



The Catholic Reporter

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YEAR OF FAITH CLOSES. FAMILY CRIES

By Bp. Rolando Santos CM – Alotau

THE closing of the Year of Faith comes on the 24th of November with the celebration of the solemnity of Christ the King. It is not so much a closing as an opening or entry into the door of faith, Porta Fidei, in a more committed and courageous way which leads to light, Lumen Fidei, the light that gives a promise of hope, peace, love and joy to all.

As I go around making the pastoral visit of the different parish centers and communities within the diocese, I feel deeply touched by the simple faith of the people and their desire to deepen and to live it more

intensely in their lives. I am also deeply impressed by the zeal of others who reach out to share their faith to other communities and villages.

But while the faith of these simple people bring me much comfort and joy, however, I am also deeply distressed about how little still is being done so that the light of faith could penetrate and cast out the darkness that affects many people of our day.

I am saddened with the difficult situation in which many families, couples, young people, and children find themselves today.

If in our towns, communities and villages there is much physical and sexual violence against women and children, this is be-

cause the light of faith has dimmed immensely within the sanctuaries of their homes.

We hear of many cases of incest and rape, not counting sexual misconduct, which lead to the breakdown of good human values and creating a new silent culture of selfishness and death.

These lead to the loss of peace, harmony and joy in many families and communities, as well as bring grave harm to many children who grow up in poverty, ignorance and poor health, if not aborted earlier.

At the end of the Year of Faith, it is my sincere hope that in the Church we all focus and work together on evangelizing and sanctify-



ing the Christian family.

May there be more seminars given to young people and young adults on sexuality, marriage and the family; and more celebrations of the sacrament of marriage.

Babies for sale and for rubbish in Port Moresby

By Fr. John M. Glynn WeCare! – Port Moresby

I AM afraid that the laws - including the Lukautim Pikinini Act - are quite ineffective in the absence of infrastructure. A few weeks ago a woman we know found an abandoned newborn baby in a rubbish heap - umbilical cord still attached. She took it to Port Moresby General Hospital where the baby was cleaned up and found to be in good health. A Social Worker was called. The woman who found the baby said she wanted to keep it and the Social Worker was very relieved and told her to take it. No records were made of the incident. It was all done quite informally. This is not a rare incident.

The media does report from time to time on unwanted babies being abandoned or sold in the market place. Two or three visits to Gordon Market here in Port Moresby will turn up a baby for sale - for upwards of about K50. Otherwise a visit to the labour ward at Port Moresby General Hospital will often find a mother who is only too willing to sell her newborn baby. This is generally known and does not cause any concern to most people - it is just the way things are.

I have been helping young women - and a few young men - who have been struggling with their lives in the settlements for over twelve years now. When a young lady was very badly wounded in a knife attack we could get no help for her - even at POM General Hospital Emergency, where we waited until nearly 2 o'clock in the morning, we could not get a nurse to examine her wound. We had to wait until the following day to get help at St. Mary's.

The poor are completely used to the fact that the Police, the Health Authorities, the Schools all have little time for them. They are used to being ignored, rejected, dismissed and denied help.

The general population is complacent and not concerned and so there is no pressure on politicians or Government to do anything about reforming our institutions.

The Churches are primarily focused on lotu and ceremony. With very few exceptions there is no outreach to the truly poor. Parishioners in the Catholic Parishes are totally subservient to their Parish Priests and will not take independent action. For twelve years I have been urging the parishioners of Sacred Heart Hohola to set up a Parish Charitable Works Committee and to take advantage of the support they could get from WeCARE!

Pope Francis is so far away, and the sound of his voice is so weak for us here in PNG. Will he ever be heard?



The Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands is very young. Celebrating 50 years of the Catholic Church along the mid Fly River (Oct. 2013) (Photo Yohanes Werang)

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PNG youth confused; parishes ignoring them

By **Bp. Rochus Tatamai MSC**
PNG/SI Deputy Bishop for Youth

From January 2012 to October 2013, Fr. Shanthi Chacko Puthusseray PIME, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands Secretary for Catholic Youth and Laity conducted 17 parish youth leaders' leadership trainings in 17 of 22 dioceses in the two countries. An essential part of the training was actual personal accompaniment of the participants in which they felt safe to share their hearts desires and longing to be better persons in the community and in the Church.

Painful reality check

Such sessions were openly honest yet personal, whereby the participants readily identified their struggles, issues of concern thus making stunning revelations about the concrete situation of the youth today. Such revelations underline a reality check; hence the point of reference and departure if we are honest and ready to embrace our reality in order to move forward.

