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Bishop Peter Houhou
Catholic Diocese of Gizo

PASTORAL LETTER FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2025

JESUS THE REAL VINE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord
Grace and Peace to you from God our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. For this month of June, we will be reflecting on the Gospel Text according St. John 15: 1—17. It is on the great image of the REAL VINE and

Branches.

Jesus said, "I am the real vine and my Father is the gardener. He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit." Jn. 15: 1-2

The metaphor of True Vine is a powerful illustration of the believer's relationship with Christ. It underscores the importance of abiding in Him for Spiritual vitality and fruitfulness, highlighting the active role of the Father in nurturing and pruning His people.

In the Church, we have seven (7) Sacraments; 1) Baptism, 2) Reconciliation; 3) Eucharist (Holy Communion); 4) Confirmation; 5) Marriage (Matrimony); 6) Holy Order; 7) Holy Anointing. All these sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ for the spiritual wellbeing of all Christians in the Church to be connected to Jesus the Real Vine. Now let us in brief see how we are connected to Jesus the Real Vine through all these Sacraments.

BAPTISM:

I want to take our minds back to the very day of our Baptism. What happen? I am not expecting you to tell me every detail story of what actually happen on that day; as to who was the priest who baptized you; and who was your God parents, (god father and god mother); and the story of the celebration that took place after the Baptism ceremony.

Baptism is not just a mere ceremony. Baptism is a ceremony of building a Spiritual Relationship with Jesus the Real Vine in a higher level. In the ceremony of the sacrament of Baptism, Jesus share with us something of His Divinity.

Important thing to understand here now is that, during the ceremony of Baptism, we are officially welcome and become a member of God's family; when the Priest pronounces the Trinitarian formula; "Peter, I Baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" and your parents and god parents on your behalf respond, Amen.

This is an important spiritual event in your life and above all in your Christian journey, because at Baptism you began your journey with Jesus the Real Vine. This is the time that you graft and connect yourself to Him, and Him alone and no other. By doing so, you have been moved from human level of your family, into a higher level of a Spiritual Family, to become a member of God's Happy Family.

RECONCILIATION:

How often have you been to confession? How long ago have been to confession? As a baptized Christian, we have been connected to Jesus the Real Vine and have life to the full and bear fruits in plenty through Him, but as we journey in life, there are times that we made choices to follow wrong paths and we fall into sin. Our fall to sin disconnect us from the Real Vine. Through the sacrament of reconciliation, we reconnect ourselves back again to the Real Vine.

EUCCHARIST:

Brothers and sisters I want to take your minds back to the great event of the Holy Thursday, when Jesus Instituted the great Sacrament of the Eucharist. The disciples and Jesus sat around a table, Jesus took a bread in His Sacred Hands, looking up into

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BISHOP'S PASTORAL MESSAGE CONTINUE

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Website: www.catholicgizo.org, Facebook page: Catholic Diocese of Gizo, Landline (677) 60130.

Photo's & articles from the parish media volunteers, Chris L—St. Dominic parish, Anthony Telovae—St. Joseph parish, Fr. Tomas—Christ the King parish Voruvoru, Fr. Jacob— St. John Bosco Taro, Fr. Charles—St. Eugebiu Noro, Fr. Qello— Holy Rosary parish, and The Catholic Media office- Rellysdom Aaron Malakana

Bp's PM cont'

Heaven and said a blessing, gave it to his disciples saying, "TAKE AND EAT, THIS IS MY BODY...., TAKE AND DRINK THIS IS MY BLOOD... here Jesus is feeding His disciples with His own precious Body and Blood.

In our time Jesus is continuously feeding us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Here, in the very act of receiving the Holy Communion, you are connecting yourself to the Real Vine. How often have you received Holy Communion? How long ago have you received Holy Communion?

