



The Catholic Reporter

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The death penalty coming like a thief

By Fr Giorgio Licini
Catholic Reporter PNG

THE front page of The National on 27 January reminded the public of the fact that the death penalty is coming and is not far. Thir-

Christmas or New Year celebration. Their mothers, wives and children better forget about them.

High ranking PNG government officials have travelled abroad during the year 2013 trying to understand if it would be easier to get rid of them by lethal injection, hanging, or firing squad.

The countries visited, reportedly US, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia are not on the top list of human rights watchdogs, but at least others such as China, Iran or Saudi Arabia were avoided.

One day the nation will wake up at the

news the first head (since 1954) has rolled probably somewhere in Bomana. We refuse to believe that all thirteen inmates will be executed at the same time, that way prompting PNG to grab for the first time in history the headlines of all international media.

It is the expectation of the government, and probably the great majority of the country's citizens, that after this bloody and gruesome exercise crime will drastically drop all over PNG. It never happened anywhere in the world, but we normally say that Papua New Guinea is "different".

It is also admitted in informal debates that

executioners will have to be hired (hopefully at a reasonable price) from outside the country to avoid ensuing retaliation and possible tribal fights among PNG citizens. It's like years ago hiring foreign mercenaries to kill people in Bougainville. A lesson apparently not learned.

Will in fact relatives and wantoks of the criminals not hold the highest officials of the Department of Justice responsible for the execution of their guilty relatives? Is it going to be Sepiks against Simbus once again?

The death penalty is coming like a thief. But it may not be able to get away scot free.

A SHORTCUT LEADING NOWHERE..

The consequences of crime for families and communities are appalling. A life taken can never be given back. The humiliation of rape remains forever. The scare of armed robbery makes people frightened for life. But the capital punishment is a shortcut leading nowhere. Lack of education, job opportunities, and social services will keep on breeding crime. Politicians and public servants are particularly responsible for that, when allotted funds are misused and projects are not implemented. A government task force against corruption is in operation, but corrupt people are not being punished. Now money is being spent to figure out the best way to execute a handful of criminals, while common inmates are left to rot in jail or escape by the dozens due to neglect and lack of security. (Bp. Francesco Sarego SVD - Goroka)

Capital punishment to hurt families

By Sr Hendrina Sinipo, SSps

On my first day of work (29 Jan. 2014) at the Catholic Family Life Office, I had a chance to attend a meeting with different non-government organization here in Goroka. It was organized by the Family Voice.

The meeting was about the death penalty already approved

by the PNG government.

During our meeting we discussed the causes and effects of the death penalty and how it is going to affect society.

We also stressed the fact that all us come from a family.

If implemented, the death penalty will affect the lives of many families.

We are all Melanesians who

live in a communal society and we support each other when we have problems.

All of us have the right to live our life to the full. I think people can change their ways if they can be helped.

Those criminals performing or reacting to sorcery, raping women and girls and robbing others, can change their lives if there are people who can help

them in looking at themselves in a positive way.

Death penalty will not solve crime; it will only cause more conflict and disappointment in our society. We should look at "Melanesian" alternatives.

As a Christian, I believe that all people are supposed to go through natural death; no other human being has the right to take a human life.



Pope challenges Religious

By Sr Mary McCarthy
National Catholic
Education Coordinator

POPE Francis is the first Jesuit to be elected Pope, the first member of a religious congregation since 1831! What is the role of religious men and women? What is their place in the Church? There are many religious sisters, priests and brothers in Papua New Guinea.

They publicly consecrate their lives to God and commit themselves to live in community for the sake of the Church's mission.

They promise obedience to whatever they are

called to do.

Pope Francis has some thought-provoking and challenging things to say. He puts it simply: "Religious men and women are prophets." What kind of prophets are they? How are they called to live? Pope Francis explains, "they have chosen a following of Jesus that imitates his life of obedience to the Father."

That is the first point he makes. Obedient as Jesus was obedient to the Father.

Then there are three other ways in which they have chosen to follow Jesus, "poverty, community and chastity." The vow of chastity must be a

vow of fruitfulness.

Religious are called to be prophets by showing how Jesus lived on this earth, proclaiming how the kingdom of God will be in its perfection.

Prophets are not always comfortable people to live with. They challenge Church and society. Pope Francis further explains.

Prophecy "does not mean opposing the hierarchical part of the Church, although the prophetic and the hierarchical structure do not coincide." He adds, "I am talking about a proposal that is always positive, but it should not cause timidity."

