**News Compilation for Catholic Church News aired on Radio Maria**

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**Welcome to another weekly Catholic Church News on Radio Maria. I am Nigel Akuani, and I am Rosemary Yambune with the news.**

**Our stories for the week:**

1. **Pope at Angelus: Do not forget about joy**
2. **CSHA call for cooperation to end violence**
3. **Youths accept Jesus into their Hearts**
4. **Kumin Primary Celebrates 31st Graduation**
5. **Christmas Spirit shared with West Papuan Community**
6. **Chaplain anticipates PNG’s 50th Independence Anniversary**
7. **JCSS Principal to Retire After 20 Years**

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**News Item 1 – Pope at Angelus: Do not forget about joy**

“John the Baptist was a leader of his time, who lived the expectation and joy of seeing the Messiah arrive without ever drawing attention to himself but directing it toward Christ, the true light,” said Pope Francis in his Sunday Angelus of 13th December, in St Peter’s Square.

Reflecting on the day’s gospel, Pope Francis noted that John the Baptist was introduced in a solemn way. He is the first witness of Jesus, excluding Mary and Joseph, and was a leader in his time but did not surrender for an instant to the temptation to draw attention to himself, and had always oriented himself toward the One who was to come.

The Pope explained that the excitement felt by John was caused by his closeness to the Lord, and urged for Christians to draw closer to the Lord away from sadness, fear and anxiety. He concluded his sermon stating that Christian joy was the light that gave full meaning to the life of every man and woman who came into this world.

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**News item 2 – CSHA Call for Cooperation to End Violence**

The Catholic Safe House Association (CSHA) made a call to the government, Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) and stakeholders to continue supporting church-run institutions who have been assisting victims of all forms of violence.

The call for collaboration was made in a media conference held on 9th December, at the Catholic Bishops Conference in Port Moresby. It had the special presence of Bishop Rolando Santos, Chairman of National Catholic Family Life Apostolate and Bishop of Alotau-Sideia; Ms Rolyn Kuniata, Program Quality Manager Caritas Australia; Ms Marie Mondu, Development Secretary of CBCPNGSI; Religious; Child Protection Advocates; Safe House Coordinators and media personnel.

Speaking on behalf of all Safe Houses, Sr. Theckla Gamog, President of Catholic Safe House Association, called for churches, government, NGO’s and stakeholders to continue to effectively collaborate to better address the violence experienced by women and children.

CSHA is a network of small agencies that have been providing temporary shelter for battered women, children and victims of family and sexual violence in Wewak, Kokopo, Madang, Bougainville and Port Moresby.

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**News item 3 – Youths Accept Jesus into their Hearts**

Youths from Keta Kori, in the Dei District of the Archdiocese of Mt. Hagen have given up drugs and surrendered to Jesus. They did this in the presence of their community, their leaders, the police and Church Elders.

The surrender on 9th December, at the Keta Kori Primary School, saw more than fifty youths uproot marijuana trees from their gardens and march into the community dressed in black and white, together with graduating students of Grade Two.

They promised never to go back into drugs, gambling and alcohol, and signed an MOU before their Councilor Clement Namba; Snr Police Prosecutor, Mr. Mathew; Parish Priest Fr. Joseph Siune, church and community leaders.

It was a great relief and a success for the church and community leaders who had been working for many years to eradicate drugs in this community. The event ended with the final blessing of these youths by all the Church elders led by Fr. Joseph Siune, Parish Priest of Mun Parish.

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**News item 4 - Kumin Primary Celebrates 31st Graduation**

The Mother of Divine Shepherd Kumin Primary school of the Diocese of Mendi, in Southern Highlands Province, held a heart-warming ceremony in honour of its 131 graduating students during its 31st graduation Rite.

The graduation on Wednesday 9th December, was held in the school’s grandstand hall and had the attendance of former member for Mendi, Ps Isaac Joseph; School Inspectors Mr Panga Roman and Mark Mowai; Board of Management Representative, Mr Martin Pat; and Rector of the Cathedral Parish, Fr Sunny Mathew. Also present to witness the occasion were public servants, staff and students, family, friends and guardians.

Meanwhile, a touching mass was held during the blessing of the Papai Pangi Healing Prayer Centre at Kaupena, Imbongu Parish. The mass celebrated by its Parish Priest, Fr Damien Szumski, was backed by the joyful singing of youths and parishioners.

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**News Item 5 – Christmas Spirit shared with West Papuan Community**

The Christmas Spirit of sharing and caring was evident in the atmosphere of the small West Papuan Refugee Camp at Rainbow Gerehu, as 71 families each received food hampers valued at K30.

The special visit made on Wednesday 9th December, had the attendance of four Religious from the ‘Sisters of Charity of St Anne' (SCSA) Congregation, staff of Caritas PNG, the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI, and the presence of more than sixty people both young and old.

Sr Mary Joseph SCSA, Principal of St Anne Elementary School in Gerehu, reminded families gathered of the reason for celebrating Christmas and said it was a time of rejoice and hope for the Son of God.

In her reflection of the meaning of Christmas, she also acknowledged the current low standard of living experienced by all members of the camp especially the children, and called on the Government and responsible authorities to look into their problems.

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**News item 6 – Chaplain Anticipates PNG’s 50th Independence Anniversary**

“My ambition is to live for another five years to see this great country of ours celebrate its 50th Independence Anniversary,” said Fr John Glynn OL, Chaplain of Jubilee Catholic Secondary School (JCSS), Hohola.

Born in Ireland in 1936, Fr John first came to Papua New Guinea in 1963, to train as a Primary School Teacher during the time when the country was still recognized as a protectorate of the Australian Administration.

Recalling his younger days, Fr John said his biggest motivation was the burning need for an adventure and that this was exactly what PNG had offered him, “A million different journeys”. He confessed that though he felt homesick and isolated at times, one thing that remained clear for him was that he was already living in Paradise and was quickly drawn into the lives of Papua New Guineans.

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**News item 7 - JCSS Principal to Retire After 20 Years**

Jubilee Catholic Secondary School Principal, Mrs Bernadette Ove, is retiring from teaching at the end of this year.

Mrs Ove from Waromo village in Vanimo, made the announcement during the recent launching of a new four-in-one classroom in JCSS. She said she had reached her mandatory retirement age and has been directed by the Teaching Services Commission to retire.

She has served as Principal of JCSS for 20 years- taking the school from its early days to what is now one of the biggest and best performing secondary schools in the country. National Capital District Governor, Powes Parkop, has pledged that in honour of Mrs Ove’s distinguished services and as the school’s longest serving principal, a four-in-one will be built in the school by NCDC.

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**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 here at Catholic Communications, we wish you all an enjoyable week.**