Live Jesus! Live Jesus! Live Jesus! Live Jesus!

THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATION OF
PAPUA NEW GUINEA &
SOLOMON ISLANDS


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Extensive Bibliography

Listed here are some materials meant to help those who may wish to further deepen their understanding on specific topics discussed in this booklet.


*Directory of the Catholic Church 2006-2008* (Goroka: Liturgical Catechetical Institute 2006). [This is published every three years].


*Journeying with the Young to Walk His Way, Tell His Truth & Live His Life*. Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry in PNG (Port Moresby: Catholic Bishops’ Conference 2007).


*Pita ToRot. Katekis na Martir* (Vunapope: Archdiocese of Rabaul n.d.).


Melanesian Pidgin Phrases

Papua New Guinea pidgin is slightly different from Solomon Islands pidgin. Here are some sample phrases that may be helpful for a beginner.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA PIDGIN**

How are you? My name is John. What is your name?  
*Yu olrait? Nem bilong mi Jon. Wanem nem bilong yu?*

I come from..... I live in ...... Where do you live?  
*Mi kam long .... Mi stap long.... Yu stap we?*

I like sweet potatoes. Do you like sweet potatoes?  
*Mi laikim kaukau. Yu laikim kaukau tu o nogat?*

I want to be your friend. Can we be friends?  
*Mi laik kamap pren bilong yu. Inap yumi kamap pren?*

I want to learn pidgin. Can you teach mi pidgin?  
*Mi laik save tok pisin. Inap yu lainim mi long tok pisin?*

**SOLOMON ISLANDS PIDGIN**

How are you?  
*U hao ?*

My name is John. What is your name?  
*Nam bilong mi Jon. Hu nao nam blong u?*

I come from..... I live in ...... Where do you live?  
*Mi bilong ... Mi stap long.... Yu stap long wea?*

I like sweet potatoes. Do you like sweet potatoes?  
*Mi laeikem kaukau. Yu laekem kaukau ?*

I want to be your friend. Can we be friends?  
*Mi laek fo mi fren blong u. Um i save fren?*

I want to learn pidgin. Can you teach mi pidgin?  
*Mi laek lanem pidgin . U save lanem mi pidgin ?*

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**Foreword**

These two booklets had their remote beginnings in my inputs and sharings in Goroka (while I was at the LCI) with some participants to the MI Orientation Course for Expatriate Church Workers as well as to the queries of some young Salesians preparing or beginning to work in the PNG-SI Delegation. I eventually decided to organise these materials into booklet form as a personal initiative.

The topics in this booklet come from diverse sources which are clearly indicated. There had been several versions of this booklet. The request of Fr. Raffy Galve SDB, our Provincial Delegate, for more copies made me decide to revise and update this fifth edition.

In putting these materials together there had been a conscious effort to present the essence of important documents especially those of the local Catholic Bishops’ Conference so that the reader can easily grasp these fundamental magisterium of the local Church and apply them to our actual pastoral situations.

The key dynamics of this booklet is to know one’s own cultural baggage in order to be able to transcend one’s own thought patterns and, consequently, understand the new culture and its expressions more objectively. Thus, the questions “For Reflection & Sharing” are of tremendous help in order to benefit from these materials.

However, in order to face up to the challenges which arise from a better understanding of the life, activities and directives of the local Church presented in this second booklet, a change of mentality is need moving:

- from a superficial knowledge of the local Church to a serious effort to understand the teachings, liturgical & pastoral directives of the Church in PNG & SI;
- from a ministry focused on our own Salesian apostolate to a more serious effort to rejuvenate the local Church by sharing actively in its life and activities and be enriched by her experience while at the same time enriching the local Church by sharing actively the richness of our Salesian charism.

This is part two of two booklets. The first booklet deals with a general introduction to the dynamics of culture. This second booklet is a presentation of the history of the local Church and directives of the Bishops’ Conference and the Salesian work in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. It is hoped that this simple collection may be of some help to Salesians who are preparing to work - or are working - in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Alfred Maravilla, SDB  
Sept 29, 2008
The Fundamental Initial Attitude

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion is to take off our shoes, for the place we are standing on is holy, else we may find we are treading on people's dream. More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival!

Moses' example of respect for God's presence shown by taking off his sandals before the burning bush is a fundamental initial attitude for a missionary who comes into a new country, a new people and a new culture.
### Geography

**Land area:** 462,860 sq. km.  
The Capital is Port Moresby (254,158).  
The terrain is mostly mountains with coastal lowlands and rolling foothills.  
The largest portion of the population lives in fertile highlands valleys that were unknown to the outside world until the 1930s, but that supported agriculture some 10,000 years ago, possibly before agriculture was developed elsewhere.  
The climate is tropical. NW monsoon, December-March; SE monsoon, May-October.

### People

Population (2007 est.): 6.1 million. Annual growth rate: 3.1%. There are three official languages: English, Tok Pisin, and Motu. There are approximately 860 other languages. Literacy is 57.3%. Infant mortality rate is 68.4/1,000 while life expectancy is 56.0 yrs.

### Government

The government is constitutional monarchy with parliamentary democracy constitution. Independence from Australia: September 16, 1975. The branches of government are: The **executive** is the British monarch (head of state), represented by the Governor-General; Prime Minister (head of government). The **legislative** is the unicameral parliament. The **Judiciary** is independent. There are 19 provinces and the National Capital District.

### PEOPLE

The indigenous population of Papua New Guinea is one of the most heterogeneous in the world. The country has several thousand sepa-
rate communities, most with only a few hundred people. Divided by language, customs, and tradition, some of these communities have engaged in low-scale tribal conflict with their neighbours for millennia. The advent of modern weapons and modern migration into urban areas has greatly magnified the impact of this lawlessness.

The isolation created by the mountainous terrain is so great that some groups, until recently, were unaware of the existence of neighbouring groups only a few kilometres away. The diversity, reflected in a folk saying, “For each village, a different culture,” is perhaps best shown in the local languages. Spoken mainly on the island of New Guinea—composed of Papua New Guinea and the Indonesian province of West Papua—some 800 of these languages have been identified; of these, only 350-450 are related. The remainder seem to be totally unrelated either to each other or to the other major groupings. Most native languages are spoken by a few hundred to a few thousand, although Enga, used in part of the highlands, is spoken by some 130,000 people. However, the Enga people are subdivided into clans that regularly conflict with each other. Many native languages are extremely complex grammatically.

Melanesian Pidgin (tok pisin) serves as the lingua franca. English is spoken by educated people and in Milne Bay Province. The overall population density is low, although pockets of overpopulation exist. Papua New Guinea’s Western Province averages one person per square kilometer. The Chimbu Province in the New Guinea highlands averages 20 persons per square kilometer and has areas containing up to 200 people farming a square kilometer of land. The highlands are home to 40% of the population.

A considerable urban drift toward Port Moresby and other major centres has occurred in recent years. The trend toward urbanisation accelerated in the 1990s, bringing in its wake squatter settlements, ethnic disputes, unemployment, and social problems, especially violent crime. Approximately 96% of the population is Christian. The churches with the largest number of members are the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the United Church, and the Seventh Day Adventist church. Although the major churches are under indigenous leadership, a large number of missionaries remain

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**The English Language**

English is the official language in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. It is indispensable to have a good command of this language. British English is the standard followed although you might notice some people who mix up British (Oxford) and American (Webster) spellings. Below are some differences. Note that in these two countries the British spelling is always preferred. This is also true for Liturgical books. The British version of liturgical books is the version approved by the local Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

---|---|---|---
airplane | *aeroplane* | *antenna* | *aerial*
apartment | *flat* | *awful* | *terrible*
bandaid | *plaster* | *backpack* | *rucksack*
balloon | *byro* | *(bank)note* | *bill*
blackboard | *duster* | *buddy* | *mate*
eraser | *bookshop* | *busy (phone)* | *engaged (phone)*
bookstore | *notice board* | *checking account* | *current account*
bulletin board | *cheque-book* | *collect call* | *reverse charge*
checkbook | *biscuit* | *cot* | *folding bed*
cookie/cracker | *anticlockwise* | *diaper* | *nappy*
clockwise | *tea towel* | *driver’s license* | *driving licence*
dish towel | *town centre* | *drugstore* | *chemist*
downtown | *lift* | *elementary (or grade) sch* | *primary sch*
assailed by a mess of difficulties he continued to be zealously en-
gaged in an intense missionary program of preaching, catechesis
and writing. “Walk always near to God, for the gentleness of His
shadow is more wonderful than the brightness of the sun”, was his
constant advice. He died of stroke while visiting the Visitation Con-
vent of Lyon, France on December 28, 1622.

Father Aubry made it clear that there is a real and sincere affinity
between Don Bosco and St Francis de Sales. In their hearts there
burned the same missionary passion, the same love for the Church
and the same pastoral charity that impelled them both towards the
direct and creative apostolate. For them charity constituted the apos-
tolate’s means and form - they toiled and fulfilled their pastoral work.
They showed us that unless missionary work is built on personal re-
lationship of love and friendship it is doomed to failure. This implies
  a) respect for the dignity of God’s children through radical confi-
dence in each one’s natural and our local people’s capacity to
develop their intelligence, freedom, heart and faith;
  b) practical realism and dauntless courage by accepting our people
as they are and give them what they need here and now;
  c) apostolic inventiveness without fear of trying new initiatives and
calmly discussing through patient dialogue various aspects of
our contemporary cultures.
(adapted from J. Aubry, Role of the Salesians within the Salesian
[accessed Sept 1, 2008]).

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING
Are you familiar with St. Francis de Sales’ life and teachings?
The situation in our countries has similarities with that of St. Fran-
cis de Sales. He teaches us the missionary way to enter our peo-
ple’s heart: apostolic energy and passion for souls wrapped in ex-
traordinary kindness, patient dialogue, sensitivity and charming
manner! Wouldn’t Saint Francis de Sales, then, be a really rele-
vant patron to our Delegation and future Vice-Province?

