

Keynote address.

"Quality Leadership & Community Oversight for Improved Governance"

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INTRODUCTION

I had a recent meeting with leaders in Nondugl, Jiwaka. They expressed a general dissatisfaction with life, with how things are now. They expressed disappointment about the last 40 years of failed expectations, and anxiety about the potential for the next generation. Communities that cannot find good successors for leadership positions. Youth were without hope.

This is the general feeling in rural and remote areas (such as the Jimi in my own diocese), where the issues are often different to those that leaders want to address. There is definitely a crisis of leadership in PNG. Good leaders give hope; bad leaders leave people feeling discouraged, powerless, dependent, and this is often encouraged by "patronage" or "Big Man" politics. There were some local priests there to give advice on a program of self-reliance I felt they were good leaders because they admitted their own weakness and struggles, expressed confidence in the people's capacity to change, and gave concrete suggestions.

THE KEY NOTE

Accentuate the Positive (Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive, a Jimmy Merer (1945) song, as sung by Bing Crosby):

You've got to accentuate the positive
Eliminate the negative
Latch on to the affirmative
Don't mess with Mister In-Between

You've got to spread joy up to the maximum
Bring gloom down to the minimum
Have faith/ or pandemonium
Liable to walk upon the scene

To illustrate this last remark
Jonah in the whale, Noah in the ark
What did they do?
Just when everything looked so dark

Man, they said we better, accentuate the positive
Eliminate the negative
Latch on to the affirmative
Don't mess with Mister in-Between

1. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Accentuating the positive involves talking about good governance rather than "corruption" which is definitely a negative. Probably most PNG government circles, and maybe other leaders, would prefer an alternative to "corruption" since to them it can too easily fit with neo-colonial rhetoric. It is better to use a positive term using "good". But how do we translate this from a rather abstract term into a reality that can bring about change for the better? We can concentrate on the core values as per the recent civil society dialogue: trust (promises and commitments are made prudently and then kept), integrity (public and private lives are in harmony; people's words and actions are consistent), accountability of leaders and institutions (no one is above the law and everyone, especially those in public office, have to be able to justify their decisions and actions). Then "oversight by the community" can determine whether these values are being lived out.

There are Many positive signs to accentuate:

1. John Momis

BOUGAINVILLE president Dr. John Momis says his government is encouraging a culture of accountability from ministers and parliamentarians down through the public service: "We must develop a culture that promotes excellence, rewards success and penalizes those who do the wrong thing," Dr. Momis said. Dr. Momis instructed chief secretary Joseph Nobetau to take all necessary action to address gaps in service delivery and inefficiencies in the public service. The chief secretary's primary aim is to enhance the professionalism of our public service and to ensure that senior leaders step up and take charge of their respective responsibilities," he remarked. "This has to happen if we are to change. "The corporate plans provide a roadmap of what

agencies expect to achieve. They are key accountability documents that will allow us as a government to demonstrate the work that we do." Dr. Momis said accountability does not only extend to public servants but that it also applies to ministers and members of parliament. "Let me be clear that the standards and expectations that I have of our public servants apply equally to our elected leaders," Dr. Momis said. (<http://postcourier.com.pg/momis-calls-local-mps-promote-culture-accountability/>). Is what Momis is trying to do with leadership in Bougainville unrealistic? I like to think not. Maybe he is one of the few helpful examples of leadership in PNG today. Bernard Narakobi said similar things and was considered a dreamer? I don't think so. Visionary would be a better word.

2. Department of Personnel Management under Secretary John Kali

Also what Secretary John Kali is trying to achieve in the public service through a program promoting ethical leadership, with two important documents:

- a) Ethics and Values based Leadership and management Capability framework.** *Vision: High performing, ethical and values based leaders in the public sector driving the future of Papua New Guinea.* This vision is in line with the strategic intent of the PNG Vision 2050 and fosters a major paradigm shift in mindset amongst public officials for effective service delivery. We commit to embrace, promulgate and cascade the six Leadership Values of: Honesty, Integrity, Accountability, Respect, Wisdom, and Responsibility. (Aligned with legislative requirement as in Leadership code)
- b) Gender equity and social inclusion: respect, equity and diversity.**

This document addresses issues for women. These issues include Gender Based Violence and sorcery allegations. We can support community based solutions that don't challenge the belief in sorcery but stop the violence. (Richard Eves, associate professor with the State, Society and governance in Melanesia program, www.academia.edu/33046708)

- c) And the partnership with Australian government in the precinct project (PNG Governance Facility) promoting ethical leadership which we hope to roll out to the Pacific. (UPNG School of Business and Public Policy, and PNG Institute of Public Administration)**

I like to think our Divine Word University under the leadership of Fr Jan Czuba had some role to play since he always insisted that programs must have a component which enabled students to think ethically. I wonder if the high level of corruption in PNG could be related to this lack of a capacity and not necessarily bad will. I like to think so.

