

OCEANIA NEWS BULLETIN

One Heart and Mind for life and mission



Vol 4 Issue 9: Sept 2021

UPDATES ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC as of last week of September 21

Pacific Nation	Total Cases	Total recovered	Total Deaths	Total in Hospitals	1st dose of vaccine	Fully vaccinated
Fiji Since Apr 21	50,883	36,977	622	88	95.8%	72.5%
Papua New Guinea Since Feb 20	19,903	18,431	229	No data	165,000 doses given	45,000 0.5%
New Caledonia Since 06 Sep 21	6,838	3,840	101	297	2,955 doses / day	30.94%

While most of the island nations in the Pacific are still in covid-free status they are nevertheless affected by the pandemic as every other nation in the world. Despite the high numbers of infections and deaths in **Fiji**, the fully vaccinated has reached the threshold where the government decides that it is enough for everyone to return to a limited normal by the 4th October. The houses of worship, for instance, will be allowed only 80% capacity of the venue for the fully vaccinated only, masks and 2-metre physical distancing. The Archdiocese has recommended a special opening ceremony to welcome everyone to the Eucharist after 5 months. Children under the age of 18 have begun their vaccination. So far, 17,996 children have been vaccinated. **Papua New Guinea** has pushed the panic button early on in the pandemic but has petered off noticeably in its data collection. Many have now considered Covid-19 as another disease alongside others like malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid, cholera, etc. However, many yet believe that the pandemic has become too much for the Health ministry to handle. **New Caledonia**, after only 21 days of the second wave, has amassed a high rate of infections, hospitalization and deaths. Our prayers go out to New Caledonia as they valiantly fight against the Covid through their vaccination drive.

Council of the Province

The Council's sessions have been completed and the follow up continues.

Schedule of meetings with the Parish priests and parish communities:

Bougainville	13 October
Fiji	20 October
Vanuatu	27 October
PNG	03 November
Solomon	10 November
N. Caledonia	16 November
Tonga	01 December
Samoa	02 December
Wallis	07 December

Our sick

Fr Seluini 'Akau'ola sm
Fr James Mokela sm
Fr Emiliano Lasaqa sm
Fr 'Ofa Vaihu sm

ZONE ST JOSEPH THIRD ORDER (TOM) RETREAT, NOUMEA



TOM retreats are organized in 8 areas in the Archdiocese of Noumea in September and October every year. The first two retreats were held at Riviere-sale and Montravel and preached by Fr Sao and deacon Filitiga. Due to the onslaught of the Covid Delta variant with lockdowns and curfews all retreats are now cancelled until further notice.

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Vanuatu

Bishop John Bosco Baremes sm, joined the Marist family in Port Vila to celebrate the Holy Name of Mary. The celebration began with the Eucharist and followed by the feast and entertainment. The occasion gave them the opportunity to celebrate with Fr James Mokela sm the Silver jubilee of his priesthood and Sr Madeleine smsm who had

renewed her perpetual profession in the Eucharist to mark her Diamond anniversary. Congratulations to Fr James and Sr Madeleine.



Tonga

The Marist family came together to celebrate the Holy Name of Mary. The Third Order of Mary made up the bulk of the celebration which was led by Fr 'Anaua Finau sm. After the celebration the priests went off for their annual retreat which was facilitated by the Sector delegate, Fr 'Ekuasi Manu sm.



Solomon

Fr Jacob Aba sm visited the village community of Susu to celebrate with them the Feast of the Holy Name. The whole community joined heart and soul in the celebration as Marist laity and witnessed to how Mary has cared for them through the work of the Marist fathers in the past.

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Bougainville—The Hahela community made the 6-hour trip south to join the Buin community in celebrating the Feast of the Holy Name. The priests took also the opportunity to join the Bishop and the parishioners of Our Lady of Sorrows, Monoitu (Siwai) in celebrating their centenary.

MINISTRY TO YOUTHS



Fr Floyd Gatana sm, while waiting for his visa to join the new mission community in Sydney, he made use of his time to help out in the Marist parishes in Bougainville.

He has recently conducted a week-long workshop on youth leadership at Patpatuai for the youths of Turibouri parish, Buin.

“Together we can bring change in our community” was the call of the workshop.

R.I.P. FR KEVIN KERLEY SM

“A Tribute on behalf of the people of Bougainville and the Oceania Marist province by Fr Justin Ratsi sm.”



On behalf of the people of Bougainville and the Oceania Marist Province, I would like to pass on to you, the Marist Province of Australia and to the family of late Fr Kevin Kerley our sincere and deepest condolences in losing someone so dear to us. There are many things for which late Fr Kevin will be remembered. What I will never forget are the following: the most memorable one is his great love for the people of Bougainville and always putting himself on the line for the people especially in the Bougainville Crisis. He was a very dedicated person to all those whom he took charge of in his missions to the rural areas of Bougainville. Fr Kevin was honest and straightforward. He was interested in everything that was happening around him. He could listen to the radio, read the newspaper while the TV was on. He used to carry around a pair of scissors to cut off news from the papers he read, especially news about the Bougainville Crisis.

Born 23.07.1928
Prof 24.09.1950
Ord 21.09.1985
Died 29.09.2021

I, Fr Justin Ratsi, on behalf of us who have known you, wish to pay last respects in thanksgiving for the wonderful and incredible contribution you have made in the lives of our people of Bougainville, the Society of Mary, and other places where you served our church with great zeal. It has been a privilege to have known you. We were family, not just friends, and we will carry you in spirit until we meet up once again. May you rest in love and peace.