

TALANOA TOKTOK

Official Publication of the Pacific Conference of Churches

Life on the edge

IN the coastal community of Togoru in Fiji, the sea continues to eat away at the shore. There appears to be no relief in sight. We accompanied our partners to the settlement to see for themselves the effects of climate change.





Learning curve ... PCC Climate Change expert, Frances Namoumou, at Togoru with Catholic bishops from around Oceania

Bishops see nature's fury

WHEN the Catholic bishops of Oceania visited Fiji, they saw first hand the fury of nature.

At Togoru, the bishops saw how the sea had eaten away at the shore, uncovering graves which had destroyed vegetation. The Pacific Conference of Churches, which has worked with the community for five years, facilitated the visit.

In the Namosi Province, the delegates saw how indiscriminate logging and gravel extraction had affected the Navua River and impacted communities living along the waterway. The PCC in conjunction with Caritas Fiji - the social justice arm of the Catholic church, briefed the bishops on civil society efforts to help the affected people.

The Federation of Catholic Bishops in Oceania comprises members from the Pacific and includes Australia and New Zealand.

Our partners walk the talk

THE Pacific Conference of Churches' partners have become regular visitors to the Lomana Na Vulagi Eco Farm.

The latest visitors were Brande Midgett-Crosby (pictured) and Derek Duncan of Global Ministries, based in the United States.

While at the farm, the two planted baigan (egg plants) which will be part of an income generating project for the PCC.

In talks with Global Ministries, PCC General Secretary, Reverend James Bhagwan, discussed the possibility of a US mission worker joining the Lomana Na Vulagi team later this year.





fully grounded ... Derek Duncan of Global Ministries plants eggplants at Lomana Na Vulagi

Farm plan in place

A COMPREHENSIVE five - year plan for the Lomana Na Vulagi Farm Eco Farm and School has been completed. The Pacific Conference of Churches Finance and Business Committee has approved the plan and roll out began in the last week of the month.

Farm workers have been briefed on plans to increase productivity, generate new income streams and build additional structures. Work on the first phase of the piggery has been completed with provision for two sows and 20 piglets. The second phase of the

piggery project will begin in April.

In May, work will begin on facilities for free-range chicken and ducks which will be sold online and at the farm.

Also part of the plans are the creation of fruit orchards and root crop plantations.

Media workshop for churches

PACIFIC church media workers gather in May to discuss ways in which to improve communications. The two-day workshop will help church media and communications teams draw up plans and implement these in their countries.

A small grant will be provided to participants so they can fund local projects. These may include setting up websites, buying equipment or live streaming Sunday worship.



Seven communications staff from member churches have confirmed their attendance. It is envisaged that some of

students will join the PCC Media Team at the General Assembly in Kanaky (New Caledonia) at the end of 2023.

The course will also focus on Digital Justice and the need for coverage of issues which affect the most vulnerable in society - especially women, children and the disabled. If you want to be part of the course, send an email to media01.pcc@gmail.com for details.



Child rights ... children in the Solomon Islands benefit from PCC Child Protection programmes

We reach out to all

THE first quarter of 2023 has seen a flurry of activities across the region.

From the Republic of the Marshall Islands to Nauru and Kiribati, the Pacific Conference of Churches has been involved in a series of activities.

These include the Training of Trainers in Child Protection methods and creating safe churches in the region.

A concerted effort has been made to involve the Northern Pacific churches in regional activities in a greater way.

In May, Marshallese churches will host a meeting of church leaders as they become more involved with the ecumenical family. A quick survey has been done on Nauru to determine the needs of the local church before implementing programmes around youth, women and children.

PCC General Secretary, Reverend James Bhagwan, said a project to improve meeting facilities on Majuro would take

shape soon as activities were ramped up in the Northern Pacific.

"We are able to help refurbish one of the oldest church schools on Majuro ahead of the Pacific Church Leaders Meeting," Bhagwan said.

"The PCC is committed to keeping all its members involved through meaningful dialogue and activities."

Last quarter, Bhagwan visited the Marshall Islands and Kiribati to support the PCC ecological stewardship and youth programmes.

He also spoke at the annual Gay Pride event in Sydney after an invitation from organisers.

"The task is now to go back and find ways to respectfully share the messages, the lessons from our rainbow community to our Christian community in the Pacific; that is my role."