



The Catholic Reporter

Catholic Bishops' Conference of PNG & SI - Commission on Social Communications, P.O. Box 398, Waigani, NCD Tel.: 325 9577 - Fax: 323 2551

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Madang police, society and church mobilize against sexual violence

The launching, dedication and blessing of a Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary "Family and Sexual Violence Centre" was done on Friday, 27 June 2014 at the Yomba police station in Madang with the presence of numerous local dignitaries including Gov. Jim Kas. It is one of the first such projects in Papua New Guinea. Archbishop Stephen Reichert, OFM Cap was invited to deliver the keynote address:

By Abp Stephen Reichert OFM cap
Madang

FAMILY and Sexual violence has become an enormous concern in Papua New Guinea and our province is not exempted from this serious problem. The more focused we as a community are about this problem, the more we realize just how huge, widespread and serious the problem is.

In the past, domestic violence, mostly violence against women and children and sexual violence has for the most part been kept hidden or swept under the floor mat. No one wants to get involved. "Em i no bisnis bilong mi. Wari bilong ol. Nogut em i kik bek long mi," we sometimes say.

So, domestic violence and especially sexual violence, has been handled in what some would describe as the "traditional way". More violence was sometimes the response, pay back, or, even more often these days, payment of compensation, sometimes for the most horrendous of crimes, the rape of children, even babies, brutal and repeated

beatings of wives and children and other such violence.

We know that payback simply causes the circle of violence to continue and more people suffer from violence. Compensation might have satisfied some people, but it does not punish perpetrators of violence in a meaningful way nor provide justice for the victims of violence. Neither of these traditional methods of dealing with violence are a deterrent to stop further domestic violence and sexual violence crimes.

Here's another problem. The public believes that we cannot get assistance from the police and the courts, nor from any other source, so what is the point of reporting these crimes? Why should we get involved?

Today we have gathered to witness the launching and establishment of a Family and Sexual Violence Unit in the Madang Province, with its office here at Yomba Police Headquarters. Throughout PNG this initiative is a project of the Royal PNG Constabulary.

In Madang we thank the Provincial Police Commander Chief Superintendent, Sylvester

Kalaut, and his team for leadership in moving this initiative forward, along with the great support given by the Australian High Commission through the PNG Law and Justice Partnership Program.

Many other individuals and groups have joined hands to stop family and sexual violence too. We are all ready to work together so that this initiative bears fruit. No more family violence! No more sexual violence crimes! No more violence against women! No more violence against children! Let's work together to stop violence of all kinds!

As reported in the media, a two-day workshop about family and sexual violence was held in the past two days.

The purpose of the training was to look at police attitudes toward issues concerning family and sexual violence and to move away from the entrenched attitude of so-called "civil" and "family matters" which we need to change. "Many people who come to us feel ashamed and traumatized and don't want to pursue their case. We need to do our bit to make this country free from violence." Chief Superintendent Kalaut is

quoted as saying.

It is extremely difficult in cases of family and sexual violence for victims of these crimes to find a way from the rural villages and towns into the courtroom where justice is found. There are many obstacles. However, the police stand at the door of the courtroom and can open it for victims by giving awareness, gaining the trust of the people, responding to people in need of assistance, investigating reported crimes quickly and offering compassionate support to victims of violence. That is the task of the Family and Sexual Violence Unit.

It is very important that this unit, and the police in general, take strong action in every case to immediately investigate and prosecute all crimes related to Family and Sexual violence that come to their attention. We, the public, will then see and become confident that a new day has dawned in this matter. And we, the families and communities of the Madang Province and all PNG must give whole-hearted, active support and cooperation to this effort to stop family and sexual violence.

Dawn of the new PNG

By Fr Giorgio Licini
Catholic Reporter PNG

WE leave it up to the courts to determine if presumed legal services by Paul Paraka Lawyers were really met with illegal payments by Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and others. We also stay out of the political wrangling that inevitably accompanies inquiries into government officials and politicians. Neither, do we care much about political careers that may end or blossom according to court rulings.

We just note the fact that the soul searching exercise the country is undergoing these days reveals a deep yearning for a new beginning. Since independence Papua New Guinea has been marred in poor governance and corruption. Now people have had enough.

They had enough of dubious



payments; uncompleted projects; political consent and votes captured every five years with unfulfilled promises.

O'Neill and colleagues always repeat the same refrain: You will judge us at election in 2017.

