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Contents



4-5



10-11



12-13



18-19



22

- 3** From the Editor
Making the Risen Christ present.
- 4-5** Peace of mind for working mothers
Projects to offer concrete solutions to vulnerable families.
- 6-7** To light a candle
Fr Warren Kinne's welcome in China.
- 8-9** Reflection - "Do you believe in the resurrection?"
This question was put to Archbishop Mark Coleridge.
- 10-11** Fire in my heart
A Columban lay missionary shares her vocation story.
- 12-13** Instruments of Christ
Fr Barry Cairns tells us about two young members of his parish.
- 14** New garage for special bus
First was the bus, now the garage.
- 15** Columban's invite WYD pilgrims to Chile
- 16** Mission World
- 17** From the Director
Death and Resurrection.
- 18-19** Jesus loves me and you
- 20-21** Out of weakness hope and strength
A Columban tells us about his gambling addiction.
- 22** Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice
- 23** Support Columban Mission





Cover: Benjamin takes care of his little sister Carmen (see pages 4-5).

Photo: Fr Ed O'Connell

From the Editor

Making the Risen Christ present

Easter is a time of great joy and excitement. It is a time when the Church commemorates the Resurrection of the Lord from the dead and what this means for all of humanity and indeed all of creation.

There is also great joy, excitement and expectation in the Church at the election of a new Pope. His choice of the name Francis, after Francis of Assisi, highlights for the Church the importance of the values of humility, simplicity and solidarity with the poor and marginalized. St Francis was called by God to rebuild the Church at a critical time in the Church's history.

In the first homily that Pope Francis gave as Pope, when stating his priorities, he said that unless the Church remained faithful to Christ and his cross, it would be nothing more than "a NGO" - (non-government organisation). The mission of the Church is to bring the Easter Christ, the Risen Christ and His Kingdom to the world. For the Church to lose sight of this is to betray her mission and her identity.

Every month *The Far East* magazine publishes stories from around the globe of Columban Priests, Sisters, Lay Missionaries and lay co-workers who follow their vocation to bring the Risen Christ and His Kingdom to the world through the witness of their lives and the dedicated work they are involved in.

In this Easter edition, Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane helps us to understand what our Easter faith is about, - our belief that Christ rose from the dead and that this event opens the way for our own resurrection from the dead at the end of time and so enter Eternal Life.

Wherever missionaries are sent, they work as a part of the local Church to make the Risen Christ present there and to build up His Kingdom. This month Fr Edward O'Connell shares with us a solution to the problems facing working mothers in his parish in Lima, Peru. These women have to leave their children unsupervised because they must go out to work in order to support their families.

Likewise, writing from Shanghai, China, Fr Warren Kinne writes about his Christian witness in a local university and also his efforts to help the poverty stricken internal migrants through special support programmes.

Fr Barry Cairns writing from Japan, Columban Missionary Gloria Canama from Pakistan and Columban Sr Mihua Kim from the Philippines all remind us that Christians are called to be instruments of the Risen Christ in their life situation. An addiction to gambling by a Columban priest which years later led to his ministry with Gamblers Anonymous also shows us the power of the Risen Christ working in this priest's life and work.

Writing from Peru, Fr Chris Baker thanks donors who have contributed to the building of a garage for the new bus at the school and centre for handicapped children and adults. Fr Jack Evans from Sydney writes about the work of the Centre for Justice, Peace and Ecology at the Columban Mission Institute in Sydney.

One of Pope Francis' early engagements will be to attend *World Youth Day* (WYD) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in July 2013. There will be more pilgrims attending WYD than there will be visitors to Rio de Janeiro for either the Soccer World Cup in 2014 or the Olympic Games in 2016.

Every month until WYD in July 2013, *The Far East* will give an update of our Columban involvement in WYD. We are offering Australian and New Zealand pilgrims a Mission Experience in Columban parishes in Santiago, Chile on the way to Rio de Janeiro. This gives them an opportunity for an encounter with the Risen Christ through contact with a living Church such as the Latin American Church.

During this Easter season, let us remember Pope Francis and also the work of Columban missionaries.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dan Harding'.

Fr Dan Harding
TFE@columban.org.au





Photos: Fr Peter Woodruff

The Team of Workers at one of the Warmi Huasi projects.



Juana tends to her stall.

