

'Journalism is a responsible and holy job!'

Carol Labbad, Catholic Communications Solomons

On Saturday 4th October 2008, Catholic Communications Solomons (CCS) invited various students, teachers, animators, presenters and other guests to their Final Media presentation and Thanksgiving program session. The event was held in the Conference Hall of the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC). It marked the conclusion of a series of media



education seminars run by CCS throughout the year for school students where they learnt about the media. The running theme was "The Media: At the crossroads between Self-Promotion and Service. Searching for the Truth in order to Share it with others".

The concluding event began with a prayer then proceeded with a warm up, an audio presentation, a video presentation and a final viewing of a series of short films scripted, directed, performed and edited by school students during the year. The films were based around current youth issues and were created by groups from each participating school - St Joseph's - Tenaru, Bishop Epalle - Rove, Don Bosco - Henderson and St John's - Rove.

The students were extremely pleased and proud of what they had achieved throughout the series of seminars throughout the year, particularly the high standard of the short films. Philip Kafa, St John's, Rove, commented that "...I have gained skills and confidence in many areas of media from handling a camera to writing newspaper articles..." He also added that "...the



seminars were not only educational but they were also very enjoyable and enabled me to form new friendships with the other students." Another highlight of the morning was a presentation on "*Media and its role in Peace Building*" executed by Mr Cornelius Rathamana, General Manager of SIBC. Whilst the topic of Peace is a challenging one, particularly in the media, Mr Rathamana emphasised the fact that

media has the potential to resolve conflicts but can adversely have the strength to set conflicts on fire.

Therefore he stressed that the objectives of the media in building peace must be to; increase awareness, promote common values, create avenues for sharing opinions and attract assistance from third parties to help resolve issues. In addition, he stated the media must adopt good regulations and protection, strong independence and editorial policies, appropriate qualifications and strong ethical individuals with principles. Such aspects are crucial for the media to portray an objective, balanced, factual, educational and informed story to its audience.

Mr Rathamana's key message was succinctly communicated to the audience by the use of a quote from an Iranian journalist named Elsharin; "Journalism is a responsible and holy job".