



The Catholic Reporter

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Assembly of Faith and Renewal

By Fr Roger Purcell MSC

My work this year with the Catholic Church General Assembly (Madang, 5-11 Nov) has brought home more clearly to me the movement of renewal that is alive and well in the Church of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (PNGSI).

It is clear that this is not a recent happening or a short term change. As the world has been changing, so the Church renews itself to meet

the needs of the world. This has been happening for about 100 years with a greater intensity for the last 60 years.

Pope Francis is giving a particular emphasis and boost to implementing the teaching and spirit of the Council. His words and actions recall us to the core of our faith in Jesus Christ, challenging us to live out our faith everyday in clear and concrete ways.

In PNGSI this movement of renewal has been happening since

the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65, as the Church as a whole, dioceses and religious Congregations seek ongoing and permanent renewal.

We see this clearly in the Self-study of the PNG Church in the 1970s, the shift to many different ministries and more recently the first General Assembly and National Pastoral Plan. We have had this year the preparation for and experience of the Assembly of Faith.

Generally I sense a real re-

sponse to this ongoing call of the Church to renew and build the Kingdom.

The world cries for values to live by, for justice and rights for all and for a deep faith to live by. We have all that is necessary in the scriptures and teaching of the Church.

We are called to the conversion necessary to move on from the past practices and expressions of faith to discover new ways of being Church that will attract people today.

The General Assembly was a real discernment of our situation, a reading of the Signs of the Times. It was a sincere search for what God is asking of us in a new and changing situation. We are moving forward now to a Conference Pastoral Plan to help us answer the call in concrete plans and programmes.

Our readings at this time of Advent are full of hope and promise that we will see the Kingdom alive in our time; "See here is our God". We continue to move forward in hope, trust and confidence.



A celebration during the Year of Faith in the diocese of Lae.

Reject PNG religious fundamentalism!

By Fr Giorgio Licini
Catholic Reporter

PNG House Speaker Theo Zurenuoc these days is purging the House of Parliament of carvings and decorations that in his opinion are not worthy of a Christian country. According to press reports, he is doing it of his own authority and inspired by evangelical pastors.

I wonder if anybody else could be allowed similar acts. What if the manager of the airport decides to shut down radar control; or the governor of Madang to remove the bulb of the Kalibobo lighthouse; or what if the CEO of PNG Power decides that modern electricity contradicts forty thousand years of traditional bonfires?

What's happening to the Parliament building is really ridiculous if true that behind the move are fundamentalist Christians who cannot distinguish

between the novelty of the Gospel and what of the past needs to be preserved and treasured at least for collective and historical memory.

These people seem to act regardless of the opinion of scholars and anthropologists. They are probably the same who run against the times (all the times) by trying to ban other religious practices by law, thus criminalizing people for their beliefs.

But Christians have enough of this unfair treatment in China and North Korea, in many parts of the Middle East and even India, and elsewhere. Why retaliate in PNG?

PNG citizens should be aware of the rising religious fundamentalism. It sprouts from a mix of arrogance and insecurity, ignorance and cargo cult. Politicians should not court these movements. Listen rather to traditional educated and well

grounded pastors, priests and bishops of the mainstream churches. They will criticize you from time to

time. But they will do it for the good of the country. And your good!

Catholic Reporter wishes everybody a **Merry Christmas** and a **Prosperous New Year 2014!**



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Catholic Church in PNG to offer religious education to journalists

The Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea needs to wake up to the reality of media communication and see how she can be more present and active where modern culture and behavior is shaped and promoted.

There is not only a need for new radio stations, printed materials or television programs; but to accompany and educate the public, especially young people, making them aware at the same time of the possibilities and risks offered by social media, advertising and the Internet.

We also need to engage with secular media and accompany Catholic communicators in their professional experience.

These considerations came about as sixteen Certificates of Participation were handed over at the end of the First Basic Media Course for media and pastoral workers held at Divine Word University in Madang from 18-27 November.

It was organized by the Commission on Social Communications of the Catholic Bishops



During the First Basic Media Course in Madang the logo for the Bishops Conference Commission on Social Communications (SOCOM) was designed by Stella Paulus and laid out with the help of Mervyn Mandawa. The Twitter sign represents the new media (or social media). The satellite dish represents the traditional media. The Bible represents God's message. The outstretched palm represents our willingness. All put together: we are willing to use all channels of communication to bring God's message to the people. (Stella Paulus)

Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands and included training and awareness in all main areas of media: print, radio, TV, social media.