But what if by then the country is financially, socially and morally bankrupt. Outgoing ministers and members of Parliament are not going to pay any price for it, while common people will suffer.

There is something missing in a democracy when Constitutional changes

become too easy and Parliamentary opposition almost nil. Thank God the judiciary appears to be vibrant and independent in PNG.

But still government and politicians should not blame the media when they prove to be the last bulwark of democracy. Who else is going to expose bad or wrong decisions when Parliament is an accomplice and the judiciary cannot acquire necessary proof?

The dream for a clean and honest running of the public affairs is palpable at the grassroots. There is a third post-independence generation of Papua New Guineans fast emerging after the Somares and the O'Neills.

They want a more mature democratic process and a totally transparent management of public wealth and funds. They are preparing for it. Please, don't stand in their way!

Big Koko's Kona

Street begging is child abuse



People are beginning to know of me, Mate! Last week a lady from a popular Radio Station emailed me with an important question: **Does PNG have a Law against using kids on the streets to beg?**

My answer: **YES!** PNG has a very good Law to protect our children. It is entitled: **Lukautim Pikinini Act 2009 (LPA).**

LPA is a Right based Law. In other words, it is a Law based on the Rights that children have and which adults must respect and guarantee. The Law covers all PNG children 0-18yrs; meaning the unborn and everyone up to the age of 18 yrs.

Using children on the streets to beg is a form of Child Abuse. It is an Exploitation of the child for the benefit of some adult(s). It deprives the child of his/her Rights to an Education, to safety, to play, to being a child and to the family life and home they have a Right to expect from their parents. And it also violates the child's Right to expect that he/she will not be asked to do work that is harmful to

him/her as a child.

LPA is very clear: we abuse a child when we do not provide him/her with appropriate care. Child Abuse can be in the form of: Neglect, Sexual Abuse, Exploitation, Discrimination or Violence against the child. **Abusing a child in PNG is a CRIME!** Child Abuse breaks PNG Law, it is a serious wrong against God, it damages the lives of the young and it weakens our Nation.

The LPA bottom line is this: In caring for children in PNG we must always ask ourselves: Is what I am about to do in the best interest of the child or not? Is putting the child on the streets to beg in his/her best interest?? Our children deserve much better than we are giving them. They are our hope, our future.

The Catholic Church is working very hard to build a child safe Papua New Guinea and it invites all peoples to join in this most important work. Many have already joined in, but it is not enough because Child Pro-

tection is EVERYBODY's business.

As adults we have a moral obligation to protect our children; to make this world a better and safer place for them to live in, to grow up in. **Become a Child Protection Advocate, Mate!** Be the voice that makes audible the "Silent Cry" of PNG children aged 0-18 whose trust is too often betrayed by adults. Someone's life may depend on you.

Our critics are right to condemn us if we are not living as God calls us to live. What is YOUR contribution, Mate, to a more just world, to a safer PNG for our Children???

Cheerio, Mate. Stap gud! Meet you again next month. Lots of happy kokomo hugs to you from me, your friend,

Big Koko,
Child defender

PNG children chewing and smoking

PARENTS and guardians have been urged to start being more responsible for the health of their children who chew buai and smoke.

Director Medical Services at Port Moresby General Hospital, Dr David Mokela says parents should be blamed for allowing their children to be at risk to cancer, respiratory diseases and ulcers.

The senior pediatrician told PNG Loop that's because they are still developing physically and have higher breathing rates than adults.

Dr Mokela outlined that childhood smoking also causes asthma in children who have not previously exhibited symptoms and lower respiratory tract infections, such as pneumonia, bronchitis and middle ear infections.

Meantime, Dr Rose Andrew, Technical Officer at the Health Departments Oral Health Promotion & Prevention Program says a catalyst to kids smoking is their early exposure to chewing buai.

children as young as five years old chewing, the chances of developing mouth cancer at an early age have also increased along with the likelihood for them to start smoking.

Dr Andrew says that parents and guardians need to take better care of their children and young adolescents, citing a recent report launched by the World Health Organisation and the Department of Health which highlights that PNG is among the top five countries in the world for underage smoking among children...

Meanwhile, both doctors agree that while the Government is doing its part by pushing to increase taxes on tobacco products to raise the retail price of smoke and decrease cigarette consumption, parents also need to monitor their children and even lead by example as most children tend to start smoking to emulate their parents and elder siblings who also smoke.

