our life has also benefitted. We got some time for rest, for family, for reading, for reflection, for prayer. Humanity has regained centre stage as we were forced to see ourselves in the mirror and take notice of the fragility of our persons and our plans.

Fr Licini concluded his message commending the works of nurses, doctors and in general medical staff saying “despite everything, with them and for them we still wish each other a Happy Easter!

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**News Item 3 – Celebrating the life of Emeritus Bp Henk Kronenberg**

Emeritus Bishop Henk Kronenberg who served the Diocese of Bougainville for 10 years has passed away.

This announcement was made by the caretaker of the Diocese of Bougainville, Fr Polycarp. According to Fr Polycarp, Bp Henk passed away of old age on Wednesday, 26th March in Eschpoort Carehome in Holand. The late bishop, a marrist missionary served in PNG for over 45 years.

In his condolence message, Bp Rochus Tatamai, Bp of Kavieng and President of CBC, gave thanks to God for Bp Henk’s life. He said that as a Marist missionary, Priest and Religious, he faithfully served the people of Bougainville and in Oceania. On behalf of CBC, Bp Rochus acknowledged and sincerely thanked him for generously serving as General Secretary before being appointed Bishop of Bougainville.

The Archbishop of Rabaul, Abp Francesco Panfilo, was deeply saddened by the news and remembered the late bishop in a Chrism Mass that was held. The Archdiocese extended their condolences to the Diocese of Bougainville.

May the Good Lord grant eternal peace to this zealous and faithful Marist.

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Secretary for Social Commissions Fr Ambrose Pereira said the meeting aims to educate on the situation we are in and what we can do to get our students impart what we already know about the trending pandemic.

**News Item 4 – SOCOM Smart Meeting**

The Corona Virus pandemic has forced people to reach avenues to connect with each other.

Journalists under the Social Communications Commission of CBC had their first online meeting to discuss possible response to young people through audio and video, articles and social communications tool.

Secretary for Social Communication, Fr Ambrose Pereira, Sdb, says the meeting aims to discuss how young people should be inspired before educating others what we already know about the current pandemic.

Bp, Donald Lippert, CBC media personnel’s and youth secretary, plus several other representatives from dioceses, Radio Maria and catholic schools joined the meeting online.

The video and audio should portray three key awareness messages; Hygiene, Social Distancing , Stay at home.

**News Item 5 – Holy Week Preparations**

Dioceses nationwide will be celebrating the holy week with certain restrictions adhering to the precautionary measures from the Bishops was circulated recently.

At Holy Thursday there should be no washing of the feet and no procession with the Blessed Sacrament. At Good Friday liturgy there should be no kissing or touching of the crucifix.

There should be no Stations of the Cross.

Few congregations have shown calmness, parishioners remaining calm in this situation.

In a phone conversation, the Vicar General, said much of the parishioners of Madang town seem not frightened rather showing signs of faith.

**Recapping our headlines for this week:**

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**This ends the Catholic Church news for this week, join us next week for more.**

**From all of us at Catholic Communications we wish you all an enjoyable week.**