The parish youth leaders' leadership training took place over eight full days as it needed time to teach the different themes, do the practical skills and reflections attached to the learning exercises, integrate meditation and prayer with the learning exercises, celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, inner healing prayer and Holy Mass

This process revealed that many young people today live with one of their separated father or mother; or live with their adopted parents, even several cases with relatives/guardians. This may be accepted as common practice by the communities today, yet the participants explained and expressed their struggle, pain and other difficulties associated with the separation from their biological parents. They were missing love, care and attention from the biological parents at the early childhood and even in their later stages of life, which

significantly affected them as young people reflected by their adequate or inadequate personal growth today. As Church we need to seriously look into the pastoral care of families in the parishes and take more concrete action plans.

Smoke, alcohol and sex

Other revelations were the number and percentage showing the habit of smoking, use of marijuana, consumption of alcohol/homebrew, watching pornographic materials, immature/improper sexual activities and abortions among the youth today. While this becomes common practice among the young people; yet parents, families and parishes are not responding to these activities by providing the organised pastoral care for the young people. Unless, the parents, families and parishes engage in appropriate pastoral care for the young people in their own respective communities at the base level through love, care and attention, guidance and advises, morale teachings and values education, there'll be little positive change and little transformation. While Dioceses need to organise trainings and workshops yet each parish community must take ownership of their own young people and ensure they are growing up appropriately.

No formation activities in parishes

Another case in point is the regular formation activities for the young people by the parishes. Out of 230 parishes surveyed, 217 (94.35%) show practically no regular formation activities happening to the young people at the parish level so there was a need for priority and direction for the pastoral care of the young people in the parishes.

If parishes are not able to organise regular formation activities and workshops at the parish level with sense of responsibility and ownership how are we going to assist the young people. There is great need in encouraging parishes to function in more

organised and appropriate ways so that the young people's steady and stable growth of faith is ensured.

Contents of faith ignored

How about the faith and faith practices of the young people today? After learning the *Four Areas of Formation*, (Human – Physical & Psychological, Intellectual, Spiritual and Social – Pastoral Formation) each participant answered several questions in the area of *Spiritual Formation*. This data clearly demonstrated where the young people are today with their faith and faith practices.

Firstly, there is strong evidence that the young people do not know the content of the Catholic Faith which includes the intellectual knowledge and understanding of the faith as founded on the Creed, the Catholic Catechism, Church History, etc.; there is little, weak and poor transmission of the CONTENT OF FAITH from adults to youth and children.

Secondly, the young people lack the EXPERIENCE OF FAITH through the active participation of the Sacraments, doing an experience of prayer and meditation, adoration and Bible Sharing, etc

Thirdly, the young people lack the ACTS OF FAITH in which they can reach out to those in need in the community. There is lack of Charity in Action, where there are community voluntary activities, such as cleaning the cemetery, building roads and bridges, supporting the old and sick, advocacy and awareness in justice and peace issues, etc.

The origin and source of every young person is the parish community after his/her home and family, therefore, the regular active participation of every young person in the parish youth group is very important and essential. For this very reason all the responsibilities and efforts of the pastoral care of the young people are/should be concentrated in the parish youth groups at the parish communities.

FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

TWENTY REGISTER FOR BASIC MEDIA COURSE IN MADANG. Twenty priests, religious and lay people from around the country with an interest in media communication will attend the first basic training course organized by the Commission on Social Communications of the Catholic Bishops' Conference at Divine Word University from 18-28 November, 2013. The aim of the course is to introduce the participants into the relationship between Church and Media, to explore Media and Evangelization, to acquire basic skills in writing, speaking and communicating through media; understand the changes brought about by the internet and the new social media such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, etc. "This is a first time, but we will learn from this experience and try to make the November basic course a regular annual activity", says Fr. Giorgio Licini, Secretary for the Catholic National Commission on Social Communications. (Anna Omba)

BEREINA REMEMBERS ABP. ALAIN DE BOISMENU. The diocese of Bereina just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the death of Abp. Alain Maria Guynot de Boismenu, who died at Kubuna on 5 November 1953. Alain de Boismenu arrived on Yule Island on 25 January 1898 at the age of 28. He was coadjutor of Bishop Andre' Navarre after the untimely death of Fr. Henry Verius, who was the first missionary priest to arrive at Yule Island and celebrated the first Mass there on 4 July 1885. Alain de Boismenu was consecrated Bishop in 1900 and retired at Kubuna in 1945 where he eventually died on 5 November 1953. He believed in local PNG vocations and encouraged Louis Vangeke from the Mekeo village of Veifa to go for priestly formation in Madagascar. Vangeke was then ordained first PNG priest in 1937 and consecrated first indigenous Bishop by Pope Paul VI in Sydney in 1970. Alain de Boismenu founded the Handmaids of the Lord (A.D. Sisters) in 1918. The diocese of Bereina celebrated the 60th anniversary of de Boismenu's death with the usual annual pilgrimage walk from Aropokina to Kubuna followed by night celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Anniversary Mass on 5 November 2013 at Kubuna Pilgrimage Centre. (Bp. Rochus Tatamai MSC)

MAMA BILONG PLANTI PIKININ SLIPS AWAY.