How can you imitate St. Francis de Sales’ missionary zeal?

in the country. There is a non-Christian
portion of the indigenous population, as
well as a portion of the nominal Chris-
tians who practices a wide variety of
religions that are an integral part of tra-
ditional culture.

Foreign residents comprise about 1% of
the population. More than half are Australian; others are from the
United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Philippines, and the United
States, most of whom are missionaries. Since independence, about
900 foreigners have become naturalised citizens.

Though cultures vary widely, traditional Papua New Guinea social
structures generally include the following characteristics:
  • The practice of subsistence economy;
  • Recognition of bonds of kinship with obligations extend-
    ing beyond the immediate family group;
  • Generally egalitarian relationships with an emphasis on acquired,
    rather than inherited, status; and
  • A strong attachment of the people to land, which is held com-
    munally. Traditional communities do not recognise a permanent
    transfer of ownership when land is sold.
  • Though land and other possessions may be inherited through the
    female line in some cultures, women generally are considered
    and treated as inferiors. Gender violence is endemic.
  • Patterns and frequency of sexual activity, though never publicly
    discussed, contribute to the current rapid spread of HIV.

Many Papua New Guineans still adhere strongly to this traditional
social structure, which has its roots in village life.

HISTORY
Archeological evidence indicates that humans arrived on New
Guinea at least 60,000 years ago, probably by sea from Southeast
Asia during an Ice Age period when the sea was lower and distances
between islands shorter. Although the first arrivals were hunters and
gatherers, early evidence shows that people managed the forest en-
vironment to provide food. There also are indications of gardening
having been practiced at the same time that agriculture was developing in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Early garden crops—many of which are indigenous—were initially sugarcane, bananas, yams, and taros, while sago and pandanus were two commonly exploited native forest crops. Today’s staples—sweet potatoes and pigs—were later arrivals, but shellfish and fish have long been mainstays of coastal dwellers’ diets.

When Europeans first arrived, inhabitants of New Guinea and nearby islands—while still relying on bone, wood, and stone tools—already had a productive agricultural system. They traded along the coast, where products mainly were pottery, shell ornaments, and foodstuffs, and in the interior, where forest products were exchanged for shells and other sea products.

The first Europeans to sight New Guinea were probably the Portuguese and Spanish navigators sailing in the South Pacific in the early part of the 16th century. In 1526–27, Jorge de Meneses accidentally came upon the principal island and is credited with naming it Papua, a Malay word for the frizzled quality of Melanesian hair. The term New Guinea was applied to the island in 1545 by a Spaniard, Íñigo Ortiz de Retes, because of a fancied resemblance between the islands’ inhabitants and those found on the African Guinea coast. Although European navigators visited the islands and explored their coastlines for the next 170 years, little was known of the inhabitants until the late 19th century.

NEW GUINEA

With Europe’s growing need for coconut oil, Godeffroy’s of Hamburg, the largest trading firm in the Pacific, began trading for copra in the New Guinea Islands. In 1884, Germany formally took possession of the northeast quarter of the island and put its administration in the hands of a chartered company. In 1899, the German imperial government assumed direct control of the territory, thereafter known as

Saint Francis de Sales

A Model Missionary for our PNG-SI Delegation

Francis was born on August 21, 1567 in the family castle of Sales, in Thorens in the duchy of upper Savoy. He was the first born of the 12 children of Francis and Frances de Boisy. He studied in Paris and Padua where he obtained his doctorate in civil and canon law in 1591. He secretly studied theology and, against his father’s wish, he was ordained on Dec 18, 1593.

While studying theology he had a crisis of faith. This eventually led him to make an act of heroic abandonment to Jesus which he would live out throughout the rest of his life. He spent his life as priest and bishop proclaiming to all in word, through his writings and preaching, and by his very life, that he had chosen Jesus, that Jesus lived in him, and through him was presented to the entire world. This was summed up by his watch word Live Jesus!

The saintly bishop knew, as we know now, that people have many different options to choose how to live their life. Through his writings Francis de Sales attempted to convince people to choose Jesus as the best and only option for a good, happy, and peaceful life.

As a young priest he volunteered to be a missionary to the Calvinistic district of Chablais. Though he faced violent resistance from the Protestant population he persisted in his friendly relation with the people. He distributed leaflets—which were catechism in a nutshell—about the Catholic faith and preached with courage. “When you encounter difficulties and contradictions, do not try to break them, but bend them with gentleness and time”, he used to say. His technique of gentle but persuasive preaching, patient dialogue with Protestants, the practice of charity to all and fervent prayer contributed to the return of the people of Chablais into the Catholic faith.

On March 24, 1599 he was appointed Coadjutor Bishop of Geneva and eventually bishop of that city on Dec 8, 1602. On June 6, 1610 he founded with Jane de Chantal the Order of the Visitation. Despite
... The title *Help of Christians* shows Mary as a servant helper, humbly subordinate to Christ. But with it goes a powerful dimension that will not let anything stand in the way to Christ's redeeming mission. We, and every Christian, experience her help as she intervenes to assist the Church or each individual believer when things are at its darkest. "By her motherly help," pointed out Pope John Paul II while visiting a poor parish, "Mary liberates us so that as a community we may experience freedom, dignity, love and joy".

In his conclusion to the post Synodal apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Oceania* Pope John Paul II wrote this beautiful prayer:

*O Mary, Help of Christians,*  
in our need we turn to you  
with eyes of love, with empty hands  
and longing hearts.  
We look to you that we may see your Son,  
our Lord.  
We lift our hands that  
we may have the Bread of Life.  
We open wide our hearts  
to receive the Prince of Peace [...]  
*O Help of Christians, protect us!*  
*Bright Star of the Sea, guide us!*  
*Our Lady of Peace, pray for us!*

(adapted from A. Maravilla, *Maria Helpim, Catholic Reporter* May 2005)

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**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Can you recall how the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians spread in your country?  

*Devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians is an important expression of our Salesian Charism. This devotion will spread in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands especially by fostering popular religiosity through the spreading of her pictures, statues, prayers and the organisation of the ADMA!*

How can you foster the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians?

German New Guinea. In 1914, Australian troops occupied German New Guinea, and it remained under Australian military control until 1921. The British Government, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia, assumed a mandate from the League of Nations for governing the Territory of New Guinea in 1920. That mandate was administered by the Australian Government until the Japanese invasion in December 1941 brought about its suspension. Following the surrender of the Japanese in 1945, civil administration of Papua as well as New Guinea was restored, and under the Papua New Guinea Provisional Administration Act, 1945-46, Papua and New Guinea were combined in an administrative union.

**PAPUA**

On November 6, 1884, a British protectorate was proclaimed over the southern coast of New Guinea (the area called Papua) and its adjacent islands. The protectorate, called British New Guinea, was annexed outright on September 4, 1888. The possession was placed under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1902. Following the passage of the Papua Act of 1905, British New Guinea became the Territory of Papua, and formal Australian administration began in 1906. Papua was administered under the Papua Act until the Japanese invaded the northern parts of the islands in 1941 and began to advance on Port Moresby and civil administration was suspended. During the war, Papua was governed by a military administration from Port Moresby, where Gen. Douglas MacArthur occasionally made his headquarters. As mentioned above, it was later joined in an administrative union with New Guinea during 1945-46 following the surrender of Japan.

**POSTWAR DEVELOPMENTS**

The Papua and New Guinea Act of 1949 formally approved the placing of New Guinea under the international trusteeship system and confirmed the administrative union of New Guinea and Papua under the title of "The Territory of Papua and New Guinea." The act provided for a Legislative Council (established in 1951), a judicial organisation, a public service, and a system of local government. A House of Assembly replaced the Legislative Council in 1963, and the first House of Assembly opened on June 8, 1964. In 1972, the name of the territory was changed to *Papua New Guinea.*
Elections in 1972 resulted in the formation of a ministry headed by Chief Minister Michael Somare, who pledged to lead the country to self-government and then to independence. Papua New Guinea became self-governing in December 1973 and achieved independence on September 16, 1975. A plethora of political parties, coalition governments, shifting party loyalties and motions of no confidence in the leadership all lend an air of instability to political proceedings. For the first 27 years of independence, a “first past the post” electoral system resulted in many parliamentarians elected with less than 15 percent of their constituency. Fractious politics and a 75% loss rate for incumbents precluded the development of strong political parties or a stable national leadership. Many hope that limited preferential voting, introduced in 2003, and an organic law on political parties will stabilize national politics.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS
Papua New Guinea, a constitutional monarchy, recognizes the Monarch of England as head of state, represented by a Governor General who is elected by Parliament and who performs mainly ceremonial functions. Papua New Guinea has three levels of government—national, provincial, and local. There is a 109-member unicameral Parliament, whose members are elected every five (5) years. The Parliament in turn elects the prime minister, who appoints his cabinet from members of his party or coalition.

Members of Parliament are elected from 19 provinces and the National Capital District of Port Moresby. Parliament introduced reforms in June 1995 to change the provincial government system, with regional (at-large) members of Parliament becoming provincial governors, while retaining their national seats in Parliament. Papua New Guinea’s judiciary is independent of the government. It protects constitutional rights and interprets the laws. There are several levels, culminating in the Supreme Court.

ECONOMY
Papua New Guinea is rich in natural resources, including minerals, timber, and fish, and produces a variety of commercial agricultural products. The economy generally can be separated into subsistence and market sectors, although the distinction is blurred by smallholder...
cash cropping of coffee, cocoa, and copra. About 75% of the country's population relies primarily on the subsistence economy. The minerals, timber, and fish sectors are dominated by foreign investors. Manufacturing is limited, and the formal labor sector consequently also is limited. High commodity prices in 2005 continued to lift both sectors after several years of declines.

RESOURCES
Papua New Guinea is richly endowed with gold, copper, oil, natural gas, and other minerals. Papua New Guinea’s first oil refinery was opened in 2004. It has the capacity to produce 30,000 barrels of oil a day. Papua New Guinea also produces and exports valuable agricultural, timber, and marine products.

