



# 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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## Small actions can minimise the effects of climate change

By Louise Mary Kodor

### ...Start at home

IMAGINE living in a tropical paradise then you are forced to leave because the place you've once called home could not cater for you anymore.

It is a nightmare and a heart-breaking move to make.

Doted across the Pacific Ocean are so many tiny island communities that form our Wan Solwara family who are going through the struggle of saving their homes each day.

We are all burdened with answering the same question. "What can we do as an individual to help save these people and their homes?"

It all starts with looking after ourselves and our homes as Demoti Magini, an employee of Catholic Bishops Conference puts it. "If we can take care of ourselves and the place we live in, then we will be able to take care of the bigger environment".

His view is shared by colleagues Anna Muten and Vivian Nangile who said we must start cleanliness with ourselves and our homes before we look at bigger issues.

Pauline Dai and Mary Martin who are also employers at CBC said planting trees around our surrounding instead of cutting them helps to keep the place cool and beautify the place.

They gave a suggestion that

NCDC should involve more people in the cleaning program and impose tough penalties on those caught littering.

You may wonder: How is that helping those people and their island homes?

The answer is very simple. Everything starts at home.

If you keep yourself clean, your home clean and your community clean, you keep your province and your country clean too.

You may not notice but these are small actions one can take to help minimise the effects of climate change. Though very small, we can save islands to disappear completely.

Take a look at the world's first ever climate change Refugees from a remote island in Autonomous Region of Bougainville, the Carteret Islanders.

Portions of the island are swallowed by the rising sea level. This has made it difficult to grow food on the island.

The population of approximately 2,500 people are being forced to move to mainland Bougainville as their home can no longer provide food for them.

The problem is the same with other Pacific Islands too.

A student from Jubilee Catholic Secondary School, Dagia Ma'i-Aka

who attended the launch of the Encyclical letter at St. Josephs Parish hall, Boroko two months ago gave a touching statement when he delivered a speech about Environment change.

He said "Very soon all Pacific Islanders will walk around with only passports to identify where they come from".

This problem does not need a genius to solve; all it needs is you to take small steps starting at home.

If you use things that emit a lot of carbon dioxide or other gases that

are harmful to the atmosphere, slow down on using them.

For instance, if you always drive a car, try to walk once in a while. If you use spray can deodorant, try not to use too much.

Plant trees, plant flowers. Beautify your environment.

It may be small, but it's a start to save our island paradise.



**SOLOMON HEART MADE IN ITALY:** Bishop Luciano Capelli SDB celebrated his golden anniversary as a Professed Salesian of Don Bosco on August 16, 2015 Solomon Islands. This photo captures Bishop Capelli affectionately greeting Pope Francis on behalf of his people of Gizo Diocese, Solomon Islands. See story on Page 4.

## We are Resourceful People

MUCH of Papua New Guinea and parts of Solomon Islands are experiencing a time of drought and in some places frost.

Water is short and for many people food sources are becoming depleted.

This is a time to draw upon our traditional Melanesian values of sharing and hospitality, and particularly on the Christian virtues of charity, honesty and justice. This is not a time for some to benefit from other's misfortune, but rather an opportunity to demonstrate our resourcefulness and concern for one another.

Water flowing in rivers has its source in rain coming from the heavens. It does not belong to anyone.

So it is wrong if some people

with access to rivers charge money for those people without river access to get water. River water is for the common good.

Likewise, now is not a time for some who are relatively unaffected by drought and frost to inflate prices for garden food or seedlings and to make a large profit from those who are less fortunate.

Nor is it right to take advantage of people who have to leave their homes to take refuge elsewhere.

Any form of profiteering from this tragedy is unjust and unacceptable.

Now as PNG begins celebrations for our forty years of Independence, this is surely a time to show our resourcefulness and concern for one another.

Like the people of Israel wandering 40 years in the desert, we place our trust in God who will always care for his people, and in Jesus who showed us that he can transform what little we have into great abundance as long as we are willing to share. We do not have to be beggars. There is enough in this great land for all to share. Before thinking about store goods from overseas, we should think of our own reserves and first see how much unaffected areas can help with garden produce.

