The Bishops of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands have just completed their five yearly ad limina visit to Rome with a General Audience with Pope Benedict XVI.

The ad limina enables all the bishops to undertake a pilgrimage to the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul who were martyred and buried in Rome. The visit always involves preparing a 5 yearly report on the state of the diocese, and discussing the issues of the diocese with the Holy Father privately as a group. It is also an occasion to visit the various departments of the Vatican, such as those dealing with Evangelization, Ecumenism, Health, Social Justice and Liturgy. This visit was an historic one, not only because it was an occasion to meet with the newly elected Bishop of Rome, Benedict XVI, but also because it was the first ad limina visit to include an Anglican bishop as a guest of the Catholic bishops. The idea of inviting an Anglican bishop to accompany the Catholic bishops on their ad limina had been suggested in documents on ecumenism, but until now no Bishops' Conference had taken up the suggestion directly.

All the bishops found Pope Benedict to be a very humble man with a keen interest in the situation each diocese. This was reflected in his address to the bishops at the close of the ad limina, in which he stressed fostering a good relationship with coworkers, priests in particular, but also catechists and other laity involved in the mission of the church. The various Vatican departments were also eager to assist the local church in PNG and SI to carry out its mission in close collaboration with the Catholic Church all over the world.

Issues raised included the situation of West Papuan refugees in PNG and of Kiiribati migrants in Solomon Islands; the plight of internally displaced peoples such as Manam Islanders, the training and formation of priests, the effective dialogue between Christianity and traditional culture, developments in ecumenism, especially regarding the Anglican Church, and how the church should best deal with cases of misconduct by clergy. In much of these discussions the bishops were encouraged by the realization that the church in PNG and SI is generally fulfilling its task in an effective way.

At the same time we were encouraged by the suggestions that came from other contexts such as Africa. As the bishops return to their dioceses they will continue the discussions raised at the ad limina in order to contribute to and learn as much as possible from the wider church.
Religious in Wewak promote Vocations

There are 15 religious congregations, men and women, in Wewak Diocese. The Diocese decided to organise the Wewak Diocese Vocation Promotion Team with the purpose of encouraging vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Sr Jerry Masella SSPS said, "We believe if we work together, this can have a big impact on the youth. They will see that we are not competing but work together for the growth of national vocations."

We had a Eucharistic Retreat conducted by Fr Daniel, a Spiritan from Australia. Last June, they gave vocational talks to the students in Branda High School and later to the students of Bishop Leo Arfild High School after their school mass in the Cathedral. After that they plan to go to Yangoru, a parish outside Wewak town, to awaken among the youth God's call, vocations to priestly and religious life. Sister Catherine, known before as Sr Mary Concil, said to organise the We Retreat conducted by Fr Daniel, a Spiritan from Australia. Last June, they gave vocational talks to the students in Branda High School and later to the students of Bishop Leo Arfild High School after their school mass in the Cathedral. After that they plan to go to Yangoru, a parish outside Wewak town, to awaken among the youth God's call, vocations to priestly and religious life. Sister Catherine, known before as Sr Mary Concil, said, that there will be a diocesan youth rally in St. Marcellin high school in Yangoru.

One Diocesan Vocation Director joined our group so we are composed of 16 religious congregation and 1 diocesan. The Federation will meet again in August, to discuss further planning for the rest of the year.

Living Waters House of Prayer

A place of quiet, prayer and reflection...
Located on the Bay in Alexishafen, on the North Coast of Madang. (18km from Madang town)
The facility has accommodation of eight private rooms.
Six of these rooms have there own small ensuites.
There is a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament and the possibility of daily Mass.
The House of Prayer is available for those wishing to make Directed Retreats, Guided Retreats, Private Retreats or Recollection Days.
Directors are available for daily or frequent direction.
Full time Spiritual Directors are:
Sr. Joyce Ann Edelmann, SMSM
Sr. Patricia Phillips, SMSM
Phone: 853 3159
Email: joyceann@dg.co.pg
patricia@online.net.pg

Good-Bye To a Good Friend

The students of the Y.C. CODE school in Goroka said a sad farewell to Sr Catherine Keogh, SMSM, a Marist Missionary Sister, when she left Papua New Guinea after fifty years of service with the Catholic Church here. Sister Catherine (known before as Sr Mary Concil) came to PNG in 1955. For almost all her years here she was involved in education. Sr Catherine worked for many years in the North Solomons Province. She also worked in the Southern Highlands province and Eastern Highlands Province. For the last fifteen years Sister had been teaching at the Y.C. CODE school in Goroka.