It also gave an opportunity to

the participants to better understand the relationship between Church and Media. Seven dioceses (out of 19 in PNG and 3 in SI) and seven religious congregations were represented along with a handful of lay peo-

ple working mostly in Catholic radio stations.

The participants went further suggesting additional formation courses in the fields of radio programming and broadcasting, printed layout, and religious education for journalists in secular media.

Beginning with the year 2014 activities will be held on 24 January, Feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron of authors and journalists, on 25 May, World Communication Day, and 29 September, Feast of St. Gabriel the Archangel, patron of communication workers.

In September 2014 the Commission on Social Communication of the Catholic Bishops Conference will offer a two-day workshop in Port Moresby to all interested journalists on Church organization and teachings.

It will come at hand for the upcoming first Synod of Bishops on family life scheduled a few weeks later in Rome and expected to arise wide international attention. (G.L.)

Campaign against hunger launched

Caritas Press Office Rome

On 10th December, Human Rights Day, Caritas International invited everybody to join in prayer at 12 noon to raise concern about the scourge of hunger and malnutrition. Pope Francis contributed a personal message. It was the kick off for a long term campaign aiming at ending the unbalanced distribution of resources and food in the world.

The food in the world is enough to feed everyone and yet almost one billion people (842 million – to be exact) people are hungry. This is a global scandal. Caritas envisages a future without hunger. The key to achieving this is through the establishment and implementation of the right to adequate and nutritious food.

As one confederation of 164 organisations we will work together to end hunger by 2025. Our campaign is about food because it is essential to living a dignified life, it is also central to the Christian faith in the form of the breaking and sharing of bread. The foundation for any real change comes from within ourselves first and foremost and our ability to see the face of Christ in those who are suffering from hunger. The parable of the loaves and fishes teaches us that if there is the will, what we have never ends. The campaign "One Human Family, Food for All" works on three levels: international advocacy regarding the right to food, national objectives which each Caritas organization can decide and each person is invited to think about their attitudes and habits regarding the use of food and its waste.

The first Millennium Development Goal is to eliminate hunger and poverty. The Caritas confederation wants to put its collective power and good will, and join with many other organisations to contribute to the process and bring an end to the suffering of millions of hungry people around the world. "A way has to be found to enable everyone to benefit from the fruits of the earth, and not simply to close the gap between the affluent and those who must be satisfied with the crumbs falling from the table." - Pope Francis

Parish of Alotau takes to the streets

By Bishop Rolando Santos CM Alotau

The parish of Alotau celebrated the closing of the Year of Faith with three days of street preaching followed by the culmination Mass on the Solemnity of Christ the King on 24 November.

The first day of preaching took place on Thursday, 21 November at the Top Town market. The

topic was on 'Mary, Woman of Faith'. Bro. Kenneth, a seminarian from the Dominican Republic did the preaching. About 60-80 people were present and prayed the Rosary.

The second day was held just outside the Government Transit House on the seashore. The topic was 'St. Joseph, Man of Faith'. Fr. Francis Sundararajan was the preacher. More than a

hundred people were present, including several onlookers.

On Saturday the preaching was held at the Alotau Market grounds. The topic was on 'Christ, the Center of the Holy Family'. Fr. Richard Tomelty, the cathedral administrator, was the speaker.

Again about one hundred listeners were there, not counting several onlookers. In the recent

apostolic exhortation, 'The Joy of the Gospel', Pope Francis writes: "Each Christian community and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the 'peripheries' in need of the light of the Gospel." (n. 20)

Lae couples renew vows of fidelity and faith

By Fr Kirby Bagaslao MJ

On Nov. 24, 2013, Christ the King Feast Day, the Catholic Diocese of Lae celebrated the closing of the "Year of Faith" at the newly-built Catholic Diocesan Hall, St. Mary's Primary School – Eriku, Lae.

Thousands of Catholic faithful coming from the different parishes and sub-parishes in Morobe Province gathered in jubilation to mark the closing of the Year of Faith as proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI last October 12, 2012.