As a baptized Catholic Christian, receiving Holy Communion is very important for your spiritual wellbeing connecting yourself to the source of life. "I am the Bread of Life" Jesus said. Jn. 6: 35. Whenever you receive the Eucharist, you are connecting yourself to Jesus the Real Vine.

CONFIRMATION:

Here again, I want to take your minds back to the great event of Pentecost, when the disciples received the Holy Spirit. They were in the upper room behind locked doors, fear of the Jews. While they were praying, something strange happened, something that they never experienced before. The room where they were, was filled with a strong wind from Heaven and on the head of each them a flame of fire, but they were not burning. They were all filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. When you receive the Holy Spirit, you receive a gift and the spirit will connect you to the Real Vine and you will be effective in your mission. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot do anything.

MARRIAGE:

In the Book of Genesis, we hear a story about how this beautiful planet earth was made. The earth was without form and the spirit of the Lord was hovering over the formless earth. As from day one (1) to day five (5) God made everything. The word of the Lord is so powerful, that God commands: "Let there be", and everything came to be. God looked at everything he had made and was very pleased. Evening passed and morning came—that was the sixth day.

On the sixth (6th) day God change the tone of His voice: As from "let there be" to "Let us made man in our own image and likeness" and God made man. Then God brought everything he made before the man to give them their names, but not one of them was a suitable companion to help him. So God made man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took out one of man's ribs and closed up the flesh. He formed a woman out of the rib and brought her to the man. Then the man exclaimed;

"At last here is one of my own kind- Bone taken from my bone and flesh from my flesh. Woman is her name because she was taken out of man." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife and they become one. Gen 2: 23 - 24.

What is the moral behind this creation story? Reflecting on this story, it helps us to see the importance of relationship between all the created things and human beings (man and woman) and above all the connectedness to the Real Vine.

ORDINATION (Holy Order):

Before Jesus begins his Ministry, after being in the wilderness for 40 days, he chooses 12 men from different backgrounds, to follow him, whom later he called them Apostles; he formed, shaped, and molded them in preparation for the ministry that is ahead of them. He taught them so many things. They moved from one community to another; one district to another; one region to another, exposing them to see and experience the very purpose of his ministry.

On the night before he suffered, he ate the Pass-over meal with his disciples. During that night he instituted the sacraments of Eucharist and Holy Order. He Ordained the first Priests of the Church. While at the table, He said to his newly ordained Priests; "Do this in memory of ME.

At every celebration of the Mass you attended, you are connecting yourself to the Real Vine, in the Real Presence of Christ in the Liturgy of the Word and in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Therefore, as a Catholic Christians,

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BISHOP'S PASTORAL MESSAGE CONTINUE

Bp's PM cont'

we should be thanking God for the great Gift of Priests serving in the Church, since the time of the Apostles until now, connecting all believers through the sacraments in the Church to the Real Vine.

HOLY ANOINTING:

To conclude our reflection on Jesus the Real Vine, as Catholic Christians, we should thank God for the sacrament of the Holy Anointing. It is a sacrament instituted purposely for the sick in our homes, clinics and hospitals. Whenever someone is sick and is in a serious condition, call for the Priest of the Church to come and pray for the sick person and anoint him/her with the Oil of the Sick.

During the time of Jesus, as he was moving from one location (community, district and region) to another, people brought many sick people to him to cure them. Seeing the great faith that they have, he cured them. As a Catholic Christian, how many sick

people do you helped them in arranging the Priest of the Church to come and give them the sacrament of the Holy Anointing? By doing this, you are helping the sick person to be connected to the Real Vine during this last moment of his/her life.

Lastly, as Catholic Christians, let us thank our Lord Jesus Christ for INSTITUTING the seven SACRAMENTS that we have in the Church. Receiving each of these sacraments as you journey in life, you are connecting yourself to the "REAL VINE" and you will bear fruits in plenty.

May the Spirit of the Lord give you the strength to continuously connecting yourself, your family, your work to the REAL VINE.

