



THE PACIFIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

GPP & IRSA NEWSLETTER

"For a dynamic Christian presence in the Pacific"

Volume 1, April 2016
Issue 1

Editorial

Inside this issue:

<i>A word of thanks to Rev. Rosalyn Nokise</i>	2
<i>GPP Programmes</i>	3
<i>Eliminating Violence Against Women</i>	3
<i>English for Ecumenical Cooperation</i>	4
<i>IRSA Research Updates</i>	4
<i>The IRSA Intern 2016</i>	5
<i>Our Contact</i>	5

Welcome to the first edition of the joint newsletter of the God's Pacific People Programme (GPP) and the Institute for Research and Social Analysis (IRSA) of the Pacific Theological College!

We hope that you will find this newsletter informative, as we share stories and activities of the two programmes here. The newsletter will become available on a quarterly basis. The thought behind this initiative is to keep our communications up to speed with our friends, partners and other institutions worldwide — hoping to strengthen partnerships.

So what are these two programmes all about you may ask? Well, the IRSA seeks to investigate and address issues and concerns of the Pacific Churches through exploring the biblical, theological, ethical, social and moral foundations of the issues and concerns of Pacific societies. The GPP on the other hand has a strong missiological focus through a capacity building approach and engagement with communities on pertinent issues facing Pacific societies today. Both programmes are also driven by the context in which these societies are embedded.

Both the IRSA and GPP are an integral part of the Pacific Theological College. Although they were established for different reasons and at different points in time of the life of the College, these two initiatives are now working in closer collaboration through a more integrated strategic approach. This comes after a thorough review and evaluation in October 2015 of the 'Capacity Building for Social Transformation' Programme which was previously delivered by both the

IRSA and the GPP. The evaluation also brought about the realization that research and praxis should inform each other better for a more effective and relevant delivery of its programmes. This means that the GPP would identify research topics from their work with partners and the IRSA would input research findings into capacity building work. This would also mean that IRSA will focus solely on research, while all capacity building programmes will be administered by the GPP.

Although both programmes work on separate budgets, under the new strategic direction the two programmes will work under a more harmonized organizational structure. The IRSA and GPP are eagerly looking forward to welcoming a new joint Director in May 2016. Prof. Ernst, the outgoing IRSA Director, will retire in June 2016. More on the outgoing IRSA Director and new joint Director will feature in the next issue of this newsletter. Rev. Rosalyn Nokise, the former GPP Director, had to resign from her post after a serious illness in 2015. We pay a special tribute to her in the next section.

The new organizational structure will also include programme managers for each programme and several programme officers with one joint finance officer.

More information on the programmes can be found on the PTC website on: www.ptc.ac.fj

From the team; we wish you happy reading!

Anna Anisi
Editor

A word of thanks to Rev. Rosalyn Nokise

* This article is an excerpt from the farewell speech by Professor Manfred Ernst, Director of the Institute for Research and Social Analysis at the College Farewell in November 2015.



We dedicate this section to an extraordinary woman. Rev. Rosalyn Nokise, or the 'mother of the College' as she is affectionately called, has devoted many years in providing dedicated leadership to the GPP Programme. Her work in the Pacific Islands is probably best described as a ministry of work and commitment of a gifted priest and teacher, a faithful Christian, and a tireless organizer and motivator.

In September 2015 Rosalyn tendered in her resignation because of her illness that requires medical treatment in New Zealand, where she now resides.

She has been at PTC for about 18 years since she arrived with her husband and three little children in May 1998. Before Rosalyn came to PTC she had already been working after she finished her studies at Victoria University Wellington with a Bachelor degree in Anthropology. From the early years of her career her concern was always with those that live at the margins of society. In 1987 she co-authored a book titled "*Poor New Zealand – an open letter on poverty*", in which she and the co-author criticized the social-economic conditions in NZ and the effects of the adoption of neoliberal politics on the poor.

She obtained a Masters in Theology degree with distinction, at PTC, in 2002 with a thesis entitled "*Learning to Dance Grace-Fully: A Theological Reflection on Intercultural Marriage.*"

In 2004 Rosalyn became a non-stipendiary Anglican priest of the Diocese of Polynesia at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Suva. Moreover, as the coordinator of the regional body of staff and students who are part of the Anglican community at PTC she organized regular gatherings of the Anglican community at PTC for worship.

While she lived at PTC, Rosalyn has had many roles which relate to the regional and ecumenical nature of PTC. She was the Chair of the Advisory Committee when the former Women's Programme was in crisis, mainly because of lack of funds and declining number of students. It was Rosalyn who led a group of other committed faculty wives and it was their planning and vision that enabled the continuation of academic and practical learning for women in the form of a renewed Women's Fellowship Development Programme.