We can use disaster funds to first purchase kaukau and greens etc. from our neighbours and transport them to the affected areas, rather than waiting for rice and noodles.

We also need to warn people of

the danger of fire, not to light fires unnecessarily, and to be particularly careful that fires do not get out of hand and threaten people or their homes, and also the forests.

Forest creatures and the forests themselves are also suffering at this time.

Let us pray to God the Lord of all creation that this time of frost and drought will end soon and that with God's help we will emerge from this trial stronger and more resourceful people, proving once again our great capacity to share with those less fortunate than ourselves.

Bishop Arnold Orowae, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference PNG/SI  
19 August 2015



**Bishop Arnold Orowae,**  
President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference PNG/SI



# Statement to the COP 21 meeting in Paris 2015

The Executive Committee of the **Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania** is currently meeting in Noumea, New Caledonia.

As representatives of the Catholic Bishops' Conferences of Australia, CEPAC (the Pacific Island nations), New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, we come from a multitude of island nation states spread throughout the Pacific.

We are heartened by the growing international concern about Climate Change and Global Warming.

Governments and international bodies are taking up the united cry of citizens to implement and monitor outcome focused policies to reduce practices and choices that impact negatively on the environment and thus on our peoples.

Of particular concern to us are rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and unusual rainfall patterns.

These are affecting many of our communities in a harmful way. In some cases, entire regions and na-

tions are under threat from the indisputable fact of rising sea levels. Examples from this part of the world include the Carteret Islands, Fead Islands, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Mortlock Islands, Nukumanu Islands, the Tokelau Islands, and Tuvalu.

Efforts to build seawalls are largely ineffective against the rise of tides and consequently scarce fertile soil and cultivation areas are being destroyed rapidly.

While offers of relocation are generous in themselves, uplifting a people from one place and planting them in another is a "solution" that is fraught with difficulty and at times even insensitivity to cultural identity and traditions.

Pope Francis in his recent encyclical *Laudato Si'* (on Care for our Common Home) invites – indeed urges – the entire global human family to see our planet and its peoples as our universal *home*.

Homes need care and should be safe havens in which the next generation is raised. What is good for

individual families – including in a special way economically poor families – is good for the worldwide family and what is good for the worldwide human family should also be good for the world's most vulnerable individual families.

The protection of the atmosphere and the oceans are powerful examples of the need for political representatives and leaders of nations to take responsibility for the wellbeing of peoples beyond their own particular shores or borders. This requires courageous, selfless, far-sighted governance shaped by the principles of justice and fairness that reflect and protect the best of the human person.

We commit to encouraging our own people, civic leaders included, to do their part to foster sustainable and equitable developmental and economic policies in our region. And we implore those gathered in Paris to work assiduously to reach binding outcomes that will enhance the care and protection of our planet as the home of the citizens of the world.

Noumea August 2015

Sighted and signed by the following members:

**Archbishop John Ribat MSC :** President of the Federation of the Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania Executive Committee (FCBCO) and Archbishop of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Representative of the Catholic Bishops conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (CBC-PNG/SI).  
**Bishop Robert McGuckin:** Deputy President of FCBCO Executive; Bishop of the Diocese of Toowoomba and Representative of Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC).

**Bishop John Bosco Baremes SM:** Bishop of Port Vila, Vanuatu and the FCBCO Executive representing Episcopal Conference of the Pacific (CEPAC).

**Archbishop Michel Calvet SM:** Archbishop of Noumea, New Caledonia and member of the

FCBCO Executive representing the Episcopal Conference of the Pacific (CEPAC).

**Bishop Colin Campbell:** Bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand and member of FCBCO Executive representing New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC).

**Bishop Charles Drennan:** Bishop of Palmerston North, New Zealand and member of the FCBCO Executive representing New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC).

**Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv:** Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne and member of FCBCO Executive representing ACBC.

