

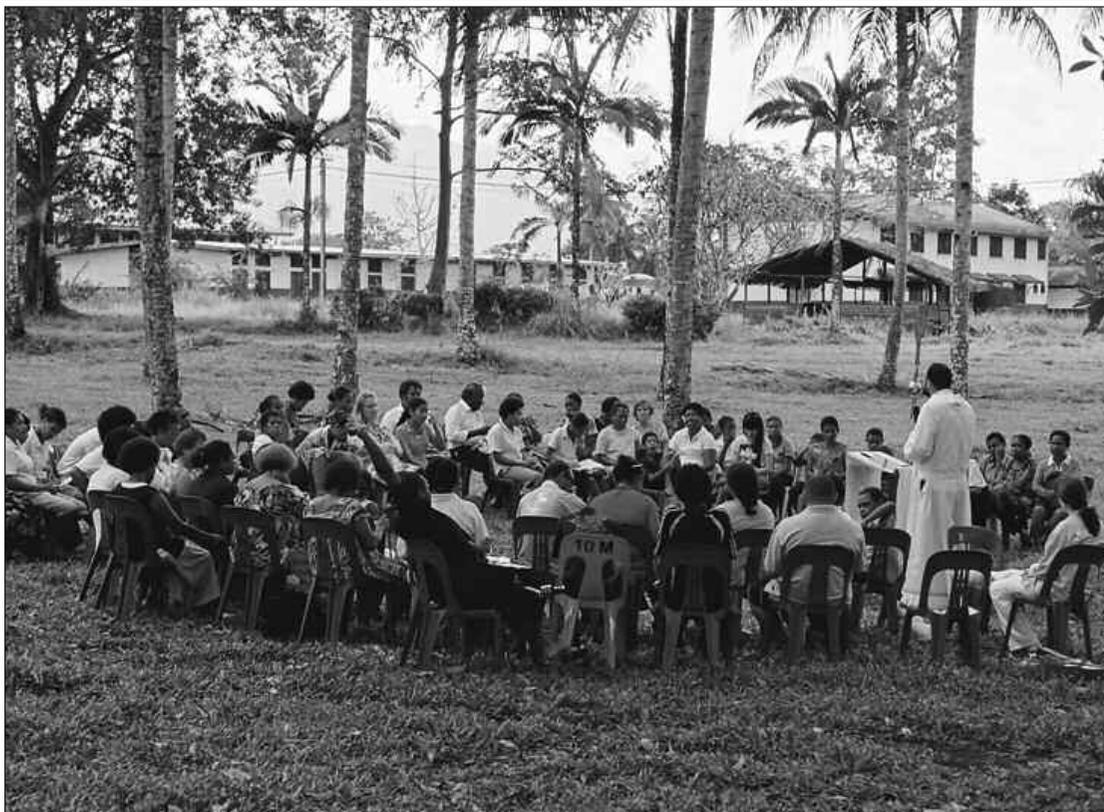
## THE LOGO OF THE YEAR OF FAITH

11 October 2012 – 24 November 2013



The Logo for the Year of Faith is composed of a square and bordered field on which a boat, symbolizing the Church, is depicted sailing over the waves. The main mast of the boat is a cross from which sails are displayed in the form of dynamic signs which compose the trigram of Christ (IHS). Behind the sails is a sun which, associated with the trigram, also refers to the Eucharist.

## The Neocatechumenal way from Alotau to Wewak



The Neo-Catechumenal community recently established in Alotau.

By Fr Giorgio Licini  
CBC Communications

**GIOVANNI** Trentin is only 22, but already a missionary to Papua New Guinea. He arrived in Wewak last August 29 along with Milena Croce and Fr Eugenio Zurias. Giovanni was born in Australia from Italian parents, while Milena, now 50, left her native Italy at 32 to be a missionary to Sweden. Fr Eugenio is from Venezuela but studied and was ordained a priest in Perth, Australia. They are the itinerant team assigned to PNG by the Neo-Catechumenal Way, a ministry which aims to rediscover one's baptismal promises through Christian Initiation done in small communities.

### Is your ministry new to Papua New Guinea?

**MILENA.** No, we are new to Wewak but not to Papua New Guinea. The Neocatechumenal Way came to Alotau three years ago upon invitation of then diocesan Bishop Francesco Panfilo SDB. In 2011 and 2012, with the new Bishop Rolando Santos CM, we conducted catechetical activities there, which led to the rise of a first community of about 50 lay people. In Wewak we are going to start in the Parish of Kaindi upon the invitation of the parish priest, Fr. Caspar Talmay, and Diocesan Bishop Tony Burgess.

