

Media – to enhance the lives of people

Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb, Director, Catholic Communications Solomons

“There is a real need for students and people who want to learn more - to use the media, as much as possible, to read papers, to listen to the radio, to watch TV, - as all these are a part of the development of a country. Media plays an important role in decision making to guide the country, the politicians and the church leaders, and all the members of the community – as they check on all the balances – spending, decision making, for the benefit of a people. Hence to get information people must discuss, debate ... use the media to enhance the lives of their people”, stated Mr. John Lamani, publisher, Solomon Star in a video presentation to the Media Students, principals and animators – gathered at SIBC conference hall on Saturday 22nd October, 2005.

“We have had a glimpse of the world of the Media in the previous seminars that we have had”, stated Mary Materaia, student of Don Bosco, as she welcomed the gathering at the start of the programme. The participants then listened to an Audio track recorded at SIBC by the students of St. John’s school and watched the short video presentation of the different Media Seminars held during the year in the entire country.

Highlighting the advantages of the Media, Dr. John Roughan, SIDT advisor stated, “It has taken me 30 years to realize the need to write on issues that are relevant for the development of the country and the empowerment of its people”. He was delighted that Media Education has been conducted for the students in Solomon Islands. “You are so young, and it makes me a wee bit jealous, as I did not have this opportunity, despite growing up in the big city”, he stated.

“You have won my heart”, stated Colin Rugebatu, principal at Bishop Epalle School, as he expressed his appreciation and said that he noticed that his quiet and shy students have the confidence to speak out clearly. He also suggested that there is the need for greater collaboration with the Ministry of Education for Media Education to be part of the school curriculum. “We’ve heard, we’ve seen and we hope we will play a greater part in the programme”, stated Benedict Esibaea, principal at St. John’s school, Rove. “We have resources at our disposal and it is up to us to do things”, he continued.

“The students have put into practice what they have learnt in their newsletter and in the Whispering Aru now in production”, stated Peter Kubebatu, animator at St. Joseph’s school, Tenaru. “It has given our students the opportunity to build up confidence in themselves and also built up a camaraderie among the schools and the animators”, stated Oliva Doblas, teacher at Don Bosco, Henderson. Eve Aihunu, Simon Laulae and Gideon Kanai expressed their thanks and appreciation for the opportunity to understand the media and developing their skills.

“Truth, justice, peace and harmony are obvious needs for the Solomon islands and the Media can play its role to build up the same”, stated Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb, Director, Catholic Communications Solomons as he thanked the participants, animators, students all those connected in this important aspect of the Media for their contribution to assist the students by way of transport, food and other materials. MMC, Australia, Grarme Thomson and Mike Mathews were specially mentioned for support and the computers made available for Communications. Looking ahead he hopes that the students will gradually enter into the world of images, producing short programmes on issues of importance – as Television is not far away from Solomon Islands. Souvenirs were then presented to all present.