

Statement from Bishop Anthony Randazzo, President of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania

March 31, 2025

It is with great joy and gratitude that we welcome the announcement from the Vatican regarding the canonisation of Blessed Peter To Rot, a faithful lay catechist, who gave his life as a powerful witness to Jesus Christ.

Born in 1912 in Rakunai, Papua New Guinea, Blessed Peter's dedication to preaching the Gospel, teaching the faith, and upholding the sanctity of the sacrament of matrimony stands as a shining example of courage and fidelity.

In a time of great suffering and persecution, he resisted efforts to impose polygamy on his people, remaining steadfast in his love for God and commitment to the truth. His courageous witness to the faith, even in the face of death, earned him the crown of martyrdom, and his example continues to inspire all who seek to live a life of faithfulness to Christ.

May his canonisation deepen our own resolve to live as bold disciples of the Lord, bearing witness to His love and truth in our own lives.

It is also a moment of great pride and joy for the Church in Papua New Guinea, whose faithful have long revered Blessed Peter To Rot as a model of unwavering commitment to the Gospel. His canonisation is a powerful affirmation of the Church's deep-rooted faith in the region and a testament to the strength and vitality of the Christian community in Oceania.

This is a wonderful occasion not only for Papua New Guinea but for all Christian people in Oceania, as we celebrate the life and witness of a true martyr who exemplified the call to live with courage, love, and faith in Christ. May this announcement bring renewed hope and inspiration to the entire Church in our region and beyond.