What examples can we turn to in order to understand what this prophecy is?

Pope Francis explains, "Let us think about what so many great saints, monks and religious men and women have done, from St Anthony the Abbott onward.

Being prophets may sometimes imply making waves. I do not know how to put it ... Prophecy makes noise, uproar, some say "a mess." But in reality, the gift of the God's Spirit, that is, the charism of religious people, "is like yeast: prophecy announces the spirit of the Gospel."

Bogia district abandoned by men

By Stella Paulus
Madang

ABANDONED by politicians they decided to dedicate the village to God.

It happened in December in remote Mikarop in the Madang district of Bogia.

Nick Frani, Team Leader of the group, said that they had tried to help the people for the last ten years getting surveyors for the road leading up to the area.

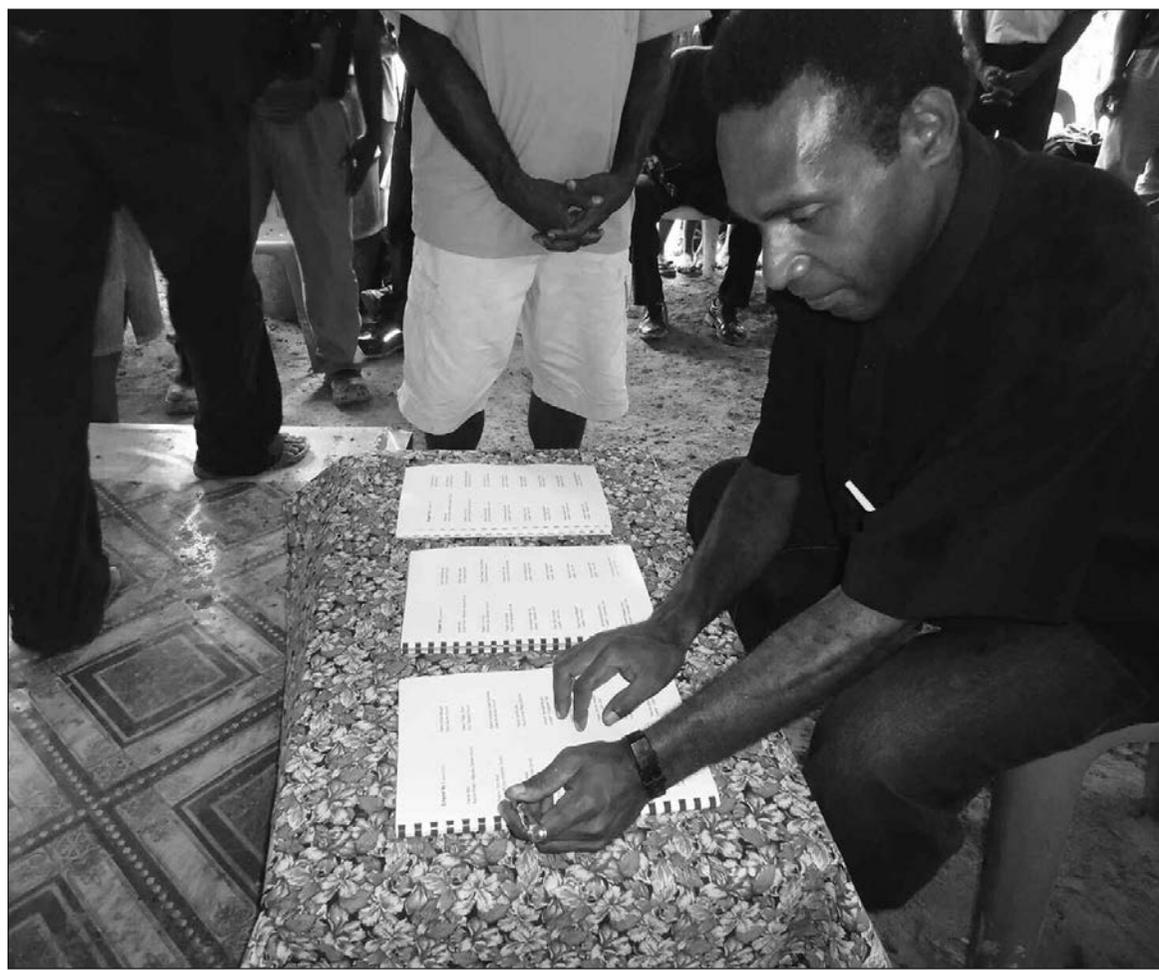
After everything was done "we came up with a proposal for our Member of Parliament, John Hickey, to endorse; however, he refused to sign it giving as the only reason the fact that he was not aware of the initiative".