This centre is dedicated to helping young men and women complete their high school education. Sr Catherine will be remembered by everyone as a joyful, welcoming, generous and kind person who supported so many young people in their life journey. All who had the privilege of knowing Sister Catherine will miss her smiling face and wonderful sense of humour.

Good Shepherd Seminary

They also covered a a covered a session on the media values workshop on the values; the mass media often promotes with a particular look at advertising.

The workshop finished with an exercise in learning to critically 'read' movies. Each year Fr Geo. gives Good Shepherd and other seminaries around the country giving these workshops as part of the Commission for Social Communications' apostolate.

media values workshop at good shepherd seminary

Thirty-five year students from Good Shepherd Seminary recently joined with Fr. Geoffrey Lee, the National Director for Social Communications, in a workshop on 'Media and Values'. The one-week workshop covered the topics: 'The Church and the Media', where they looked at the various statements the Church has officially made on the media, including a look at the Synod for the Media's statement.

Allow God space and time

The Retreat is the culmination and synthesis of our entire spiritual life, stated Fr. Luciano Odorico, delegate of PNG/SI, as he addressed the retreatants at the good night. "The need to be faithful to the few practices of prayer throughout the day and the spiritual exercises of the monthly and six-yearly retreats, should be our priority", he continued.

"And the beauty of nature, the neat rows and potted plants, the beautiful statue of Mary Help of Christians atop a little mound in the center of a pond, the recently completed Emmanuel Retreat Centre, Boroko, Port Moresby was the perfect setting for the annual retreat held from the 3rd to the 6th July, 2005. Fr. Christopher Kennedy o.s.b., Rector of the Retreat Centre, Batalag presented the retreat teaching on God of Love, Freedom and Surprises, Emmanuel, Holiness, Mission and Compassion, Religious Life, Mary and other Salesian topics. His insistence on personal and communal almsgiving to allow God peace and time encouraged the retreatants to spend the entire day in the serene and joyful atmosphere of reflection and prayer. In a spirit of sharing and coordination, Fr. Rafael Calvo, the Director of the Retreat involved all the participants in the different aspects of spiritual animation.

"It has been a refreshing experience of community and camaraderie, a time for us to be reconnected and return back to give of our best for the mission", stated Fr. Albert Leung, Gaburu. "I enjoyed the simple style of the preacher especially his lived out experience and his sharing on the saintly salesians", stated Fr. Walew Dec, Vanimo. "The retreat has given us the time to rest and relax and enjoy the company of our Salesian confreres", stated Fr. Roger Misada. "It has been our first community retreat in six years and we are grateful for the experience", stated Fr. Luciano Capelli, Solomons.

Taking advantage of having come to the Retreat and different commissions members were also able to visit at the end of the day, to plan for the visit of the Rector Major in September, discuss priorities of the delegations, initiatives of the commissions and plan for the coning Miri Chapter in April 2006."
The Celticism of the Catholic Church

Bishop Francesco of Goroka writes:

Let's continue the exploration of our faith taken from the Celticism of the Catholic Church.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The sacrament of confirmation strengthens and expands the bond of the baptized with the Church, they receive the special gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to be true witnesses of Christ.

There are two great moments of the ceremony: first the laying on of hand by the bishop and then the conferring of the Holy Spirit.

The celebration begins with the renewal of the baptismal promises and the profession of faith. Then the bishop opens his hands invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit on those being confirmed.

The bishop then assembles the people with the Holy Oil saying the words: "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." The sign of peace concludes the celebration.