(<http://www.pngloop.com/2014/06/03/png-children-among-worlds-worst/>)

WHY MUST MY PEOPLE SUFFER?

By Gregory Avira

Surrounded by oil and floating on gas, lies my country so rich and diverse. Aliens they come to dig up my earth, for whose benefit my mind ponders. Millions of kina rush in, yet so little seen in our everyday life. My people cry in silence, yet my leaders turn a blind eye. And I wonder, why must my people suffer...

A mother dies giving birth to life, not much done to safeguard hers.

A child left to wander the street, while peers learn skills to better their lives.

Thugs rob a man of an honest wage, where are the cops to come to his aid. My people long for change, but the big men busy fighting for power.

And I wonder, why must my people suffer...

Will change ever come, my people ask every day.

A fair slice of the income cake, for a better tomorrow all that it takes.

Yet my people's tears roll, as millions disappear in thin air.

Happiness is what they long for, tears and anguish is what they obtain.

And I wonder, why must my people suffer...

(An entry in The Crocodile Prize - Kina Securities Award for Poetry)

The Second Vatican Council - What change for us?

THE SECOND Vatican Council (1962-'65) opened up a new era for the Church, laying the theological and spiritual foundations to continue its mission in a new and different world. This teaching of the Church has consequences for all aspects of the life of the Church.

Our recent General Assembly of the Church in PNGSI is part of our continuing effort to live out these teachings of the Vatican Council.

We are still searching for a way to make this part of our lives, the way that we think and which leads us to action for the Church and the world.

Strong themes of our Assembly were Church of communion, evangelization, inculturation, justice and church of the poor, and pastoral planning. These have been spoken

of often and in depth in the 50 years since the Council.

Our challenge is to live out what this theology of Church means.

It is not to remain a "theology" in the books or in our heads, but to become a lived reality in the Church, our communities and our own personal lives.

There are many questions for us to consider and we will look at these in more depth later.

We are also challenged by the world in which we live with all its problems and difficulties, but also its goodness and greatness.

We face the growing materialism and secularism of the world, increasing poverty and injustice, domination by corporations and big money all of which challenge us as never before.

We also see many movements all over the world for

peace and justice, for unity and cooperation, and for greater depth and understanding of our own faith and the faith of others.

In the history of the Church Councils, especially major Councils have taken many years to implement, even generations.

They can also cause controversy and conflict as the documents are interpreted in different ways, by different people.

The situation of the world and the Church changes.

The teaching of the Council itself changes many things in the Church and in the way we see ourselves.

We have not completed the renewal of the Church which is an ongoing challenge for us.

We are called to ongoing, permanent renewal, to continual conversion and change

in our lives, in the life of our communities, and in the way we live as Church and carry out the mission given to us.

The Church has still some way to go in "putting on this new self".

Reflection and discussion:

- How to see and relate to God, and therefore speak of God, preach and teach?
- More importantly, how do we witness to God in our lives in all we say and do?
- What are the implications for us in all aspects of our theology Christology, sacramental and spiritual theology, moral theology?
- How does this theology of Church flow into our pastoral approach and strategy in all its different aspects?

Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (CBC)

New Youth Policy and Guidelines (May 2014)

Deputy Bishop for Youth

His Grace Bishop Rochus Tatamai MSC - Bereina

Deputy Bishop for Laity

His Grace Bishop Bernard Unabali – Bougainville

Secretary of the CBC Commission for Youth and Laity

Fr Shanthi Chaccko Puthussery PIME

Catholic Youth

Men and women 14 - 25 years old (or up to 30 but with no leadership role); Active in the parish.

Term of leadership

Two years

Purpose of the parish youth group

Empower the young people;

Draw the young people to responsible participation; Foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each person.

Tools to achieve the goals

Community life;
Catechesis;
Prayer and worship;
Leadership development;
Pastoral care;
Evangelization;
Justice and service;
Advocacy.

Four areas of formation

Human
(physical and psychological);
Spiritual;
Intellectual;
Social and pastoral.

Parish based formation topics for each area

Physical formation

Obesity, overweight, diabetics, cholesterol, malaria and HIV/AIDS;
Effects of smoking, alcohol and drugs on one's physical body;
Healthy love and sex education.

Psychological formation

Dealing with fear, anger, pride, insecurity, superiority, inferiority and emotional immaturity;
Personal growth;
Psycho-social developments;
Psycho-sexual integration;
Personal integration.

