

# As seen in 2022 - Caribbean Church

**As the new year begins,** *The Catholic News* recaps some of the news highlights from the wider Caribbean Church in 2022.

## Celebrations

- Sr Marlene of Our Lady of Sorrows, Valmond became the first from the indigenous people of the Kalinago community to become a Sister of St Joseph of Cluny last May.
- Metropolitan Archbishop Gabriel Malzaire of Castries, St Lucia was among the 44 archbishops from 32 countries to receive their individual pallium at the June 29 Mass for the Feast of Sts Peter and Paul at St Peter's Basilica, Rome.
- St George's Presentation Brothers College (PBC) was rededicated January 21 to begin its 75th anniversary celebrations. The school was established on that date in 1947.

## Destruction/vandalism

- The Archdiocese of Castries condemned a May 8 attack at the Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Vieux Fort, where a man exploded two incendiary devices inside the building. No one was injured and the fire was extinguished. The man was later arrested by police.

## Incidents

- Bishop Clyde Harvey of St Georges-in-Grenada spoke out on the incident that took place in Grenada on board the Harbour Master vessel August 10 involving Grenadian javelin thrower and current world champion Anderson Peters and his brother Kiddon Peters, who were reportedly assaulted by six Trinidadians. He invited all to pray for two things: that God may heal him, but also during that healing that he might come to a deeper experience of who he is, not only as a son of Grenada, but as a son of God.

## Church-state affairs

- "The sneak attack on our children." This is how Bishop Neil Scantlebury of Bridgetown, Barbados described the controversial "pre-test survey" on Computer Science, administered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) at five secondary schools in the diocese. The October 3 survey was done without parental consent and included offending questions of a psycho-social nature.

- Belizean priest Fr John Robinson warned that legalisation of the cultivation, use, and sale of marijuana is akin to "clandestine production of and trafficking in drugs". In response to queries about the position of the Catholic Church on the matter, Fr Robinson told Belize's *Amandala* newspaper that the Church's stance is outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC).
- The Ministry of Justice signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) September 6 to form a partnership with churches, aimed at training church leaders and their congregants in restorative justice practices. The MOU forms part of the Ministry's push to make justice more accessible to Jamaicans by providing alternative justice services to all citizens. There are 20 restorative justice centres across the island and all churches, schools and communities are being urged to use the service.
- Archbishop Patrick Pinder of Nassau expressed support for criminalising marital rape, noting that forced sexual activity within a marriage is a "distortion" of the biblical understanding of marriage.
- Bishop Clyde Harvey of St Georges-in-Grenada appealed to political parties to do their best to keep the standard of campaigning at a level that does not involve personal attacks and divisiveness of the people ahead of the country's elections June 23. Tit for tat, the Bishop said, is not the way a Christian acts.
- Archbishop Patrick Pinder of Nassau reacted with sadness at the news of a boat carrying migrants from Haiti capsizing off the coast of the Bahamas on Sunday, July 24. He has since called for international efforts to remove the reasons migrants risk their lives to leave their homelands in the first place.
- The Diocese of Montego Bay is seeking the help of the private sector in raising JA\$200 million to restore the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. Bishop Burchell McPherson of Montego Bay said after 57 years, the Cathedral no longer befits its status. Senior Pastor Faith Temple Assembly of God, Bishop Conrad Pitkin, Custos of St James has urged communities in the parish to rally to the cause

of the church, as it would be to the benefit of the wider community.

- The Catholic Church said they welcome and support most of the analysis and recommendations in the publication of the Patterson Report and its frank assessment of the situation in education in Jamaica. The report highlighted three main problems keeping Jamaica's education system in a state of crisis.
- Archbishop Kenneth Richards of Kingston believes using culture to communicate is essential to evangelism. He has done stage shows with dancehall artistes who have converted to Christianity and used these events to promote peace in some of the communities in which he has pastored.

## Deaths

- Bishop Emeritus Anthony 'Tony' Hampden Dickson, the first bishop of Bridgetown-Kingstown passed away at the Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, Tuesday, November 29. He was 87 years. Bishop Dickson's Funeral Mass was Monday December 12 at the St Patrick's Cathedral.
- Corpus Christi Carmelite Sister Angela Teresa Bacchus of the Child Jesus passed away at the Corpus Christi Carmelite Convent in Grand Anse, St George, Grenada, Saturday, September 3 at the age of 92. Originally from Guyana, Sr Angela served in Trinidad, as Superintendent at St Jude's, a correctional facility for girls.
- The Archdiocese of Nassau extended condolences to the family of a girl who died after a swing set fell on her on the grounds of St Bede's RC Church, September 8.