The joyful thanksgiving celebration started with the Eucharist presided by Most Rev. Christian Blouin, CMM, Bishop of Lae. Parishioners from Sacred Heart –

Aromot, Siassi led the colourful entrance procession of parishes, sub-parishes and spiritual groups with their respective banners and the Year of Faith Cross that has visited all the parishes in the Diocese.

The ceremony proceeded with the blessing of the new Catholic Diocesan Hall. Bishop Chris thanked the Switzerland Province of Marianhill through Fr. Arnold Schmitt, CMM for funding the project and Alva Engineering for the construction of the building.

Expounding on the theme: "Know your faith, live your faith, share your faith and become evangelizers", the Bishop in his homily, encouraged the Catholics of Lae to strengthen their faith especially as

families alive in Christ. He added that "faith is an on-going process whose responsibility lies in every family - the true church". He also expounded on the topic of *communio* as true believers in Jesus.

As a concrete sign of communion, he then acknowledged the presence of Bishop Giegere Wenge of ELC-PNG as well as representatives of other churches who were present during the occasion.

One of the highlights of the celebration was the renewal of marriage vows of couples while holding high the Year of Faith Family Cross after which the Bishop and the priests of the Diocese went around to bless the families.

The liturgy went on so smoothly. The combined choir led by Mr. Bernard Limoto was commendable. Holy Spirit Parish did the Gospel procession while St. Francis – Wau and Holy Family – Bulolo took charge of the offertory procession. St. Anthony – Gubari and St. John's – Situm went ahead with the final procession.

The afternoon was dedicated to items presentation showcasing cultural dances, action songs, drama, etc. from the different parishes and communities.

Guests from other Christian denominations also gave their speeches challenging the faithful to become one body in Christ regardless of skin color, tribe affiliations, and religious beliefs. It was an af-

ternoon of fun and entertainment especially with the "angelic voices" coming from "heaven man na heaven meri" choir of Buimo – CIS.

Bishop Chris in his closing remarks expressed his joy seeing his flock gathered together and thanked the preparatory committee, headed by Mr. Mark Sahin for a job well-done.

One of the parishioners commented after the celebration: "It was indeed, a spirit-filled celebration". With the presence of all clergy, the Lutheran bishop and pastors, religious men and women, and the faithful of the Diocese, in an atmosphere of overwhelming bliss, we take on the challenge to grow in our faith so that we can share it to others as joy-filled witnesses of the risen Christ.

Alotau men lead effort for new evangelization

By Fr Ronnie Victoria Alotau

During the Year of Faith the diocese of Alotau focused on the Cross Pilgrimage to end with the Men Convention. The cross was entrusted to the Men Group to be brought all over the diocese to draw all people to Christ.

In fact they brought the cross everywhere, only skipping the remote East, and came back to Alotau for the Diocesan Men Convention on 18-23 November. The theme was, 'Men arise! Live the faith you believe!' Ninety-three participants attended from twelve parishes.

Welcoming them, Vicar General Fr Joe Ensing encouraged the members of the group to be responsible fathers and active members of the Church. Then he invited them to establish men groups in their communities.

For a few days the Men Convention dwelt on topics such as family values, child protection, gender equality, productivity and self-reliance, Bible sharing methods, and Sunday service without a priest... The men admitted being motivated by the activities and willing to overcome that traditional laziness and lack of interest, which frequently keeps them away from community service.

Deputy Milne Bay Provincial Administrator Michael Kape facilitated the drafting of the Diocesan Men Constitution, which was approved during the Convention and led to the election of the executive officers, with former Diocesan Caritas coordinator Joe Kaiso as chairman.

Leaving for Africa. Crying of joy



Sr. Irene Kuam MSI from Nuku, Sandaun province recently received her missionary assignment to Camerun, Africa.

By Sr Irene Kuam MSI
Vanimo

On 8 Dec. 2013 the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate (MSI – Pime) celebrated 25 years of presence at Watuluma, Milne Bay province and in Papua New Guinea. On 26 Oct. this year the first Grade 12 batch graduated from their Santa Maria Secondary School at Watuluma.

In 25 years they have fast spread from Milne Bay to Port Moresby, Vanimo and Fatima in Jiwaka province with some young national sisters already joining the missions in Africa and South America.

Sometime in April 2013 I was attending a Religious Education confer-

ence at Don Bosco Institute in Port Moresby when I received a call from Rome. I was in the chapel praying and hesitant to reply to an unknown number.