Most significantly Rosalyn has made an outstanding contribution to the life of the member churches/owners of the Pacific Conference of Churches and the Pacific Theological College while she headed the God's Pacific People Programme for more than a decade (from 2004-2015). During her time as Director, GPP significantly developed to a point where it now offers churches a great variety of programmes which significantly enhances the life of the people and churches in the region.

She also directed for many years the Face-to-Face programme of the Council for World Mission (CWM) in the Pacific. This was an outstandingly creative and significant two-month-long programme for theology students from all over the world.

Rosalyn helped to set up an innovative programme under the heading *Capacity Building for Social Transformation*, based at PTC, which has delivered practically-oriented training with relevant theoretical and theological foundations to, quite literally, hundreds of participants from the region. In particular, she developed and directed two very important elements in this programme: training in *Peacebuilding* for members and leaders of churches in the Pacific, as well as the first significant and substantial church based intensive training in *Pastoral Counseling*, equivalent to a year of full-time study.

She has made an important contribution to the work of significant committees in regional and international ecumenical organizations, such as the Working Group on Ecumenism as well as the Commission on Mission and Theology (PCC), and the Working Group on Personnel and Training (CWM).

Since she joined the College, Rosalyn has been a pillar of strength always helping the students and their families in many practical ways. She was also instrumental in the management of the College with her clear analytical thinking and her inputs in discussions at faculty level regarding the future of the College. She became a role model for many women who are the wives of ministers and pursue a career on their own. Because she has been the 'lifeblood' of PTC she will be very much missed not only by her core family but by her extended family, which is the whole PTC community.

We continue to pray for Rosalyn's recovery. We wish her faith and strength to overcome all her challenges. Moreover, we wish her happiness in her future endeavors as she continues to journey on the windy paths of life. We thank her for everything she has contributed to the life of the College, College community, her own church, the Pacific churches and each one of us.

GPP - Capacity Building Programmes

The God's Pacific People Programme offers several unique capacity-building opportunities for individuals and groups in the region. The programmes include: the **Personal Exchange Programme** which enables the sharing of skills and expertise for mission among the Pacific churches to meet identified developmental requirements within the Pacific churches in the form of learning attachments/sending resource personnel/flexi-learning packages/consultancies. Another stream within the GPP is the **English Language for Ecumenical Engagement** (see story on page 4). There is also the

Eliminating Violence Against Women initiative which comes in the form of workshops, training of trainers, awareness and advocacy for the eradication of all forms of violence against women in the region. The capacity building for social transformation courses such as **Leadership and Management, Social Analysis, Pastoral Counseling and Peace building** are delivered by expert facilitators locally and/or regionally and can be taken for professional development or as an undergraduate certificate. Pastoral Counseling is offered at a Diploma level.



The GPP team: Glenine Hamlyn (Consultant), Rev. Raki Tigarea (Program Development Officer), Ana-Latu Dickson (Programme Mentor), Rev. Prof. Feleterika Nokise (Principal and GPP Acting Director), Rima Sivanjali (Finance Officer), Lynne Lala (Programme Assistant).

Eliminating Violence Against Women (EVAW)

By Ana-Latu Dickson

The first Regional Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) training of trainers, organised by God's Pacific People that ran from 7 - 11 March 2016, had an attendance of 11 participants representing churches in the region and Fiji. It's theme was 'Breaking the Silence: Speak Up, Speak Out!

Ending violence against women came out of a resolution at the General Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) in 2013.

The training targeted female leaders working in programs that address eradication of violence against women, an issue that is affecting Pacific churches. The Anglican Diocese of Polynesia in Suva sent a male advocate to participate as well.

Facilitated by an international trainer and staunch male advocate, Paulo Baleinakorodawa, the week-long training covered gender-related issues, utilisation of

media, cross-gender dialogue and in-country planning. Stories of resilience and hope were featured from two women leaders in Suva.

It was a powerful medium for women to reflect on their own journeys and at the same time be assured that there is hope amidst the challenges one experiences when one begins to tell ones own story.

Interactive bible studies were delivered by Rev. Dr Cliff Bird and Rev. Dr. Val Ogden. The studies addressed culturally rooted gender roles, structural violence and 'breaking the culture of silence' - to speak up and speak out about issues on violence against women.

A participant from the Solomon Islands remarked: "I never saw the empty tomb the way Rev. Val explained it. It gives me more courage to speak up on behalf of women and children who are victims of violence. We either seal our lips or open our mouths."

Countries represented at the training were

West Papua, Bougainville, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji.

EVAW Trainings will continue over the next 3 years under the 'Strengthening Capacity Building for Social Transformation' Programme.



Participants at the last EVAW Training held in Suva—Fiji.

English Language for Ecumenical Engagement

By: Lynne Lala

The English Language for Ecumenical Engagement is designed for individuals from non-English speaking Pacific Churches to intensively learn English over a 3-month period at the Pacific Theological College.