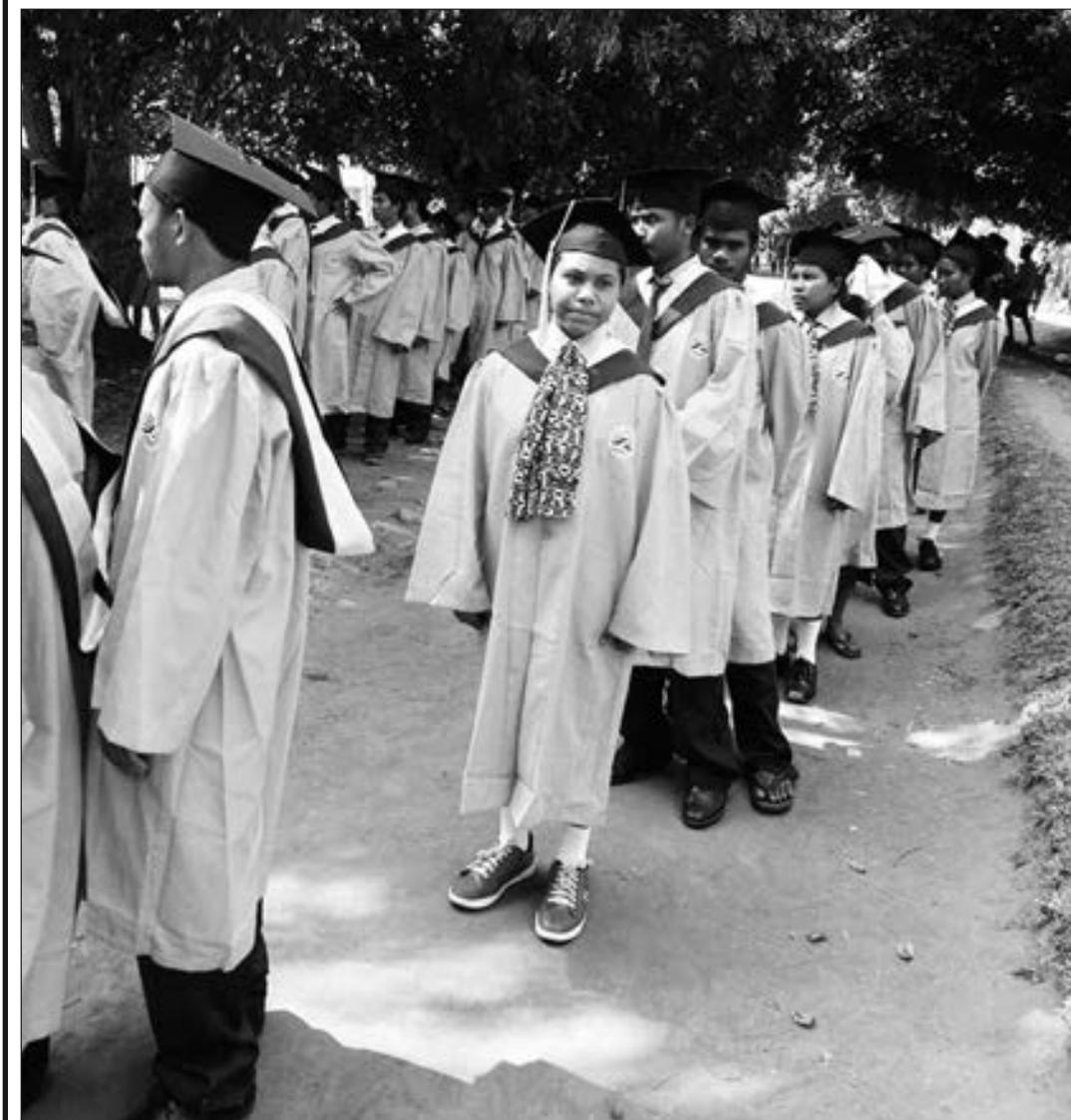
Sr. Mary Bernadette MSC was born Philomena Louise Howard on 17 May 1917 in Victoria, Australia being the fourth of eight children. In speaking of her call to Religious Life she always said that she read a booklet on Damien the Leper. This led her to seek a Congregation in which to serve the poor as he did. Bernadette began her training as a nurse in 1943 in Melbourne. She moved to PNG in 1948. During her sixty-one years in the country she worked in Vunapope, Lihir, Gerehu and Mongop mostly as a midwife. A number of the children she helped deliver were to become priests. "I am one of them – says Bp. Rochus Tatamai of Bereina - and she would refer to us as her *pikinini* and we used to call her *mama*. May God bless her soul." Sr. Bernadette died in Melbourne on 22 October 2013 aged 96, four years after retiring from active service in PNG. (Sr. Carmel Slattery MSC – Bp. Rochus Tatamai MSC)