When I did, I was not able to recognize the voice since it was so soft. Then Mother General Rosilla Velamparambil identified herself. I felt bad and apologized for not replying fast. We still had a night session so she promised to call me back later. After the talk I went back to the chapel and began to converse with the Lord, "What are you telling me now?"

After the conference I went back to our convent in Boroko. The call really came. Mother Rosilla was calling me about my mission assignment. "Are

you ready?', she asked me. I immediately recalled the words of our foundress Mother Josephine Dones, "If God wants it will be done"; so I said, "Yes Mother, I am ready".

We then continued to chat and I anxiously waited for her to tell me which country I was assigned to. After a while she said, "You are assigned to South Brazil, are you happy?" I said, "Yes!" But since I was laughing, Mother asked for the reason and I said, "I am laughing because I have always dreamt of Africa." "Do you want to go to Africa?" she asked. "Wherever you send me, I will go." I felt happy. Within me, however, I had a positive feeling. Mother would still change my destination. I could sense it from the way she spoke.

Back in Vanimo weeks

later I got the message that Mother General had in fact changed my mission assignment from South Brazil to Camerun in Africa. At that very moment I was delighted and thanked God for the good news.

This joy remained in me till the eve of Pentecost. After the vespers my community superior read the circular letter from the Mother General announcing the names of the sisters assigned to different missions.

I cried of joy. The sisters and novices were all happy and congratulated me. As I knelt before the tabernacle my heart was thrilled with gratitude to the Lord for the gift of my missionary vocation and to be sent out to another country.

West Sepik Catholics still drink at the same fountain

By Sr Betty Singamai
Aitape

Almost one thousand Catholics and members of other Christian denominations attended the closing of the Year of Faith at Tumeleo Island in the diocese of Aitape on Sunday, 24 November. They came from 22 parishes in the deaneries of Lumi, Nuku and Aitape.

Tumeleo Island is the historical place of the first Catholic mission in the area by the Missionaries of the Divine Word (SVD) back in 1896. The diocese of Aitape also opened the Year of Faith in Tumeleo Island on 11 October 2012.

Then every deanery organized its own pilgrimage bringing the Book of the Gospels to all outstations till the diocesan final gathering last 24 November.

PNG mothers touched by Holy Land trip

By Fr Martin We-en Aitape

Fifty-four 54 Papua New Guinea pilgrims, mostly mothers, travelled to the Holy Land in late October and early November 2013 as the Year of Faith was coming to a close. Via Singapore and the Sri Lankan capital Colombo they arrived in Amman, Jordan where they crossed over to Israel by land.

They drove through the Jordan Valley and arrived at Jericho on the way to Jerusalem, passing through the Good Samaritan place, and then to Bethlehem.

All in all they spent three nights in the town where Jesus was born, two in Jerusalem and two in Nazareth in the north, travelling every day to the most relevant places of Jesus life and ministry: the Garden of Olives, the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Crucifixion and Burial sites, the Nativity Church, the Jordan River, the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea and many more.

At times the pilgrims were moved to tears recalling the deeds of Jesus in the different places.

Their faith was strengthened by this pilgrimage as they could see and experience the hand of God working among them in various ways.

Some of them got sick at times, had sores and malaria attacks but always were promptly healed. It was a group with members of different Christian denominations, such as Lutherans and Pentecostals, but all cooperated well.

East New Britain offers first national Don Bosco priest

By Fr. Angel Sanchez SDB

The Salesian Archbishop of Rabaul, His Grace Francesco Panfilo, presided over the ordination of the first Papua New Guinean Salesian priest, Fr. Isidore James Maramun, last Nov. 11. About thirty priests celebrated at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Vunapope, the head-

quarters of the Archdiocese of Rabaul in East New Britain province. Salesians from their different schools came over to witness the momentous event along with some staff from Don Bosco Technical School in Gabutu, where Fr. Isidore is currently assigned as Spiritual Moderator. A sizeable crowd from the family, relatives and friends of Fr.

Isidore also joined in the celebration.

In his homily, Archbishop Panfilo recalled the time of his own episcopal ordination when he felt more deeply the call to "put out into the deep".

The same challenge is now given to the new priest. Fr. Isidore chose as his inspiring words: "The love of Christ impels us", from the second

letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. "A credible father, a teacher of the faith, a good shepherd"—this, according to Archbishop Panfilo, is what young people want a newly-ordained priest to be.

