

## Bishop John Saklil of Timika, Indonesia

Bishop John Saklil of Timika, Indonesia, known for his staunch commitment to upholding the rights of the indigenous people of Papua and New Guinea died suddenly Aug. 3. He was 59.

Bishop Saklil's death occurred a week after Pope Francis appointed him as apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Merauke, Indonesia, following the dismissal of Bishop Nicolaus Seputra for alleged mismanagement, ucanews.com reported.

Father Dominikus Hodo, head of priests for the Timika Diocese, said Bishop Saklil, who was known to suffer from diabetes, collapsed as he was about to leave for a lunch appointment.

The bishop's driver and a priest took him to the nearest hospital in Timika, where he died soon after, Father Hodo said.

The bishop had returned two days previously from the Merauke Archdiocese, where he had assumed the role of apostolic administrator.

"I ask all Catholics and Papuans to continue his struggle to defend human rights," Father Hodo said.

Bishop Saklil was known for speaking out against human rights abuses and government policies that adversely affected indigenous Papuans

in eastern Indonesia.

In July he disapproved a decision by local authorities to withdraw state teachers from private schools, saying the move would harm the education of indigenous Papuan children.

He also often condemned the killings of Papuans by security forces, and repeatedly called on the indigenous community not to sell their ancestral lands to outsiders.

Ronny Nakiaya, 35, a parishioner from Timika, told ucanews.com that people were shocked by the prelate's death. "People loved him. He was a warrior for Papuans," he said.

Father John Djonga, a human rights activist and a priest in neighboring Jayapura Diocese, called Bishop Saklil's death a loss amid the struggle against human rights violations in Indonesia's poorest region.

"Another Papuan leader has had to leave so quickly. This will be a challenge for the people of Papua," he said.

Bishop Saklil became the first bishop of Timika Diocese when it was formed in 2004 from the Diocese of Jayapura.

A Funeral Mass was offered Aug. 7 with Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo of Jakarta, president of the Indonesian bishops' conference, presiding.—CNS

## Toni Morrison, Award-Winning Author

Toni Morrison, award-winning author of 11 novels whose words brought to life the experiences of African American women, died Aug. 5 in New York due to complications from pneumonia. She was 88.

In 1993, she became the first African American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature.

The award came five years after she won the Pulitzer Prize for her book "Beloved," which centers on the life of an enslaved woman.

Ms. Morrison received the National Humanities Medal in 2000 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012.

She was born in Lorain, Ohio, with the name Chloe Ardelia Wofford. Her first-name change is directly linked to when she became Catholic at age 12 and chose the name Anthony, after St. Anthony of Padua as her confirmation name. Ms. Morrison's mother was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church but extended family members were Catholic.

Anthony then became her middle name and was shortened by family members to Toni. She started using this



Toni Morrison

as her first name when she was a student at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where she later taught, and some people had a hard time pronouncing Chloe. In 1958 she married Harold Morrison. The couple had two sons and were married seven years before they divorced. She then became a textbook editor and began her pas-

sion for fiction writing.

In a 2017 interview with the British literary quarterly Granta, Ms. Morrison was asked about the significance of taking up the name of a patron saint for lost things and was asked if she had lost anything she would like back.

"Two things. One is my son. And there are certain periods in my life I'd like to live over," she said, referring to the death of her son Slade Morrison, a painter and musician who died of pancreatic cancer in 2010 at age 45.

In a presentation at Seton Hall University in New Jersey in 2002, Ms. Morrison said that "there is nothing more exciting than true adulthood; it is an achievement that is a hard-won glory." —CNS

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