As far as I know our DWU Dept. of Governance and Leadership (DGL) was developed when we started running flexible learning courses with government bodies and when we introduced programs for Public Administrators. There is no actual unit on "governance and leadership" as such in the programs from the DGL. Rather there are courses on "Professional Ethics" and "Ethics in the Public Sector." Fr Gibbs, Vice President for Research at DWU told me recently, "Having just taught one of those courses I found the students were very appreciative of the chance to think about and debate the topic."

We are therefore making progress in enabling our leaders to think through ethical issues in a logical way.

3. Democratic Election

Someone in Kandep once told me that PNG was a democratic country unlike Australia. He explained that in PNG anyone could become an M.P. but in Australia one would need to be in a Party or have a lot of financial backing.

We are about to have an election where a smooth transfer of power is possible. This must be the envy of many nations in the world. We know that there is huge room for improvement, and we will probably hear more of that from Dr Ketan.

Is the Westminster system the problem? Maybe so, but not democracy as such. Winston Churchill, wartime Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is quoted as saying that "democracy is the worst form of government ... until you compare them with the rest!" (Actually he was citing some other unnamed person.)

But this is what he did say:

"How is that word "democracy" to be interpreted? My idea of it is that the plain, humble, common man, just the ordinary man who keeps a wife and family, who goes off to fight for his country when it is in trouble, goes to the poll at the appropriate time, and puts his cross on the ballot paper showing the candidate he wishes to be elected to Parliament—that he is the foundation

of democracy. And it is also essential to this foundation that this man or woman should do this without fear, and without any form of intimidation or victimization. He marks his ballot paper in strict secrecy, and then elected representatives and together decide what government, or even in times of stress, what form of government they wish to have in their country. If that is democracy, I salute it. I espouse it. I would work for it." —*House of Commons, 8 December 1944*

2. ELIMINATE THE NEGATIVE.

But where there is light there is also darkness. George Burns, in his 1977 movie *Oh God!*, speaking as god says something like, "I couldn't figure out how to make an up without a down."

The term "governance" or "good" governance) is basically a positive code word for a corruption free administration. When we talk about governance in PNG we can't escape from the perception of corruption. Now it is still contentious, but if we cross the line and assume that corruption is normal then we are lost. Even if there is enough wealth to absorb waste (corruption is waste) we have lost our souls. The term governance or good governance tends to be used more by international bodies than by local interests, who might feel freer to use terms such as "corruption".

When it comes to leadership possibly the biggest issue is to distinguish between "leader" and "Bigman/chief" in the PNG context. Culturally it seems that PNG tends to promote a "power distance" culture that accepts and even expects power to be distributed unequally. And "patronage", whereby the supporters expect their status to rise with the status of the leader whether or not he or she shares any of the spoils of victory with them, How often do we see children at end of the year school ceremonies, waiting out in the sun for the arrival of the "Bigman" who often arrives late or not at all? Yet, people accept it as the way such big men behave. Is this a way of preparing children to be adults who will accept the self-promoting behavior of their leaders?

Political Corruption As A Deformity Of The Democratic System

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: Among the deformities of the democratic system, political corruption is one of the most serious because it betrays at one and the same time both moral principles and the norms of social justice. It compromises the correct functioning of the State, having a negative influence on the relationship between those who govern and the governed. It causes a growing distrust with respect to public institutions,

bringing about a progressive disaffection in the citizens with regard to politics, and its representatives, with a resulting weakening of institutions, because they become an arena for political bartering between client's requests and governmental services. In this way political choices favor the narrow objectives of those who possess the means to influence these choices and are an obstacle to bringing about the common good of all citizens. (*Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church No 411*)

The common good of all citizens is tested by transport, especially road access, e.g. Jimi. Dr Mike Bourke (ANU) commenting on the recent on El Nino said that the difference between life and death is not so much the severity of the frost or the drought, but whether a community has road access to get food to market and to purchase other goods.