It was at that point that they idea

came up of dedicating Mikarop back to God, "We would rather come back to the village and strengthen the people spiritually before we think of bringing material things to them" – Nick Frani said - . "God is the source of everything and by signing the contract, the people have acknowledged that."

The signing of the contract was not only the initiative of the Lutherans and the Four Square members of Mikarop. Seminarian Kenneth Otugawa signed on behalf of the Catholics.

He said that the signature of every religious leader signifies the commitment of all Churches to do everything possible to take Mikarop out of the clutches of poverty and generational curses.



Catholic Seminarian Kenneth Otugawa signing on behalf of the Catholic Church. (Photo Michael Samuga)

Madang takes lead on Child Protection

THE Archdiocese of Madang has established a Child Protection Office and Mrs. Schola Bogg has been employed to run this important pastoral and social ministry.

Cathy Darek, President of the Catholic Women's Association, and Solomon Kaka, Chairman of Charismatic Groups in the Archdio-

cese, will also be promoting child protection as volunteers.

In addition to giving awareness around the archdiocese about child protection as laid down in law in the national *Lukautim Pikinini Act of 2009*, the Madang Child Protection Office will also take on the task of challenging cultural practices which may harm children and

teach parents about the appropriate care of children.

In addition, the office will develop programs and materials related to catechesis of children.

The three staff members will try to set up a network of Child Protection Volunteers, which will include all the parishes.

Madang Archbishop Stephen

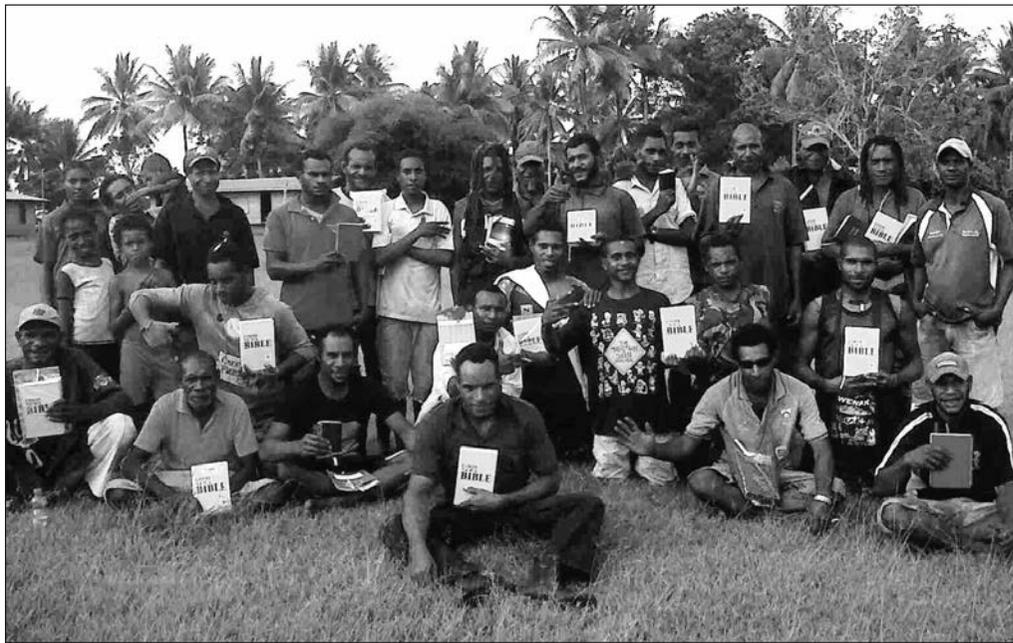
Reichert is asking the parish priests, religious in the parishes, and lay leaders to take a very serious interest in child protection, appropriate care of children and catechesis of children.

"A strong focus on the human and spiritual formation of small children – he wrote in his Christmas Circular Letter – is an important el-

ement in our efforts of new evangelization."

'*Evangelization in and through the family*' is one of the primary cross-cutting themes which has come out of the recent General Assembly of the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Catholics in Western Province turn to the Bible



ABOUT thirty young and adult people from the Western province villages around Bosset in the Middle Fly River attended a Bible course on Jan. 22-27 organized by parish priest Fr. Yohanes Werang.