INDUSTRY
In general, the Papua New Guinea economy is highly dependent on imports for manufactured goods. Small-scale industries produce beer, soap, concrete products, clothing, paper products, matches, ice cream, canned meat, fruit juices, furniture, plywood, and paint. The small domestic market, relatively high wages, and high transport costs are constraints to industrial development.

(Cf. http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2729.htm)

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

What makes up the ideological sphere of your culture?
What makes up the sociological sphere of your culture?
What makes up the technological sphere of your culture?
In your culture which sphere is wider?

The cultures of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands have a very wide sociological sphere and consequently lesser technological and ideological spheres.

How can you overcome the temptation to feel that the local cultures of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands are culturally inferior to your own culture?
Solomon Islands

GEOGRAPHY

The Solomon Islands form an archipelago in the Southwest Pacific about 1,900 kilometres (1,200 mi.) northeast of Australia. With terrain ranging from ruggedly mountainous islands to low-lying coral atolls, the Solomons stretch in a 1,450-kilometer chain southeast from Papua New Guinea across the Coral Sea to Vanuatu.

The main islands of Choiseul, New Georgia, Santa Isabel, Guadalcanal, Malaita, and Makira have rainforested mountain ranges of mainly volcanic origin, deep narrow valleys, and coastal belts lined with coconut palms and ringed by reefs. The smaller islands are spectacularly beautiful atolls and raised coral reefs. The Solomon Islands region is geologically active, and earth tremors are frequent.

The islands’ ocean-equatorial climate is extremely humid throughout the year, with a mean temperature of 27°C and few extremes of temperature or weather. June through August is the cooler period. Though seasons are not pronounced, the northwesterly winds of November through April bring more frequent rainfall and occasional squalls or cyclones. The annual rainfall is about 305 centimetres.

More than 90% of the islands traditionally was forested, but this has come under pressure from current logging operations. The coastal strips are sheltered by mangrove and coconut trees. Luxuriant rainforest covers the interiors of the large islands. Soil quality ranges from extremely rich volcanic to relatively infertile limestone. More than 230 varieties of orchids and other tropical flowers brighten the landscape.

PNG SI DELEGATION
VISION-MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Salesians of Don Bosco in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, living in fraternal communities, are consecrated educators and evangelisers of the young especially the poor and underprivileged.

Therefore, entrusting ourselves to Mary, and in communion with the Local Church,

We educate and evangelise the young towards integral development and social transformation by building up the Educative-Pastoral Community and the Salesian Family in the spirit of Don Bosco’s Preventive System.
2002 the first group of Salesian Cooperators made their Promise. In 2005 the Salesian Family Council was established.

Salesians had been and continue to serve directly the local Church. In 1999 Fr. Ambrose Pereira was appointed to the Catholic Communications of the Solomon Islands. From 2000-2004 Fr. Sylvester Casaclang was appointed the National Youth Coordinator. In 2001 Fr. Francesco Panfilo was elected bishop of Alotau-Sidea. From 2002-2004 Fr. Alfred Maravilla was appointed director of the Liturgical Catechetical Institute, Goroka. Frs. Stephen Placente and Ariel Macatangay had lectured at the Sacred Heart Seminary, Rapolo while Fr. John Cabrido continues to lecture there. Fr. Alfred Maravilla lectured from 1996-2006 at the Catholic Theological Institute, Bomana while Fr. Luciano Odorico continues to lecture there since 2003. In 2007 Fr. Luciano Capelli was elected bishop of Gizo.

In 2005 the Rector Major, Pascual Chavez, joined the Salesian presences in PNG and Solomon Islands forming the Salesian Provincial Delegation of PNG-SI. In September that year he visited PNG to celebrate the silver jubilee of our Salesian presence. The new delegation had its first Extraordinary Assembly of Confreres in 2006 which formulated the Delegation Vision-Mission Statement and the Integrated Delegation Plan in view of a future Vice-Province.

(revised & adapted from http://www.sdb.ph/sdb4/about/about_papua.htm)

**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Can you recall the important events of the history of the Salesians and the Salesian family in your own country?

Don Bosco’s charism has been planted in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. But Salesian Charism may have deeper roots only when there are well formed local Salesians. In this task the recruitment of local vocations is indispensable!

How can you actively contribute to the growth of our Delegation?

PEOPLE

The Solomon Islanders comprise diverse cultures, languages, and customs. Of its 496,000 persons, 93.3% are Melanesian, 4% Polynesian, and 1.5% Micronesian. In addition, small numbers of Europeans and Chinese are registered. About 120 vernacular languages are spoken.

Most people reside in small, widely dispersed settlements along the coasts. Sixty percent live in localities with fewer than 200 persons, and only 10% reside in urban areas. The capital city of Honiara, situated on Guadalcanal, the largest island, has over 30,000 inhabitants. The other principal towns are Gizo, Auki, and Kirakira. Most Solomon Islanders are Christian, with the Anglican, Roman Catholic, South Seas Evangelical, and Seventh-day Adventist faiths predominating. About 5% of the population maintain traditional beliefs. Most Solomon Islanders maintain this traditional social structure and find their roots in village life. The chief characteristics of the traditional Melanesian social structure are: The practice of subsistence economy; the recognition of bonds of kinship, with important obligations extending beyond the immediate family group; local and clan loyalties far outweigh regional or national affiliations; Generally egalitarian relationships, emphasising acquired rather than inherited status; and a strong attachment of the people to the land.

HISTORY

Although little prehistory of the Solomon Islands is known, material excavated on Santa Ana, Guadalcanal, and Gawa indicates that a hunter-gatherer people lived on the larger islands as early as 1000 B.C. Some Solomon Islanders are descendants of Neolithic Austronesian-speaking peoples who migrated from Southeast Asia. The European discoverer of the Solomons was the Spanish explorer Alvaro de Mendana Y Neyra, who set out from Peru in 1567 to seek the legendary Isles of Solomon. British mariner Philip Carteret entered Solomon waters in 1767. In the years that followed, visits by explorers were more frequent.

Missionaries began visiting the Solomons in the mid-1800s. They made little progress at first, because blackbirding—the often brutal recruitment of labourers for the sugar plantations in Queensland and
Fiji-led to a series of reprisals and massacres. The evils of the labour trade prompted the United Kingdom to declare a protectorate over the southern Solomons in 1893. In 1898 and 1899, more outlying islands were added to the protectorate; in 1900 the remainder of the archipelago, an area previously under German jurisdiction, was transferred to British administration. Under the protectorate, missionaries settled in the Solomons, converting most of the population to Christianity.

In the early 20th century, several British and Australian firms began large-scale coconut planting. Economic growth was slow, however, and the islanders benefited little. With the outbreak of World War II, most planters and traders were evacuated to Australia, and most cultivation ceased. From May 1942, when the Battle of the Coral Sea was fought, until December 1943, the Solomons were almost constantly a scene of combat. Although U.S. forces landed on Guadalcanal virtually unopposed in August 1942, they were soon engaged in a bloody fight for control of the islands' airstrip, which the U.S. forces named Henderson Field. One of the most furious sea battles ever fought took place off Savo Island, near Guadalcanal, also in August 1942. By December 1943, the Allies were in command of the entire Solomon chain.

POSTWAR DEVELOPMENTS
Following the end of World War II, the British colonial government returned. The capital was moved from Tulagi to Honiara to take advantage of the infrastructure left behind by the U.S. military. A native movement known as the Marching Rule defied government authority. There was much disorder until some of the leaders were jailed in late 1948. Throughout the 1950s, other indigenous dissident groups appeared and disappeared without gaining strength.

In 1960, an advisory council of Solomon Islanders was superseded by a legislative council, and an executive council was created as the protectorate's policymaking body. The council was given progressively more authority. In 1974, a new constitution was adopted establishing a parliamentary democracy and ministerial system of gov-

request to establish an agency technical training centre to train the growing number of unskilled grade 10 schools. In 1994 Fr David Buenaventura and Br Ramon de la Cruz were sent to start the work. Frs. Joseph Savina, Angelo Fazzini and Br. Joseph Kramar formed the first community in 1995. Today Don Bosco Institute of Technology trains machine fitters, electricians, carpenters and office secretaries. The Daughters of St. Anne work together with the Salesians and take care of the female boarders. In 2007 the noviciate was transferred there.

In 1995 Papua New Guinea was established as a Delegation of the Philippines-North Province. The foundation stone for the new Delegation House was laid and blessed in East Boroko, NCD by the first Delegate, Fr. Valeriano Barbero. That same year the Province of Japan accepted the Parish of Christ the King in Teteire, 35 km. east of Honiara. Fr. Pedro Balcazar and Br. Francis Tanaka arrived in 1995 to start the Salesian work in the country. Teteire is the Salesian 'motherhouse' of the Solomon Islands. There is now a parish, rural training centre and a hospital run by the Pietà Sisters.

In 1995 Fr Alfred Maravilla and five aspirants took up residence in the house formerly used by the Caritas Sisters in Gabutu. It was named Savio Haus. In 1997 Fr. Alfred Maravilla and Br. Simon Naime moved to the new Savio Haus Aspirantate in East Boroko with 18 aspirants. In 1999, Don Bosco Technological Institute, rose on the same compound, PNG’s first technical teachers’ training college. It is now affiliated to the Divine Word University. Fr Arnold Sanico, Fr Agustin Miciano and Br Ramon dela Cruz composed the first Salesian Community. In 2002 the first Daughters of Mary Help of Christians arrived to work in partnership with the Salesians in DBTI. In 2004 a new delegation house was inaugurated. In 2005 the former delegation house became the noviciate and Postnoviciate. Fr. Luciano Odorico became the rector and first Novice Master in PNG.