NEW HOME FOR PRIESTS IN MENDI.

A small but enthusiastic crowd gathered in Mendi on 23 October to witness the blessing and ground-breaking for the new residence for diocesan priests. It was a beautiful celebration of faith and culture in this remote, mountain diocese of Papua New Guinea. The project is a strong witness of trust in God's generosity and Providence and a challenge for the Catholic community of the Southern Highlands and Hela Provinces of PNG (and beyond) to respond to God's constant call to build-up the Kingdom of love among all peoples. The construction is made possible with the help of the Capuchin Mission Office in Pittsburgh, PA, USA. We pray daily for our benefactors who through their generosity and sacrifice are helping to make this dream come true. (Bp. Donald Lippert)

Watuluma, Goodenough Island, Milne Bay Province - 26 October

2013. "Ninety-nine students pioneered for the first Grade 12 graduation of Santa Maria Secondary School, which has come a long way since its humble beginnings in 1991. Long time Principal Sr. Nancy D'Souza MSI sowed the seed and nurtured it for eighteen solid years. Upgrading Santa Maria High School to Secondary Status was also a primary concern for Bp. Francesco Panfilo SDB when in Alotau (2001-2011) and Mr. Michael Ova, the Provincial Education Advisor. The dream has now come true! *Siule lakaina!*" - Sr. Bridgit Suwakeen MSI (Principal)



From around the Country

THREE NEW PRIESTS FOR ALOTAU.

Catholics in Milne Bay celebrated the ordination of local deacons Aloysius Seduhey, Nicholas O'omu and John Kubali into the priesthood on 13 October. All of them from Normanby Island, they were taken with traditional dances from the homes of relatives in Alotau town to the Catholic Cathedral, where they were "given away" to the Church with traditional chants. In ordaining the new priests, Bishop Rolando Santos encouraged them to be strong to live and work like Christ. Bishop Santos told the three new priests that their ordinations did not mean they became "angels", as they were still humans and inclined to sin. He also called on the congregation to support the three new priests in their mission and not to tempt them into doing earthly things that may cause them to fall in their promise to remain celibate. Milne Bay Governor Titus Philemon and National Planning Minister Charles Abel attended the ordination ceremony and congratulated the three new priests. (Anna Omba)

FIFTY YEARS OF CATHOLIC FAITH ALONG THE FLY RIVER.

St. Peter Parish at Bosset, along the mid Fly River in Western Province, celebrated on Oct. 12-15 the 50th anniversary since its foundation in 1963. Bishop Gilles Cote' of Daru-Kiunga with some religious and lay people travelled by canoe on the river from the place where the first missionaries arrived, bringing the Bible, the Cross and a coconut plant to the village. The people were excited to welcome them with traditional dances and singing. Steven Yata-mala, one of the leaders, said that "this celebration brings a lot of joy, because people came together to express their gratitude for the hard work and love of the early missionaries and pioneers in bringing the Good News...". Since their arrival in 1959, the Montfort missionaries from Canada took over the pastoral and social care of the people in the Bosset area. Now many are educated and have a good job as public servants, teachers, lawyers, nurses, etc. because of the pioneering presence and work of the Catholic Church. (Fr. Yohanes Werang CM)

FIRST MISSIONARY OF PNG HEAD HUNTERS PASSES.