We also need to get moving on the Independent Commission against Corruption

"The Australian judge appointed to head Papua New Guinea's (PNG) new corruption-fighting body is wondering why he has not been allowed to start work. Graham Ellis has been waiting for a visa to go to PNG so he can chair the Interim Commission against Corruption. "I can't go back without a visa and I haven't heard anything to suggest that visa is ready or has been issued," Mr. Ellis said. The body was meant to replace PNG's controversial coordinating agency Taskforce Sweep, which was dissolved after it sought to arrest Prime Minister Peter O'Neill for official corruption in 2014. The Government had said the start of the interim commission was delayed because the chair of Taskforce Sweep, Sam Koim, was fighting the decision in court. But Mr. Koim withdrew his appeal on April 26, and Mr. Ellis has not heard from the Government since. Part of the justification for dissolving Taskforce Sweep was that the interim commission would carry on its work until the PNG Parliament could pass legislation to set up a fully-fledged Independent Commission Against Corruption. Mr. Ellis said he was worried the delay in his appointment meant that the Taskforce Sweep investigation files were not being looked after. "It strikes me that looking after the Taskforce Sweep files is important, so I'm particularly concerned that nothing might be happening in relation to files, and that would be very significant," he said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-09/png-anti-corruption-fight-on-hold-as-judge-waits-for-visa/8510204>

3. DON'T MESS WITH MR IN BETWEEN

I take this to mean, don't wreck things that are mostly working well, such as traditional society, and the churches which are now embedded within communities.

Doug Tennant Issue

Our recent experience surrounding the deportation of Doug Tennant, a lay missionary in the Archdiocese of Rabaul. He was also formerly of Mount Hagen where he gained a reputation and upset people also for siding with the little people, in this case the wrongly imprisoned, against the system. He first came to Papua New Guinea in 1984. He worked as a lay missionary for seven years under the Archdiocese of Mt Hagen as a social worker and advocate in the prison system in the Highlands. He worked closely with police, CIS, courts, judges and lawyers.

When I heard of his deportation I first thought, possibly the Archdiocese did overstep the line. Countries do have a right to determine how their guests behave. But the sensible thing in a partnership would have been to raise the question with the Archdiocese and come to an understanding, not this heavy handed and I believe ultimately illegal action which has all the appearance of being engineered by people who don't want the underlying issue raised. Not surprisingly this heavy-handed action against someone deeply committed to this country and its people has had the opposite effect. We will now simply increase the pressure, i.e. the exposure through other means, such as this one! I for one am much more aware and angry about the issue than I was before.

And now we hear threats of a hard line against Catholic missionaries who forget to renew their work permit or visa. In those applications handled by the CBC there have only been two cases in recent times. One a retired Archbishop, now over 80, who, wrongly, took his presence for granted; another was a priest on a remote island who was so engaged with his ministry that he let it slide. We are of course committed to compliance and need to improve our systems to assist people like this. But these cases can't be compared to someone who came as a tourist and is running a tuck shop or tyre service!

The case enables us to examine quite a few issues related to good governance.

It highlights issues over the *partnership* between civil society and the state, the church and the state. We sometimes feel like a partner in a relationship

that has grown cold. Our spouse says nice things about us in public and then won't keep his promises and dominates us, like ignoring all the meals we have cooked and then he rates us because we put out the garbage, which was not our job! You don't kick out your spouse because he/she is asking you to be faithful.

It highlights issues over *the nature of public service*. Who does the public servant serve? "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first...and then tries to serve." (Greenleaf). Who is the "client" for an immigration officer? Yes, the nation, but also this person in front of you. Anyone who has been a victim of the whims of a customs or immigration officer knows what I mean! They need professionalism and a respect for the rights and dignity of each person possibly more than any other.

It highlights issues over *due process*. A leader is accountable for his or her actions and the due process is there to protect him or her but also the powerless. We are told that many others have been deported in the same way without media attention. The media should now give attention!

It highlights issues over the *role of police*. The ENB PPC was unwilling to act without the opportunity for due process but some police were found and Doug, being very docile and compliant by nature, thought it best not to act in a way that might tempt them to violence. His docility and compliance should not be interpreted as passivity!

It highlights *issues over customary land use*, especially the unresolved issues of the legality of Special Agricultural Business Leases (SABL). The Commission of Inquiry from before the last election highlighted problems with SABL. The big question is, "How to make land available while protecting rights of landowners? This issue was fully addressed by Dr. Thomas Webster's earlier COI into land, but not implemented (like the one on gun control). We know what to do but don't do it. (The issue of implementation of findings of COI is also there.)

It highlights issues over *dialogue and consultation*. The Pomio people not against development that companies like RH can bring, but want to be sure that it is done in a consultative way.