In 2001 Don Bosco Technical School in Honiara was opened with Fr. Luciano Capelli and Fr. Ambrose Pereira as pioneers. That same year Fr. Alfred Maravilla started the formation sessions for the first groups of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) and the Salesian Cooperators. That same year the ADMA Primaria in Valdocco approved its canonical erection in Gabutu. In February
dary school and of having been visited by all the Prime Ministers of Papua New Guinea. In 1995 when Pope John Paul II came to beatify Peter ToRot he was welcomed in the Church dedicated to Don Bosco to commemorate his death centenary in 1988. That year the Parish of Mary Help of Christians in Sabama was also established and entrusted to the Salesians with Fr. Denis Meim as parish priest.

Soon after the start of the work in Araimiri and Gabutu, the need of having local vocations was of great concern in mind of Fr. Lazaro Revilla, Provincial. Thus he accepted the invitation of Archbishop Albert Bundervoet of Rabaul to open a school for non-selected students. On September 22, 1985 Fr. Oscar Zamora and Bro. Joseph Kramar arrived and were lodged with the MSC community at Vunapope while helping Bro. Martin, MSC at the nearby St. Joseph Vocational School. After a long search a suitable site was found at Rapolo. Fr. Peter Zago, Brs. Anthony Hopida and Ramon dela Cruz welcomed the first batch of students in 1990. Today Vunabosco Agro Technical School is an agro-technical secondary school, catering to non-selected boys from the New Guinea Islands.


Overcrowded with no employment opportunities, many Simbu youth migrate to the urban centers without sufficient skills for employment. Confronted with this reality, Bishop William Kurtz, SVD of Kundiawa approached the Salesians as early as 1986 with a

GOVERNMENT

The Solomon Islands is a parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth, with a unicameral Parliament and a ministerial system of government. The British monarch is represented by the Governor General, elected by the Parliament for a 5-year term. The National Parliament has 50 members, elected for 4-year terms. However, Parliament may be dissolved by majority vote of its members before the completion of its term. Parliamentary representation is based on single-member constituencies. Suffrage is universal for citizens over age 18. The Prime Minister, elected by Parliament, chooses the other members of the cabinet. Each ministry is headed by a cabinet member, who is assisted by a permanent secretary, a career public servant, who directs the staff of the ministry. For local government, the country is divided into 10 administrative areas, of which nine are provinces administered by elected provincial assemblies, and the 10th is the town of Honiara, administered by the Honiara Town Council.

Land ownership is reserved for Solomon Islanders. At the time of independence, citizenship was granted to all persons whose parents are or were both British protected persons and members of a group, tribe, or line indigenous to the Solomon Islands. The law provides that resident expatriates, such as the Chinese and Kiribati, may obtain citizenship through naturalisation. Land generally is still held on a family or village basis and may be handed down from mother or father according to local custom. The islanders are reluctant to provide land for non-traditional economic undertakings, and this has resulted in continual disputes over land ownership.

No military forces are maintained by the Solomon Islands, although the police force of nearly 500 includes a border protection element. The police also have responsibility for
fire service, disaster relief, and maritime surveillance. The police force is headed by a Commissioner, appointed by the Governor General and responsible to the Prime Minister.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS
The first post-independence government was elected in August 1980. In 2001 governance lawlessness, widespread extortion, and ineffective police, prompted a formal request by the Solomon Islands Government for outside help. With the country bankrupt and the capital in chaos, the request was unanimously supported in Parliament. In July 2003, Australian and Pacific Island police and troops arrived in the Solomon Islands under the auspices of the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

ECONOMY
Its per capita GDP of $340 ranks Solomon Islands as a lesser developed nation, and more than 75% of its labour force is engaged in subsistence farming and fishing. Until 1998, when world prices for tropical timber fell steeply, timber was Solomon Islands main export product, and, in recent years, Solomon Islands forests were dangerously overexploited. Exploitation of Solomon Islands' rich fisheries offers the best prospect for further export and domestic economic expansion.


FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

Can you recall important events in your own country’s history? How did your knowledge of your country’s history help to form you as a citizen?

It is important to know the history of Solomon Islands in order to understand the culture and the people of your, now, new country.

Did you have a previous knowledge of Solomon Islands? How did you initially imagine the Solomon Islands to be?

Historical Outline of the Salesian Presence in Papua New Guinea & Solomon Islands

In June 14, 1980 the first Salesians, headed by Fr Valeriano Barbero, Fr Rolando Fernandez and Br Joseph Kramar, arrived in Arahimiri, Gulf Province upon the invitation of Archbishop Virgil Copas, MSC to run the St Peter’s Vocational School for non-selected students. Arahimiri is the ‘motherhouse’ of the Salesian presence in PNG. Don Bosco High School was soon transformed into PNG’s first permitted technical high school with courses in mechanical, electrical, carpentry and welding technologies besides the regular academic subjects. The Parish of Mary Help of Christians was also erected there. In 1987 the Caritas Sisters of Miyazaki came to take care of the girls. In 1997 the school was closed while the facilities were used for the pastoral activities. A few years later the school was reopened as an agency secondary school. Since 2007 the Sisters of Cluny take care of the female boarders. In 1989 Mary Help of Christians Parish in Lariu was opened with Fr. Valeriano as parish priest. Today it has mission stations, an elementary school, boarding houses for children coming from far-flung villages of the Province.

Towards the end of 1979, on his way to Kerema, Fr. Jose Carbonell, then Provincial of the Philippine Province, met Archbishop Herman Topai of Port Moresby. The Archbishop asked the Salesians to do something for the non-selected boys of the National Capital District. In 1981 Frs. Joseph Savina and Oscar Zamora arrived and stayed above the Family Life Services Office in Boroko until a suitable land was found at Gabutu and a residence built. In 1985 Don Bosco Technical School opened its doors to the first group of students. Frs. Joseph Savina, Angelo Fazzini, Ramon Tañola, Brs. Alfred Maravilla and Ronald Vidal composed the first community. Today it carries the distinction of being PNG’s first permitted technical secon-
A village chief named Avicoar, well known to the missionaries for his antagonistic attitude, met the new arrivals with his men on their ship which had run aground on a coral reef at the entrance of Guazap Bay. The natives reaching the schooner pretended to sympathise with the white men and promised them help. Even Avicoar who, in spite of the protests of the captain, succeeded in climbing on the deck, gave no thought to the crew. The hatred of the missionaries and their religion which had accumulated for so long in their minds demanded blood. First it was necessary to destroy that man whose very life personified the principles and righteousness which for three years had been a condemnation of their wayward ways.

When Avicoar reached the bridge he did not even look at the captain. He went directly toward Father Mazzucconi who was easily distinguishable in his black cassock. He was the victim to be destroyed. Avicoar, pretending friendship, smiled and greeted the missionary, shaking his hand. Then Avicoar, thrusting his hand into his grass skirt, extracted the hatchet from his left side with frightening speed. The shiny metal glittered in the sun for a second and then with all the strength the sturdy native had, he hit Father John on the head. Under the impact of the blade, the priest stumbled for a moment looking for support, then collapsed on the deck with a split skull. His soul had already flown to that Heaven for which he had longed since childhood.

(excerpts from N. Maestrini, Mazzucconi of Woodlark)

**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Can you recall any missionary whose example of total self-giving to his people impressed you?

*John Mazzucconi’s example is a challenge to all missionaries to bear witness to Christ even to the point of giving one’s life to the people he has been sent to!*

What can you do to bear witness to Christ through total self-giving to the people you are sent to?

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The Evangelisation of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

When missionaries came to bring the Gospel of Jesus to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, the people they encountered were very religious. God revealed Himself to them as they developed the religious values and beliefs on which their whole society was built. Many elements of Christian truth were present in their values and beliefs. This was the sign that the Holy Spirit has sown seeds of the Word among the people.

Their traditions narrate of ancestral spirits - the spirits of those who had lived among us before passing on to their spiritual existence. As he did for the people of Israel, Jesus has come to us, not to destroy the old things, but to fulfil them.

Their ancestors were seeking for a good life and for the ways to reach it. In their search they established many cultural and religious traditions that still represent the very basis of the societies in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Those life-giving traditions were also inspired by God’s Spirit’s presence and action.

Yet there has always been evil everywhere. Their cultural traditions were not always enhancing life but, sometimes, harming it or even taking it away. All know how tribal fighting, ethnic hostility and domestic violence have caused destruction, fear, suffering and death in our societies for thousands of years.

Through no fault of their own, their ancestors did not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church. Yet many of them sincerely sought God and tried to do his will, as far as they could discover it. Their ancestors’ lives were guided by their consciences. It is God who gave them
the goodness and truth by which they lived. It is God who enlightens all people that they may finally have life.

In 1526 Jorge de Meneses, the governor-elect of Moluccas was driven by the northwest monsoon to Waigeo Island. He called it *Ilhas dos Papuas*. In 1545 the Spanish explorer Íñigo Ortiz de Retes eventually mapped parts of the New Guinea coastline. On February 8, 1568 the Spanish explorer Álvaro de Mendana landed and named a long and narrow island *Santa Ysabel*. Their first act on coming ashore was one of thanksgiving. The Franciscan chaplain of the expedition, Friar Francesco de Galvez, then planted a cross on a small hill. A few days later they celebrated the first Mass in Melanesia. From there they explored and named the neighbouring islands. De Meneses eventually called these the *Islands of Solomons*. These marked the beginning of European interest, which eventually led to colonisation of our two countries.

On April 28, 1606 the Franciscan chaplain on Luis Vaez de Torres’ ship came ashore on Sideia Island and celebrated the first Eucharist in Papua New Guinea. Torres, in fact, named Sideia as ‘the Island of St. Bonaventure’. 240 years later Catholic missionaries started the work of evangelisation in our countries.

Pope Gregory XVI erected the Vicariate Apostolic of Eastern Oceania in 1833 and Western Oceania in 1836. In 1844 he erected the Vicariates Apostolic of Melanesia and Micronesia. Bishop Jean Baptist Epalle was appointed to Vicar Apostolic of Melanesia.