Fr. Antoine Fournier MSC died in Marseille, France on 23 August 2013 at the age of 87. Born in Bramois on 13 October, 1926 in the canton Valais, Switzerland in a poor but very pious family, he was the sixth child of 18. From the tender age of 8 to 12 Antoine was separated from his family for six months each year and sent in solitude to mountain pasture. There he lived a poor life, worked and slept on the straw. Father Fournier worked as a missionary most of his time in Papua New Guinea in the diocese of Bereina. After an extended rest in France to regain his physical and spiritual strength, he came back in 1989 to the diocese of Kerema. He was the first to go to the Kukukukus, which had the reputation of head hunters and that the Australian colonial administration began only to control from 1961 onward. At that time it was not without danger to venture to the Dameas in Kaintiba. He thus opened the large district of Kotidanga, which comprises now 5 parishes, a third of the diocese of Kerema. Then in 1990 he threw himself into the conquest of the West. The Catholic Church was not present in the district of Kikori because of lack of funds and personnel. Antoine daringly settled into an abandoned old house, right in the centre of the town of Kikori. From these humble beginnings the Catholic Church is now present in the district of Kikori and is also fast expanding. (Bp. John Paul Marx MSC)

Should PNG people stop Marie Stopes?

By Sr. Lorena Jenal
Family Life Apostolate

Marie Stopes PNG encourages men to consider the health of their wives and children (see Post Courier, 29 Oct. 2013). Marie Stopes does it since 2006. We, the National Catholic Family Life office, have done it for the past thirty years in PNG.

For us the family is the most important, and vibrant cell in the whole of society. The healthy family has healthy children with a bright future where wellbeing, education, ongoing formation, safe environment and values that provide for dignity, respect and responsibility are granted. For sure in the family, the husband and wife have the right to plan and space their children considering income, education, clothing and food. Our question in line with the above mentioned article is: does Marie Stopes provide all the possible information, guidance, counseling to ensure that at the end the decision is really made by the couple?

Marie Stopes provides a range of methods for family planning such as: tubal ligation, vasectomy, intra uterine device (IUD), emergency contraceptive pill (ECP), the pill (oral contraceptives), depo provera (DEPO), the condom and other sexual reproductive health gadgets. Interestingly, Marie Stopes highly recommends all these methods, by hardly talks about the side effects and long term implications. All they do is offering "safe sex"

in terms of pleasure, self gain and self interest.

Everybody talks about behavior and attitude changes. What does attitude and behavior change mean in our Christian oriented country? Do we really understand what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God? Do we really take the reproductive health of our women seriously? What about the side effects and other implications like becoming sterile? Isn't it medically proven that Depo Provera (DEPO) arises cancer risks? Have we been thinking seriously about the number one killer of women in our country which is cervix and breast cancer? Have we really and truly spent time with mothers, couples, men and women to share all the information we have. Do we really let people make their own decisions instead of controlling them, forcing them and brainwashing them because of business and government interests?

Can Marie Stopes also consider the natural family planning method called the 'Billings Ovulation Method' as education for safe control and as a sign of respect for the wife and husband? Why are we always talking about body functions and avoiding a holistic approach to the human person? What about harmonious communication between husband and wife in terms of love making really satisfying and fulfilling for both? We would like people to consider and reflect on God's plan for humanity.

Poem - I AM LOST

(Dengan Biaya Untuk)

By Lapiéh Landu

For the asylum seekers

I wake to the smell of stench

The sound of an angry tide

As ocean spray surrounds

Blinded by cold-thick mist

My hands are all I feel.

Dengan biaya untuk

The swaying to and fro

Shaken by this fragile craft

Fear, anxiety, ambiguity

Of everything about the unknown

My feet, as if planted in ice

Dengan biaya untuk

The vivid flashes of my belonging

Brutal hardships all too many

For I float in the midst of nowhere

God knows where I am going

My mind, slowly wanders

Dengan biaya untuk

My pockets emptied in despair

Disrobed from all riches I own

Emptiness an ancient matter

Nothing but Polaroids of memories

My heart, pounding in anguish

Dengan biaya untuk

Scanning through the drove of heads

Young and old, sick and dying

Intentions all too familiar

Freedom of anguish and despair

My body, trembling in fear

Dengan biaya untuk

The aura of desperation overwhelming

Somewhat filled the heavy air

Frantically in search for hope

Among each and every glare

My eyes, glistening with fright

Dengan biaya untuk

How I long for the warmth of fire

As its thought gives me comfort

A feel of ease I recall

When nights turned cold and brutal

My skin, peeling in distress

Dengan biaya untuk

To a land foreign but promising

They pledge, they reassure

They make it sound all but gold

We are near! Alas we are near!

They roar

My conscience, engulfed in

doubt still

Dengan biaya untuk

Will this be my home for now?

A place I bury my past

My source of forage and strength

I long for this to last

My soul still whispers at dawn to me

Dengan biaya untuk!

