



PNG TANGET

News Leaflet of Mariannahill in Papua New Guinea

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St. Joseph's Mission,
P.O. Box 3, 411 Lae, PNG

Dear friends of Mariannahill PNG

First of all I wish you a Blessed and Happy Christmas, with peace in the heart and around, and a renewed awareness of God's overwhelming love!

Greetings from an extraordinarily hot Lae. It seems that the climate change has finally reached us. On top of the 34 degrees Celsius - 2 degrees more than normal - comes the high humidity of the air which makes us experience the heat as over 40 degrees. The fans are moving and from midday on the air conditioned supermarkets are para-dise regained. Supermarkets, in the last month full of the most incredible Santa Klaus exhibits, those which – through clever marketing – have occupied totally the place of Bethlehem with its crib.

Let me start the CMM news from PNG with our confreres coming and going in these last 5 months after the latest TANGET (last July).

Frs. Krzysztof, Arnold and Brian returned save and relaxed from their home-leave, each of them having raised support for our mission work. Fr. Brian visited also our community in Switzerland in connection with the yearly St. Joseph's Campaign, which this year was held to support the Catholic Radio in Lae. This campaign of our Swiss confreres and the generosity of the faithful gave a magnificent result. Bikpela tenkyu i go long ol!

As Regional Superior, I went in October to Rome to attend the Council of the Congregation and combined with it a journey to the Netherlands for a medical check-up.

Since November our Mariannahill presence in PNG has been enriched by a new confrere, **Fr. Marco Antonio Saavedra Quiel**. Fr. Marco is from Panama and 57 years old.

Fr. Marco was the first Panamese candidate of Mariannahill when he came to Spain in January 1988. Several others would follow.



Fr. Marco Antoio Saavedra Quiel, cmm

Fr. Marco received his priestly formation in Salamanca and was ordained a priest in June 1996.

In 1997 he was sent out for three years to the diocese of Mthatha in South Africa. In 2000 he came back to Spain to be in charge of the missionary animation. In 2008 Mariannahill started a new mission in Colombia and Fr. Marco was part of the pioneer team till 2015.

Back in Europe, his latest challenge took shape: PNG. After two years of red tape, his papers, workpermit and visa, were ready and he arrived on the 21st of November in Lae.

For the moment he is stationed at St. Joseph, 8 Mile. His first task is to learn Tok Pisin. He put it already into practice celebrating the Eucharist in one of the parishes of Lae. And on the 21st of December the parish priest of Wau-Bulolo, **Fr. John Nake**, took him to Wau, a town up in the mountains, where he will preside the Christmas liturgy.

We were happy to welcome our **General Superior, Fr. Thulani Mbuyisa**, who came on the 5th of December to PNG for the ordination of the new Bishop of Lae, which took place the 15th of December. (see further below)

Fr. Thulani left on the 20th of December. On the evening before we had a farewell-party in our "haus win" at Mariannahill House. Also the new Bishop, **Fr. Rozario Menezes**, the CPS Sisters and a few other Sisters attended. It was a nice, familiar celebration, concluded – at the initiative of Fr. Thulani – by singing Christmas Carols, with as last song "Silent Night, Holy Night", sung in at least 12 different languages. That showed well our multicultural composition and the challenge we face to form, in spite of our different cultural backgrounds, a harmonious community. Singing together is a beautiful part of it. Perhaps we should do it more.



Our General Superior, Fr. Thulani Mbuyisa, cmm, and Bishop Christian Blouin, cmm
As to our CPS Sisters in Lae, they have been able to welcome another member of their
Congregation to PNG.

Sister Pauline Mpongo, from Congo (DRC), arrived on the 27th of October. After three years
of religious and missionary life in the country of her birth, she did 5 years of medical studies
in Dar Es Salam, Tanzania. After a few years of practice she specialized in pediatry and got
her destination for PNG in 2016. Welcome, Sister Pauline!



Sister Pauline Mpongo, CPS

Some missionaries seem to stay young forever, but age claims its toll. **Sister Clemence
Klever**, CPS, broke her arm on the 9th of October, when she slipped on the steps in front of
her room. She went to a clinic in Lae, but afterwards the arm didn't really get better and
stayed swollen. Finally, after two months, on the 10th of December, Fr. Krzysztof took her by
car to Kundiawa, 400 kilometers into the highlands, where a Polish missionary and
surgeon, famous as "Fr. Jan", operated her arm. On the 14th of December they came back.
Sister Clemence feels already much better. We wish her a speedy recovery.

On the diocesan level we had our usual end-of-the-year-&-Christmas
party on the 7th of December in the Diocesan Offices. Also Fr. Rozario Meneses, SMM, the
not-yet new Bishop of Lae, was present.

The handing over of Christmas presents was accompanied by lots of laughter and jokes. It
was a very pleasant party. Bishop Chris pointed out that it would be the last time that we

had it in these offices, as per January 1 all the departments should have moved into the new Office buildings erected next to the Cathedral.

Then came, on Saturday, the 15th of December, the great diocesan event of the year, the ordination of the new Bishop of Lae, **Fr. Rozario Menezes, SMM** (Montfort Missionaries).

It was a huge, beautiful and very well organized celebration with nearly 2000 people attending.

In the superhall at St. Mary's Primary School a big and beautifully ornamented stage had been built, giving ample space to the 20 bishops who had come for the ordination. Next to the hall is a soccer field-sized space. It was half covered with big tarpaulins, providing opportune protection against the sun.

Singing processions, performed by groups from Chimbu and Siassi, and by youth from Lae, gave colour and a popular note to the liturgy which took three hours. Everything was carefully organized, late-comers being guided to their seats, ice-water being distributed all the time to the thirsty.

Family members of Fr. Rozario, who had come from India for the occasion, presented him to Cardinal John Ribat and the consecrating Bishops.



Bishop Rozario Menezes, SMM
Bishop of Lae Diocese

After the celebration, the new Bishop was congratulated by bishops, priests, religious and every lay man or woman who had a chance to shake hands with him or give him a hug. Then followed the "kaikai", a great variety of food waiting the guests in abundance on the tables under the huge tarpaulins.

Everybody had visibly enjoyed the beautiful celebration and happiness was all over the place.

During and after lunch all kinds of singsing groups performed and speeches were delivered. It was a great day, to be remembered with gratitude!

Bishop Rozario was born in 1969 in a small town in the South Indian State of Mysuru. At 30 he was ordained a priest. He came to PNG in the year 2000 and worked in the diocese of Daru-Kiunga, Western Province.

After 8 years in that Diocese, he was sent for further formation – psychology and counseling – to Canada, where he spent two years. Then he continued his pastoral work in the Diocese of Port Moresby. Apart from parish work he had several specific tasks: he was the Spiritual Director of the Charismatic Renewal and of the Society of Catholic Professionals, a member of the Health Board of the Archdiocese of Port Moresby, and was involved in even more ministries and responsibilities. No doubt, he brings along extensive and varied pastoral

experience.

Bishop Chris is visibly relieved. His health has steadily improved since his heart operation in March this year, but we may suppose that the stress of waiting for nearly two years for the appointment of a successor was a tough price to pay.

In name of all the confreres here in PNG I wish you a Prosperous and Happy New Year!
God bless, and till next time!

Fr. Alfonso Voorn, cmm

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