On December 2, 1845 Bishop Epalle and the missionaries of the Society of Mary set foot on San Cristobal Island. 14 days later some local people killed the Bishop. The missionaries eventually opened a mission on Woodlark Island in 1847 and Umboi Island in 1848. In 1852 the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions replaced the Marists in Woodlark and Umboi Islands. In 1882 Missionaries of the

**Blessed John Mazzucconi**

John Mazzucconi was born on March 1, 1826 in Lecco, a suburb of Milan, the ninth of twelve children of Giacomo Mazzucconi and Anna Maria Scuri, and baptized the following day. John was a member of the newly founded "Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions," popularly known as "P.I.M.E.,” an association of diocesan priests dedicated to the foreign missions founded in 1850. Seven PIME missionaries, five priests and two brothers, arrived at Woodlark in 1852. Two priests and one brother remained at Woodlark, and the other three priests, including John, went on to Rook (present-day Siassi).

Unfortunately, John contracted malaria his very first night on Rook Island, and the other missionaries soon succumbed. Soon the bodies of the men became covered with sores and they were reduced to walking skeletons. When a ship by chance arrived at Rook, the Superior, Father Reina, ordered him back to Sydney, Australia to recuperate. While John was gone, Father Salerio, the Superior on Woodlark arrived with letters from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. The Roman officials urged them to consider other fields where the people might be less hostile to the faith. Reluctantly the missionaries left Rook Island. They decided to rejoin John in Sydney and await further orders from Rome and Milan.

Since several deaths among the natives, especially in the chief's families, had just taken place, which the natives attributed to the missionaries, the various chiefs resolved independently of one another to kill the missionaries. But they left unexpectedly aboard a chance ship narrowly escaping a general massacre. Meanwhile John having partially recovered his health, and having purchased an enormous load of supplies, impatiently set sail for Woodlark on a ship called the Gazelle, without knowing that his confreres have already abandoned the mission. The ship from Woodlark and the ship from Sydney must have passed each other at night on the Coral Sea.

«There is no true evangelisation if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed...»

Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 22, 23
The Japanese later told an old family friend that Peter died from a secondary infection. His body was returned to his village for burial, which took place in silence without a religious ceremony. The immense crowd that attended Peter’s burial, in spite of the presence of the Japanese police, immediately acclaimed Peter a martyr.

Peter dared the wrath of the occupying military forces in order to fulfill his commitment as a Christian by fostering the faith in a time of peril. Defending the truth of marriage, ToRot offered his life as a ‘living sacrifice of praise.’ His beatification is a fresh inspiration to married couples throughout the world, strengthening their resolve to trust that God will reward their fidelity to Him.

(Cf. Arena Vol XXIV, March 2004, p. 9; Mark Rix, A rare day for a Saint’s daughter, in Catholic Weekly Sydney, Aug 3, 2008)

Sacred Heart arrived in Matupit Island and in 1885 in Yule Island. The first religious women to arrive in Papua New Guinea were the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Yule Island in 1887 and Matupit Island in 1892. In 1896 the first group of the Society of the Divine Word Missionaries arrived in Tumleo Island, which marked the start of the evangelisation of the New Guinea Mainland. They were joined by the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit in 1899. The first proclamation was followed by a lengthy catechumenate programme conducted by trained catechists.

Many other Christian Churches had earlier arrived in the Pacific region: In 1797 the London Missionary Society sent their first group of missionaries to Tahiti marking the beginning of the evangelisation of the Islands of the Pacific; In 1872 missionaries of the London Missionary Society arrived in Redscar Bay near Port Moresby; The first missionaries of the Methodist Church, Brown and Bromilow, arrived in 1877 on Duke of York Island and later missionaries did extensive work in New Britain and Milne Bay; In 1886 Lutheran missionaries arrived in Finschafen, Morobe Province; and in 1891 Anglican missionaries started their work of evangelisation in Dogura Milne Bay Province.

From the very first proclamation of the Gospel, lay catechists were an integral part of evangelisation. Because of language and other cultural barriers, local lay leaders often went ahead of foreign missionaries and prepared a way for the Good News. The formation of lay catechists has always been and remains important in the work of catechesis.

However, the early missionaries also brought Christian divisions in Europe to Papua New Guinea and these divisions caused confusion among the people. Some early missionaries were not always aware of traditional Melanesian attitudes and values. Often they failed to include positive aspects of the local culture in catechesis. The colo-
nial times introduced many changes in our societies, which had to adapt to these outside influences. Some of those changes fostered the life of the people. Some changes did not respect traditional Melanesian values and were harmful to their lifestyle.

The local cultures are healed and transformed by accepting the Gospel and its demands. Papua New Guineans and Solomon Islanders believe now that Christ has come to reveal to them a way to the fullness of life that their ancestors and they have been longing for. Now they live more fully in the presence of Jesus and his Spirit. They are now proud of their faith in Jesus Christ and the Constitutions of the two countries describe us as ‘Christian nations’.

The Good News of Jesus gives sure guidelines to help the people evaluate the values that accompany these changes. He is alive among us and continues to show us the way to the fullness of life. In the light of the Gospel there is a need to work together to reconcile local traditional values with the many changes in the Papua New Guinean and Solomon Islander society and so build a society, which is truly Christian and truly Melanesian.


"Do not worry about me. I am a catechist and I am only doing my duty. If I die, I die for my faith." To another, he said of his imprisonment, "I am here because of those who broke their marriage vows and because of those who do not want the growth of God's kingdom."

On the day of his death the Japanese police informed him that a Japanese doctor would come to give him medicine. Peter said, "I suspect this is a trick. I am not really ill at all and I cannot think what all this means." He told his elderly mother, who was visiting him in the prison, "Do not cry. Go home and pray for me." Peter asked his wife to bring him his good clothes and his cross - he wanted to go to God properly attired.

When the doctor arrived, the Japanese sent the other prisoners outside. The doctor gave Peter an injection, then something to drink, and finally stuffed his ears and nose with cotton. Two police officers made him lie down while the doctor covered his mouth. Peter was stricken with convulsions and held down while he died in agony.

July 17, 1995, Port Moresby, beatification homily taken from Supplement to the Liturgy of the Hours for dioceses of PNG & SI (LCI: Goroka 2006)
prayer, baptisms, communions, weddings, and burials. After the church was destroyed he built a bush church outside of the village. He kept records of baptisms and weddings and helped other catechists who were confused about changes brought by the Japanese. Peter was arrested several times.

After the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Japanese began to tighten up their leniency on religion. While at first the Japanese did not completely ban Catholic practices, they later decreed that all types of religious gatherings and worship would be forbidden. As well as this, and in order to entice the local chieftains to side with them, they mandated that the practice of polygamy would be reinstated making resistance to the legislation a punishable offense, and when their efforts failed, the military authorities instituted rules and regulations designed to limit the Catholic presence. Peter openly opposed the regulations, knowing that he had to witness for the faith.

Peter organised Catholics in smaller less conspicuous groups and hid the parish records. He continued with his mission. Inevitably, he was caught. A couple from another village, coming to get married, happily told a native policeman. The policeman reported to the Japanese police and Peter was arrested. Peter was charged with holding religious assemblies and interfering with the Japanese plan to promote polygamy.

The efforts by the Methodist chief of Navunaram and the Catholic chief of Rakunai to have Peter released failed. Peter told them,

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The Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

In 1966 the local hierarchy was established, almost 10 years before the achievement of political independence. The establishment of the hierarchy and the organisation of the Church into archdioceses and dioceses also signaled the increasing maturity of the PNG Church. Today there 4 archdioceses and 15 dioceses in Papua New Guinea and 1 archdiocese and two dioceses in Solomon Islands

**Ecclesiastical Province of Honiara and suffragan dioceses**

Archdiocese of Honiara - Archbishop Adrian Smith, SM
Diocese of Auki - Bishop Christopher Cardone, OP
Diocese of Gizo - Bishop Luciano Capelli, SDB

**Ecclesiastical Province of Port Moresby and suffragan dioceses**

Archdiocese of Port Moresby - Archbishop John Ribat, MSC;
Auxiliary Bp. Cherubim Dambui
Diocese of Aitape-Sidea - Bp. Francesco Panfilo, SDB
Diocese of Bereina - Bp. Rochus Tatamai, MSC
Diocese of Daru-Kiunga - Bp. Gilles Côté
Diocese of Kerema - Bp. Paul Marx, MSC; Coadjutor Bp. Patrick Taval, MSC

**Ecclesiastical Province of Mt. Hagen and suffragan dioceses**

Archdiocese of Mt. Hagen - Archbishop Douglas Young, SVD
Diocese of Goroka - Bp. Francesco Sarego, SVD
Diocese of Kundiawa - Bp. Henk TeMaarssen, SVD; Auxiliary Bp. Anton Bal
Diocese of Wabag - Bp. Arnold Orowae

**Ecclesiastical Province of Madang and suffragan dioceses**

Archdiocese of Madang - Archbishop William Kurtz, SVD
Diocese of Lae - Bp. Chris Blouin, CMM
Diocese of Vanimo - Bp. Cesare Bonivento, PIME
Diocese of Wewak - Bp. Anthony Burgess

Ecclesiastical Province of Rabaul and suffragan dioceses
Archdiocese of Rabaul - Archbishop Karl Hesse, MSC, Auxiliary
Bp. John Doaninoel, SM
Diocese of Bougainville - Bp. Henk Kronenberg, SM; Auxiliary
Bp. Bernard Unabali
Diocese of Kavieng - Bp. Ambrose Kiapseni, MSC
Diocese of Kimbe - Bp. emeritus Alphonse Chaupa

Catholic Bishops Conference
of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

President: Bishop Francesco Panfilo, SDB
Vice President: Bishop Stephen Reichert, OFM Cap
Bishop Anthony Burgess
Archbishop Douglas Young, SVD
Archbishop John Ribat, MSC

General Secretary: Fr. Nick de Groot, SVD


Major Seminaries
Catholic Theological Institute - Bomana
Interdiocesan-intercongregational institute for theology and philosophy

Good Shepherd College - Banz
Interdiocesan-intercongregational Institute for philosophy

Sacred Heart Interdiocesan Seminary - Rapolo
Interdiocesan institute for theology and philosophy

Holy Name of Mary Interdiocesan Seminary - Ranadi

Blessed Peter ToRot

Peter was a lay catechist: a married man and a father engaged in teaching the faith and assisting the priests. According to his biographer, he and his wife Paula, in the early years of their marriage, had the usual matrimonial disagreements. Paula, who died in 1993, frankly admitted that he had even given her a “solid beating.” But she hastened to say that this was only once; and she blamed herself for it because she had been notional and uncooperative.