May the Blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you now and in the years to come. AMEN.

From your servant Bishop,
Peter HOUHOU

NEW FOR JUNE

Youth Commission Seminar for PNG/SI Youth



The Diocese of Gizo youth, represented by Fatima and Concita, are honored to be present at the PNG/SI Youth Commission meeting at the Emmaus Conference Center in Port Mores-

by, Papua New Guinea, along with other youths from Auki, Honiara, and Papua New Guinea.

Concita said that one of the interesting topics in our group discussion is about the three actions for the seven priorities of Catholic youth ministry in PNGSI.

Concita and Fatima are currently on day three, and everyone has shared, contributed, and learnt.

The theme for the gathering is: "Journeying in communion with youth in Christ."



VATICAN NEWS



VATICAN
NEWS

Fake Message to President of Burkina Faso Attributed to Pope

Pope LEO XIV Responds to Captain Ibrahim Traoré | A Message of Truth, Justice & Reconciliation

1M views • 6 days ago



A 36-minute speech in English, created with artificial intelligence, has been uploaded to YouTube, falsely attributing to Pope Leo XIV words for Ibrahim Traoré, President of Burkina Faso.

“To His Excellency President Ibrahim Traoré, President of the Sovereign Nation of Burkina Faso, son of African soil, defender of his people, may grace and peace multiply for you through wisdom, courage and truth.”

This is how a supposed English-language message attributed to the Pope and created with artificial intelligence begins.

A video of about 36 minutes was uploaded to YouTube on the account “Pan African Dreams”, produced using footage from Pope Leo XIV’s audience with journalists on Monday, May 12.

A “morphing” technique was used—that is, transforming the image so that the movement of the lips matches the AI-generated words.

The fake video is titled “Pope Leo XIV responds to Captain Ibrahim Traoré – A Message of Truth, Justice & Reconciliation.”

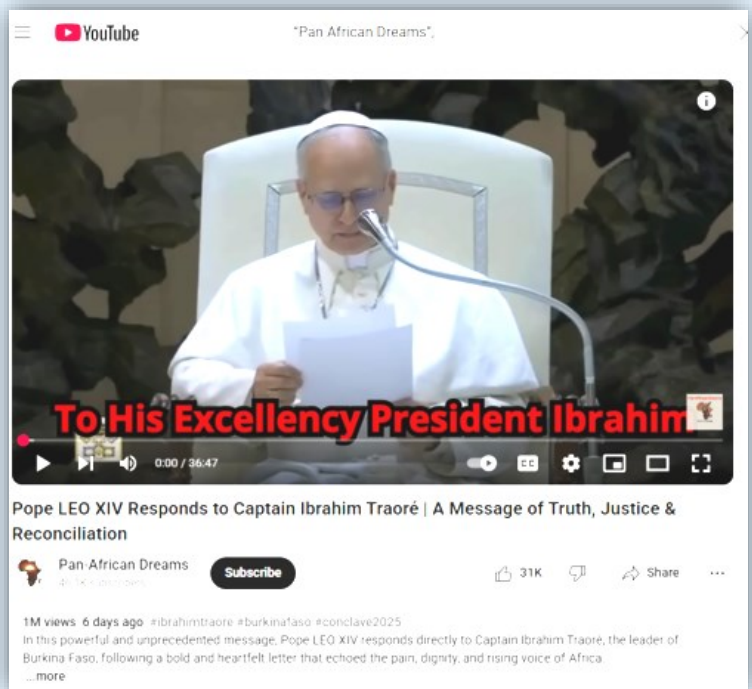
Viewers are led to believe that the new Pope delivered an entire public address to Burkina Faso’s President Ibrahim Traoré in response to his letter, and in the video Pope Leo is made to say: “I have read your words not once, but many times, and each reading has been deeper than the last, because in your voice I have heard not only the anger of a president, but the righteous cry of a continent long wounded by the twin blades of abandonment and exploitation.”