The effects of Confirmation:

The effect of the sacrament is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the same way as it happened to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. In calling us more fervently to Christ, we become more rooted in our union with God making us more and more like Christ and strengthening our commitment to live a holy life.

Who can receive the sacrament of Confirmation?

Every baptized person, not yet confirmed and should receive the sacrament of confirmation. It should be received by those who have reached the age of discretion.

A period of preparation should help the candidates to grow more in union with Christ and develop a sense of belonging to the Church. To receive the sacrament the candidate must then express their desire to receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be in a state of grace. A sponsor should accompany the candidate when receiving the confirmation.

It is a great responsibility for the sponsors to follow and guide the candidates in their Christian life journey reminding them of the gifts received from God and their commitment to be faithful to him.

The minister of Confirmation is the bishop, who may also grant the permission to a priest to administer the sacrament if the need arises.

If a Christian is in danger of death, any priest can give confirmation.

Highlands Regional Catholic Youth Pilgrimage

The Highlands Regional Youth from Goroka, Mt Hagen, Mendi, Wahabag and the four Diocese of Kavieng recently took part in a Pilgrimage which started at Wamena Oration with a procession to the statues of the first missionaries especially Fr. Karl Morschheuser, the first SVD missionary killed in the Highlands.

The one week program was mostly spiritual and motivational with some inputs and talks on Holy Eucharist, Holy Cross, General Assembly, Family Life, HIV/AIDS, ending with sight seeing and a climb to Mt. Wilhelm. Kirsheba diocese was represented by another 20 youngsters who came to support the regional youths program.

This pilgrimage in a success as confirmed by many pilgrims despite some few problems. At the Closing Eucharist Bishop Douglas Young said, "This pilgrimage is a love to experience different cultures and unexpected events which happened in this one week program."

The youths collectively shared the fruits of their experiences through talks, dramas, dance, poems and group discussions.

A priest from each diocese took turns to celebrate Holy Eucharist after the day's reflection. The pilgrimage is a significant event which contributed to assisting individual youth to maintain a Christian focus in their life and to work in their respective communities, parishes and dioceses to share their experiences, and implement the knowledge and wisdom gained through this pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage ended with a Holy Mass celebrated by auxiliary bishop of Mt Hagen. Bishop Douglas Young, SVD, in the absence of Bishop Henkte Maarssen, SVD. Bishop Douglas gave an inspiring homily in which he further encouraged the youths to continue on their journey. The pilgrimage was an important event which the pioneer missionaries had planted. The seed of the Gospel has been planted, it is our task to tend it and see that it grows. Bishop Douglas Young said, "A sponsor should accompany the candidate when receiving the confirmation as true witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith."

The bishop said, "You must apply self-discipline so that you stay away from social ills such as drunkenness, sex, marijuana, rape, racism and all that the Lord loathes."

"Youth must have a personal relationship with Christ, and live self-control via personal validity," he said.

The youths must take up the task to contribute towards elevating and eradicating social, ethical, spiritual and cultural problems existing in our communities. Through our witnessing of Gospel truths," Bishop Douglas.

As the Holy Eucharist, the Diocese youth were congratulated and farewelled by priests, doctors, nurses and the community leaders of Denglapu Parish and Kundawiro Diocese.

Tok bilong God em i osemp lam bilong helpim mipela long wokabaut str... Pas bilong oispos PNG na SI long Baibel Sande na Baibel Wik (Summary)

Dina Brina na Sios,

Ot Karel Manu nei bim Pilias Naigina and Solomon Islands.

Pas bilong oispos PNG na SI long Baibel Sande na Baibel Wik (Summary)

Tok bilong God em i osemp lam bilong helpim mipela long wokabaut str... Pas bilong oispos PNG na SI long Baibel Sande na Baibel Wik (Summary)

Dia Brina na Sios,

Ot Karel Manu nei bim Pilias Naigina and Solomon Islands.

Pas bilong oispos PNG na SI long Baibel Sande na Baibel Wik (Summary)
Katifolik Sios Long Sauten
Hailans 50 Yia Planpng

Bishop Fesmen