PNG ATTITUDE

(http://asopa.typepad.com/asopa_people/2013/10/dengan-biaya-untuk-i-am-lost.html)

Catholic youth not better than others!

By Fr. Shanthi Chacko Puthussery PIME
National Catholic Secretary for Youth and Laity

From January 2012 to October 2013, Fr. Shanthi conducted 17 Parish Youth Leaders' Leadership Training Programs in as many dioceses of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Here are data collected from his questionnaires on a total of more than 300 participants.

YOUTH ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

| | ISSUES | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|----|---|-------------|--------------|
| 01 | Living with one of the separated parents | 312 | 117 (37.5%) |
| 02 | Living with adopted parents | 312 | 129 (41.35%) |
| 03 | Smoking for three years or more | 312 | 239 (76.60%) |
| 04 | Smoked marijuana more than five times | 312 | 167 (53.53%) |
| 05 | Consumed alcohol/homebrew for more than three years | 312 | 237 (75.96%) |
| 06 | Had opposite sexual relationships with multiple partners more than five times | 312 | 193 (61.86%) |
| 07 | Had opposite sexual relationships with more than three different partners | 312 | 113 (36.22%) |
| 08 | Watched pornographic materials more than five times | 312 | 286 (91.67%) |
| 09 | Had same sex relationships | 312 | 23 (7.37%) |
| 10 | Had sexual relationships with a "sugar daddy" for financial assistance more than five times | 312 | 61 (19.55%) |
| 11 | Had sexual relationship with animals | 312 | 07 (2.24%) |
| 12 | Have done abortion secretly | 123 Female | 53 (43.08%) |
| 13 | Had group sexual activities (with four or more persons at a time) | 312 | 19 (6.09%) |
| 13 | Had group sexual activities (with four or more persons at a time) | 312 | 19 (6.09%) |

YOUTH FAITH

| | ITEMS | RESPONDENTS | VERY POOR | POOR | GOOD | VERY GOOD |
|----|---|-------------|--------------|------|------|-----------|
| 01 | Personal prayer | 327 | 269 (82.26%) | NA | 23 | No Answer |
| 02 | Family prayer | 327 | 234 (71.56%) | NA | 17 | NA |
| 03 | General knowledge about the Ten Commandments | 327 | 313 (95.72%) | NA | 7 | NA |
| 04 | General knowledge about the Bible | 327 | 294 (89.91%) | NA | 4 | NA |
| 05 | General knowledge about the Catechism of the Catholic Church | 327 | 289 (88.38%) | NA | 17 | NA |
| 06 | General knowledge about the Sacraments | 327 | 262 (80.12%) | NA | 4 | NA |
| 07 | General knowledge about the Sacrament of Matrimony | 327 | 312 (95.41%) | NA | 4 | NA |
| 08 | General knowledge about the history/biography of Blessed/Saints | 327 | 317 (96.94%) | NA | 4 | NA |
| 09 | General knowledge about recent Popes John Paul, Benedict, Francis | 327 | 312 (95.41%) | NA | 2 | NA |

GRANT CITIZENSHIP TO WEST PAPUA REFUGEES!

Fr. Franco Zocca: "Thousands of West Papuan children born in PNG have a certificate of birth, grow up the same way and receive the same education of PNG children but are not PNG citizens. They will not be able to vote in elections or to travel abroad. But they are Melanesian brothers and sisters; much more than the Asian refugees for whom Australia and PNG now invest so much in Manus Island."

By Fr. Franco Zocca SVD - Goroka

Fr. Franco, you have been involved with the West Papua refugee crisis for the past twenty-five years and you just came from the border. What's the situation there right now?

We have scattered communities of refugees all along the border. Then we still have the lowara Refugee Camp in Western Province. It was established in 1987 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Its purpose was to "relocate" West Papuan refugees, about 12,000 of whom had crossed the 750 km border between PNG and Indonesia's Irian Jaya province (as it was then known) to avoid clashes with the Indonesian military. Only about a third of the refugees took up the offer of relocation. The rest choose to settle along the border or to be repatriated. The camp can be reached from Kiunga, Western Province, after a half-hour trip by dinghy upstream on the Fly River

and a few hour drive along 40km of very bad road.

You just visited lowara...