This video is part of a series of fake messages covered by BBC News on May 15 (<https://www.bbc.com/afrique/articles/c3rpw8n0zvxo>), and was reposted in a slightly shorter, lower-quality version by the YouTube account “Nou se Legliz”.

It is noticeable that the image of the Pope is repeated, and Leo holds the same two sheets of paper throughout the entire message.

It is worth recalling—given the circulation on various social media of texts attributed to the new Pope without source indication—that all of Pope Leo XIV’s speeches, addresses, and texts can be consulted in full at vatican.va.

News of his activities and video messages are available in real time on the Vatican News portal at vaticannews.va, in multiple languages, as well as on the Vatican’s newspaper website L’Osservatore Romano at osservatoreromano.va.



WCD 2025 REFLECTION & JUNE FEAST DAYS

World Communications Day 2025 theme calls for gentleness

Pope Francis has chosen the theme for World Communications Day 2025, which calls on people to "share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts," emphasizing the importance of communication that fosters dialogue.



The Holy See Press Office released the theme Pope Francis has chosen for the Church's 59th World Communications Day in 2025: Share with gentleness the hope that is in your hearts (cf. 1Pt 3:15-16).

The introductory text accompanying the theme notes that the topic aims to bring attention to the fact that in today's world, "too often communication is violent, aimed at striking and not at establishing the conditions for dialogue." This calls for efforts "to disarm communication, to cleanse it of aggression."

The theme description notes that the prevailing

standard seems to be that of competition, opposition, and domination as can be seen in television talk shows to verbal wars on social media. It adds that for Christians, "hope is a person, and He is Christ." And this hope is tied to community, since "when we speak of Christian hope we cannot disregard a community that lives the message of Jesus in such a credible way as to give a glimpse of the hope that it brings, and is capable of communicating the hope of Christ with deeds and words even today."

World Communications Day is usually celebrated on the Sunday before Pentecost. Pope Paul VI established the Day in 1967 in the wake of the Second Vatican Council as an annual celebration that encourages reflecting on the opportunities and challenges that the media offer and how the Church can better communicate the Gospel message.



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (1st June)



The Ascension of the Lord Year C encourages us to trust in Jesus' promises and look forward to His return. It also reminds us of our mission to share His message with the world.

PENTECOST SUNDAY (8 JUNE)



It is the Holy Spirit who enlivens, enlightens, guides, and sanctifies the Church. Pentecost an observance commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on to the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ .

HOLY TRINITY (15 June)



Trinity Sunday (also called the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity) falls one week after Pentecost Sunday. It is also symbolic of the unity of the Trinity.

NEW DIOCESAN STAFF & OTHER NEWS.

New Pastoral Coordinator for the Diocese.



The Diocese of Gizo has a new Pastoral Coordinator, replacing the late Deacon Jerome Kuibatu. He is Augustine L. Kasiava from Sariana Village, Christ the King Parish, Voruvoru.

Mr. Augustine previously served as a Sunday school Coordinator for the

Sariana Zone and was affiliated with Pangobiru Community High School, primarily teaching Religious Studies.

He arrived safely with his family and was briefly oriented in the office the following day.

As the new Pastoral coordinator of Gizo Diocese, he anticipates that all diocesan employees, priests, and religious will work together to strengthen our Diocese and ensure that its initiatives reach every parish and village in their respective zones.

Diocese Welcome New Administration Staff.



Our diocese has been without an administrative staff for quite some time, and we are glad to announce the appointment of a new staff to administer the office.

Mr. Aloysius Aropa, who previously worked at WorldFish (ICLARM) as Finance Administrator and HR Coordinator in

the Finance and HR Department for the country office, also assisted global finance and HR department.

Aloysius Aropa is prepared to work with all parts of the Catholic Diocese of Gizo, including priests and religious, schools, and employees, to improve service to our community.

