



PNG TANGET

News Leaflet of Mariannahill in Papua New Guinea



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Mariannahill Eriku
P.O. Box 3, 411 Lae, PNG



Dear friends of Mariannahill PNG!

Sorry for being late with this Tanget! I hope you are all doing well, although in many parts of the world the Covid-19 is devastating normal life. Here we are still relatively safe. There have been some 600 cases in Port Moresby, but in Lae only a total of 6-7. Our situation is quite exceptional, I think. You can imagine that we are very happy and grateful for it.

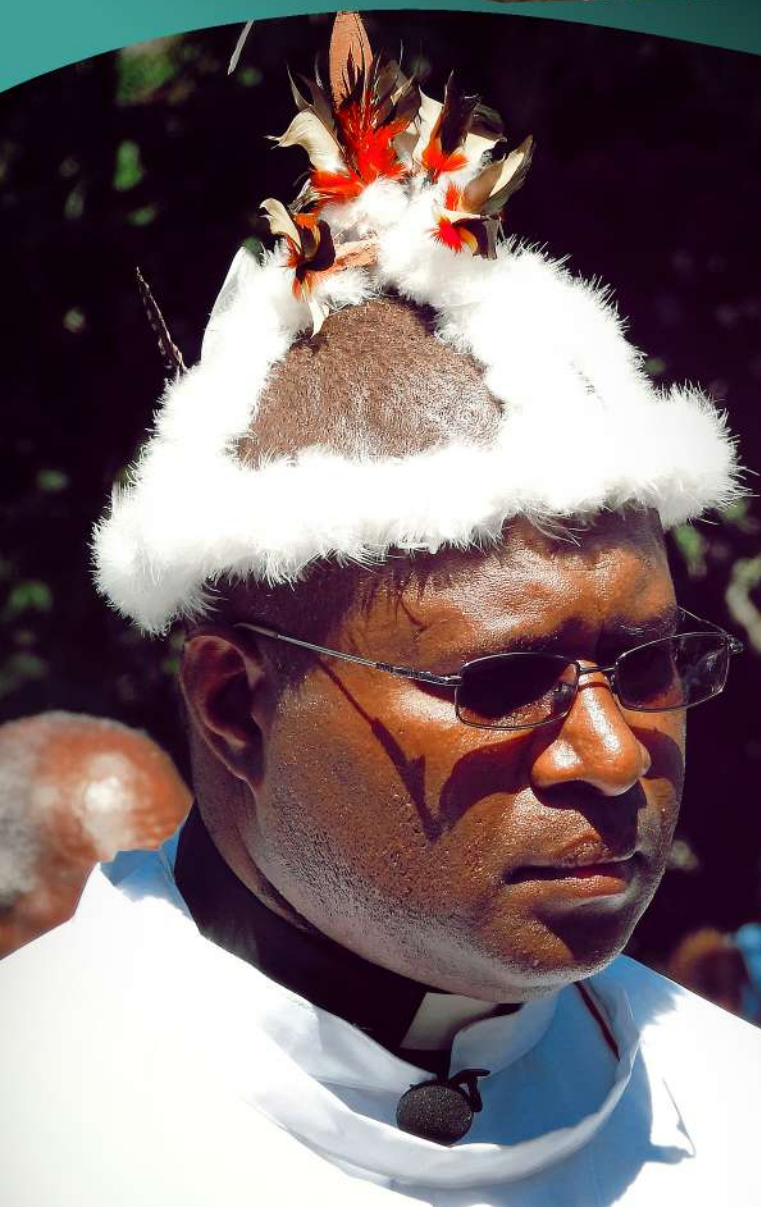
Like many, I have been puzzled by the fact that in PNG the Covid-19 appears, but then it doesn't seem to spread like in other countries. Are people here somehow immune? Or is it just the lack of tests? A few weeks ago I heard a possible explanation from one of our diocesan priests who had attended an interchurch course on dealing with Covid-19. Commenting during the course on the custom of chewing betelnut, very common in PNG, they were told that the "kambang", the lime they mix with the buai when chewing, actually kills the virus. That, indeed, may be the reason why the virus is not spreading in PNG. Thus, long live the buai!



What has happened in these months since the TANGET of June?

We Celebrated a few birthdays, but in low key let us say.

