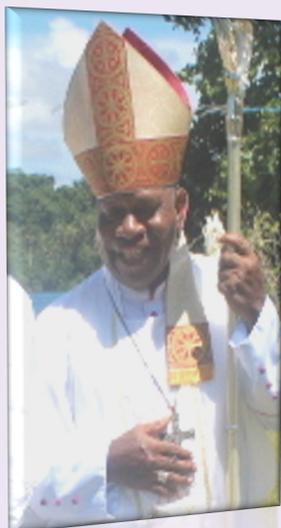


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Bishop Peter Houhou

GIVING OF ONESELF TOTALLY TO GOD DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON

May the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

This month of February, we have two very important celebrations. First, we are preparing to celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple.

Second, we are also preparing to celebrate Ash Wednesday, and on this day too, we will begin the Season of Lent for this year 2026.

1. THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD:

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is celebrated on February 2, commemorates the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and is also known as Candle Mass. On this day also, let us continue to pray for our beloved Religious Priests, Brothers, and Sisters who are working as missionaries in the diocese. On this day, they renew their commitment to serve God's People. Let us thank God for choosing them for who are now serving in our diocese.

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is celebrated forty days after Christmas and marks the occasion when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to fulfil the Jewish Law of purification and to present Him to the Lord. This event is described in the Gospel (Lk 2: 22-40).

During this great event of presentation, Simeon, a righteous man, recognized Jesus as the Messiah and proclaimed Him as a light for revelation to the Gentiles. The Feast has been celebrated since the 4th century and is also referred to as Candle Mass due to the tradition of blessing candles during the liturgy, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the world. The celebration includes various liturgical practices, such as emphasizing the theme Light and Revelation.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, this feast reminds us that our Lord will reveal Himself to those who are pure and, like Simeon and Anna, wait expectantly to meet Him. How prepared are we to meet the Lord? When we meet the Lord, there is no better gift we can offer Him than our own selves. So we shall make ourselves living temples of God into which the Holy Virgin can bring her Divine Child. This is also a time to reflect on the very gift of who we are as a great gift from God.

Reflecting on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple; what have we learn from it? There are so many things that we learn from it. In reality, we are not just celebrating the Feast Day as an occasion or event that took place some many years ago, in time and place, but something more. On this day of celebration, we should be thanking God for the gift of who we are. We are unique, and no one is like me

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GIVING OF ONESELF TOTALLY TO GOD (BISHOPS P. MESSAGE CONT')

This Publication is from the Catholic Media Office

Diocese of Gizo PO Box 22, Gizo Western Province Solomon Island.

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

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Bp's PM cont'

..... in this world. If God has given us as a gift to our families; What are we to give back to God? On this day of celebration, we, too, are to present ourselves as a gift to God. This is the time that we, too, are to renew our commitment to serving the Lord in whatever form of service in the community, parish, deanery, and diocese at large.

2. ASH WEDNESDAY:

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a special season in the Church, lasting about 40 days, to help the faithful prepare for Easter. It is a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal, leading up to the celebration of Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

The word Lent comes from an Old English word meaning "springtime," as it is a season of growth and renewal. In many other languages, the term is linked to quadragesima, meaning "forty days," highlighting the length of the season.

According to the General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, and I quote: "Lent is a preparation for the celebration of Easter. For the Lenten Liturgy disposes both the catechumens and the (Candidates for Baptism), through the several stages of Christian Initiation; the faithful through reminders of their own baptism and through penitential practices" (General Norms27).

Lent is marked by three key practices: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Catholics are called to deepen their relationship with God, fast from distractions and excess, and give generously to those in need. One well-known tradition is abstaining from meals on Fridays, but self-discipline can take many forms.

Giving to others, whether through charity, time, or talents, is an essential part of Lent. As St. John Chrysostom reminds us, "what we have is not ours alone but meant to be shared." Lent invites us to grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the Easter Joy.

During the season of Lent, we are urged to take a greater and more fruitful share in the Lenten liturgy and penitential services. We are also advised particularly to approach the sacrament of penance during Lent, in accordance with the law and tradition of the Church, so that we may share in the joys of Easter Sunday with purity of heart.

As we reflect in brief upon the celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, and what is presented before us according to the General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar on Lent, somehow it helps us to appreciate who we are as a gift from God, and to thank God for the season of Lent, and to have a heart that is ready to respond to God's call, and to give generously of oneself in helping others as we journey throughout the 40 days of the Lenten Season.