Yes, I went back there after 19 years invited by Bishop Gilles Cote' of the Catholic Diocese of Daru-Kiunga. In 1994 there were 3636 people living in the camp. But in October 2013 I counted only 2190. Why the drop in number when over the past 19 years there has been hundreds of new arrivals and a very high birth rate? There are various reasons. One is that in 1997 and 2003, the PNG Government offered lowara refugees permanent residency (but not citizenship), with the result that many left the camp and settled elsewhere in PNG. Many left because they were skilled and could find work, or because they wanted to join relatives elsewhere in PNG or back in West Papua. More than 500 refugees are now settled in Kiunga. Those who remain at lowara are mainly subsistence farmers.

Children are being educated?

Because so many people have left, four out of the 16 villages settled in 1994 are now completely abandoned. The number of students enrolled in the elementary, community and primary schools has dropped from 1023 in 1994 to the present 694. In the past, the Indonesian language was used in school. But in 1997 the camp schools were officially registered with the PNG National Education Department, and classes are now conducted in English. Dozens of

students from lowara are now receiving secondary and vocational education in Kiunga. The Catholic Diocese of Daru-Kiunga, through its agencies, continues to be responsible for education and health services at the camp. Beside the health centre, which has been expanded with a maternity ward, a Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre for Hiv-Aids and a TB clinic, four new aid posts have been built. In partnership with the Jesuit Refugee Service, the Catholic Diocese has established an office, run by the Mercy Sisters from Australia, which provides assistance to the refugees and scholarships for their tertiary students.

How is life for people away from their place of origin?

The lowara residents look much more at ease today than they did 19 years ago. Tension and conflict with the original landowners has mostly died away since the PNG Government purchased more than 6000 hectares of land for them. Tensions also reduced with the departure of militant refugees obsessed with West Papuan independence. Occasionally however, tensions do arise between refugees of different tribal background. The PNG Government's Department of Provincial and Local Government and Border Affairs has managed lowara since 1987 through an administrator and several assistants. The refugees are also governed by the lowara Central Committee, an elected body established by the United Nations,

whose members are chosen from the refugees and local landowners residing in the camp. Unfortunately, as I also discovered back in 1994, the Central Committee is not working properly. There is mistrust between members, misuse of funds, and ethnic tensions.

So, what is the actual involvement of the United Nations, the PNG Government and the Catholic Church in lowara?

The United Nations have not maintained a continuous involvement with the West Papuans in PNG. From 1987 till 1996, they had an office and a representative in Port Moresby. The office was closed in 1996 and reopened 11 years later only to be closed again in 2013. The United Nations want the PNG National and Provincial Governments to take complete ownership of lowara. In this context, in January 2013 a formal agreement was signed "on continuous service delivery and sector support for Refugees in lowara-East Awin after United Nations phase out". The signatories were the Secretary of the Department of Provincial and Local Level Governments, the Provincial Administrator of Fly River Provincial Government, the Catholic Bishop of Daru-Kiunga, the chairman of the lowara Central Committee, and the outgoing representative of the United Nations office. The refugees I interviewed were quite sceptical about the new agreement. They see the heavy machinery for road maintenance granted to them by

several agencies not being used but left to rust for lack of fuel and operators; they don't see people from the Provincial and North Fly district administrations showing interest in their development; and they doubt that money assigned to them will be ever put to good use. They are now pinning their hopes on a company that plans to extract nearby oil and gas to improve their road and provide jobs for their youth. The Catholic Church is now virtually left alone to cater at least for health and education in lowara.

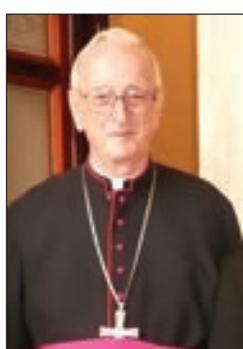
In your opinion what should the PNG government do at this point in time?

Now after thirty years in the country these people should be granted citizenship. Otherwise they can live in PNG, but they cannot travel abroad. Recently three candidates of the Daughters of Wisdom could not travel to the Philippines for their year of Novitiate to become members of the Congregation. This constitutes a serious violation of human rights, religious freedom and freedom of movement in this case. Thousands of West Papuan children born in PNG have a birth certificate, grow up the same way and receive the same education of PNG children but are not PNG citizens. They will not be able to vote in elections or to travel abroad. But they are Melanesian brothers and sisters; much more than the Asian refugees for whom Australia and PNG now invest so much in Manus Island. (G.L.)

Retired Bishop Tony Burgess of Wewak

OUTSTANDING MISSIONARY OF THE SEPIK PASSES

By Fr. Greg Bourke OFM - Aitape



His Excellency Bishop Anthony Burgess (1938-2013).

Anthony Burgess was born on 29 July 1938, the eldest of eight children, in Singleton, New South Wales, Australia. After attending the local convent school he won a scholarship to St. Stanislaus College, Bathurst (Vicentians). Having obtained his Leaving Certificate he returned home to work in his father's business.

