



St Michael the Archangel,  
A Warrior for Today

# In Honour of the Angels

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The CONGREGATION of SAINT MICHAEL the ARCHANGEL (CSMA)

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## The Scapular of St Michael

### PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray and do you, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Editorial	1
Chronicles	2
Papua New Guinea	3
Divine Mercy, PNG	4



**D**ear Friends,

We welcome the New Year and hope it will be a blessed one. 2017 marks 100 years since Our Lady appeared to 3 shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. It gives us the opportunity to reflect on the messages, the importance of the apparitions that call for conversion, our re-commitment to Jesus and to pray for peace in our world. The Holy Father, Pope Francis will be visiting Fatima in May to enhance the devotion to our Mother Mary.



While we are all informed about Mary's apparitions there is also an angelic presence in this story. Preceding our Mother Mary's appearance, the Angel of Peace appeared to the children numerous times to prepare them spiritually and to help them to pray. It reminds us that Angels are there to teach us to pray and to pray with them. One way of reminding us of this is the Scapular of St Michael the Archangel. When we wear it faithfully on a daily basis it helps to unite our minds, hearts and souls with God.

The Scapular is an outward sign of entrustment to St Michael. It was first introduced in the 19th Century in Rome and in recent years re-established and propagated by CSMA. As seen in the photo above, the Scapular consists of 2 layers of woollen cloth in the shape of a shield. It has a face with the image of St Michael the Archangel and another face with the image of Our Lady Help of Christians. There is also a medal version of the scapular. Wearing the scapular should remind us of our Christian duties and of the assurance of St Michael's intercession on our behalf. Acceptance of the scapular includes us in the Michaelite family and grants access to all the spiritual goods of the Congregation. Those who receive the scapular are enrolled into the Book of the Scapular and become members of the Confraternity of the Scapular. The reception into the Confraternity is valid if the priest or deacon uses the rite prescribed by the Superior General of the CSMA. If you would like to be invested with the scapular of St Michael the Archangel please contact your local Michaelite priest. We are all encouraged to accept this spiritual gift by Pope Benedict XVI who writes: *that acceptance of the outward sign of the scapular is to remind the wearer that they experience the effective assistance of a powerful defender, thereby discovering the majesty, goodness and love of God as well as the fact that there is no greater value, nor any greater good, above God Himself, the Creator and Lord of all that lives. Mi-ha-el, Who is like unto God!*

*Blessings to all for the Easter Season*

*Fr Janusz Bieniek CSMA*

# Chronicles

## Feast of Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz



On 30 January the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel (CSMA) Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and co-workers all over the world celebrate the Feast of the Congregation's Founder, Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz. It is an occasion to remember the heroic efforts of this holy man who dedicated his life to the service of

children and young people, especially the neglected and marginalized and those experiencing material and spiritual poverty. Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz provided shelter, spiritual and intellectual care in educational institutions that he established in many cities throughout Poland. After his death, his mission was carried on by his spiritual sons and daughters. Today, with the grace of God, Michaelite Fathers, Brothers and Sisters practice their Founder's charism by continuing to provide pastoral care in the Catholic Church, not only in Poland, but on every continent throughout the world.

This year, on the Founder's Feast day, the Sydney Michaelite Fathers gathered for a religious community day at the Star of the Sea parish in Terrigal hosted by Fr Jacek Kokosa csma (PP) and assistant priest Fr George Gorzkowski csma. Together we shared a day of reflection and celebrated a thanksgiving Mass, thanking God for all His blessings and graces, and offering prayers for the intention of parishioners, co-workers and past and present benefactors.

## Br. Thomas Lasen CSMA

Every month the Sydney Michaelite community gathers for their monthly recollection day to dedicate some time to community prayer, reflection on the charism of the Congregation and to discuss any issues concerning community life. Last month on 27 February we held our meeting at Our Lady of Victories Parish, Horsley Park, where we were hosted by Fr Dominik Karnas csma (PP) and Fr Marek Okarma csma. In addition to the regular program, we had a few extra



Fr Stan Kluk installing Br Thomas to the Ministry of Acolytes

reasons to come together. Firstly, we had the Instalment of Br Thomas Lasen csma to the Ministry of Acolytes. This was held in the church chapel where we celebrated Mass, during which the Provincial Superior, Fr Stan Kluk csma administered the ministry to Br Thomas. The Ministry of Acolyte is a stage in the formation on the way to priesthood which we hope and pray Br Thomas may reach

in the future. Please keep him and our seminarians in your prayers.