My dear sons and daughters in the 8 parishes of our diocese: God our Father has created us in His own image and likeness, and has given us as a great gift not for ourselves, but for others. The greatest "act" during this Lenten Season is the act of giving of oneself, not for our own benefit but for the benefit of others. May the Blessing of God the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you all, as you journey in the Season of Lent for this year 2026.

Your Servant Bishop Peter HOUHOU

NEWS FROM THE VATICAN



**Pope Leo:
Let us raise our voices for peace**



The Pope makes a brief statement to journalists in Castel Gandolfo and, commenting on the situation in the Middle East, urges people to pray for peace. Recalling Holocaust Remembrance Day, he says: “Let us fight against all forms of antisemitism.”

“I’ll only say that we must pray very much for peace.”

Those were the words of

Pope Leo XIV, in a brief statement given to Italian television as he left Villa Barberini, his residence in Castel Gandolfo, where, as usual, he had spent his Tuesday both resting and working.

Asked by reporters about the situation in the Middle East, particularly the presence of a naval strike group led by the U.S. aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln in the waters of the Persian Gulf, the Pope reiterated his appeal for peace.

“We little ones can raise our voices and always seek dialogue and not violence to resolve these problems,” he said, “especially on this day when we commemorate the Shoah.”

Today being Holocaust Remembrance Day, Pope Leo reaffirmed what he had already said earlier in the day on his X account, @Pontifex: “Let us fight against all forms of antisemitism.”

In other News Pope Leo appeals for peace in Ukraine and in all war-torn regions

During his Angelus address, Pope Leo XIV urges intensifying efforts to end the war in Ukraine and reiterates his appeal for prayers for peace in the nation and in other regions affected by conflict.

Pope Leo XIV on Sunday called on the faithful to pray for peace in regions affected by conflict, highlighting Ukraine, the Middle East, and other areas where people suffer due to war.

The Pope turned his attention to the ongoing suffering in Ukraine, noting that “even in these days, Ukraine continues to be struck by relentless attacks, leaving entire populations exposed to the cold of winter.”

“I follow what is happening with sorrow, I am close to those who suffer, and I pray for them,” he said, and he noted that the prolonged conflict causes “ever more serious consequences for civilians, widens the rift between peoples, and pushes a just and lasting peace further away.”

“I urge everyone to intensify their efforts to end the war,” he appealed.

The Pope’s words come as Ukrainian and Russian mediators are set to hold face-to-face talks promoted by the United States in Abu Dhabi. The parties have reportedly agreed to hold a second round of U.S.-brokered direct peace talks next weekend despite a barrage of deadly strikes on Ukrainian cities and infrastructure.

Meanwhile, greeting a group of young people of Catholic Action in Rome present in the Square, the Pope thanked them for their initiative to give life to a “Caravan for Peace” and for “helping us adults to see the world from another perspective: that of cooperation among people and populations who are different.”

Urging them to be builders of peace “at home, at school, in sports, everywhere,” he reminded them never to be violent, “neither in words nor in actions,” and that evil is overcome by good.

“Together with these young people, let us pray for peace: in Ukraine, in the Middle East, and in every region where, sadly, people are fighting over interests that are not those of their peoples. Peace is built through respect for people!” he said.

“Let us pray for peace: in Ukraine, in the Middle East, and in every region where, sadly, people are fighting over interests that are not those of their peoples. Peace is built through respect for people!”

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF MOST REV. JACOB ABA

Most Rev. Jacob Aba Ordain and Install as Fourth Bishop of Auki.



The Catholic Diocese of Auki celebrated the Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Most Rev. Jacob Aba, S.M., as its fourth bishop on Saturday, 24 January 2026, at St. Augustine Cathedral, Fasitoro, Auki, Malaita Province.

The event was attended by clergy, religious individuals, lay faithful, and invited guests from throughout the Solomon Islands and the broader region.

The ordination and installation were overseen by the Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, Archbishop Maurizio Bravi.



In attendance were also the Vice President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, Bishop Rozario Menezes, S.M.M.; Archbishop Christopher Cardone, O.P., of Honiara; Bishop John Bosco of Vanuatu; Bishop Peter Houhou of Gizo; Emeritus Bishop Luciano Capelli; along with diocesan priests and representatives from various religious congregations and parish communities.