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## SOLEMN ASSEMBLY NOT FOR CATHOLICS

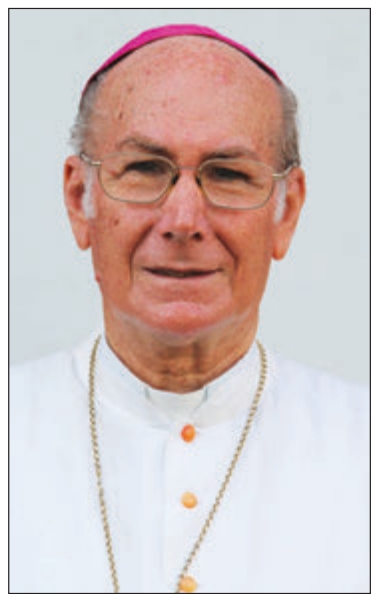
### Pastoral Letter by Bishop Cesare Bonivento PIME

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

**RE: Protect your Faith. Do not fall into the trap of false worship**

We are surprised to read on "The National" newspaper that on the 26th of August 2015 there will be a "Solemn Assembly Program" which "... includes burning of objects used in idol worship and witchcraft as well as collecting the Aliyah Offering". Since many Catholics came to us asking for clarification, we are obliged to give some explanations and directions to our Catholic people regarding what they found on pages 32 and 41 of the National newspaper of August 14, 2015.

2. We understand that this is not a program of the Government of Papua New Guinea. It appears to be a private program and personal initiative of somebody, who wants to use the name of the honorable



**Bishop Cesare Bonivento PIME**

office of the Speaker of Parliament to promote private beliefs.

3. The Church does not acknowledge any mandate to anybody who claims to have received it from the Most High. The reason is that we believe that only Jesus has received such mandate by our Father in Heaven.

4. The Program of worship proposed by the "Solemn Assembly" appears to be totally confusing and contradictory: it mixes religion and culture, without any reasonable distinction. Anybody doing that, he is eventually led to be disrespectful of the history and culture of our country. Nobody can reasonably suggest to destroy the signs of the cultural evolution in PNG. Nobody can sensibly suggest to destroy precious handicrafts in the PNG museums. All the countries in

the world are very jealous of whatever reminds the modern world of their history and their culture. Why is it that in PNG we have to destroy everything of our history?

5. We are told that some people are accusing the Catholics for idol worship. This is absolutely false. Idolatry is strongly condemned by the Catholic Church: following the First Commandment of God, the Catholic Church totally rejects idolatry, and teaches that idolatry is a grave sin. (Exodus 20:4).

6. Anybody can warn people to get rid of the sin of idolatry. But to accuse the Catholics to be idolaters because they honor the images of Jesus and Mary, they pray with the Rosary, and they receive the Holy Communion and the other Sacraments, it is absolutely unacceptable and gravely offensive.

The images of Jesus and Mary and other religious objects are only helping the Catholics to raise their hearts and minds to God.

7. In this context I urge all the Catholics of Vanimo Diocese to ignore the program of worship proposed by the "Solemn Assembly". As Catholics we have our own way of worshipping our God. This group has nothing to do with our Parishes and Catholic Institutions.

8. May Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist be praised, worshipped and adored both now and forever. May the Blessed Virgin Mary intercede to her beloved Son, Jesus our Lord, for us, our families and our nation.

Bishop Cesare Bonivento PIME  
22-8-2015. Feast of Our Lady Queen

## Kefamo communicates Pope's message on the environment

**By Bomai D Witne**

**THE issues surrounding climate change are real, and different communities across the globe are taking various approaches to deal with the resulting challenges.**

In the Catholic Church, Pope Francis has used an encyclical, *Laudato Si mi Signore* (Praise be to you my Lord), to extend the thoughts of St Francis of Assisi and other popes on the need for people to care for the world's environment.

Pope Francis reiterated St Francis's words that the earth is a common home for humanity and is like

a sister with whom humanity shares life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace humanity.