Spiritual formation

Prayer;
Meditation;
Spirituality;
Bible;
Sacraments;
Catechism of the Catholic Church;
Christian morality and ethics;
Social teachings of the Church;
History and biography of the Saints.

Intellectual formation

Parish to set up a library with newspapers, journals, magazines;
Public radio and TV for the young people;
Distance education;
Capacity building skills.

Social and pastoral formation

Compassionate and charitable activities;
Assisting the poor and needy of the community;
In cooperation with other mainline Churches, denominations.

PNG & SI Youth Patron Saint

Saint Maria Goretti

National Catholic Youth Day

Sunday between 7-13 July;

Saint Maria Goretti – Blessed Peter ToRot

Tasks of the Diocesan Youth Coordinator

Organize and assist the youth groups in the parishes;
Liaise with the parish priests for the parish youth programs;
Liaise with the bishop for the diocesan youth programs;
Liaise with the Bishops' Conference Youth Office for the national youth programs.

Fr Shanthi Chaccko Puthussery PIME

Secretary of the CBC Commission for Youth and Laity

What does it take to be a Catholic school?

By **Abp. Stephen Reichert**
Madang

THE meeting of the bishops belonging to the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania is held every four years and this year we gathered in Wellington, New Zealand.

As is the custom, we were given a little experience of the local church of the place of the meeting.

The gathering provided a very nice time for all of us.

One of the workshops offered at the conference was given by a mother of two teenage boys who is employed as head chaplain at a large Catholic secondary school for boys. She has several others working with her.

Their role is not primarily to give religious instructions in the classroom, which is done by others. Rather, they are tasked with the job of building a Catholic culture and practice in the school.

They work with the whole student body, with smaller groups and counsel individuals as well. Priests in the local area are called in for sacramental service which they provide with great enthusiasm.

In an hour-and-a-half presentation this dynamic woman explained how her team is creating a thoroughly Catholic culture in their Catholic institution using a mixture of traditional and more modern practices.

Not all the students are Catholic, however all become part of the Catholic at-

mosphere and culture of the school.

The school has a nicely decorated chapel which is in use throughout the day, for Mass, a decade or two of the Rosary, short periods of meditation and Benediction, private and prayer group visits and other religious activities.

The prayer life of the school is very important. Everywhere there are signs and symbols of the faith presented, a crucifix in every classroom, religious posters here and there on the campus, scripture quotes hung on walls and bulletin boards, which are regularly changed.

The chaplains are very active with groups and individuals throughout the day.

The chaplaincy team tries to infuse everything that

takes place at the school with a spiritual influence, the academic life, sports, social life, everything.

Every opportunity is used to expose the students to the Scriptures, the catechism and the lives of the saints. And there is opportunity for outreach in the local community too.

The imagination and enthusiasm of this lady and her team was truly inspiring.

What about our Catholic schools, from the highest level to our humble elementary schools in the bush?

Are they truly Catholic schools, places of learning that develop young people with Catholic hearts and minds?

To be honest, we have to admit that they aren't.

So what should we do about this?

Churches facilitate PNG development

THE governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia recently released data on the third phase (2010-2014) of the Incentive Fund partnership program, which started in the year 2000 and has so far successfully funded 47 "well performing organizations" for 59 projects across 17 PNG provinces with a total investment was of AUD 170 million (PGK 405 million).

The projects funded during the past four years were twenty, of which thirteen were in Education and seven in Health at the cost of AUD 60 million (PGK 131 million).

It is worth noticing that the Catholic Church was the partner of twelve of the projects while three were developed with different denominations.

The remaining five projects also went to health and education through government departments.

Social inclusion, gender equality and child protection were the underlying values the beneficiary institution-sand people involved were trained to understand, uphold and promote.

According to official statements the response and outcome were overwhelmingly

positive:

"Individuals have made remarkable changes to their lives: contractors have become aware of better ways of working; hospital staff have changed their approach to survivors of domestic violence, child protection and disability; secondary schools have identified extra ways to support and encourage leadership and community responsibility in their students; health clinics have focused on service to children and women, and have recognized the needs of men in their support services."

About one third of the projects were implemented in remote areas in the provinces of Milne Bay, Madang, Central and Simbu while the others went to the upgrading of Secondary Schools, Universities and Hospitals from Alotau, to Port Moresby, Madang, Mount Hagen, Vanimo and Rabaul.