As the years passed the couple grew in grace. They nourished their strong mutual love by praying together each dawn and dusk. Peter was most conscientious about his church duties. He studied doctrine carefully, and when he failed to understand something he sought the advice of the “big holy men.” Pope John Paul II beatified him in Port Moresby on January 17, 1995.

The decisive turning point in Peter’s life and mission occurred when the Japanese occupied the island during World War II. In 1942, the Japanese occupied Papua New Guinea and slowly began to put a stop to the work of Catholic missionaries. Many missionary staff were imprisoned in concentration camps but, as Peter was not strictly a missionary, he was able to stay in Rakunai. In this way, he continued to work hard for the Church, providing prayer services, doctrine and catechism, administering Baptism and, most importantly, preserving the Eucharist and giving it to those who were sick and dying. When the priest was sent away he turned to Peter and said, “ToRot, I am leaving all my work here in your hands. Help them, so that they don’t forget about God.”

Peter ToRot was outstanding as the organiser of his village for
see how many young people in your village, at school or in your community are struggling to have a better life.

Listen to the cry of those who are poorer and in need, starting from your own friends, family and community. Open your own hearts to them and offer them your help in defense and promotion of their human dignity and rights. “Promise the Holy Spirit you will be Holy and Missionaries... each one of you, bring one friend to Christ...” (Benedict XVI Message World Youth Day 2008). Your reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is an important moment in your life to make a conscious commitment to be good Catholics and honest citizens!

Dear young people, do not be afraid! If the above youths have succeeded to become saints, so can all of you! The Catholic Church in PNG and Solomon Islands need the witnesses of youthful holiness! May Mary, our “wondrous helper” and “unfailing refuge” journey with you through out your lives. May Saint Maria Goretti and all the young saints in heaven pray for us all!

† Francesco Panfilo, SDB
President Catholic Bishops’ Conference of PNG and SI

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

Have the bishops in your own country proposed a concrete blueprint to holiness for young people?

In this letter the Bishops of PNG and SI have proposed a blueprint to youthful holiness. The similarities to our Salesian Youth Spirituality are strikingly obvious but the differences are also clear since this letter is based on the Framework of Youth Ministry in PNG. It is important not to confuse both.

How can you help the young practice this letter?

Interdiocesan-intercongregational institute for theology and philosophy

St. Charles Borromeo Diocesan Seminary - Vanimo
Diocesan institute for theology and philosophy

Minor Seminaries
St. Peter Chanel College - Ulapia
St. Fidelis College - Madang
St. John Vianney Diocesan Seminary - Vanimo

There are several female and male religious congregations and institutes of apostolic life. The Federation of Religious runs the Xavier Institute in Bomana for formation and ongoing formation courses for religious.

(adapted from Directory of the Catholic Church 2006-2008; CBC Minutes of the AGM 2008 minutes)

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

Are you aware how the Catholic Bishops’ Conference in your country functions?

The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands provides clear pastoral guidelines in the work of evangelisation in our countries. It is important to keep yourself constantly up to date with the Bishops’ directives.

As a new missionary how can you rejuvenate the Church that is in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands?
Proper Feasts of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

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<th>Feast</th>
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<td>January 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Peter Chanel</td>
<td>April 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Mother of the Church</td>
<td>Saturday after Pentecost</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stella Maris</td>
<td>1st Saturday of May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Lady Help of Christians</td>
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<td>Blessed Peter To Rot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blessed Peter To Rot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holy Name of Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holy Name of Mary</td>
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<td>Blessed John Mazzucconi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael the Archangel (PNG)</td>
<td>September 29</td>
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A New List of Holy Days of Obligation for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

The Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG SI, in line with Canon 1246.1, granted dispensation from obligation to participate at Mass and to abstain from servile work on Holy Days that fall during the week except

sister or brother. But in order to finally make your choice of either entering into Christian marriage or giving up a family for the Kingdom of God, you should already start now to give generously your time and talents without expecting a reward or even just a word of thanks from those you help.

4. The Spirituality of Responsible and Joyful Service

Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati is an example of an active sports-loving 24 year old who was a committed Catholic. He dedicated his time in social projects to help the poor. He also openly opposed the fascist government of his country because he saw its injustices against the people. Pope John Paul II called him “the youth of the beatitudes”.

Blessed Francis Kesy and his four companions, in their early twenties, were members of the youth group of their parish. The daily Eucharist was their source of strength to disobey the Nazi prohibition of continuing their parish activities. They were eventually falsely accused of treason against the Nazi, tortured and beheaded.

Piergiorgio, Francis and his companions challenge you to be servant-leaders who have the courage to stand up for what is right and fight all types of corruption and injustices.

Open your eyes, beloved young people! Look around you and
can turn to in daily prayer.

You will experience his presence through regular prayerful reading of the Bible. In the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance you experience Jesus’s help as you struggle to overcome sin in your daily life. Observe Sunday as “the Lord’s Day”. Jesus also gave us Mary to be our mother. Ask her help especially through the daily prayer of the Holy Rosary.

3. The Spirituality of Communion with the Church

After receiving Baptism Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha made a promise to remain a virgin and spend her life working for God through prayer and sacrifice. For this she was rejected by her own tribe. Although she could not read and write she helped the poor and sick in her village. She died of sickness at 24. Her last words were “Jesus, I love You”.

Blessed Isidore Bakanja was a young worker in a rubber plantation. Among his fellow workers there were those who did not know Christ. He shared with them the Gospel which the missionaries taught him when they visited his tribe. He was not yet 25 years old when he was tortured and killed by his employer because he refused to give up practicing his Catholic faith.

Beloved young women and men, Kateri and Isidore remind us that our love for Jesus leads us grow in our love for his Church. Your active participation in the life and activities of your parish is an important expression of your love for Jesus and his Church.

Join sports or youth groups. They offer you important opportunities which help in your human maturity and mutual relationship with others. Your love for Jesus and his Church is also shown by putting into practice the teachings of the Pope, the bishops, priests and Church leaders, which after all, are the teachings of Jesus.

Do not be afraid to pray for guidance so that you may discover if Jesus is calling you to serve his Church as a priest.

| Solemnity of the Mother of God | January 1 |
| Solemnity of the Nativity of our Lord | December 25 |

The following are celebrated:
- the Epiphany on the Sunday after January 1
- the Ascension of Christ on the following Sunday
- the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ on the following Sunday

The following are celebrated in line with the calendar of the Universal Church but all (except St Joseph) may be transferred to the following Sunday for pastoral reasons:
- Assumption August 15
- St Joseph March 19
- Apostles Saints Peter and Paul June 29
- All Saints November 1
- Immaculate Conception December 8

(Cf. CBC, Minutes of the AGM 2005)

For Reflection & Sharing

Do you know the holidays of obligations and the proper feasts of the Church in your own country?

The Proper Feasts have important significance to the Church that is in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. It is important that we join the Church in giving them due importance. The LCI has published the “Supplement to the Liturgy of the Hours” for the proper feasts in PNG and Solomon Islands.

As a new missionary how can you help your people meaningfully celebrate these Proper Feasts?
Liturgical Norms on Eucharistic Celebrations
in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

In 2005 the Catholic Bishops’ Conference published Pastoral Guidelines for Celebrating Mass which give clear directives regarding the inculturation of the Eucharistic Liturgy in PNG and SI. Reading the integral text is obviously a necessity that a new missionary cannot do away with. Below are some of its important directives.

**Sacred Dance**

30 In most of the cultures of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, dancing by groups in traditional costumes is used at more important celebrations in the lives of the people. The meaning of these dances can well express the joy, happiness, and unity of the people at Mass. These dances are especially fitting at the processions in the Mass: the entrance procession, the procession with the bread and wine and other gifts, and at the concluding procession. It may on occasion be very fitting to use dance as part of the Gospel procession.

- The dance and words that go with it are to fit the purpose and meaning of the procession at which they are used.
- If a traditional *singsing* is used at the entrance procession or for the procession with the gifts, it is not necessary to use another entrance or “offertory” song at the end of the procession. For example, a traditional *singsing* used at the entrance procession serves fittingly as the opening song for the Mass. If dance is used as part of the Gospel procession (see numbers 81 and 144) there is no need for another Gospel acclamation. The dance and song to my people” and to lead them to “the true God”. He loved sports. He was an expert horseman and archer. He understood that, as a future chief, now God is calling him to be holy through the exact fulfillment of his daily duties.

Beloved young people, Dominic and Ceferino remind us that our ordinary daily life is where we meet God. Your duties at home, in school, at work and in your community are expressions of God’s will for you. By doing these well you do God’s will for you and grow in holiness.

2. **The Spirituality of Friendship with Jesus**

**Blessed Peter Calungsod** decided to help the priests who brought the Catholic faith to his people. His joy was in serving Mass. As a “mission-volunteer” he sailed with them through the Pacific Ocean until they reached Guam. He was just 18 when he and his priest companion were killed because they were teaching catechism to the local children.

**Blessed Laura Vicuña** was just 12 when she died. She suffered a lot because her widowed mother lived with a married man who also wanted to take advantage of her. So she decided to offer herself to God for her mother’s conversion. Her friendship with Jesus made her resist discouragement and negative feelings. She continued to be the source of joy among her friends and family.

Beloved young people, Peter and Laura invite you not to be afraid to open wide the doors of your hearts to Christ, then you will find the fullness of Life.

