

FINAL PROFESSION of Sister Rachael Waisman RSM – ISMAPNG

On 15 November Sister Rachael Waisman RSM made her Final Profession during a very joyous Eucharistic celebration in her home parish of St Lawrence's, Dagua, Wewak, Papua New Guinea. Sister Berneice Loch, leader of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea, received Rachael's vows and Jozef Roszynski SVD was the main celebrant. Rachael, accompanied by her parents, arrived at the church wearing her traditional dress and was warmly greeted by several hundred local people, family and friends and about thirty Sisters of Mercy from Papua New Guinea and Australia. Many guests had travelled in four-wheel drives or on the back of trucks to cross swollen creeks after heavy rains. After professing her vows Rachael changed her attire and returned to prostrate in front of the altar while a beautiful rendition of the litany of the saints was sung. The local *singsing* groups led the entrance and gospel processions with traditional colourful dance and vibrant music. Maryanne Kolkia RSM was MC and Angeline Singiat RSM gave a reflection on the vows. After the Mass all gathered for a delicious lunch prepared by the Sisters and some of the local parishioners who had begun preparing at 4.00am that morning!

Rachael worked for several years with Mercy Works on projects for economically disadvantaged people in Goroka. She now lives in Wewak where she offers budget counselling to marginalized groups while finishing her matriculation studies.

A special thanks to Schola Fakiwi RSM and all the Sisters at Yarapos and Kaindi for their very warm hospitality to all of us who travelled to PNG for this special occasion!

Joan Doyle RSM

Director Initial Formation ISMAPNG