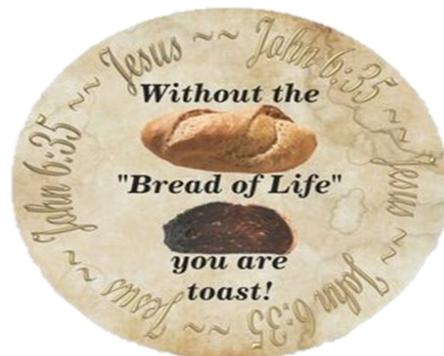
Most Rev. Jacob Aba was appointed as Bishop of Auki by Pope Leo XIV on 28 October 2025. With this ordination, he becomes the second indigenous Solomon Islander to be appointed as a Catholic bishop and the first member of the Society of Mary (Marists) from the Solomon Islands to assume this role.

The installation signifies a transition in leadership within the Diocese of Auki and highlights the ongoing participation of indigenous clergy and religious congregations in the Catholic Church across the Solomon Islands.

**THE YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST
CATHOLIC CHURCH SOLOMON ISLAND**

This year 2026, our Catholic Churches in the Solomon Islands commemorated the Year of the Eucharist.

We are encouraged to concentrate on the Bread of Life as we accompany our Sister Diocese (Archdiocese of Honiara, Diocese of Auki, and the Diocese of Gizo) in our planned activities.



John 6:35 records Jesus saying, **"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst,"**

AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)



Rellysdom Aaron Malakana
Catholic Media
Diocese of Gizo

AI (Artificial Intelligence) is a field of computer science that aims to create systems or machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. In simple terms, AI = machines/computers doing things that look smart, like thinking, learning, understanding, deciding, creating, or perceiving, but without having a real human-like mind or consciousness.

and addressing global challenges across various sectors.

With the introduction of the Grok AI and other similar vision, mobile users in our communities will be able to access these programs, as some are free online.

This year, 2026, people, especially the students, will be allowed to ask questions in simple English/Pijin, receive explanations, or practice conversations. Helps with your proofreading, like Grammarly or QuillBot, improve essays for school assignments or create posters for presentations easily.

Important Notes for Responsible Use.

Balance with human guidance — Teachers remain essential for deep understanding, motivation, and cultural relevance.

Top AI Tools for Math That Work Well in Solomon Islands now. These are accessible via browser or apps, often free, and effective on Android/iOS phones with moderate data.

AI is a game-changer for science learning in the Solomon Islands in this year, helping students grasp biology, chemistry, physics, and environmental science topics (key in the national curriculum, especially with a climate and marine focus). It provides explanations, virtual experiments, instant help, and personalized practice—super useful where labs are limited, teachers handle multiple subjects, or you're, and many more.

It is our responsibility to take note of the disadvantages of AI on students.

Over-reliance & weaker thinking — AI does the work (solves problems, writes answers), so your

Now (AI), it is transforming the world by reshaping industries, enhancing daily life,

brain gets less practice. This hurts critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and deep understanding—skills needed for real life and exams.

Wrong or misleading answers — AI can "hallucinate" (make up facts confidently) or give errors, especially on local/Pacific topics. If you don't check, you learn the wrong things.

Less real learning & shortcuts — Easy to copy AI answers for homework/exams, less effort, lower long-term knowledge, and higher cheating risks.

Weaker connections — too much AI use can make you feel less connected to teachers/peers; human guidance (explaining face-to-face) builds motivation and emotional growth better.

Another disadvantages of using AI, to create pictures/scenes for unaccepted movies. AI often produces weird artifacts (extra limbs, distorted faces, unnatural movements like jerky walking or impossible physics).

Risk of copyright infringement (trained on scraped art without permission), deep fakes/misinformation, bias (stereotypes in generated people/scenes).

Pope Leo XIV has issued one of the Vatican's strongest warnings on artificial intelligence, cautioning that unchecked AI could undermine the "pillars of human civilization".

The Pope delivered this significant statement during his message for World Communications Day, using it as an opportunity to address new technological developments.

The Pope presented artificial intelligence to his audience as more than

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CONTINUE AI / FEBRUARY EVENTS

AI (Artificial Intelligent) a technical instrument, with the power to change human cognitive processes and social interactions.

What are the ‘Pillars’ He Believes are at Risk?

Leo XIV believed that technologies capable of duplicating human vocalizations, facial expressions, and emotional displays would endanger essential components of human identity. He warned that synthetic speech and images, together with personalized digital interactions, would create a situation in which people would be unable to distinguish between actual human existence and machine-generated simulations.