A special and joyful event, of course, was Fr. Wilfred Salhun's priestly ordination on the 29th of August in Rabaul. Wilfred was ordained a priest on 29th August in the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Vunapope, Kokopo, Rabaul, East New Britain Province, PNG, by his Grace Emeritus Archbishop Francesco Pamfilo (SDB). Fr. Wilfred is our second Papua New Guinean Mariannahill priest. Fr. Roland Matoyi and Fr. Brian Nonde represented our CMM community at the celebration.



Fr. Wilfred comes from a family of 7 children, both of his parents are Catholics from different regions and quite different cultural background.

Wilfred was born on the 26th of June 1979 and grew up in his mother's place and thus more acquainted with his mother's customs and traditions. Part of his secondary education he did in Lae, and it was there that he knew Mariannahill.

He started his studies at Bomana, PNG, went to the Novitiate in Mariannahill Monastery, SA, and finished his studies in Zambia, where he was ordained a deacon in 2019. He came back to PNG in March this year.

It was decided that the priestly ordination should take place at Rabaul, having thus most of his family nearby. As usual, traditional festive dances and performances marked the celebration. Fr. Wilfred's next designation has still to be decided by our General CMM Government.



Fr. Wilfred Salhun was ordained priest on the 29th of August in Rabaul Archdiocese



On the 24th of September Fr. Krzysztof Zacharuk celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his religious profession. He celebrated it in Siassi, on Mandok. Fr. Roland Matoyi, our Regional Superior, and Fr. Brian Nonde went in representation of the other confreres to Siassi to participate in the event.


It was after his professional technical training and military service that Krzysztof, born in Poland from a Catholic family, started feeling a strong vocation for missionary life. It dawned upon him that if he was to be happy, he needed to become a priest, a missionary. The assistant parish priest of his home parish who knew him very well, suggested that he go to Rome on a pilgrimage. There he would be exposed to many religious institutions that are in the missions. The trip was paid for, and the lucky Krzysztof found himself in no time at St. Peter's Square. There he met a Polish Mariannahill priest by the name of Richard who was there too for the Pope's catechesis. After a short tour through Rome, Fr. Richard offered Krzysztof a chance to visit the community of the Missionaries of Mariannahill in Rome. He took him to our Generalate in Rome and that was Krzysztof's first contact with the Missionaries of Mariannahill.

After this experience in Rome, Krzysztof went back to go and pack his bags for the life of his dreams. He joined the Missionaries of Mariannahill, went through priestly formation and after 8 years of serving as a priest in Poland his Superiors in Rome decided to send me to the missions. Thus he came to Lae (PNG). It was the 1st of March 2009. After several years in Lae, Fr. Krzysztof was appointed parish priest of the Catholic communities on the Siassi islands in 2013. There are three Catholic communities on small islands, namely Mandok, Mutumala and Aramot, two of them in villages in the mountains of Umboi island, namely Marasulon and Gomlongon, and two on the coastline of Umboi, namely Aupwel and Kampalap. Thus, there is a lot of work to be done and much travelling, by boat or on foot. Fr. Krzysztof is also involved in helping the people in development work and new economic initiatives like fishfarming and the cultivating of seacucumber. The people are happy with him and they organized a big celebration with lots of traditional performances.



Siassi Island



A man with a beard and a dark cap is shown from the chest up, wearing a red t-shirt. He is holding a large, colorful, woven bag made of mesh material. The bag features a pattern of green, blue, and yellow stripes. He is looking down at the bag with a focused expression. The background is bright and slightly blurred, showing other people and what appears to be a market or festival setting.

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. As a community composed of men, united in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit toward the Kingdom of their Father. They have welcomed the news of salvation, meant for every man. This community realizes its link with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.

(Pope Paul VI Gaudium et Spes, no. 1)

Bilum traditional bag with Fr. Krzysztof

Other Events

Early this year we lost Rev. Deacon Daniel Apas C.M.M. We keep him and all those deceased confreres from other units of the congregation in God's hands, may they rest in eternal peace.

Other minor events, some of a totally different character, took place during the last months.

On the night from 17 to 18 October our community in Eriku had visitors. They came when everybody was asleep, and obviously not wishing to disturb and less to be detected, they didn't make much noise. They were able to enter the house and took the TV and Fr. Krzysztof's laptop along.