### What are the basic contents of the catechesis?

**FR. EUGENIO.** The initial catecheses and the neocatechumenal itinerary are based on the three fundamental elements of Christian life, underlined by the Second Vatican Council: Word of God, Liturgy and Community. In a Parish, we invite everyone to come and listen to the Good News of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This "word of salvation" calls to conversion and to faith, and invites participants to recognize themselves as sinners, to welcome the forgiveness and free love of God, and to start walking towards their personal transformation into Christ, through the power of the Spirit. We try to help them rediscover the mystery and the gift of Baptism, which confers a new life and new dignity on the human person. We try to establish communities of believers, so that the members can help each other on their journey and be more faithful to their Baptism.

**GIOVANNI.** It is important to stress that not only do we target lapsed Catholics, but also the far away from the Church. In this itinerary of Christian Initiation the Christian Family appears as the place for the transmission of Faith. Concretely, I have experienced this in my family because my parents

joined the Way in their 20s. I am convinced the Christian Family is the corner-stone of society.

### Is the parish priest to be involved in the ministry when you take it to a parish?

**FR. EUGENIO.** The parish priest doesn't need to become a full member of the community. However, in my experience, a priest greatly profits from the reviving of the gift of his own Baptism. Since the pastoral work of Christian initiation is vital for the parish, the implementation of the Neocatechumenal Way must be coordinated with the proper function that the parish priest has in each parish community, providing the pastoral care of those who are going through the Neocatechumenal Way.

### Are the parishes and the dioceses open to the Neo-Catechumenal Way?

**MILENA.** Although the Way is still quite new in PNG (so far, we only have a Neocatechumenal Community in Alotau), some Parish Priests have asked us to help them in the Evangelisation of the people entrusted to them. They have told us that many of their parishioners have stopped practicing their faith and others have joined the sects. Some Bishops have invited us to work alongside the other realities which already exist in their Diocese. Someone pointed out that we have just arrived and may not be able to have a grasp of the people and their culture. We know we need to learn and are willing to do so. We are also very encouraged by St Paul when he says: "My grace is enough for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

**GIOVANNI.** In any case our focus would be in trying to close the gap between faith and life, which frequently contradict each other. We noticed that people here are listening, they are open to the Word of God and they are willing to apply it to their lives. The goal is to help the person to develop an intimate relationship with Christ, to rediscover the faith and bring it to its fullness.

### Do you see the Neo-Catechumenal Way as an asset for the New Evangelization?

**FR. EUGENIO.** Certainly! We have always thought of ourselves in those terms especially after Pope John Paul II started developing and promoting this idea. More recently, in January this year, Pope Benedict XVI told us at an audience: "The Church thanks you; she needs you for the New Evangelization... I invite you not to be afraid: those who bring the Gospel are never alone."

## ALL CHRISTIANS TO ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL

From the message of Pope Benedict XVI for Mission Sunday on 21 October 2012:

One of the obstacles to evangelization is, in fact, the crisis of faith, not only in the Western world but among a large part of humankind, which nonetheless hungers and thirsts for God, and which must be invited and led to the bread of life and the living water. ... We must renew our enthusiasm to communicate the faith, so as to promote new evangelization in communities and countries of ancient Christian tradition, which are losing their reference to God, and help them rediscover the joy of believing."

"Many priests and religious from all over the world, many lay people and even entire families leave their countries, their local communities, and travel to other Churches to bear witness to and announce the Name of Christ. ... This is an expression of profound communion, sharing and charity among Churches".

"Together with this exalted sign of faith transformed into charity, I would like to mention and thank the Pontifical Missionary Works, which is an instrument for cooperation in the Church's universal mission in the world. Thanks to their activities the announcement of the Gospel is transformed into assistance to others, justice for the poorest, education in isolated villages, medical care in remote areas, liberation from want, rehabilitation of the marginalized, support for the development of peoples, the breaking down of ethnic divisions and respect for life in all its stages".

From the Vatican, 25 January 2012

## Apostolic Nuncio challenges Rabaul youth

The Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, Abp. Santo Gangemi, paid a visit to the Rabaul parish youth leaders gathered at Vunapope for their leadership training program on 4 September. He told the participants that "the year of faith is around the corner, since it will be opened by Pope Benedict XVI on 11 October this year; it is an opportunity for renewing and rekindling our Catholic faith; and this can be easier for the people of Rabaul and Papua New Guinea

following the steps of Blessed Peter ToRot, a faith model of our times". "This leadership training program is a good start – the Pope's representative also told the youth - and I urge you to be responsible in your respective parishes with an active participation". Twenty nine parish youth leaders participated in the program from 2-9 September promoted by Fr. Shanthi Puthussery, Catholic Cational Secretary for Youth and Laity.