The Pope states that these changes will damage trust among people by reducing authentic relationships and altering how people perceive truth, creativity, and responsibility, which are essential to building societies.

Why did He Single Out AI Chatbots?

The pontiff expressed concern over what he described as ‘overly affectionate’ AI chatbots. He said systems designed to simulate empathy and emotional closeness may manipulate users, particularly

the young and vulnerable, by creating artificial bonds that replace genuine human relationships. Such tools, he warned, could distort emotional development and encourage dependency on machines rather than communities.

Is This Moral or Regulatory Challenge?

The Pope stated that human research is needed for the discussion of artificial intelligence because it requires more than just legal and technical expertise. He requested that governments, institutions, and technology companies create ethical guidelines that prioritize human dignity throughout their development processes.

He requested that organizations enhance their digital literacy programs because people need help assessing content generated by algorithms, rather than simply watching it.

What Message is the Vatican Sending?

The Pope’s intervention states that the Catholic Church will participate in global discussions on artificial intelligence. His message aligns with growing international concern over misinformation, emotional manipulation, and the social impact of generative technologies, framing AI as a test of humani-

2nd of February 2026

The Presentation of the Lord

The presentation of the Lord, celebrated on February 2, commemorates the event when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple, fulfilling Jewish law and recognizing Him as the Light of the World.



18th of February

The Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday 2026 marks the first day of the Lenten season. Lent is the liturgical time before Easter when Catholics prepare to commemorate Jesus’s Resurrection through prayer, penance, and fasting.



Gizo Religious Renew Vows during Presentation of the Lord.



The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord provided an occasion for our Religious Sisters and Brothers to reaffirm their dedication to God through various means, such as retreats, annual Masses, and the renewal of vows.

This event, which takes place on February 2nd, offers our Religious Sisters and Brothers in Gizo the opportunity to convene at St. Peter's Cathedral, Gizo, to renew their commitment to serving the Lord.

This gathering is intended to enhance their faith, fortify their commitment to service, and reaffirm their devotion to the religious life.

The renewal of vows represents a solemn commitment to uphold the evangelical counsels and to continue living the gospel in accordance with the Constitutions of the order.

Thanksgiving Mass, for Diocesan Staff.

A Thanksgiving Mass was held to honor all Diocesan workers, expressing gratitude to God for His presence among all the workers.

This significant celebration serves as a reminder the staff and other workers of their dedication over the years and anticipates the upcoming year.



Following the Mass, Bishop Peter Houhou took the opportunity to meet with everyone. During this gathering, participants expressed their gratitude and acknowledged one another for their contributions to the service of the diocese.

The meeting offered a platform for staff to collaborate, exchange insights, and tackle challenges together.

A similar meeting is scheduled to occur quarterly to enhance diocesan operations and promote unity among the staff.

NIPAH VIRUS



The World Health Organization reported two cases of a rare virus in an eastern Indian state on Thursday.

The virus — called Nipah — kills more than half of the people it infects. Nipah virus, which was named after the village in Malaysia where the first known patient lived, is part of the same family of viruses as measles. Despite that, it's not as infectious as measles, but it is significantly more deadly.

How is it transmitted?

Nipah is a zoonotic virus, meaning it can be transmitted from animals to humans. Most commonly, that happens through direct contact with an infected pig or bat. Eating fruits or fruit products — such as raw date palm juice — contaminated with urine or saliva from infected fruit bats also contributes to the spread...

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SIROVANGA AND MOLI IN NEWS

St. Dominic Parish, Ready for a Series of Meetings.

Since most of the new parish executives were now appointed, they are to carry on their duties as bearers to plan and implement parish programs.

Early this year, St. Dominic, Sirovanga parish, appointed its new parish executives, and it is anticipated that the committee will convene a series of meetings with its new Chairperson, Eusebius Pika-batu.

The meeting, likely to focus on reviewing the activities of the past year and establishing goals and initiatives for this year.

This will enable the parish council to report on achievements, deliberate on plans, and address any concerns or issues that may have emerged throughout the year.

Additionally, it presents an opportunity for the community to engage with the parish leadership and to take part in the planning process for the forthcoming year.

In other developments, the parish has also designated its new Community Committee, which is chaired by David Miavana.



Men's Group Commission to Take up Responsibility.

One of the benefits for men in our parish was the formation of the Men's Group.