A more visible performance of rascals took place in September at St. Joseph's Station. Four of them came, with knives and two guns and entered the house of our cook. Her husband was viewing some video with their kids. The rascals took two laptops and a cell-phone along. Money they didn't find.

These youngsters are obviously not the only ones in need of money. According to our government some 48 percent of the PNG population is living under the poverty line. This doesn't mean that they all go hungry, because that cypher is based on the movement of money in the country and many people in rural areas live without money. But undernourishment seems to be a widespread phenomenon and hunger certainly occurs in the cities of Lae and Port Moresby. The one among us who has more experience with this is Fr. Arnold Schmitt, since many years in charge of the parish of St. Mary's in toptown. There are always people around, especially kids and youths, who obviously don't get enough food at home – if they have a home.

No doubt, tradition plays a role in the phenomenon. In the village parents hardly need to care for the boys. They find their way and a good part of their food in field and forest, climbing the trees or shooting birds and rats. Now they come to town. For the parents the situation has not changed much in the sense that during the day the boys are not at home. But for the boys it is different. Town is not a forest, and all things have owners. What in the forest you get free, in town you have to steal. Therefore many land in prison, some of them 12 years of age. Fr. Arnold knows them by name and visits them every week in prison.



Wau and Bulolo:

Both places have been quite present in Mariannahill's pastoral engagement in the Diocese of Lae. Bulolo district has been a relatively peaceful place in a more remote past. Since 15 years, however, ethnic violence has flared up regularly. Bulolo's industrial possibilities have attracted migrants from other parts of PNG. Group-loyalty becomes important when conflicts arise between individuals. Lately, fighting came back to life around Wau. What prompted heavy fighting and destruction of property seems to lay in a quarrel among young people, some of them molesting a girl of the neighbourhood. A young man who came to her rescue was killed. And that sparked of a wave of violence and mutual reprisals which are escalating till today. THE NATIONAL, on the 2nd of October wrote:

“A more robust and constructive approach towards addressing the root causes of ethnic violence in the district needs to be introduced to bring about lasting peace, stability and unity amongst ethnic groups.” In general, police finds it difficult to deal with ethnic violence. The actual government is seriously thinking of inviting the Australian government to send some help in the form of experienced police officers in order to confront efficiently ongoing ethnic conflicts. It is a solution considered already years ago but rejected till now as a kind of undue foreign interference in national affairs. It is certainly not an easy question for any government. We wish them success. That peacemay flourish like the palm trees!



Tolai traditional welcome performance by the relations/clan of Fr. Wilfred's late mother



The Church in PNG in general, an important day was the 8th of September. The diocese of Rabaul got a new archbishop, and for the first time it was a local Bishop. The previous seven archbishops were all expatriate missionaries. Now it was a PNG Bishop, Rochus Tatamai, who took charge of the archdiocese. Bishop Rochus is a relative of the Blessed Peter Torot, who for his faith was killed by the Japanese during the Second World War. The Christian faith was brought to that part of PNG 138 years ago.



We depend on each other to make this world a better place

- by Fr. Roland Matoyi , Regional Superior

In his recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (Fraternity and Social Friendship), inspired by the life of St. Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father reminds the whole world of the very reality that “no one can face life in isolation.” He invites all of us... “to a rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity between all men and women,” by rekindling the fire of the dignity of each human person...” (No. 8). We are children of a single human family of God, brothers and sisters in this common home, the earth. This is one of the lessons that COVID-19 pandemic has taught us. We have learnt that it is not just a saying that the world is really a global village. That human actions in any corner of the world effect and affect all of us either positively or negatively. We now know that we are because others are. We cannot be without others.



Missionaries of Mariannahill Currently Working in Papua New Guinea

Fr. Arnold Schmitt from Germany is our Vice Regional Superior, hence a member of the regional council and Administrator of St. Mary's Cathedral in Lae Diocese. He also runs a Literacy school for street kids from the settlements in the outskirts of Lae city and he does charitable work at the Buimo prison in Lae.



Fr. Brian Nonde from Zambia is a member of the regional council, the Bursar and the Vocations and formation Director of the region. He is as well the Director of Catholic FM 103.7 PNG, the chaplain of Altar Ministers and Parish priest of St. Stevens Parish in 3Miles settlement area of Lae Diocese.



