

Pater Alfonso Voorn berichtet aus Papua Neuguinea (ENGLISH!)

Dear friends of Mariannahill-PNG! First of all I wish you, also in name of all the confreres and CPS Sisters here, a really Blessed and very Happy Christmas!

When you receive this TANGET it will be nearly Christmas eve!

What did I promise in the last Tanget? *“For the next edition you will not have to wait five months.”* Somehow true! The waiting grew into seven month! From the land of the unexpected! A nice piece of inculturation! “Sori tru!”

How we are doing? Not bad!

Br. Yvon Bourret, who arrived in May, has settled down in the meantime in Lae and, after a thorough initiation via typhoid, shingles and malaria, is now acting Superior of our Mariannahill House, readying himself for working in Youth Pastoral, while **Fr. Krzysztof Zacharuk**, the official local Superior, is for a longer time on the Siassi islands.

In the last half year our CMM Region has been enriched in a very fortunate way with two young confreres from Africa, **Fr. Roland Matoyi** from Kenya, and **Fr. Brian Nonde** from Zambia.

Fr. Roland arrived on the 5th of August. After a few weeks in Lae he was sent to a parish in the mountains of the Sepik province, where he did a six weeks' Pidgin course.

He is already well at home in Pidgin and ready to soon have a pastoral assignment in the diocese of Lae.

Fr. Brian arrived on the 3rd of November, coming from Rome where for nine months he had been working at the African Section of the Vatican Radio. Arriving at Port Moresby he could immediately put into praxis his media skills attending to a Catholic Youth Convention going on from the 6th to the 13th of November and reporting on the same.

Thus two young confreres joined our Region, ready to share our missionary experience, and at the same time renewing it. Don't be surprised if in half a year we have our own website! This enrichment with young confreres from Africa is wonderful and necessary, because some of us are really getting old and it is time for a change of the guards.

In October our General Chapter elected a new CMM Government. The shift in leadership from the northern to the southern hemisphere was more than obvious. Of the four new General Councillors only the Vicar General is from the North (Fr. Michael Mass from Germany).

Our new General Superior, Fr. Thulani Mbuyisa, is from South Africa.

Mariannahill, once starting in Africa, is coming off age. Africa is taking over.

We expect a similar shift in PNG.

Support in personnel for PNG coming from Africa was unanimously and explicitly endorsed at the General Chapter. Without an “African Bridge” Mariannahill in PNG would not be able to make the jump into the future.

On the 2nd of August our PNG Region lost one of its great members, **Br. Werner Hupperich**.

Br. Werner has been living and working in Lae for 25 years. His tireless activity, especially related to the St. Joseph’s Old Boys Company, St. Joseph’s Mission at Eight Mile and the Youth Development Centre at Three Mile, came to an abrupt end when in September 2009 he got a stroke. A speedy transport to Germany for eventual recovery was not successful and Br. Werner’s apostolate was suddenly changed from a very active to a contemplative one.

Br. Werner spent the last 7 years in our Missionhouse at Reimlingen (Germany), well cared for, but still thinking in Tok Pisin. In the early hours of August 2 he passed away.

On the 10th of August we had a beautiful Memorial celebration in the Cathedral of Lae, thanking God for the gift of Brother Werner. May he enjoy now the fullness of God’s life he has been preaching with his example!

On the 20th of August I went overseas for three operations, a medical one, participation in the General Chapter (see above), and a short trip to Africa. I survived all three and came back to PNG on the 4th of December.

My visit to Africa had as specific purpose to see our two PNG confreres **Alois Gende and Wilfred Salhun** in Lusaka, Zambia, but, visiting too our confreres in Nairobi, also to strengthen the bonds with at least these two Mariannahill communities, from where at the moment we have confreres in PNG . Our confreres Alois and Wilfred are doing well in their studies. At the end of May they will come to PNG for their home-leave.

Together with the other participants in the General Chapter I could witness in Wuerzburg on the 24th of September the beatification of our confrere Fr. Engelmar Unzeitig, who died a martyr in the concentration camp of Dachau. It was a great celebration. Extensive information on him and the beatification you’ll find in internet googling his name.

On the 8th of September **Fr. Sido v. d. Werf** celebrated the 60th anniversary of his religious Profession and the CMM and CPS communities in Lae with him.

On the 13th of October **Fr. Anthony Mulderink** received from the hands of the General Governor of PNG, Sir Michael Ogio, the distinction and decoration of “Officer in the Order of Logohu” in recognition of his longstanding service to the people of PNG through his ministry. Fr. Anthony is our longest serving missionary in PNG, being here since 1960.

Our CPS Sisters got a canonical visitation from a member of their General Government, **Sister Julian Mujuru**, who visited PNG from June 23 till July 22.

Sister Michaela Kim went on the 4th of July to Kenya for a bursar-workshop and towards the end of July to Germany for a meeting of CPS Provincial Procurators. She came back to PNG on August 23.

Sr. Henriqueta Muchate left on the 4th of August for health reasons. In November she was operated in South Africa. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Two CPS Sisters are expected to come soon to increase the small community, one from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and another one from Kenya.

The Catholic Church in PNG celebrated this year the golden anniversary of the establishment of the Hierarchy.

The **Diocese of Lae** did it on Sunday November 13, 2016. Because of the people expected, among them many guests from other Churches, the celebration took place on the grounds of St. Mary's Primary School. Main celebrant was the new Apostolic Nuncio in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, Archbishop Kurian Matthew Vayalunkal.

Bishop Christian Blouin gave an overview of the last 50 years of evangelization by the Catholic Church in the province of Morobe, making especial mention of the first pioneers.

Since the Tanget of last May **PNG** has gone through quite a bit of political and social upheaval. A vote of no-confidence in Parliament had to be forced upon the Government by a Court decision.

Riots broke out in June in Port Moresby and Lae and the police used guns against students, fortunately without casualties.

Next year elections will take place and the politicians are cleaning their weapons.

The Catholic Church in PNG had a more peaceful move in their leadership when on the 19th of November Pope Francis made Archbishop John Ribat of Port Moresby a Cardinal together with sixteen others. It was the first time that a Bishop of PNG became a Cardinal. The new Cardinals were from 14 different countries. At the occasion Pope Francis stressed the colourful unity of the Church, calling it "one of our greatest riches."

Without more news, I wish you all a Happy New Year, with greetings from the confreres and the CPS Sisters in Lae!