Fr. Isidore's mother, his brother and some people in the crowd were in tears particularly after Fr. Isidore was finally vested with the stole and the chasuble and the Archbishop and all the priests gave him the "kiss of peace."

Towards the end of the two-hour liturgy, Fr. Isidore delivered his speech and thanked everyone who was part of his life and his formation for the past sixteen years. After the ordination, people flocked to the sanctuary to wish the newly-ordained priest and to ask for his blessing.

East New Britain is a generous land. The first Missionaries of the Sacred Heart arrived in the area in 1882. The first Papua New Guinean martyr (1945), Blessed Peter ToRot, beatified by Blessed John Paul II in 1995, also came from there.

God has now given the Church its first Papua New Guinean Salesian priest from the same place. After thirty-three years of apostolate in the country, God has blessed us with this great gift. Now Don Bosco truly has a Papua New Guinean and Melanesian face!



VUNAPOPE, 11 NOV. 2013. Newly ordained Fr. Isidore James Maramun with Abp. Francesco Panfilo SDB of Rabaul and fellow Salesian priests.

The Teaching of the Second Vatican Council

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORLD

By Fr Roger Purcell
MSC Mt. Hagen

When God created the world "God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good." Over time we have tended to create the world again and to see it as a place of evil and sin.

The Council re-asserted the goodness of God's creation, the goodness of God's action in history and the goodness of humanity's development.

This change of attitude sees the world as good, as the place where God is present, the world in God's embrace; we encounter God in the world and therefore need to be in dialogue with the world, open to hearing

God speak to the Church through the world

- "For by the very circumstance of their having been created, all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws and order. Humanity must respect these as he isolates them by the appropriate methods of the individual sciences or arts" [GS 36]

- "Therefore, the council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives; that world which is the theater of man's history, and the heir of his energies, his tragedies and his triumphs" [GS 1,2]

- "The Church herself

knows how richly she has profited by the history and development of humanity." [GS 44]

Scripture: Gen 1: 31
"it was very good". Rev 21: 3 "make his home among them"

For the continued development of the human race we are asked to embrace all aspects of science and arts, of the whole social reality and its development, of politics, governance and law. The marvel of the human mind involved in scientific research, industrial development and construction, and the creativity of artistic endeavor are the inspiration of the Spirit of God. We are challenged to enter into all aspects of

our culture and society to meet God there, and to be the presence of God in the world.

We do this in our own small corner of God's world, in all the small ways that are part of our everyday living. The challenge is to live each day what we profess by our Christian faith, the sacraments and Gospel values. In this way we bring our world, our society and culture to God. We convert our families and communities, all those we meet, every event and circumstance to the way of God.

Reflection and discussion:

- In our modern and changing times, how do we look at the world in

Holy Priests for a Holy Church

The PNG rural and traditional set up still exists and accommodates the majority of the people, but it's being challenged by a growing trend of urbanization. Not only people move and settle in the city, but for those remaining in the village the "city" goes to their place. Investors and researchers, tourists and traders, teachers and nurses, missionaries and adventurers have been around for more than a century. Now the mobile phones and the Internet are connecting everybody to the rest of the world making of every inch of terrain a part of the global village.

With this comes mobility, the end or the weakening of traditional practices, values, family and tribal ties. Boundaries fall. Human behavior is no more as well constrained as in traditional society. In the past you knew of a lot of things that you could not do, that certain people you could not touch, and in some places you could not go. In certain areas only the chief was allowed more than one wife along with respect and wealth, not the common villager. Psychological threats were at hand to enforce tribal order.

With the crumbling of the old way of life nothing has replaced the traditional watchdogs or shown new criteria in a changed situation: not the law and its enforcers, not education, not religion, much less the media which are actually becoming channels of good as much as of bad. It is no surprise, therefore, that violence, corruption, alcoholism and criminality spiral out of control! And the family has become a mere word with no content as far as fidelity, care of children, food and education is concerned. Many young people appear to be without a personal plan in life, let it alone a goal and a dream. No education, job or house is assured as a foundation for a meaningful family project or positive social contribution.

This is the man and the people to whom the Church intends to announce Jesus message today.