In some instances the project included VSAT Internet connection, such as the case of Santa Maria High School in the remote Good-enough Island of Milne Bay province, thus effectively ending isolation and providing students with access to a wealth of online academic resources.(G.L.)

SEMINARIANS LEARN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

THE CATHOLIC Church in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific wants the new priests trained in mass media and social communications.

Therefore, a symposium on "Radio and New Evangelization" was organized on 1-2 May 2014 at the Catholic Theological Institute in Bomana, Port Moresby.

This followed a similar initiative held around the same time last year on "Social Networks: Portals of Truth and Faith; New Spaces for Evangelization."

About 120 young candidates for the priesthood and religious life attended the sessions.

A theological key note

address by Hong Kong based theologian Fr Gianni Criveller, 'Evangelizing in the 21st century', introduced the theme and was followed by experiences of community and religious radio broadcasting in Australia, Italy, Africa, and the Philippines.

During the second day the focus was on Papua New Guinea with a presentation by PNG National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) acting manager Allen Aarifeae followed by a forum with resource persons and the presence of directors of PNG Catholic radio stations (Port Moresby, Mt Hagen, Rabaul, Lae, Bereina).

Italian missionary and

media expert Fr Fabrizio Colombo, Sydney CRA-DIO staff member Luke Streher, and PNG journalism student Bradley Gregory also took a smaller number of participants and a dozen of PNG Catholic radio operators into a two-day workshop to enhance their communication skills.

The activity was sponsored by SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication based in Brussels and Rome, and by the office of Social Communications of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.(G.L.)

Give a Bible to the Youth!

At the Diocesan Youth Coordinators gathering in 2012 and 2013 we suggested that all youth acquire a Catholic edition of the Bible and a copy of the Catechism of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Can parishes and dioceses help? Thank you very much! -

Fr. Shanthi Puthussery

Late Bro Brendan Crowe, apostle of the Goilala students

By Fr Roger Purcell MSC

BROTHER Brendan Crowe (de La Salle) died on Tuesday 10 June in Melbourne, Australia, aged 71.

He spent many years in Papua New Guinea and leaves behind a great legacy of work, achievements and most importantly, friends.

One of his confreres said, "His loyalty, commitment, generosity, set purpose and dare we say devotion, could well be an allegory for his life both professional and religious." He was a true Aussie who enjoyed his football (North Melbourne), a beer with friends and stories.

He was a religious of dedication and a man with a vision of what could be done, and great energy and determination to get it done.

In 1972 he came to Mainohana High School in Bereina Diocese, becoming involved in the Secondary Schools Community Extension Program, and bringing that dedication and commitment to all he did.

When I first knew him he was at Tapini High School, which he was instrumental in establishing.

His many trips on the Louis Mona Highway (Tapini Highway) were the stuff of legends and the mechanics at PNG Motors often worked overtime on his Mazda to keep it on the road.



Bro Brendan Crowe FSC
(17 August 1942 – 10 June 2014)

Previously the Goilala students used to go to Mainohana High School, and Brendan would often walk back with them during the Christmas holidays and visit the villages; hence his great interest and commitment to Goilala.

On these walks he said that, in crossing the high passes, he always put himself at the end of the line and did not allow anyone to stop in the cold and mist of the pass. He would guide them further down, find shelter and light a fire to warm them. Many people have died of cold in those passes.

Bro Brendan spent

years in Goilala establishing many small community schools, finding teachers, getting them to the schools and chasing them through the settlements in Port Moresby to ensure they were in their schools.

He was so well known he could go freely into any settlement in the city to find teachers, students and parents. He pestered Members and Public Servants to get funds for the schools, and turned to the Embassies to establish a radio system in the schools.

From the Tapini canteen, the brothers ran a system of supply to the re-

mote teachers. They would pay their salary into the canteen account, send their orders by radio and the Brothers would send their goods by plane and debit their accounts.

Brendan's policy was that if the teacher was in the school, kids were being taught. He patrolled regularly to these schools in very difficult terrain, found materials to build and organized Rotary Australia to come and build them, often in very remote location.

Following many others before him, he was a real apostle to the Goilala, bringing the benefits of education to many remote villages.

With these schools feeding the high school and his care for the teachers, the aggregate mark at Tapini High School climbed steadily to be one of the best in the nation.

Later, when his health declined, he moved to Trinity Teachers College in Mt Hagen with a better climate. Here he became the primary writer of the PNG Catechism, working closely with the Catechism Committee. His work required much study and thought.