On this same day, we had a special visitor from Poland, Fr Krzysztof Stanula csma, Local Superior and Parish Priest of the newest CSMA community in Gniezno, central Poland. Historically, Gniezno is a very important city in Poland as it is the place where the first Polish Martyr and Saint, **Bishop Wojciech (Adalbert)** is buried. It is also the place where the first Polish ecclesiastical province (archbishopric) was established in the year 1000 AD.

Afterwards, in the presbytery, we had a scrumptious meal with pavlova to celebrate Br Thomas' Installation and Fr Krzysztof's 50th Birthday. From the Michaelite Fathers many thanks goes to Barbara from Horsley Park parish for preparing the luncheon and celebrations.



Sydney Michaelite Fathers together with visiting priest, Fr Krzysztof (2nd from left)

# From the Missions in PNG

*An interview with Fr Bogdan Skupien – Diocesan priest of Czestochowa, Poland and Fr Marek Kondrat – Diocesan priest of Lublin, Poland. Both Fathers were visiting Sydney earlier this year residing with the Michaelite Fathers in Hurstville parish.*

## How long have you been working in the missions?

Fr Marek and Fr Bogdan were commissioned to the Mendi Diocese in PNG in 2005/06. The Mendi Diocese was then in its 50th Jubilee year of missionaries working in that region. Missionaries first came to the region in the 1950s and now, most people in the region are Christians.

Fr Marek started as a chaplain in Tari secondary school which was the only Catholic high school in the Diocese. He found the people to be very warm, happy, generous, respectful and welcoming. Fr Marek didn't like to travel much so when he was in need of new resources, he was always supported and accompanied by others. He commented, "In PNG there are crowds of people in the Mass. The liturgy is alive. People are very involved and like to bring their traditional music and dances to the liturgy. On some occasions, when we celebrate the Sacraments, the people use their traditional costumes and cultures. It is really beautiful." Both Fr Bogdan and Fr Marek agreed that the people of PNG have a proud sense of identity with religion and their culture and have embedded the two in their daily lives. "The people are always happy to support the missionaries and assist them wherever possible." said Fr Marek.

## How has Christianity helped the people of PNG?

Christianity has slowly changed the attitude of the people. Wars among the people are happening less. Their Christian faith and beliefs are helping them to choose to have a discussion rather than to fight. They have heard the *Good News* and because of their Christian faith and beliefs, they stop, talk and discuss issues. Often, we missionaries step in as a mediator and talk with the leaders of the people. Other times, the people are asking for a Reconciliation Mass where they can bring their offerings and share their food as a sign of peace.

Fr Marek went on to tell the following story: "One time, there was a young man who came to the church and admitted in front of everyone his wrongdoing—that he had killed a man. Before the community, he openly asked for Reconciliation and soon after, converted to the faith. The people of PNG are starting to realise that killing is not the way. They have heard the Good News and they know in their hearts that Jesus is the Way."

Fr Bogdan noticed that during the Year of Mercy 2016,

more people were coming to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Many were returning to the church after considerable years of being away. Fr Marek commented how baptisms were becoming more and more common.



Fr Bogdan Skupien with some of his parishioners.

"People are bringing their children and all those who have not been baptised to the church. The Catholic Church is really growing in PNG."

## What devotional prayers are strong in PNG?

**Legion of Mary:** is very present in most parishes and is in nearly every village. There are Charismatic prayer groups and *Antioch* for the youth and single people.

**St Michael Prayer:** The devotion to St Michael is well known in PNG as St Michael is the country's Patron. In most Dioceses, it is policy to say the St Michael prayer after every Mass. Frs Marek and Bogdan commented that the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel (CSMA) have been instrumental in spreading devotion to St Michael among the people, with printed copies of the St Michael prayer on cards and bookmarks and pamphlets on the chaplet together with prayer beads. The CSMA is also very active to cooperate and support other priests in their Diocese and surrounding Dioceses with materials, resources and spiritual works.

**Divine Mercy Chaplet:** This devotion is growing rapidly with groups set up in parishes. Fr Bogdan is the Parish Priest in the Divine Mercy Parish on Karkar Island - Archdiocese of Madang. He brought relics of St Faustina from Poland to be placed in the church.