It is (in theory) a well known message of meaning and purpose, honesty, respect, peace, industriousness and concern for others. It's a message of love for the poor. It is in no way old-fashioned or outdated. In fact it appears to be what's most needed nowadays.

It calls, however, not much for spoken or written words, but for action and consistency in life.

The Gospel is made present by the Church and the Church is mostly represented among the people by its priests. The religious also do their part.

And in recent times stress has been put on lay people and lay co-operation by means of pastoral councils and all sort of lay groups and initiatives. It is common (and correct) belief, however, that the natural leader in the community is the priest, normally the parish priest, representing the bishop of the larger diocesan community.

It is evident, after 2000 years of Christian faith that Church reform and holiness much more depend on persons and saints than meetings, committees, synods and councils.

Therefore it is probably priests' behavior, stand and commitment that will make a difference and ensure an effective evangelization in modern times as it did in the past.

The new five-year pastoral plan to be born out of the General Assembly of the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (Madang, 5-11 Nov. 2013) will certainly stress a variety of issues and objectives. The family will have central stage.

But only the priests and the parishes can really take it up and effectively lead their local communities and especially their youth into a new experience of faith and communion in modern times. (GLadius)

Radio Maria now in ten PNG provinces

By David Kuna Radio Maria

Radio Maria PNG is going national. Mt. Hagen, Rabaul, Aitape, Vanimo, Kimbe, Wewak, Lae and Port Moresby now receive the signal. The equipment for Mendi and Alotau is already on site and will be installed early next year.

Radio Maria was invited to the country by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in 2005 and started its operations in 2007. Radio Maria PNG is one of about sixty such stations now around the world. Together they form the World Family of Radio Maria.

Each station associates with the founding radio station based near Milan in Northern Italy.

Radio Maria stations strictly adhere to the Church teachings. Radio Maria's sole purpose is to evangelize.

It doesn't air commercials. The stations depend entirely on donations from listeners, individuals or corporate organizations for operations and technical equipment.

Radio Maria PNG cooperates with other diocesan radio stations on a time sharing agreement. The local radio stations will broadcast for as many hours as they wish and the rest of the time will be covered

by Radio Maria.

Dioceses with no local radio station may invite Radio Maria to take over the full air time broadcasting. The programs aired fall under three categories and equally take one third of the time: prayer, catechesis, and human values.

Lack of infrastructures, difficult terrain, and the shortage of priests and religious have been major hindrances in reaching out to people in remote areas.

The Catholic radio stations help tremendously for evangelization and to address social issues.

They explain the Catholic faith and bring a message of hope, peace, consolation and love.



Future teachers reflect on faith. Over forty Catholic Students from Madang Teachers College attended a final year recollection at Alexishafen Conference Centre on 16 November on the theme "Faithful Evangelizer". Given by Fr Harry Gahare from Divine Word University the recollection first focused on personal identity as a child of a family, a tribe and a region and as a child of God through baptism; then expanded into the call to the profession of teacher and the challenges faced in professing the faith as true believers and witnesses. (Photo by Fr Harry Gahare)

Divine Word University at the forefront of child protection

A call to action for the protection of children recently came from Prof. Br. Julian McDonald, a member of the Divine Word University Governing Council and active against child abuse in Australia since 1990. Speaking at a workshop for academic staff on "Safeguarding children and young people" on 29 November, Prof. McDonald said that safety policies need to be put up for the simple fact that are needed: millions of children are subject to abuse and neglect all over the world every day.

Though child abuse may not necessarily be of a sexual nature, such as the case of forced labor or corporal punishment, it is frequently sexually related; and "90 per cent of it takes place in a domestic environment", Prof. McDonald said.

According to Communication Arts senior lecturer Mr. Patrick Matbob,

the traditional Melanesian society was carefully dealing with sexuality and marriage. Young people were led into adulthood through initiation and were told how to behave. Nothing and nobody has replaced that function in an orderly manner in modern Melanesian communities.

Government and Churches have been late in dealing with the issue of child abuse and neglect, but what really matters now is the way forward: "It is easy to say what has not been done so far; more difficult to say what to do from now on", Prof. Julian McDonald concluded. The conversation will help Divine Word University draft a Child Protection Policy for the different campuses and Departments, particularly Education. It will also put the institution at the forefront of child protection in the country according to President Fr. Jan Czuba. (G.L.)