They discovered that "the Holy Book can be a real lamp to their path – Anita Girokopone of the women leader from Kuem village said - and for young people an inspiration in times of confusion and social upheaval."

Bishop Gilles Cote' of Daru-Kiunga diocese, which covers the all of Western province, issued his pastoral letter for the year 2014 with the title "The Word of God gives meaning to our lives". "When the Word of God takes roots in us, our lives are transformed - he writes -. We are no longer buried by worries of our present life, but guided to walk together the way of Jesus". (Photo Yohanes Werang)

Western province: Bishop calls, MEN respond

... WE would like the Movement of Men to become a source of strength in our families, our communities and the diocese. So much good for all the people come up when the men stand up and play well their roles in the family and community.

The husband is the head of the family. He is the head not in order to be the boss who controls everything and abuses his power for his own gain. He is the head of the family to lead the family on the right path and find happiness and peace...

Men can make a big difference when they become active members in a Small Christian Community. One very important thing is this: put into practice in your own life what you have learnt during the seminars given to men in each parish. Share with other men what you have learnt at the seminar and about your efforts to become a better man, papa, provider, protector and leader.

May God continue to bless you all
+ Gilles, your bishop.

LEO ASONENG: It is good that we take time to talk to our children and give them good advices. Teach them to read the Bible and learn more about the Word of God. The Word of God should be at the centre of our lives. To know better the Word of God is like protection for our life of faith.

GILMON GERRY: We men think that we are the boss and we put down women and

children. No, not this way! We must respect, love them and also put down ourselves and share the responsibilities. As a young married man during the seminar I learned how to live as a man, look after my family and the community at large.

TONY MOSES: Let us care for our boys. And through the way we live our lives as men show them how to become good fathers themselves.

JERRY TE: As good fathers this is a time to think about our failures and to say sorry for what we have done to our family members. Let us give this service out of love and we will surely receive life and give life.

WATSON AWAKEN: Men stand strong by working side by side with women with mutual respect and support for each other. They say no to violence and speak out against it in their communities. They know that living in a home free of violence is better for all Papua New Guineans and their future... I suggest that we start thinking about giving a more profound meaning to bride price. When a man pays a bride price he pays for the privilege to start a unique and very personal relationship with a woman. He becomes her husband and she becomes his wife. They become one, a couple. They can then give themselves completely to one another and start a family and have their own children. My wife is my unique companion. I love her and respect her as I love and respect myself.

("Singaut Bilong Papa" Newsletter – January 2014/Kiunga)

Journalists against sorcery

ABOUT twenty Port Moresby based media practitioners gathered on 24 January for the Feast of St Francis de Sales Patron of Journalists and Writers, for a few hours of study, prayer and fellowship.

Organized by the Commission on Social Communications of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands the sober event was hosted by the Emmaus Centre of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Boroko.

Italian missionary Fr. Franco Zocca, 70, a sociologist and anthropologist of the Melanesian Institute in Goroka gave a presentation on "Church and Media."

A joint Reflection on Sorcery" explaining the plight of true or alleged victims.

In his opinion only scientific enlightenment and a massive education effort can help overcome sorcery beliefs. Success, however, is not imminent.

Bradley Gregory, a final year journalist student at Divine Word University in

Madang and a trainee of Kundu2 TV, in fact reminded the audience that sorcery and magic beliefs are instilled in children at the breastfeeding stage for the simple purpose of parents keeping them silent and quiet.

The recent repealing by the government of the Sorcery Act 1975 also had different effects on the public.

While it appears just right and a proper deterrent to prosecute people who take the law in their hands and torture and kill alleged sorcerers, many members of the public and believers in sorcery saw the change in legislation as allowing further sorcery practice and letting it go "unpunished".

Fr. Zocca also explained how the sorcery issue is made even more complicated by jealousy, personal grudges and outright lies against people who never intended to produce sorcery acts. Accidents, sickness and death caused by "hostile" individuals remain a deeply entrenched belief even in some of the most educated Papua New

Guineans.

St Francis de Sales instead challenges everybody to patiently and steadily seek the truth and uphold it, said Bishop Rochus Tatamai of Bereina recalling the life, work and teaching of the very committed bishop (Geneve, France) and fine writer of the seventeenth century.

At that time sorcery was still not completely overcome in Europe.

Both political and religious authorities had participated for centuries in witch hunt and burning: "A shameful page for Europe" - Fr. Zocca said in his presentation - "that was eventually overcome by the contribution of science and education."