Fr Marek is the Divine Mercy Chaplain for the Madang Diocese. He did a pilgrimage with the Diocese youth to visit the Divine Mercy Shrine on Karkar Island. He is hoping to establish prayer groups in every parish of the Diocese, like the Legion of Mary.

## Knights of St Michael The Archangel



*This is a lay Catholic Religious Movement whose members under the banner of St Michael are set on a mission to proclaim the victory of Christ over Satan, to obtain the conversion of sinners and to expiate for the sins of humankind.*

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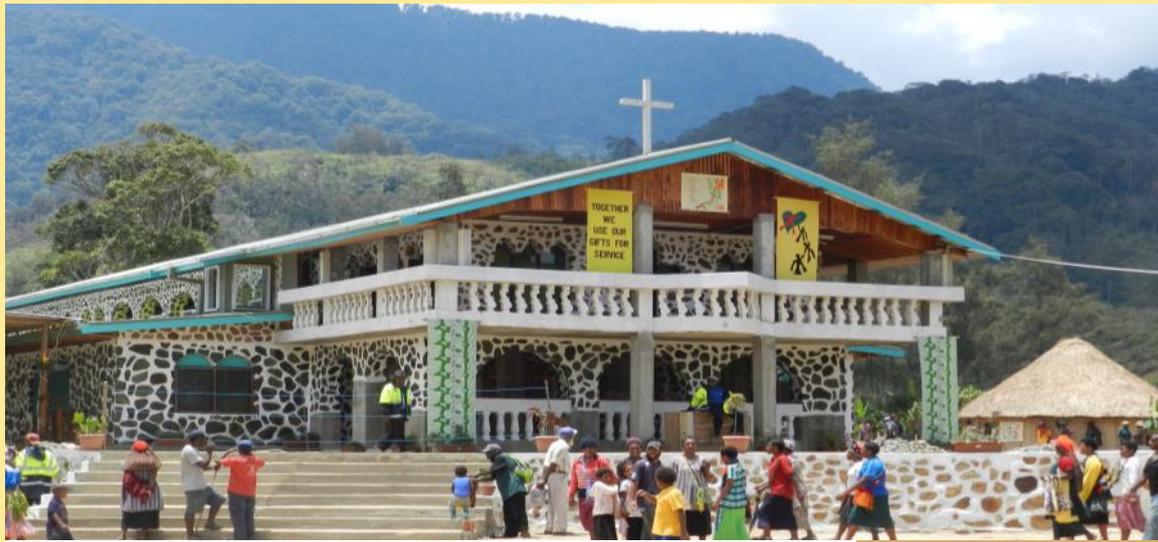
### St Michael Mission Society (SMMS)

Supporting the missions in PNG and Michaelite missionaries. If you would like to become a member or make a donation contact:  
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# Divine Mercy Shrine, PNG - APPEAL



## From Archbishop Douglas Young

Dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters families and all the faithful, greetings from the Catholic People of Mount Hagen Archdiocese in Papua New Guinea. May the love, peace and protection of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always.

Shrines are special places of God's presence among people. The Divine Mercy Shrine in Rukus was consecrated on 22 October 2015 by Apostolic Nuncio Michael Banach. Since then we have had many people coming to the Shrine for retreats, confession and Holy Mass. Now we want to complete the windows and rain water gutters that will be connected to water tanks that will provide the neighbouring village and the visiting pilgrims with safe drinking water. We also want to complete some work outside the Shrine: drainage, concrete paths and retainers and the painting of all currently unpainted areas.

Secondly, we are planning to build a permanent house for the Rector, Sisters and visiting retreat directors. At the moment the Rector of the Divine Mercy Shrine is living in a house built by the local people from bush materials. We would really appreciate with our whole heart if we can receive some help to complete the Divine Mercy Shrine and other phases of the project.



If you are able to help, please contact:  
**Fr Bogdan Swierczewski csma,**  
(pictured) Rector of the Shrine Box 54,  
Mount Hagen, WHP,  
Papua New Guinea.  
Donations may be made to: CMHT KULI PARISH Bank South Pacific, Mount Hagen Branch, 088-307 000020556 SWIFT CODE-BOSPPGPM



All proceeds go to the PNG Missions.

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