## Developments

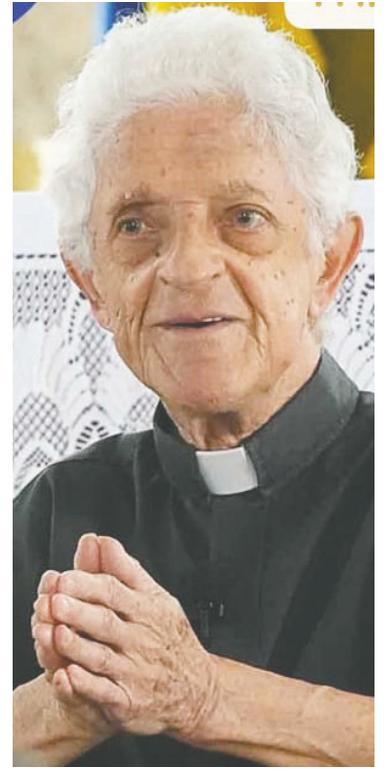
- Bishop Lawrence Nicasio of Belize City-Belmopan is now currently recovering from surgery at Regina Cleri, a home for retired priests in the Archdiocese of St Louis, Missouri following surgery to remove a blockage of the colon which was found to be cancerous.
- The Antilles Episcopal Conference (AEC) hosted a virtual meeting on the Synod journey February 12, giving representatives from each country the opportunity to share about their progress and the challenges that are being encountered.
- Sunday January 9, 2022 will

be forever remembered in the hearts of parishioners as a day of the inauguration of the new St Gerard Mayela parish church in Port-au-Prince, almost 12 years after the earthquake that destroyed the old parish church.

- Archbishop Patrick Pinder of Nassau announced the establishment of the Office of Safe Environments (OSE) and the relaunch of the VIRTUS programme in the archdiocese January 1, 2023. The OSE and the VIRTUS programme are intended to heighten awareness of the need to protect youth and vulnerable adults and provide safe environments for them to learn, grow and worship.
- Newly installed Archbishop Gabriel Malzaire of Castries called for all virtual Masses be discontinued in the Archdiocese. In a letter to faithful, Archbishop Malzaire commented that some have become very comfortable attending Mass via social media at home.
- Bishop Robert Llanos of St John's-Baseterre blessed and opened the St Lwanga Diocesan Youth Center at Stapleton Lane, St John's, Antigua last February. The center will focus on youth activities and advancing the Church's mission of hearing the call of the Lord to serve others and the building of spiritual lives.

## Ordinations and Appointments

- The new Metropolitan Archbishop of Castries, Gabriel Malzaire officially took possession of his homeland Sunday, April 24, Divine Mercy Sunday. The Archbishop identified key areas of pastoral emphasis for his 10-year office, among them parish finances which he assured will be given special attention.
- Bishop Clyde Harvey of St Georges-in-Grenada was elected as the new Chairman of the Conference of Churches in Grenada (CCG) during its 42nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) Tuesday, June 28. The CCG is an ecumenical Christian body that includes Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian members. The group serves as a forum to promote mutual understanding, unity, and tolerance among religious organisations.
- There was great joy on Friday, June 24 – the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus – as



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- many people gathered at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Brickdam for the ordination of Rev Joel Thompson SJ to the priesthood. He will be stationed in the South Rupununi, serving the communities there.
- The solemn celebration of the episcopal ordination of Fr Alain Ransay as Bishop of Cayenne was well attended with just over 1000 participants gathered at the Palais Régional Omnisports Georges Théolade, February 6.
- Mustard Seed Communities (MSC) celebrated the ordination of Fr Ernest Chikwata, at the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity in Kingston, Jamaica, September 8. Fr Chikwata is the first priest to complete his discernment process in the St Andrew's House of Formation, MSC's apostolate in Moneague, Jamaica, which opened in May 2019.
- History was made at St Ignatius Catholic Church in Brown's Town, St Ann Parish Saturday, October 22, as two notable events took place. Two women were instituted to the Ministry of Acolyte by Bishop Burchell McPherson of Montego Bay, in what is believed to be the first such institution in the Catholic Church "in hundreds of years". In the same ceremony, Kenya-born Edward Mutunga, a seminarian of the Diocese of Montego Bay, was ordained a transitional deacon.
- The Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica was strengthened July 10 with the ordination of a son of the soil, Deacon Ricardo Perkins SJ to the priesthood.