He said that the most essential thing for him is our collective engagement. And also excited to collaborate with other partners and collaborators to execute any projects effectively.

3 Days YE Ended Successfully for St. Peter Youth.

A three-day weekend Youth Encounter (YE) session ended successfully on Sunday, June 1st.

The seminar sought to engage, support, and equip attendees to make a long-term change in



their communities and the world at large.

It is a continuing program for youth in the Diocese that, like a retreat, allows participants to rediscover and grow closer to God. Participants interact closely with one another and encounter the Lord through a variety of inspirational speeches and fun-filled activities.

Fr. Dominic Soloko, one of the facilitators, expressed gratitude to the 25 participants for their zeal, involvement, and candor, which fostered a potent environment of education and development." It was incredible to see your enthusiasm, your inquiries, and how you helped each other out", he remarked.

The seminar was sponsored by the Parliament Member for Gizo Kolombangara, Hon. Jimson Tana.

Sister Alice Celebrates Her Silver Jubilee.

"My soul is now glorified." For Sr. Alice Salas, who is now in her 25th year of sisterhood as a Sister for the Servant of the Visitation, this is a prominent catchphrase.

Sr. Alice celebrated her Silver Jubilee with communities from Gizo, Nusabaruku, the fishing village, and other guests of honor, our bishop, and two of our parish priests from Noro and other diocesan staff.

Sr. Alice thanked everyone for their prayers. She said, "25 years was not easy...but with the Grace of God, not impossible".

As May, Mary's month, came to a conclusion on her jubilee anniversary, the communities gave thanks to God for the gift of Mama Mary.



ST. PETER PARISH NEWS IN BITS**Gizo Parish Hosts International Nurses Day.**

This year, St. Peter's Parish in Gizo hosted International Nurses Day, commemorated on May 12th.

The occasion was eagerly anticipated by Gizo nurses, who celebrated uniquely by engaging the community to witness their vital role.

Their well-organized program has remained vibrant over the years, moving to a different venue each year and involving every denomination as the host site.

The program began with a parade along Gizo Street, culminating at St. Peter Cathedral for spiritual reflection that was presided over by Fr. Henry Paroi OP.

This occasion marks a very special day for health workers around the world, with celebrations continuing until late evening.

A visit to Vonunu PHS, thumbs up for Patere and the team.

A pastoral visit to Nicholson College (Vonunu) Provincial High School has been appreciated by many who recognized the importance of having our Catholic students and their staff receive the Word and the Eucharist.

A lot of people praised the program, calling it a blessed visitation, a great blessing, and a great endeavor to continue visiting the flocks.

As Rose recalls, it reminds her of Fr. John McKenna's visit to the school in the 80s to celebrate Mass for the Catholic Students and their teachers.

Thank you also to Fr. Dominic Soloko, who took the privilege of visiting other isolated Catholic communities to celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

**Weekend Education Seminar, Gizo Parish.**

On the third weekend of May 2025, a Teachers' Seminar for Catholic teachers at the Jerome Kuibatu Spiritual Center, Betania, Gizo Parish was conducted highlighting numerous significant pieces of information regarding legislative matters from our provincial and national education bodies.



Specifically, one of the educational pillars that influences attendees during the two-day event is the Education Act 2023.

Fr. Henry Paroi's presentation, which integrated educational elements from Catholic doctrine, was another significant contribution during the introduction.

Participants included teachers from Gizo Primary, Nusabaruku Primary and PPY schools, and instructors from St. Peter Training School and PPY.

The 2-day seminar was facilitated by Mr. Willy Abito, the new Catholic Education Secretary for the Diocese of Gizo.

NORTHERN DEANERY NEWS IN BITS**A Visit to Choiseul Bay NPSS**

A pastoral visit to Choiseul Bay Secondary School offers an opportunity for Don Bosco parish pastoral coordinator, Mr. Kevin, to speak to the students about the Seven Sacra-

ments.