In all of these works over many years, Bro Brendan contributed greatly to the development of the nation and the church and has left behind many great friends, endless memories and stories and a fine legacy of achievement.

"The problem are the men" Mass sterilization or behavioral change?



Some of the Madang team members during the interview.

"THE ROOT of all problems is the unfaithful and uncaring attitude of the men. And the women are fed up with it".

This is what Child Protection Officer of the Catholic Archdiocese of Madang, Schola Bogg, describes as the main reason why rural women are asking for and accepting artificial contraception.

"As soon as they hear somebody promising spesim pikinini (spacing children) they flock to them.

Their men, in fact, not only are too demanding in terms of sexual relationships, neither do they provide for the upbringing of the children".

Ms Josephine Ilave, HIV-AIDS Coordinator for the same Archdiocese estimates that 60% of the women along the North coast of Madang and in Karkar Island are quite open to artificial contraception:

"We have to admit that the Natural Family Planning that we propose as a Church does not work in the case of irresponsible husbands. It needs the cooperation of both spouses to be successfully applied".

The Madang group of pastoral workers that recently conducted a research in the area is also, however, critical of the programs of artificial birth control promoted by the government and entrusted to Mary Stopes International.

"Local Member of Parliament Ken Fairweather", they said, "probably saw the increasing population in Karkar Island and opened the door to the first opportunity that came his way".

But a questionnaire and interviews conducted by the diocesan staff revealed consistent signs of

disappointment at the under-the-skin contraceptive implant (Implanon): poor or no consultation between husband and wife on the decision, significant irregularity in the women menstruation period, excessive bleeding, strong abdominal pain, tiredness with consequent neglect of household chores.

The team noticed that not only married women already with children accepted the implant, but also student girls. Why?

"They refused to answer the questionnaire in writing", the team lamented.

"Are they regularly abused or at risk of abuse? Or do they just see it as a pregnancy preventive measure?"

The team agrees that increased promiscuous behavior is something that promoters of artificial contraception and condoms do not want to hear about. "But it's dangerous! It's a powerful Trojan horse for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV-AIDS". "Young girls feel free to entertain sugar daddies", Schola Bogg writes in her report.

"Contraceptives protect from unwanted pregnancies, but not from infections".

The Madang team also said that women are left alone in an environment where resources are scarce and services are poor.

The only thing the government can offer is a painful and degrading contraceptive gadget that is, in fact, only promoted among the urban and rural uneducated and poor population.

"Call it whatever you want, but it is mass sterilization of the poor", one of the researchers put it bluntly. (G.L.)

THE OPINION

Nobody really fighting sorcery

By Igi Papenga

SORCERY or the belief in the demonic is a culture that dates back to the times of our forefathers. Churches may play an important part in fighting it.

But when we observe how they influence society it is only in the confines of a sermon or Sunday service.

As a Catholic I have observed that delivering a message in a church service does not dictate what

a person continues to do outside the church.

If we are going to phase out this sorcery culture or demonic belief a lot needs to be done by the churches and government at the village level.

Even leaders within our smaller communities need to be the front line of influence.

The fact about Pomio, for example, is that probably 90% of our population still lives decades back and this culture is strong.

Many of us who live far away and have adapted to the modern life style say we do not believe in sorcery, but once we step back into our local communities, our natural instinct tells us to have our guards up, because of the way our communities are.

A lot of times we hear about the consequences of sorcery allegations, but we do not hear about what government and churches are doing to try phase out this culture.

HOW do we stop school fights in cities like Port Moresby and Lae? The Tokarara suburb in the National Capital District has found its own way.

Every Tuesday in June a batch of Grade 8 students from the four primary schools in the area held their joint day of formation on, "Building a culture of peace, harmony and

care for our Mother Earth". The students gathered at Saint John the Apostle Catholic parish which is also home to one of the four schools. They concluded with a sports day.

"This is the second year we hold this activity," said Josephine Taiabu Baupua, principal of Tokarara Primary School. "It was first suggested

by the local parish priest, Fr Silvestre Saladaga, when school fights erupted in 2012.

The community, the four schools and the District Education Board endorsed the activity which we now plan to hold every year.

"The boys come to realise that they are brothers and in recent times we never had any school

fights," Ms Baupua said. "The Grade 8 students go back to their schools and share their experience and the message of peace with the younger students."

The 2014 program included talks on law and order, personal and community health, and protection of the environment. (G.L.)

No more school fights at Tokarara