The idea behind this course is to enhance participants' skills to allow them to be able to voice concerns facing their countries or communities at regional forums, and to allow them to better communicate across the region. Ecumenical engagement, as such,

is seen as a medium to enhance partnerships with others across borders and territories.

This year, the programme has received 7 participants (see picture on the right). Two are from West Papua, three from Maohi Nui and two from New Caledonia. Their programme will end in June. They are also living within in the PTC Community and are participating in College activities to enhance their learning.



The English language participants with their Instructor (behind, second from left).

IRSA Research Updates

The Institute for Research and Social Analysis is currently working on a 3-year regional research project to:

1. analyze the current situation of ecumenism in Oceania and;
2. provide impulses for the renewal and strengthening of cooperation between Pacific Island churches, their ecumenical bodies, regional ecumenical organizations and ecumenical partners overseas.

The final publication will include detailed country reports with focus on churches and ecumenical cooperation in PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati and Maohi Nui. The research consultants team will meet from the 2nd-6th of May 2016 to discuss preliminary findings and to jointly formulate recommendations for the churches on how to strengthen ecumenical relations. The final research report will be published and become available before the end of this year.

The research coordinator, Prof. Ernst, noted a strong emerging trend from the various interviews and discussions carried out with church leaders, principals and students at theological schools, women and youth groups, on strong denominational interests at the expense of ecumenism as one of the respondents shared from his own experience that ‘...at the local or island

level the enthusiasm and commitments were weak or absent. Each church seemed to be minding its own business’.

The following words of the late Catholic Bishop, Patelisio Finau, and also former moderator of the Pacific Conference of Churches, written 24 years ago, unfortunately very much describes the situation today.

“At present there seems to be apathy and frustration with the seeming lack of progress. In general the clergy and church leaders are so busy with maintenance that they forget about mission and ecumenism. Ecumenism is an afterthought. And the people are in the main like their leaders.” (Finau 1991, 4).

Further consolidation of research results is needed to determine the prospects for

strengthening ecumenism in Oceania.

After a public launch in Suva towards the end of 2016 there is a plan to organize consultations and workshops with interested churches in the region at a local level to present the results of the project and discuss possibilities for the strengthening of ecumenical relations in the respective countries and communities at local levels.

More project details are available on our website! (<http://ptc.ac.fj/irsa>)



IRSA staff: Rima Sivanjali (Finance Officer), Prof. Manfred Ernst (outgoing Director), Anna Anisi (Programme Manager), Rajieli Uluinaceva (Programme Assistant).

Meet the IRSA Intern for 2016...



The IRSA Intern 2016: Ana Waqanokonoko

The Institute for Research and Social Analysis has recently received its first intern for the year. The position is for 3 months on a full-time basis. Some of you may have met her along the PTC corridors, in the office or elsewhere around campus. Have you ever wondered who she is and what she does? Lets meet this lovely young lady...

Name: Ana Sovaia Lagitukawalu Waqanokonoko

Educational Background: BA in Psychology and Sociology. She is currently studying for a postgraduate diploma in Psychology at the University of the South Pacific.

Motivation to join IRSA:

Apart from wanting to gain some practical work experience which is so crucial in today's job market, she finds the research aspect very interesting.

As such, she says that the work of the Institute complements her studies as she gains more research skills.

Her role?

To assist the Director with the completion of the current research project (busy, busy, busy)!!!

Hopes and Aspirations:

She aspires to be a psychologist in the future. She also aims to do a Masters and a PhD in the near future, focusing on the issue of suicide. Indeed, this topic is also of concern to the Churches and Pacific societies.

We wish Ana all the best!

We welcome feedback from our readers. Please send your comments and/or suggestions to the editor.

If you have any questions about our programmes and activities, then please feel free to contact us!

Institute for Research and Social Analysis

The Director

Institute for Research and Social Analysis

Pacific Theological College

Private Mail Bag

Suva, Fiji

Phone: +(679) 3301 360 (Direct line) 3311 100 (Reception)

Fax: 3301 728

Email: irsa.director@ptc.ac.fj

Web: <http://ptc.ac.fj/irsa>

God's Pacific People Programme

The Director

God's Pacific People Programme

Pacific Theological College

Private Mail Bag

Suva, Fiji

Phone: +(679) 3315 542 (Direct line) 8901 174 (Mobile)

3311 100 (Reception)

Fax: 3301 728

Email: gpp@ptc.ac.fj

Web: http://ptc.ac.fj/?page_id=338

Publisher: The Institute for Research and Social Analysis & the God's Pacific People Programme of the Pacific Theological College.

Editing, Layout & Design: Anna Anisi
Email: anna.anisi@ptc.ac.fj

Proofreading: Noriko Dethlefs