It is a delightful and blessed journey that begins with the Holy Mass officiated by their parish priest, Fr. Jacob Qetobachu.

Harapa commemorate their Feast Day.

Harapa commemorated the feast day of Mary Help of Christians on May 24th. It was a beautiful and meaningful celebration that inspired the children to be with their mother.

Together, they sang the procession song through the village and to the chapel, where they prayed for intercession. The community expressed gratitude to Fr. Michael Ioteba, Fr. Benedict Qelo,

and Br. James Rapeka for their visit and for the Mass celebration.

The Month of Mary Ended successfully, Northern Deanery.

The month of Mary has been a pleasant experience for many believers, bringing them closer to the church.

Their program began with the unveiling of the Mama Mary sculpture in the first week of May, signifying her presence among parishioners and keeping Mary in everyone's heart.

Mama Mary paid visits to Christ the King, Voruvoru, St. Joseph, Moli, and Holy Rosary Nila parish, their respective zones, where the faithful were grateful.

At the end of the last week of May, the ending of Mary's pilgrimage, everyone joined Her at the parish station to thank God for the gift of Mary, who always interceded on their behalf.

Numerous parishioners watched these favors and saluted one another for the excellent and illuminating occasion that took place.

Marian pilgrimage places offer transformational experiences, miraculous encounters, and a sense of divine serenity.



APPENDICITIS AND COMING EVENTS*continue from last issue***APPENDICITIS CONTINUE****.... Lifestyle and Home Remedies**

Expect a few weeks of recovery from an appendectomy — or longer if your appendix burst. To help your body heal:

- **Limit your activity.** If your appendectomy was done laparoscopically, limit your activity for 3 to 5 days. If you had an open appendectomy, limit your activity for 10 to 14 days. Always ask your healthcare team about limits on your activity and when you can resume your typical activities after surgery.
- **Support your abdomen when you cough.** To help reduce pain, place a pillow over your belly and apply pressure before you cough, laugh or move.
- **Contact your healthcare team if your pain medicines aren't helping.** Being in pain puts

extra stress on your body and slows the healing process. If you're still in pain despite taking your pain medicines, call a member of

your healthcare team.

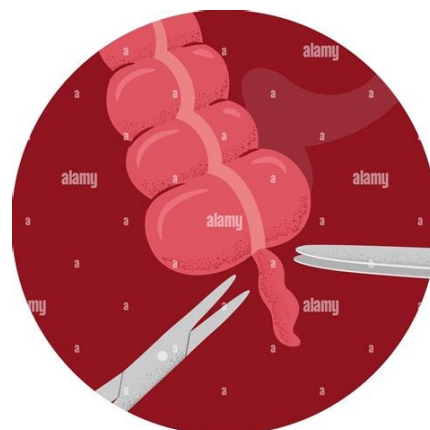
- **Get up and move when you're ready.** Start slowly and increase your activity as you feel able. Begin with short walks.
- **Sleep when tired.** As your body heals, you may find that you feel more tired than usual. Take it easy and rest when you need to.

Alternative medicine

You will be prescribed medicines to help you control pain after your appendectomy. Other treatments, when used with your medicines, can help control pain. Ask your healthcare team about safe options, such as:

- Distracting activities, such as listening to music and talking with friends, that take your mind off your pain. Distraction can be especially effective with children.

Practicing meditation to help calm the body. Also be sure to get plenty of rest.....

*To be continue next issue***▪ UPCOMMING FEAST DAYS FOR JULY 2025 ▪****BLESSED PETER TO ROT**

Blessed Peter To Rot, Celebration of his Anniversary of Beatification and Death. July 8, 2025, remembering the Beatification of Peter To Rot on 17 January 1995, planning is set aside a celebration of his death, 80 years ago.

SOLOMON ISLAND INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 7 - It is an annual celebration to commemorate the independence of the country. In 1978, the Solomon Islands gained self-governance and became a sovereign country.