In the encyclical, among many thoughts, Pope Francis challenged the current generation of humanity to think seriously about the kind of world it is creating and leaving for its children and those who come after them.

He said the challenge facing the environment now requires a holistic not a piecemeal approach from humanity.

Countries, governments, non-government organizations, churches and civil society have to

join hands to deal with the great challenges facing the environment.

Pope Francis is on an environmental protection crusade and was in Ecuador last week to encourage government and people to protect the Amazon rainforest and the indigenous people who live there.

"The tapping of natural resources, which are so abundant in Ecuador, must not be concerned with short-term benefits," Pope Francis said. "As stewards of these riches which we have received, we have an obligation toward society as a whole, and toward future generations."

The Catholic Church across the

globe has a duty to ensure Pope Francis's message reaches people. It is not enough for priests to preach from the pulpit about environmental degradation, the church community must engage in action-oriented dialogue.

After all, the local people understand their environment and they know about the rapid changes that are taking place.

Last week, Mary Help of Christians Parish, Kefamo, located in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea and under the servant leadership of Fr Michele Morando, arranged for a week long retreat for parish youth to discuss environ-

mental issues and talk about how to deal with them.

The young people travelled from Kefamo to a remote parish located in the headwaters of Yonki Dam in the Obura-Wonenara District. They were introduced to Pope Francis's message on the environment and tasked to critically think about it in the context of their own environment.

They came from different parts of PNG and provided their views on environment and how people are making efforts to conserve it or, on the other hand, thoughtlessly destroying it.



# Diocesan Laity Gathering - Kundiawa Diocese

By **Clement Bundo**  
Diocesan Laity  
Coordinator  
Migende

EIGHTY four participants comprising of fifty three men and thirty one women participated in the laity workshop facilitated by Fr. Shanthi Puthussery PIME, who is the current Secretary of the Commission of Youth and Laity of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

The workshop was conducted from 10th to the 14th of August at Migende Pastoral Center.

The participants were from different parishes, twelve pious/devotional/charitable Diocesan organisations in-

cluding a diocesan priest, two women religious and several diocesan workers.

Three and half day sessions have inspired the participants to work more on personal and family prayer life and focused attention on family life welfare by giving special consideration to the children, who are the sole reason for parental responsibilities.

The participants as one family in unity prayed together celebrated the Eucharist, received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and had Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and veneration to the relics of Padre Pio, St. Maria Goretti and Blessed Peter ToRot.

Several participants spared their free time in the night to make personal prayers till mid-

night every day.

Bringing different groups/sectors/parishes together at the diocesan level for this workshop was fundamental as all the participants understood well the responsibility of the laity proper.

The participants strongly felt that the need of having appropriate structure at every parish and need to have formation and spiritual activities from the childhood to the end of every baptized person.

The sessions on stories of saints by the 'album of every day saints' and the sessions on Sunday School from grades one to twelve with proper textbooks made each participant to understand the present low level of faith formation in the diocese very well.

Gradually, participants want to come up with proper structure in every parish, particularly with the early child care centers and Sunday school classes in the near future.

Most Rev. Bishop Anton Bal celebrated the closing Holy Mass and delivered a moving homily on forgiveness taken from the readings of the day.

It helped the participants to understand the meaning of forgiveness and the reference of it to the prayer of 'Our Father' made more meaningful.

As an outcome of the Laity Workshop every participant was assigned a homework which is to be assessed in two months' time and a working committee is established to assist work of the Laity in the diocese. proper.

Commentary by  
**Fr. Victor Roche**



20 August 2015

## Let us help our own brothers & sisters now

THE drought and frost situation in PNG is getting worse.

It is reported that about 2 million people are affected among the population of 7.3 million. The initial reports came from some of the dioceses in the highlands which are badly affected by frost.

Then came the reports from Kiunga diocese where most of the people are affected because of lack of rain.

The level of the Fly river has gone down and so the ships are not able to bring the supplies to Kiunga and Tabubil.