Fr. Krzysztof Zacharuk from Poland is a member of the regional council, Pastor in Siassi Island (also named Umboi and Rooke), a volcanic island between the mainland of Papua New Guinea and the island of New Britain. It is an isolated and remotest territory in the Diocese of Lae that takes a journey of about 8hours by boat and a bit more by ship from Lae. Due to shortage of Priests, the whole Island is being served by him alone. He treks the island by foot for days and visits people by boat and canoe. He is also appointed Chaplain of catechists in the diocese of Lae.



Fr. Marko Saavedra from Panama is a new missionary to Papua New Guinea, a member of the community of Mariannahill in Eriku. He is currently appointed the pastor of All Saints Parish Bumbu, a notorious settlement in the city of Lae.



Fr. Alfonso Voorn from Netherlands, is the oldest member of the Region. He is chaplain at St. Joseph's Technical School, St. Joseph's Pastoral Centre and Buimo Prisons in Lae.



Fr. Ludwig Teika is the first Papua New Guinean Mariannahill Priest. He is a member of the community of Mariannahill in Eriku. Currently assisting the Region with admin work.



Fr. Wilfred Salhun, a newly ordained and the second Papua New Guinean Mariannahill priest. He was ordained on the 29th of August, 2020 in his home diocese of Rabaul, by Archbishop Emeritus Francisco Panfilo SDB. As per now he is still a member of the region of Zambia. However, the process of his transfer to the region of Papua New Guinea is underway. He is still on holiday after ordination. He will be joining the community in Eriku and will be part of the formation team of the region once transferred.



Fr. Roland Matoyi from Kenya is our Regional Superior and the superior of the CMM house in Eriku. He is also the Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese of Lae and Pastor of St. Therese Parish in Kamkumung settlement area of Lae city.

Community House in Eriku

It is our only and the main community house in the region of Papua New Guinea. The community in Eriku is made of mainly 4 members: Fr. Roland, Fr. Brian, Fr. Marco, and Fr. Ludwig. Fr. Krzysztof has got a room in the house whenever he comes for a rest or for some pastoral business in town. Fr. Wilfred, will be joining this community once he is back from his holidays.

The house is in need of serious renovations. During the lockdown, we begun some minor repairs on the house. Thanks to Fr. Ludwig who was so handy during this time. We have plans to begin major renovations of the house in the beginning of next year 2021.

Formation: Candidacy Program

On the 7th of August 2020, the regional superior, Fr. Roland Matoyi, received faculties from the General Superior to admit postulants and novices as well as to receive vows for the first and temporary professed members. He also received the faculty to issue dimissorial letters for confreres admitted to Holy Orders. In line with this and to guarantee the future of the region of Papua New Guinea, we have begun vigorous vocation promotion in Papua New Guinea and the surrounding Islands and countries. So far we have quite a number of positive responses. A come and see program has been scheduled for the month of December this year. We hope by early next year we shall have the first group of aspirants and candidates. We thank God for the gift Fr. Brian, the vocations director, who through social media, despite the load of work on his shoulders, he is able to reach young people who aspire to become religious and priests within the Pacific region.

Bomana College

Our house in Bomana, Port Moresby, is mainly meant for formation purposes. Despite the fact that we haven't had candidates and students for a number of years now, the house has been underutilized and most parts of the house are falling apart. We have tenants in the house since 2018 who have no any written agreement with us and who pay either nothing or peanuts for their use of the facility. Fr. Brian and Fr. Roland visited the facility in February this year, just before the lockdown, to figure out what could be done. After seeking advice of the neighboring religious institutions and communities, the regional council reached an agreement to have a confrere look after the property. However due to changes in appointments in the diocese of Lae, lack of personnel in PNG region and the effects of the pandemic, we have had no one to stay and take care of the house.

We have therefore resolved as a council to put the house in use again by re-starting formation in the region. We intent first to remove the tenants in the house through a lawyer's notice and thereafter, do major renovation to the facility.





Mutumala Island



Change of Email Addresses

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ORDINATION, THE SILVER JUBILEE
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Mariannahill: Papua New Guinea-Tanget.

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