

Mount St Mary's Primary School Visitation

Following a full week of attending the Pre-COP31 Stakeholder Gathering in Nadi, the JPIC team was honoured to visit Mount St Mary's Primary School on Friday, 9 October 2026, to facilitate a talk on *Laudato Si'* and care for creation.



Caption: Sainiana (CLM) shared on her experiences as a Columban lay missionary, calling us all to be missionaries in our own communities, to care for one another.

Located on the hills of Namaka, the school was preparing to commemorate Fiji Day alongside its Interhouse Athletics Competition. Despite the school's busy schedule, the students and teachers gathered for a special session under the theme "*We Are All Connected*", inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

The session provided an opportunity to share the message of ecological conversion and our collective responsibility to care for our common home. The students were also invited to reflect on the experience at the opening of pre-COP31, particularly the moving performance of "*TAGI*", directed by His Grace, Archbishop Peter Loy Chong. The performance conveyed the pain and vulnerability of Pacific communities facing the impacts of climate change, reminding us that our people, especially future generations, will bear a disproportionate burden. Its message of suffering and the fear of drowning resonated deeply with the realities facing our island communities.



*Caption: Noa (JPIC Coordinator) shared on the principles of *Laudato Si'*, connecting it with the rising issue of plastic pollution in our communities.*

The talk also introduced key principles of *Laudato Si'*, encouraging students to dispose of waste responsibly, embrace recycling, and recognise nature as part of our wider family. Through these practical actions, the students were reminded that caring for creation begins with everyday choices and a recognition that everything is interconnected.

The session concluded with a sharing by Sainiana Tamatawale, a Columban Lay Missionary, who spoke about the fruits of Columban mission. Her sharing encouraged the students to recognise that everyone can be a missionary by spreading a message of hope and acting within their classrooms, homes, and communities.

My sincere thanks to Madam Salome, Head of School at Mount St Mary's Primary School, for welcoming the JPIC team and accommodating the session within an already busy school programme. Despite the limited time available, the visit was well received, with the students engaging meaningfully with the discussion and reflecting on their own role in caring for our common home.



Caption: After our engagement with the school, we paid a quick visit to Sr. Monica, who is a Marist sister and a missionary serving in the school and Mount St Mary's Parish. We encouraged each other and bid farewell to Nadi.