Mining operations were closed down in OK Tedi gold mines and many of the employees were sent home.

There is a shortage of drinking water and food supplies in Kiunga.

Most of the schools are open only half a day; people are encouraged to use water wisely; families are encouraged to have one meal a day; food supplies in the stores are going down.

The Catholic Church had requested the Government to give relief supplies to the people of the affected area.

The Government has set aside K 25 million for helping all those people affected throughout Papua New Guinea.

The frost and drought are natural disasters. It is because of the lack of rain and the experts say it is El Nino effect.

It is also a man-made disaster: people in PNG have cut down lots of trees for mines and for export in order to get money.

We have also created lots of bush fires. We all have contributed to the frost, drought and El Nino effect.

Pope Francis has reminded us in his recent Encyclical letter "Laudato Si" that we should protect and look after our planet earth which is our home. Do we?

We have helped some needy countries which were affected by natural disasters: Vanuatu, Philippines and Haiti.

Let us help our own brothers and sisters now. Let us raise funds for drought and frost affected people. Let us have a Sunday collection and give generously to those in need.

Those people living in those affected areas: use food and water wisely.

Help will come from the people, Church and the Government.

God does not abandon His people.

**Fr. Victor Roche, SVD**

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## The MSC missionaries ends assembly in Kokopo

The Missionaries of the Sacred working in all parts of Papua New Guinea gathered together for the first time over fifteen years for their General Assembly in Vunapope, Kokopo, East New Britain Province.

A weeklong event ended on a high note last week.

Among the many issues the assembly tried to look at was the renewal of commitment to the mission of making the heart of Jesus known and loved everywhere. That is, how well they might make visible the presence of God here on earth.

A document was produced at the close of the assembly declaring the commitment of the missionaries to be "united in holiness" with each other in

their common mission and vision.

A summary of that document succinctly outlines the commitment and spirit of that assembly by giving the missionaries a working paper for their pastoral and apostolic life in their areas of work.

It declares:

We acknowledge our failures as individuals and as a congregation;

We want to embrace a new way of living our charism and spirituality;

We want to live in the present with passion for the world;

And we want to promote a Gospel of joy.

The M.S.C's - as they are known, comes from Latin "Missionari Sacratissimi Cordis" or

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

Their founder was a secular priest from Bourges, French, Fr Jules Chevalier, who started their little society under the patronage of the Sacred Heart in 1852.

Father Chevalier had a strong devotion to the Sacred Heart. He saw the heart of Jesus as a remedy for ills of his time. He also recognized that the whole world could be saved through the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Only after 18 years of its foundation, with just 20 members, the congregation accepted the invitation of Pope Leo XIII to send its first missionaries to Micronesia and Melanesia.

The first missionaries left the shores of Barcelona, Spain, on September 1, 1881.

They reached New Britain on September 28, 1882. Father Navarre was leader of that group. Another group lead by Fr Henry Verjus landed at Port Leon, Yule Island three years later, on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1885.

The latter group celebrated the first mass on Papuan soil on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1885.

A sacred memory of this first mass is kept on the hill overlooking Port Leon every year.

Today the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Papua New Guinea are mostly local men, priests and brothers, working in 10 dioceses: Alotau, Bereina, Daru/Kiunga, Kerema, Kavieng/Lorengau, Kimbe, Rabaul, Port Moresby, Lae and very recently Vanimo.

- By **Fr Casmiro Kito- MSC**



**BISHOP LUCIANO CAPELLI SDB** celebrated his golden anniversary as a Professed Salesian of Don Bosco on August 16, and renewed his vows to God in front of his Church community. Most Rev. Bishop cutting his Cake with his Episcopal Vicar. Fr. Jacob Qetobatu.

See story on page 4



# 'Solomon Heart made in Italy celebrates Golden Jubilee'

By Nascia Pae  
Catholic Communication  
Gizo Diocese  
Western Province

**BISHOP LUCIANO CAPELLI SDB** celebrated his golden anniversary as a Professed Salesian of Don Bosco on August 16, and renewed his vows to God in front of his Church community.