Starting this year, St Joseph, Moli parish has its new group to assume responsibility, and late last

year, the Holy Rosary parish Men's Group commenced its formation within their parish.

This indicates that the group has been inspired to engage in church activities and has recognized its potential.

Another aspect was to offer a space where men can connect, deepen their faith, and cultivate healthy relationships. It is crucial to build a community that encourages fellowship, spiritual development, and a sense of purpose.

NIPAH VIRUS

.....It can also spread directly from person to person. Transmission, however, occurs through very close contact with the infected individual.

What are the signs of illness?

It can take four to 14 days for symptoms to appear after a person is infected, and asymptomatic cases are rare.

The first signs of infection are non-specific and include flu-like symptoms like fever, headaches, muscle pain, vomiting and sore throat.

How is it treated?

There is no vaccine or drug specifically for Nipah. Doctors provide supportive care, and patients who develop severe neurological symptoms may need help breathing.

A drug called ribavirin — which is approved to be used with other drugs to treat chronic hepatitis C — may offer some benefit, though results are mixed. The upshot is that doctors focus on prevention by reducing the risk of animal-to-human transmission and implementing infection control measures when working with infected people.

KIDNEY STONES

Kidney stones continue [Kidney stones - treatment, symptoms and diagnosis | healthdirect](#)

How are kidney stones treated?

Your treatment will depend on:

- the type of stone you have
- the size of the kidney stone or stones
- where the stone is
- if your urinary system is blocked
- if there is an infection

Most kidney stones will come out by themselves in your urine. This can take up to 6 weeks. Treatments to help with your symptoms and help the stone pass include:

taking [pain-relief medicines](#)

- drinking plenty of clear fluids, such as water
- medicine to help pass the stone

Your doctor may recommend straining your urine to catch the stone when it passes.

Surgery or other procedures

You might need to see a urologist for treatment if:

- you have a large stone
- your stone does not pass on its own
- your pain is not responding to pain-relief medicines

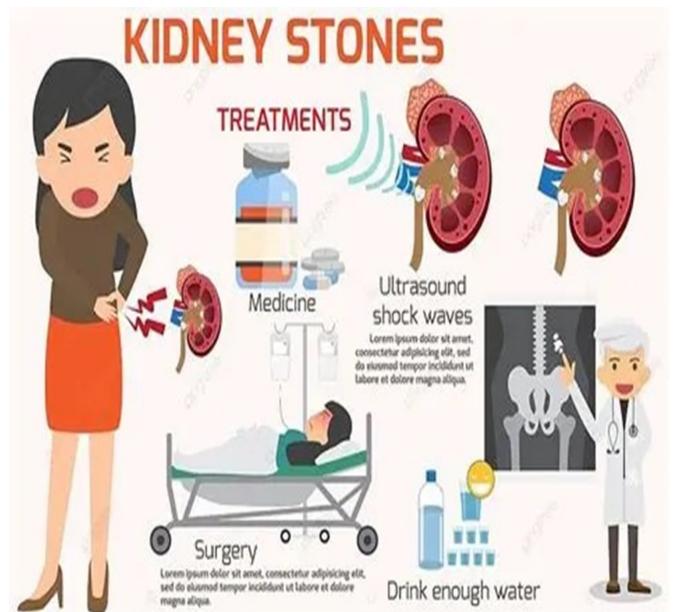
There are several treatment options available, such as:

laser treatment to break up the stone and re-

move the fragments — this is done using a [cystoscope](#)

- treatments to break up the stone so that the fragments are small enough to pass in your urine
- a procedure or operation to remove the stone

Procedures to remove kidney stones can sometimes lead to complications. These can include bleeding and infection. You can discuss with your doctor the side effects of different treatments and which treatment would be best for you.



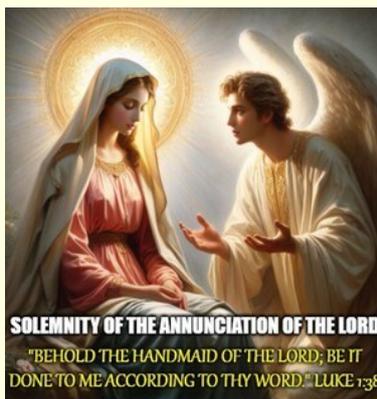
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- UPCOMMING SOLEMNITY FOR MARCH 2026 -

St. Joseph, the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Thursday 19th of March)



The Annunciation of the Lord (Wednesday 25th of March)



Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (Sunday 29th of March)