Do not be afraid to be witnesses of your faith in Jesus! It is OK to say “NO” to whatever could destroy your own life and lead you away from the love and friendship of Jesus. It is OK to say “YES” to purity of mind and heart!

Do not give in to discouragement in your weaknesses and sins because Jesus is always with you as your friend and companion in your journey through life. Jesus is your best friend to whom you
strive to recognize your dignity and form you to the fullness of your life.

- We believe that nobody among you, our youth, should be excluded from our concern because of poverty, or sinfulness and failures.
- We believe that God has put in your heart the seed of new life.
- We believe that even when our efforts fail, there is still hope because Christ is risen!

**BE SAINTS!**

Dear young people, be Saints! “This is God’s will, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4, 3). We thank God that the history of the Church is especially filled with many saints who were young people like you. These “cloud of witnesses” (Heb 12, 1) are your heavenly models and protectors. Saint Maria Goretti, your patroness, and all the young saints remind you that young people can, in fact, become saints. We would like to remind you of the journey to holiness that is adapted to your age and situation within our Melanesian cultures. The Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry in Papua New Guinea calls this “Youth Spirituality”. We would like to present to you the four expressions of this youth spirituality through short stories of some holy youth.

**1. The Spirituality of Ordinary Daily Joyful Life**

Saint Dominic Savio died when he was not yet 15 but Pope Pius XII called him a “giant of holiness”. One of his secrets was very simple: do my ordinary duties extraordinarily well. He understood that as a young person, holiness does not mean many penances and long hours of prayers, but doing very well - for Jesus - his ordinary duties at home, in school, in the community. This is all in the spirit of joy and enthusiasm: “Holiness consists in being always happy” and “serve the Lord with Joy” were the supporting quotations Dominic treasured most.

Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá was destined to succeed his father as paramount chief of his tribe. He wanted to study “to be useful themselves serve that purpose.

**Vesture or Clothing for the Liturgy**

55 Vestments serve several purposes in the celebration of the eucharist. As special clothing, for example, they show the solemn nature of the eucharistic meal. Specific ministers in the assembly are identified through the kinds of vestments they wear.

- The vestment common to all ordained ministers is the alb, or as approved by this bishops’ conference, a white cassock or white habit of religious.
- The chasuble, worn with alb or white cassock or white habit and stole, is the proper vestment of the priest. It may be made from either natural or synthetic fabrics that are worthy and beautiful. Beauty should come from the cleanliness, quality and cut of the fabric as much as from its decoration. The closed chasuble worn instead of the alb and chasuble is not an approved liturgical attire in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.
- The deacon wears an alb or white cassock or white habit, stole on the left shoulder to the right side, and dalmatic. However, the dalmatic need not be worn.
- Other ministers may wear an alb or what is approved for or the custom of particular dioceses.

**Scriptures**

60 The assembly’s worship begins with the opening song and procession...
watching and listening as the group leads in the ministers.

81 The gospel acclamation has traditionally been used during the gospel procession, when the Book of the Gospels is carried from the altar to the ambo accompanied by candles or flowers and incense.

- On more special or solemn occasions, a *singsing* group, coming from the entrance of the church, may dance towards the altar and bring the Book of the Gospels from the altar to the ambo. In this case it may be better for the assembly to sit and watch as the group comes in and carries the Book of the Gospels from the altar to the ambo. The assembly then stands at the conclusion of the procession. The song of the group is the gospel acclamation and no other acclamation is needed.

82 ... Servers with candles or flowers may stand on each side of the ambo, and the Book of the Gospels or the Lectionary may be incensed before the text is proclaimed. If the Book of the Gospels is used, it is carried in procession from the altar to the ambo. And at the end of the gospel reading, the one who has read it gives the Book of the Gospels or the Lectionary a kiss.

147 ... All the concelebrants should know what gestures will be used during the Eucharistic Prayer and how they will be done.

- The concelebrating priests stretch out both of their hands toward the bread and wine during the first epiclesis or prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to come.

- If it seems appropriate, the concelebrants may extend their right hand, with palm facing the side, toward the bread and toward the cup during the Last Supper words of Jesus.

- All the concelebrants make a deep bow when the presiding celebrant genuflects after showing the consecrated bread and again after showing the consecrated wine.

- The concelebrants hold their hands outstretched during the anamnesis or memorial and offering prayers, but not during the
7. A CHALLENGE AND INVITATION TO US ALL

Ministry to our Catholic youth should, therefore, help them to be open to discern, develop and nurture lay, consecrated and priestly vocations in the Church. We need not be afraid nor hesitate to propose to young people the possibility of a lay, consecrated and priestly vocation. In this regard the Family Life Apostolate and Catholic Youth Ministry need to work more closely since they are clearly connected and complementary.

If we have holy bishops, priests, religious and laity, then we will surely have holy young people! We will only produce holy youth if we, adults, live a coherent Christian life and make our own growth in holiness our first and foremost priority. Holiness is a gift of God and a necessity in our apostolate. We prove we are God’s servants by our holiness (2Cor 6:6). This is a serious challenge and invitation for us all!

Mary, mother of the Divine Shepherd, is a “wondrous helper” and an “unfailing refuge” during our journey through life. Hers is an ear that always listens, hers a heart that always welcomes, and hers a prayer that never fails. We look to her that we may see her Son, our Lord. With her help we shall be able to follow faithfully the way of Jesus Christ, tell courageously the truth of Jesus Christ, and live joyfully the life of Jesus Christ (Ecclesia in Oceania 53) together with our young people!

May Saint Maria Goretti, patroness of Catholic youth of PNG, pray for us all!

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

Have the bishops in your own country proposed concrete orientational directives to youth ministers?

This pastoral letter the Bishops of PNG and SI gives clear orientational directives to youth ministers. The full text merits our serious personal and community reflection and study.

What do the orientational directives in this pastoral letter imply to you as a Salesian ministering to the youth of Papua New Guinea or Solomon Islands?

FOR REFLECTION & SHARING

Are you aware of the liturgical norms in your own country?

It is important that we abide by the liturgical norms of the Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands as a concrete effort to inculturate ourselves in these countries.

As a new missionary how can you implement these pastoral guidelines as a concrete expression of liturgical inculturation.
To Have Life in All its Fullness
Catechism for Catholics of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

The Catechism for Catholics of PNG and SI is an important tool in the inculcation of the Catholic faith in our countries. It received the ‘recognitio’ of the Holy See in 2007. Below are some excerpts:

9. Jesus told his apostles to preach the Good News and make disciples of all nations. From the earliest days of the Church, Christian witness has been contained in the four Gospels, in letters to Christian communities or individual people, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Book of Revelation.

10. As the Good News was taken to lands far from Palestine, where Jesus had lived and died, books were written in many languages to instruct children, youth, and adults in the Christian faith. These were called ‘catechisms’.

11. In 1985, a meeting of Bishops in Rome asked that a new catechism be prepared which would speak more clearly to Christians of today. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) was published in 1992. That same year the Catholic Bishops Conference of our two countries decided to write its own catechism, based on the universal catechism, in a language properly understood by our people, and in the context of our Melanesian cultures. It received the recognitio of the Holy See in 2007.

12. Since their arrival the missionaries have written catechisms especially the Sunday Eucharist, in a richer, fuller way through creative and active participation. ...Our young people love religious music. For many youth music is the entry point that led them to greater involvement in the life and activities of the Church. Let us welcome and give them space in our communities, but let us also educate and guide them so that their songs and musical instruments not only support and encourage community participation in our liturgical celebrations, but powerfully assist reflection and express praise and many other human feelings before God (Pastoral Guidelines for Celebrating Mass, nos. 1, 2, 16).

We, therefore, urge all to study and put into practice the Pastoral Guidelines for Celebrating Mass. However, let us not forget that our celebration of the Eucharist and all the Sacraments are also closely related to our daily life. They push us to work for a more just society especially through practical concern for those who are poorer and marginalised.

6. Send the Young to Evangelise!
...(Luke 24, 32-35). Luke tells us that the disciples did not keep their new faith. They went back and became witnesses of the risen Lord. Today, more than ever, there is a need for young people who are eager to respond generously to the urgent call to proclaim the Gospel and bear witness to the faith (Benedict XVI Message World Youth Day 2008).

The Volunteering Commitment

We wish to draw your attention to the growing phenomenon of young volunteers who desire to make a contribution to the needs of a community. ...Since the arrival of the first missionaries we have been served by countless young and generous volunteers. Perhaps the time has now come to challenge our Catholic youth to also render voluntary service, starting in their own communities, as a concrete expression of their Christian faith. ...Thus, the annual Lenten Tarangu Appeal and the Social Awareness Week envisioned by the National Pastoral Plan are important occasions for youth solidarity and volunteer activities that should never be missed. Catholic Youth Animators, Chaplains and Catholic YouthAnimating Teams need to ensure, however, that volunteer projects are realistic and attainable for our youth.
2. **LISTEN to the Young!**

...(Luke 24, 17). Luke tells us that Jesus did not just walk with the two disciples; he asked them what the topic of their discussion was. He initiated a conversation with them in order to listen to their concerns. So it is for us! As we journey together with our youth it is important that we open not only our ears but also our minds and hearts to sincerely listen to their cry and discover what God is asking us to do on their behalf today. To do this we need to take a quick yet realistic analysis of the situation of our young people today. This will enable us to make concrete proposals which address their real needs... we cannot remain deaf to the cries of the young! Rascalism, unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse are not “youth problems”. They are really symptoms of deeper socio-economic problems and unjust *structures of sin* existing in our country which our government must urgently address. [...] We call on our Catholic schools, institutions and parishes to promote education to honest, active and responsible citizens especially among our young people.

3. **Proclaim the Good News to the Young!**

...(Luke 24, 25-27). Luke tells us that after the two disciples had expressed their worries and anxieties Jesus explained to them the Scriptures so that they may have faith in Him. We journey with the young so that the Gospel may be preached to them “and our joy may be complete”! (1 Jn 1,4) [...] .