*Visibly touched and emotionally moved, he prayed the formula of Salesian Religious Profession.*

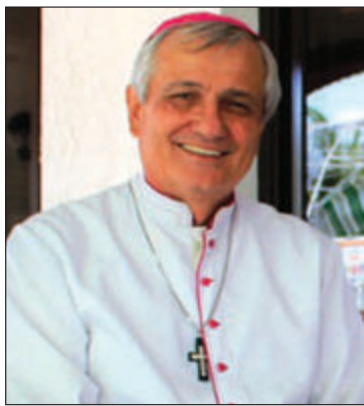
*The bishop later explained that he has never felt so emotional in his life than as he renewed the same commitment to God which he made 50 years ago.*

*"At that time I did not know what I would face, now I know and therefore this renewal is more meaningful and complete even if done in a very simple and informal way... I promised again like don Bosco to give my life to the last breath for my flock... how can you not be emotional about it?"*

Bishop Luciano Capelli was born in Tirano (So) Italy on October 19th, 1947. -

From 1965—1971 he was in the Philippines.

He obtained his Bachelor Degree in Education—philosophy studies in 1968, work as Biology instructor for Don Bosco Technical College of Engineering in 1969-1970.



**Bishop Luciano Capelli SDB**

Then in early 1971 he obtained Perpetual Profession and was a Classical Latin and teacher in Don Bosco Seminary College.

In 1972 he returned to Italy to study theological studies at Instituto Teologico San Tommaso.

He was ordained a Deacon on December 10, 1974 at Sondrio.

He completed his theological studies in 1975 in which he obtained his Bachelor Degree in Theology.

He was ordained a Priest in June 28, 1975 at Cologna di Tirano Sondrio (Italy).

In 1975 to 1999 he went back to the Philippines. In 1976 to 1977 he was a Youth Center Director for Don Bosco Technical College of Engineering.



**Bishop Luciano Capelli SDB renewing his vows.**

From 1977- 1982 he became the Spiritual Director for Don Bosco Technical College of Engineering. In 1982 he was Rector for Don Bosco Technical Institute at Tarlac, Philippines.

From 1985 to 1991, he went for further studies and obtained his Masters Degree in Education at Saint Joseph College of Graduate School, Manila.

He was also Rector of Don Bosco Technical College of Engineering.

In 1991 to 1992 Bishop Capelli was Rector Don Bosco Hall,

for the boarding house for University Students in the Philippines.

In 1992 to 1993 Bishop Luciano Capelli becomes a provincial council member and from 1993 to 1999 he was the Provincial FIN province for Manila and Papua New Guinea.

He came to the Solomons in 1999 and he built and founded and was Rector for Don Bosco Technical Institute at Henderson in Honiara and Don Bosco Rural Training Center and Mini Hospital at Tetere North East Guadalcanal until 2007.

He was ordained Bishop of Gizo

on October 21, 2007 by His Eminence Cardinal Joseph Zen—Cardinal of China at Gizo.

Over the weekend he celebrated three masses on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Friday he celebrated Mass to mark the opening of the St Peter Training Centre and the Kindergarten rebuilt by him after the Gizo Tsunami and Earthquake of April 2 2007.

He marked 200 years of the Birth of DON Bosco, on the 15<sup>th</sup> by celebrating for the Mothers of St Peter Parish and on the 16<sup>th</sup> he renewed his commitments with a heartfelt speech that left everyone in tears.

## A COMMENTARY - CATHOLIC PROFESSIONALS SOCIETY OF PNG GOVERNOR POWI'S GRAND STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE

THE PEOPLE'S House and the public in PNG cannot leave the so-called grand statement of the century by Honorable William Powi, MP, Governor of Southern Highlands Province, presented in Parliament on 30th July 2015 for Parliament to accept the 400 years old King James Bible without comment or debate.

The KJV Bible is part of the whole parliamentary reform pursued by the Speaker of the House, Honourable Theo Zurenuoc, MP.

