**News Compilation for Catholic Church News aired on Radio Maria**

**Air Date: 5/ 01/ 2022**

**Welcome to another week of Catholic Church News on Radio Maria. I am Nigel Akuani, and I am Isabella Saleu with the news.**

**Our stories for the week:**

1. **Pope at Angelus: Be open to God who loves to dwell among us**
2. **Sorcery accusation related violence must stop**
3. **Catholic Professionals call for Transparent Election**
4. **Government can do more**
5. **99 Baptisms during Christmas Season**
6. **Conference of Women Religious prepares for 2022**

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**News Item 1 – Pope at Angelus: Be open to God who loves to dwell among us**

At the first Sunday Angelus of the New Year celebrated on 2nd January 2022, in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis encouraged us to invite Jesus into our lives, to dwell among us, especially in the difficult areas where we struggle.

The Pope said that we often kept our distance from God because we doubted our worth, and urged Christians to see things from God’s merciful point of view.

He reflected on Christmas and the new year and urged faithful to make space for Jesus in our hearts, no matter their sinful condition.

God, concluded Pope Francis, is there in the midst of all the situations of our daily lives, waiting for us to speak with Him about them.

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**News item 2 – Sorcery accusation related violence must stop**

Fr. Giorgio Licini PIME, General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, has blamed sorcery-related accusation and violence on the thirst for retribution, compensation, and revenge to satisfy those who wish to hate and inflict misery.

He cautioned how our hearts harboured mixed feelings toward other living creatures, and said there would always be people who wished well unto others, and people who hated and inflicted misery in any way possible.

Fr Giorgio said sorcery was a cultural trait that was evil in essence and should not be entertained in any way, shape or form. He condemned the ill practice of sorcery violence and said it only destroyed the good moral values that once upheld and made a society prosperous.

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**News item 3 – Catholic Professionals call for Transparent Election**

While the call is on the people to elect leaders of good standing, Catholic Professionals Society President, Paul Harricknen, is calling on the Government to ensure that the election is allowed to be free from corruption and election fraud.

The statement issued on Monday, January 3, was in response to Prime Minister James Marape’s New Year message on the elections this year.

Mr Harricken also called for the campaign period to be further reduced from 6 weeks to 4 weeks due to COVID-19 and to avoid any room for corruption, organised vote rigging and cutting down of costs.

He urged candidates to focus their campaigns on development and unifying issues rather than divisive tactics to win. He said that if candidates can run clean campaigns, the voters will be allowed a level playing field for a free and fair election.

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**News Item 4 – Government can do more**

With a large number of students, teachers and schools bound to increase in the years to come, it is really the duty of each person in Government and in education, besides any individual citizen, to help turn things around for our young people.

The statement was contained in a recently published article by Fr Giorgio Licini PIME, that referenced the need for Churches to be given full mandate to drive the change and development the country was longing for since gaining independence in 1975.

According to Fr Giorgio, the Government will have to continue to run at least half of the overall education efforts and consistently support what the churches can do. He said this was primarily because of the churches’ weakened operational capabilities and the consistent growth in population.

Though more church personnel could either be hired or regularly consulted for policy making by the Departments of Education and Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, the fact that a highly qualified educationist from the ranks of the Catholic church recently had court proceedings started against him is in no way encouraging.

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**News item 5 - 99 Baptisms during Christmas Season**

The Christmas Masses around the Calvados Chain Communities saw 99 baptisms in the Diocese of Alotau-Sideia.

The Calvados Chain made up of a group of islands within the Louisiade Archipelago had Maho village with 32 baptisms, Nigaho island and Hesesai had 12 baptisms, on Grass Island – 22 baptisms and Bomalou had 21 baptisms.

Bishop of Alotau-Sideia, Rolando Santos, said any Sunday but especially during the Christmas season is a good day for Baptism, the first and foundational sacrament for all other sacraments.

He urged all priests to remind parents to have their children baptized as soon as possible one month after birth to wash away the stain of original sin and make him a child of God.

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**News item 6 –** **Conference of Women Religious prepares for 2022**

As a way to officially launch the works of the Conference of Women Religious for the new year, a launching program will be held on Saturday 8th January, at the Archdiocesan Social Apostolate Centre in Boroko.

The program will include CWR-POM Executive Handover-Takeover; CWR Past President’s Report by Sr Thecla Kakata MSC; CWR Past Treasurer’s Report by Sr Juliet De Leon FMA; and a Response by the new CWR President; reflections and a review of works in 2021.

All are welcome to attend this special gathering. COVID Protocols apply especially social spacing so please register a list of those from your community attending to ensure seating arrangements are in place.

For more information, please contact Sr Mary Mccarthy on email (mmccarthypbvm@gmail.com), or on Mobile number: 7338 7971.

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**Recapping our headlines for this week:**

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**This ends the Catholic Church news for this week. Join us next week for more.**

**From all of us here at Catholic Communications, we wish you all an enjoyable week.**