4. **Help the Young to Choose Jesus as Their Model!**

...(Luke 24, 28-29). Luke presents the invitation of the two disciples “to stay with them” as the heart of the Emmaus story. After Jesus came up, journeyed, dialogued with them and explained to them the Scriptures, the disciples opted for Jesus. They asked him to stay with them. As we journey with the young it is important to help them to welcome Jesus and ask Him to stay with them as a real and personal friend whom they can turn to, in regular personal and community prayer [...].

5. **Celebrate with the Young!**

...(Luke 24, 30-31). The Eucharist is the most important celebration of every Catholic community. ...In this light it is important that we help all – adults and youth alike - in preparing for and in celebrating to teach the Catholic faith to the peoples of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. This catechism is a continuation of that effort to present the Catholic faith to the peoples of our time. This Catechism for Catholics of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands is a resource book, written especially to help parents, pastoral workers, teachers, priests, and all who instruct others in the Catholic faith. Its aim is to present its teachings, rooted in our unique cultures. This expression of our faith is a sign of our unity in the faith of the apostles while remaining faithful to the richness of our diverse cultures.

13. It is expected that from this Catechism minor catechisms will be prepared for specific groups; children, youth, and Basic Ecclesial Communities for example. Such adaptation is important if this Catechism is to be understood by more people.

14. The Catechism builds the summary of our Catholic faith around the person of Jesus. He was sent to us by the Father to reveal the Father’s loving kindness towards us and to free us from sin and death. He has sent his Spirit to guide the community of believers, the Church, that he established. By his incarnation, death and resurrection, he gave us life in all its fullness. Life being a powerful idea in the Melanesian culture, the title and the structure of this catechism revolves around the person of Jesus Christ, the giver of life.

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**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Do you have a National Catechism for Catholics in your country? How did this help in the evangelisation of your people?

*The faith is always inculturated because there is no cultureless Christianity. This Catechism shows how the Catholic faith is expressed in the context of Melanesian cultures.*

As a new missionary what can you do to better understand the inculturated expressions of the Catholic faith in our countries expressed in this Catechism?
This National Catechetical Directory provides principles and guidelines for catechesis and religious education at all levels in the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. It applies the principles of the General Catechetical Directory in the context of our countries.

"Religious education is of equal importance in and an essential part of the school curriculum in Vocational Training Centres, High Schools, Secondary Schools, and Tertiary Institutions. This should be allocated to ensure that religious education is given the same standing as all other subjects in the school programme. [...] We must not forget too that many Catholics study in government schools and colleges. They too need religious instruction and catechesis. A regular special time for catechesis of religious associations, groups and movements is an important part in the formation of lay people."

CBC, Pastoral Letter on Catechetical Renewal Nurturing the Faith (2005)

This directory was prepared in response to the invitation of the General Directory for Catechesis (published by the Congregation for the Clergy in 1997) and the Guide for Catechists (published by the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples in 1993) to prepare a local catechetical directory as well as the desire of our Bishops to renew catechesis in our countries as expressed in their pastoral letter Nurturing the Faith (2005).

Nurturing our Catholic Faith is a fruit of several years of work and extensive consultation. It aims to assist catechists present the Jesus Christ and his Gospel in the context of our Melanesian cultures.

THE YOUNG ARE OUR JOY AND OUR CROWN!

The Catholic Bishops of PNG and SI published a pastoral letter on youth in 2008. Below is the abridged version of the letter. In 2001 they also wrote a pastoral letter on youth (Youth Walking His Way). This is a clear indication of the importance the Church in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands has placed on youth.

Dear Parents, Priests, Religious and Laity, and all those who minister to young people,

[...] the youth. They are the most precious gift of our country and "our joy and our crown!" (Phil. 4, 1)... As we designate 2008 the Year of Youth let us once again reflect on Youth.

LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER WITH THE YOUNG!

On the third Sunday of Easter this year we read the story of Jesus walking with the two disciples to Emmaus (Luke 24,13-35). This beautiful journey inspired our Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry in PNG in order to express the Church’s concern for young people. This Gospel text is also our inspiration in writing this pastoral letter. We wish to remind you – parents, priests, religious and laity who minister to youth - of some important attitudes which need to be acquired, and their consequent initiatives, in order to better minister to our youth...

1. BE WITH THE YOUNG!

...(Luke 24, 13-15). Luke tells us that Jesus came up and walked with the two disciples, initially, just to be with them. We all have at heart the goodness and value of the people we love, especially our children, adolescents and young people. So journeying with the young means two things: believe in the young and be present among them. In this way we can show concretely our youth that we are eager and happy to spend time with them and show real interest in issues of their concern in order to gain their trust. [...]
ality “adapted to their particular age and situation within the entire context of our Melanesian cultures” so that they may “encounter Christ in their daily life and activities and grow in holiness”. Thus the four dimensions of youth ministry flows into the four dimensions of youth spirituality: spirituality of ordinary daily life, spirituality of friendship with Jesus, spirituality of communion with the Church, and spirituality of responsible service.

The Framework then outlines the profile of the youth animator, the settings of youth ministry (parish, school, youth groups, movements and associations) and its organization from the national, diocesan and parish level with the corresponding duty statements. It is clear then that that Framework has given catholic youth ministry a new doze of enthusiasm providing clear principles and guidelines which are applied through measurable lines of actions in the National Youth Ministry Strategic Plan 2006-2010.


**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Do you know the policies on Catholic youth ministry in your country? How did the Salesians integrate with the youth ministry of the local Church?

The Church in Papua New Guinea has set clear guidelines on Catholic youth ministry in the country. The Church in Solomon Islands does not have one yet. What is important is we rejuvenate the local Church’s youth ministry by enriching it with our charism not creating a parallel youth ministry nor a parallel Church!

How can you apply the Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry in PNG in your context and enrich it with our Salesian charism?

We commend Nurturing our Catholic Faith to all involved in catechesis, but in particular to those in positions of leadership in dioceses, parishes, chaplaincies, pastoral centres, catechists training centres and educational institutions. In doing so the Bishops wish to thank sincerely all who have contributed to the directory and all who are involved in catechesis in our countries. This Directory clearly points out that the ultimate aim of catechesis is to foster a personal encounter with Jesus Christ (Catechesi Tradendae, 5).

The Bishops are confident that the proper use of Nurturing our Catholic Faith will bring about this personal encounter with Jesus Christ so that our Christian faith and values permeate every aspect of our life in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands...

**5 characteristics of catechesis in our countries**

29. The Church’s mission to proclaim Jesus Christ calls her to renew her catechetical ministry. A renewed catechesis that will help people become more alive in Christ and come to believe more deeply in God’s love will have these five characteristics: Christ centred (n.30), Rooted in the Word (n.31), Melanesian (n.32), Systematic and Integrated (n.33) and Witnessing the Kingdom (n.34).

**FOR REFLECTION & SHARING**

Do you have a National Catechetical Directory in your country? How did this helped in the evangelisation of your people?

Catechesis is an indispensable element of our work of evangelisation. Catechesis helps deepen the initial faith. Reading this National Catechetical Directory of PNG and SI is a must!

As a Salesian educator to the faith how can you apply in your work of evangelisation these five characteristics of catechesis?
Journeying with the Young to Walk His Way, Tell His Truth & Live His Life
Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry in PNG

The National Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in PNG expressed the General Assembly’s vision for its youth in these words:
«We want our youth to enjoy a happy and fulfilled life in Christ. We believe that this will best be achieved by enabling our youth to participate fully in the life of the church and society. This will be assisted by a wholistic youth ministry including social, spiritual, emotional, and life skills dimensions which would prepare them for life-time commitments. They would have many activities and opportunities available to them, especially opportunities to be of service to others.»

Through a consultative process which drew out from the experiences of the past and the challenges met by the present youth coordinators the Framework was formulated in 2006 and approved by the Bishops during their annual General Meeting in 2007. Its Vision-Mission sets clearly the direction of Catholic Youth Ministry in PNG in the light of the General Assembly:

Like the Risen Christ
Walking with the Disciples to Emmaus
We,
Catholic Youth
and the Christian Community,
Alive in Christ, Journey Together
Towards Human and Christian Maturity
by Promoting
a Wholistic Catholic Youth Ministry
Inspired by Christian and Melanesian
Values and Spirituality.

The Framework is inspired by the icon of Jesus walking with the disciples along the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35). Thus it defines the goal, process, context and agents of youth ministry in these terms:
«Youth ministry is journeying with the young, walking with them as Jesus walked with the disciples along the road to Emmaus, enabling them gradually to get up and stand on their own. It is establishing an educative relationship between youth and youth animator that enables their gradual growth towards human and Christian maturity.»

Since “the fundamental goal of youth ministry is the evangelisation of young people” the Framework emphasizes that it “focuses on the personal encounter with Jesus Christ” so as to lead the young “to human and Christian maturity”. Thus youth ministry cannot be but developmental in order to truly accompany the young through the different stages of their growth: adolescents, youth at their prime and young adults.

The Framework outlines the four dimensions to ensure a wholistic youth ministry as mandated by the National Pastoral Plan: (1) Human Maturity (through programs on human sexuality, courtship, marriage preparation, sports, music, cultural and talent shows, responsible parenthood, literacy skills and livelihood skills); (2) Relationship with Christ (fostering of regular prayer, daily reading of Scriptures, sacraments, marian devotion through youth catechesis where Confirmation is its important moment); (3) Membership in the Church (development of a positive sense of Christian and Catholic identity and active participation in the Church’s life and worship); (4) Involvement in the World (through solidarity projects and practical forms of social involvement within their reach like community service, prison and hospital visitation, care for the sick).

These four dimensions are built on the four Melanesian values of community, relationships, exchange and gutpela sindaun or the ‘good life’ – the ultimate value comprising security, health, wealth, growth and good relationships.

Since the General Assembly reechoes John Paul II’s invitation to give primacy to growth in holiness the Framework insists that “a wholistic youth ministry must produce holy young people”. Thus it boldly proposes the fostering of a youth spiritu-