But for modern PNG (and other countries with a similar problem), where both religion and the benefits of scientific enlightenment are at hand, the right recipe against sorcery remains elusive. People continue to die; children to be made orphans; families and communities to be torn apart. (G.L.)

Mission to Togo - Benin, Africa

Sr. Chaterine Humbardi SSpS - (Missionary Servants of the Holy Spirit) received her Mission Cross on Wednesday, 29 January 2014 at Alexishafen Conference Center Chapel, Madang Province from her Superior Sr. Anna Damas.

Sr. Catherine is from Yarapos, Wewak in the East Sepik Province. After completing her formation program, she pronounced her Final Vows on the 8th of December 2013 in Alexishafen.

She received her mission assignment to Togo-Benin in Africa. She joins the other Holy Spirit Sisters from different nationalities, working and



servicing the people of Africa.

She adds to the number of Holy Spirit Sisters from PNG working abroad not only in Africa, but USA, Australia, Asia, Caribbean, and some Pacific countries.

(Photo and story by Fr. Paul Liwun SVD)

Bougainville bets on youth and laity

WHILE the Autonomous Region of Bougainville was preparing for the visit of PNG Prime Minister, Peter O'Neill, at the end of January, the Catholic Church was also looking ahead focusing on youth and laity formation.

The first ever Vocation Camp and Laity Workshop in fact took place in January this year; both at the Mabiri Pastoral Centre in the Central region of Bougainville and both facilitated by local Bishop Bernard Unabali and National

Secretary for Youth and Laity, Fr. Shanthi Puthussery. Fifty-six participants from all the parishes in the diocese, mainly students from Grades 7-12, attended the Vocation Camp (Jan 9-12).

The activity came only a few weeks before the ordination of two new Catholic priests for the diocese of Bougainville, William Satsie from the Haku area and James Soli from Nisan Island. The Laity Workshop (Jan 21-23), with about twenty adult participants from

the parishes, focused on a recent letter by Bp. Bernard Unabali to the Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

It calls on Catholic faithful to deepen their prayer life and spirituality, and develop a better knowledge of the Scripture, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Liturgy and the life of Catholic saints.

(Raymond Girana)



Deacon James Soli, Bishop Bernard Unabali, and Deacon William Satsie of Bougainville.

TRIBUTE TO WOMEN ADVOCATE

The Women of PNG have lost a powerful advocate and a voice for women.

The president for the National Council of Women, Schola Kakas passed away on 30th January.

Aunty Schola you stood up for women of this country in times when men of this nation never regarded women as equal.

But you fought the battle the best way you knew.

This is a fight the women will keep up for generations. On behalf of the 'Women Arise PNG' and all its chapters and supporters we would like to say thank you for standing with us and supporting us at the National Hauskrai last year. Yes, Aunty Schola, your advise I hold in my heart. May your soul rest in eternal peace! *(Esther Igo - Women Arise PNG)*

Work hard for the family!

By Sr Lorena Jenal
National Catholic Family Life
Apostolate

WE want our families to be truly alive in Christ, chaste before marriage and faithful in marriage; fully enjoying the sacramental life of the Church.

A happy marriage is also free from violence, open to the gift of children with the couple communicating well.

The family is the "vital cell" of society, the foundation of the larger community. There is no question about the great effort and work that has been done by the dioceses, parishes and all kind of different groups to put our vision into action. Nevertheless there is still a tremendous amount of work to be done.

We are very much aware of the

drastic changes taking place around us with traditional values breaking down and Christian values being rejected in practice.

There is a huge hunger for money and wealth. Therefore the *National Catholic Family Life Apostolate* is committed to do everything possible to ensure that the domestic Church is light and salt for the communities, but also a source of faith, hope and love.

In our seminars and awareness programs we focus on attitude and behavioral changes.

We stress that the cycle of violence or addiction needs to be broken.

Experience shows that it happens only through prayer and conversion. The saying that, "A family that prays together stays together", proves to be right. To further the

family apostolate we urge everybody to organize more family and couple related courses, seminars, programs, gatherings, classes on human sexuality, marital spirituality, couples retreats and enrichment programs at parish level involving parish priests and pastoral workers.

Be serious about Church teachings on sexual morality. Encourage families to pray together. Involve educated laity into Church programs.

Explain the roles and responsibilities of fathers and mothers in the family. Provide good counseling services to couples and families.