It is a political reform agenda by a few MPs including the Speaker and pastors of some (not all) churches in PNG.

At the outset, let me commend the initiative in so far as it is towards promoting the Christian and moral values and principles in our political governance and leadership, churches and the civil society in the country. With the rise in secularism and the almost unlimited liberalism we all need awakening to take control of our well-being and destiny.

However, our political and church leaders must make sure they are not misled into making public statements in Parliament on subjects they are not too knowledgeable or familiar with.

The statement put out on Friday

7 August 2015 is misleading in that it moves from referring to the King James Version of the Bible to the Bible itself with no proper distinction made.

The inference is that the statements made about the Bible itself apply equally to the KJV, which is not true.

The ambiguity here is surely intentional and this is not honest on the part of the proponents of the statement.

At one stage the statement says that the KJV was transformed into liberation theology by the slaves.

Well, some of the slaves in the USA might have had access to the KJV amongst other versions, but the KJV was not the inspiration for what is commonly known as "liberation theology" today, because that arose in Latin American with people who used the Bible in Spanish and Portuguese. Any inference of the link between KJV, democracy and socio-economic prosperity in USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand is also misleading and dangerous.

Those countries have progressively become secularized, thus the preaching of a prosperity gospel with the motive of reaping political and economic opportunities and favours in the guise of

preaching the real Christ Crucified will be counter-productive to a majority of our people who are yet to benefit from Government services.

The KJV was developed for political as well as religious motives and served to promote certain issues relevant to the Church of England at that time 400 years ago.

Since then there have been many other translations, that have benefited from the discovery of Koine Greek that the translators of the KJV were not aware of.

The KJV is an important version of the Bible, but there is no reason to say that it is a more valid or correct or legitimate version of the Bible than others that we have today, particularly the versions translated here in PNG, such as the Bible in Tok Pisin or vernacular translations.

Unfortunately, putting forward the KJV of the Bible as being better than all other is a form of politics by certain groups within the body of Christian churches.

I am sure that the majority of Christian missionaries in PNG did not use the KJV, but rather more recent translations of the Bible in English, German, French, or whatever was the primary language they used to listen to the Word of God.

Hence I fail to see how the KJV is "a symbolic representation of the thousands of Bibles of various translations cherished and treasured by our people" as is claimed.

This promotion of the KJV seems to be being used to further political purposes.

It is not accepted by all Christians in PNG and at functions to welcome the KJV, leaders of important Churches in PNG have been conspicuous by their absence.

The move to have PNG declared a "Christian Country", whether Mr. O'Neill said that or not at the welcome of the KJV at Jackson's Airport, cannot be taken as an official statement binding on the country.

Even Grand Chief Somare's 2007 statement which is being interpreted as the national pledge of a new covenant, is misleading.

The issue of declaring PNG as a Christian Country over and above what has already been declared in the Prologue to the Constitution really needs to be considered carefully in the light of the value of religious freedom.

The Preamble and the National Goals and Directive Principles of the Constitution are a conspicuously inspired set of principles that founded our nation. These principles are to be recognised and respected.

Those promoting Christian principles and moral reform in PNG are to be congratulated.

But tendencies to make misleading statements are in fact quite divisive and unacceptable.

I suggest that the KJV of the Bible be given suitable recognition as a somewhat expensive copy of an important translation of the Bible and that it be given a suitable place in the proposed chapel in the House of Parliament.

I would hope that all would also agree that the Bible is not "alive" until one reads from it and takes its message to heart.

To have it sit in the House and not to be used does not make much sense to a Catholic Christian. It does not end evil and corruption.

It is only an outside appearance and a false pretence.

Moreover, towards the end of the statement it says that, "our Head of State is also the Head of Church."

It may be true that Queen Elizabeth II is head of the Church of England, but she is not the head of the churches here in PNG.

The whole idea of placing importance to the KJV and the English political democracy is also perceived as a form of neo-colonialism for an independent sovereign PNG.

**Paul Harricknen**