It highlights issues over society, management, natural environment and climate change.

4. WORK TOGETHER: POPE FRANCIS

The Catholic Church is also reviewing its governance in the face of scandal and cover-ups. Our Argentinian Pope is passionately against "corruption". Pope Francis, in a foreword to a work by Cardinal Peter Turkson, has said corruption infects the world like a cancer, and the Church must combat it by **working together with society**, infusing it with mercy. "We must all work together, Christians, non-Christians, people of all faiths and non-believers, to combat this form of blasphemy, this cancer that weighs our lives," the Pope wrote. "It is urgent to take notice of it, and this is why we need education and a merciful culture, we need cooperation on the part of everyone according to their own possibilities, their talents, their creativity ... The life of a human being can be understood in the context of his or her many relationships: with God, with his or her neighbor, with creation ... This threefold relationship gives context and sense to his actions and, in general, to his life ... but these are destroyed by corruption. When we respect these relationships we are honest, responsible, and work for the common good. But when corruption enters in, they become torn ... Thus, corruption expresses the general form of disordered life of the decayed human being ... And this has an effect on all of society. What, for example is at the root of exploitation, degradation, human trafficking, trafficking of weapons and drugs, social injustice, lack of service for people? What is the origin of slavery, unemployment, carelessness for cities, common goods, and nature? Corruption "is a profound cultural question that needs to be addressed." But in order to address it, we must understand the different forms of corruption, besides merely the political, like those that infect even the average person. For example, Francis said, our corruption can be a "spiritual worldliness, tepidness, hypocrisy, triumphalism, to make prevail only the spirit of the world in our lives, a sense of indifference." the Pope said. "The Church must listen, raise herself and bend herself on the sorrows and hopes of people according to mercy, and must do so without fear of purifying herself, assiduously seeking a way to improve ... And it is with this awareness that we, men and women of the Church, can accompany ourselves and the suffering humanity, especially those most oppressed by the criminal consequences and degradation created by corruption ... To fight the many ways we may allow corruption into our lives, we must join together, Francis said. On our own we are like individual pieces of snow, both Christians and non-Christians. But united, we can become like an avalanche, he explained: "a strong and constructive movement."

[\(http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/for-pope-francis-corruption-is-a-cancer-to-society-98381/\)](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/for-pope-francis-corruption-is-a-cancer-to-society-98381/)

CONCLUSION

Planning for the future depends on hope, having a dream. The situation, the reality on the ground is given, but the dream is the hope: A truly level playing field, with everyone able to achieve their full potential (Integral Human Development as in the Constitution). We need good leaders to facilitate our getting there. We have to create systems to protect our leaders and enable them to use these systems, and give the systems teeth. Then they will have to accept the consequences of not using them: loss of office, a fine, or even gaol.

Ultimately, we need a multi sectorial approach to combating corruption by promoting the values of good governance, working together as Pope Francis says, working together within and between government departments, and with the private sector and civil society partners. This will also needs reliability of funding and other commitments.

We need to build up an informed and networked civil society that can be heard and make a constructive and consistent contribution and hold government accountable at local through national levels.

I conclude with my version of Psalm 72:

A prayer for good governance, inspired by Psalm 72 (RSV-CE)

Give our leaders your justice, O God, and right relations with you to those who will come after them.

May they judge your people with respect, and your poor with justice.

Let the mountains bring prosperity for the people, and the hills the fruit of right relations.

May they defend the cause of the poor of the people, deliver the needy, and stop oppression.

May they flourish while the sun endures and as long as the moon, for generations to come.

May they be like rain that falls on the grass, like showers that water the earth!

In their days may goodness flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

May they care for the people from sea to sea and from the rivers to the borders?

May everyone acknowledge good leadership and oppose bad leadership.

May others imitate them, other nations follow their example.

For they deliver the needy when they call, the poor, and those with no one to help them.

They have pity on the weak and the needy and save the lives of those near death.

From oppression and violence they rescue them, and they regard their lives as precious.

Long may they live, and may they prosper.

May prayer be made for them continually and blessing invoked for them all the day!

May there be abundance of food in the land, may it be seen even on the tops of the mountains.

May its fruit be as good as the best in the world!

And may people blossom forth from the cities like grass of the field!

May their names endure forever, their fame continues as long as the sun!

May people remember them with gratitude, all nations' call them blessed.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of our nation, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be his glorious name for ever; may his glory fill the whole earth!

Amen and Amen!