After three years he decided to become a diocesan priest and entered the seminary. Two of his classmates were the future Cardinal George Pell of Sydney and Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne. Because of this time in his father's business he was several years older than them. While he was still in the seminary Bishop Guilford Young of Tasmania asked for some of the students to come to Tasmania where parishes were scattered and there were

few priests. Tony agreed and worked as a priest in Tasmania for six years. He then heard a similar request from the Bishop of Aitape in the West Sepik province of Papua New Guinea seeking help. Tony was to remain in PNG for forty years.

Arriving in 1973 Tony was sent to Karaitem near Lumi in the Torrecelli Mountains. Lumi was a large government station and the parish was under the care of Franciscan Fr. Tom Ritchie. When Tom had to return to Australia for some

months following the death of his father, Tony cared for both Lumi and Karaitem. Later on he was appointed to Wassisi in the Nuku district. Wassisi is an important station on the junction of the road between Nuku and Wewak. With the collapse of airlines all the supplies for the missionaries and government had to pass through Wassisi. Tony's business and bookkeeping skills all came to the fore now. His father had trained him well. He built a large bulk store for all who needed supplies, especially the mission stations. He did not neglect his parish duties. He kept a record of every village visited and made sure none were neglected. He received great support from the Franciscan Sisters at Wassisi and his care for the Religious would be a characteristic he would bring later to Wewak. Maybe being the eldest of a large family

left him with a legacy of care.

When Brian Barnes was Bishop of Aitape he appointed Tony to his Council with particular responsibility for Finance. He later became the Vicar General of the diocese. When the terrible tsunami hit the Aitape coast in 1998 it virtually wiped out three large villages. The cost in lives and materials was immense. Tony was a key figure in the resettlement of survivors and the one responsible for making sure that every Kina of donated money was accounted for. At the same time he continued to care for his large parish of Wassisi.

We were caught by surprise when Fr. Tony was named Auxiliary Bishop of Wewak in the year 2000 and took over the diocese two years later. We knew he had a lot of contact with Wewak from Wassisi and was well known to the Wewak priests. He was al-

ways a strong, clear speaker and couldn't stand corruption in any form. He always worked long hours right to the end. When he got sick a couple of years ago and went to Sydney for tests he stayed with the Franciscans. Many were old friends from PNG including retired Archbishop Brian Barnes and Fr. Tom Ritchie. Tony became a secular Franciscan (former Third Order) in his home parish in Australia. On his return to PNG at the end of last year he received the award of "Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu" by the Governor General. Therefore he was to be acknowledged as a "Chief". He tried to continue working in Wewak until his cancer caused him great pain and eventual collapse. He was airlifted to Sydney on Sunday, 8 September. He returned to the Lord he so faithfully served on 23 October, 2013 at 7:00am PNG time.

Marriage strengthened by the Eucharist

By Fr. Garry Roche SVD Mt. Hagen

In a now famous interview to the editor in chief of the Italian Jesuit journal *La Civiltà Cattolica* Pope Francis is cited as saying: "We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods. This is not possible. I have not spoken much about these things, and I was reprimanded for that. But when we speak about these issues, we have to talk about them in a context. The teaching of the Church, for that matter, is clear and I am a son of the Church, but it is not necessary to talk about these issues all the time." Pope Francis is not challenging the moral standards of the Church as set forth, but he is raising important questions about what is the best way that pastors can help the faithful (and pastors themselves) to achieve those standards.

The Catholic Church has set forth high moral standards. However, perhaps we have not always adequately understood the role of the Sacraments and the role of the Church itself in helping the faithful to achieve those high moral standards. At times we seem to be saying to people, "If you do not reach our high moral standards you cannot participate fully in the life of the Church." Whereas, in reality it is through the fullest possible participation in the life of the Church that high moral standards can be achieved.

People who have difficulty in living up to high moral standards may need the Eucharist even more than those who seem to lead lives of perfection. The Eucharist is not a reward for being good, it is food for the hungry. The Church is intended to be a "making holy" Church not a "looking holy" one.

Pope Francis is also quoted as saying: "I see clearly, that the thing the Church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the Church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else. Heal the wounds, heal the wounds.... And you have to start from the ground up."

Church pastors have become very good at diagnosing moral problems. Perhaps we have not been so good at healing. And Pope Francis is reminding us that we, and the whole Church, need to become better at healing, and to recognize that the Sacraments, including the Eucharist, should be part of that healing process.