Train more pastoral workers, laymen and women who can assist in this very important work.

We also recommend that our programs are developed at the



parish level.

For this we need a lot of motivated and inspired volunteer pas-

toral workers with a genuine concern for the family and its welfare.

Praying with LNG workers

By Fr Paul Liwun
Hanuabada, NCD

SINCE February 2013, besides celebrating Mass on Sunday in my parish at Hanuabada, Baruni and Bogi, I also began a new ministry to the people who are working with LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) at Papa Lealea camp, north-west of Port Moresby. Missionaries of Charity Sisters and ministrant boys and girls

from the parish always accompany me.

The company bus picks us up at Hanuabada at 6pm on Saturday. It takes us fifty minutes to reach the Camp. Mass begins at 7.30pm. We always arrive back home at 10pm.

Every time, we have to send the list of the names ahead of us. They always ask for it. To enter into the camp we have to go through two tied security checks.

There are over ten thousand workers in the LNG Camp at Papa Lealea.

They are from different nationalities, such as Philippines, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Africa, USA, Australia, Korea and many more.

The expatriates are living inside the camp. There are also many Papua New Guinea workers.

They live in their villages outside the camp, and are picked

up and dropped off by the company bus. It is a 24 hour work with shifts every 12 hours.

There are four big sections of the camp: Camp A, B, C and Pioneer Camp.

We celebrate Mass at Pioneer camp. The

venue is a huge hall used for training and classes during weekdays, but on Saturday evening it is being turned into a big chapel for the Catholics.

Many Catholics are living in the camp.

But not everyone al-

ways attends Mass because some of them are working during the night shift.

Regular attendance is 300 to 400 people. Almost everyone receives communion.

On big occasion like Easter last year, the hall

becomes too small; but it is equipped with air condition and is always cool.

The patron saint for the LNG workers at Papa Lealea is St. Joseph the Worker. They have a very good choir and music every Saturday evening Mass.

Buai ban a shock therapy

THE total buai (betel nut) ban in Port Moresby is going to remain in place, but not for ever. This was revealed on 17 January by officials from the National Capital District Commission (NCDC) at a youth seminar on social issues being held at St. John's Catholic Parish - Tokarara.

"Governor Powes Parkop is looking at a proper regulation of the betel nut trade and consumption" - NCDC Acting Manager for Social Services Vincent Manukayasi said -; "but for the moment we need a total ban. It's a shock therapy to make people realize that they cannot continue littering the nation's capital by

undisciplined chewing and spitting".

Mr Manukayasi revealed that buai chewing costs the city treasury 10 million Kina a year in cleaning contracts.

Governor Parkop is basically forcing the city residents into an educational process.

"People from certain provinces - Mr Manukayasi said - observe correct procedures of chewing betel nut in their homes and avoid spitting on roads and public places; but others don't."

According to NCDC officials, as soon as the lesson is learned proper licenses will be issued for the betel nut trade; but chewing on vehicles and public

places will remain absolutely prohibited.

Authorities are also looking into alternative markets for the Central province betel nut producers, normally supplying Port Moresby, to ship their products to the Highlands region via Kerema and Mendi. According to Mr Charlie Sarea, also from the NCDC Social Services and one of the speakers at the Tokarara youth workshop, studies are being undertaken to see if the betel nut components can be valuable for the bio-fuel industry or other industrial sectors. That will create a completely new source of income for the producers of the most treasured PNG nut. (G.L.)



Faithful ministrants boys and girls from St. Michael Parish - Hanuabada, ready to serve at LNG Mass every Saturday night (Photo Fr. Paul Liwun SVD)

11 February - World Day of the Sick

THERE are various activities that can be carried out in the parishes on the World Day of the Sick. The most obvious is to celebrate the Eucharist with and for the sick and elderly on that day. A communal celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing could take place within the Mass or at a time outside of it. Catechesis about the sacrament could be done on the day itself or on the Sunday before when the whole congregation is gathered.

There are other activities that can have great benefit for the sick and homebound elderly. Before February 11th, the parish priest, with some lay members of the parish, could find out who is sick at home or elderly and confined to their house. Then on the World Day of the Sick itself, he and his lay companions could do a visitation to all the sick and elderly, offering the Sacrament of Anointing and Holy Communion. Perhaps food could also be cooked and distributed to the sick and elderly at the same time. Be pastorally creative! (Abp. Steven Reichert - Madang)