Peace of mind for working mothers

FR ED O'CONNELL

Spread around the city of Lima, Peru, are the neighbourhoods of the poor. Here many mothers are forced to leave their young children unsupervised at home while they go out to work. This is a cause of enormous stress and worry for the mothers. One Columban parish which is based in one of these neighbourhoods has tried to face this problem through setting up the Warmi Huasi (Women's House) project which offers concrete solutions to the most vulnerable families.

Juana, a typical working mother

Juana, a single working mother, leaves home very early in the morning for work. Sometimes she has time to prepare breakfast, the children's snacks for school, and to brush her daughter's hair. Other days, the children themselves have to do these tasks, occasionally arriving late for school.

Benjamin, Juana's nine-year-old son, leaves school and runs the risk of violence from street-gangs as he walks home alone. He then prepares lunch for his sisters. Ruth, who is six, has nobody to take her to the kindergarten, so she stays home alone in the morning.

Benjamin also has the task of collecting his little sister, Carmen, who is three, from the Wawa Wasi

(Children's House) day care centre and of taking care of her for the rest of the day, so reducing the time for his homework and for any recreation. Sometimes Carmen gets tired and has to be carried home. Benjamin does his best, but it is not the same as having his Mum there.

Meanwhile Juana is busy selling plantain chips as snacks on the street next to a bus stop six kilometres away. She is in danger from road accidents and possible assaults. She has no income other than what she earns. She is continually worried about the welfare of her children, left alone, while she spends long hours working away from home.

Facing the Problem

Juana, is just one of many mothers who live in San Benito (population

12,000), in the District of Carabayllo, two hours journey from the centre of Lima. The township began 15 years ago and most homes still lack running water, sewage, roads and a regular supply of electricity.

Working mothers like Juana need to know that their children are safe while they work. To give them piece of mind our local parish developed the Warmi Huasi project to identify those families most in need of assistance. Our Warmi Huasi team of dedicated and experienced professionals consists of Rosario Salinas, an obstetrician, Amelia Palacios, a teacher, Shirley Almeyda, a psychologist, Milka Rosas, a social worker, and Vanessa Cardozo, a nutritionist.

From August to November 2011, this team, working along with a group



Ben makes lunch for his sister, Ruth.

of six university students at the weekends, interviewed 536 mothers. 162 of those mothers work more than four hours a day, on more than three days a week outside the home, and have children under 12, our target group. During February and March, 2012 the team interviewed 83 mothers and evaluated their 130 children.

A primary aim of the project is to strengthen the social skills of the working mothers so that they can better protect their children.

Identifying those most at risk

They then began to work with 55 of those mothers and their 110 children, who according to the study were those most at risk. We will take on a similar size group next year. The plan is to involve six community accompaniers in the project, as later they will play a key part in the community organizations designed to take over at the end of three years. We have been continually working to stimulate interest among the local, municipal and central Government institutions, so that they will understand the risks faced by the

children and assume their statutory responsibilities.

Strategies and Activities

A primary aim of the project is to strengthen the social skills of the working mothers so that they can better protect their children. There are workshops in personal development, information about work opportunities and rights, training to prevent risks to the children, visits to the families and psychological support.

There are separate workshops for the children, helping them with their studies and recreation, enabling them to make friends with other children, giving them psychological support, and even teaching them how to produce more nutritious meals.

Working along with existing community organizations, there is a programme to create new spaces where the children can play, read, and do homework together in their own neighbourhood.

What the Project Aims to Achieve

All of the above are designed to insure that the under 12-year-old children of working mothers will successfully overcome the risks to which they have

been exposed. The hope is that the mothers will be enabled to keep on working, knowing that their children are growing, playing and learning in a safer and happier environment.

The project will be continuously evaluated over the next three years, and whatever lessons are learned will be fed into future programmes in other areas. What is certain is that we will never lack areas that can benefit from such projects.

Columban Fr Ed O'Connell has been a missionary for almost 40 years, working mainly in Peru and Britain.





Photos: Fr Peter Woodruff

The author, Fr Warren Kinne catches up on the news in Shanghai.

To light a candle

FR WARREN KINNE

I came to China 14 years ago, settled into Beijing to learn Mandarin for three years and then came to Shanghai. Mrs Cecilia Tao Bei Ling, whom I met about 20 years ago in Manila, where she was studying to improve her English, had suggested that I might be able to help her translate books at Guang Qi Press. I began going to her office each day and with the help of Chinese friends I gradually found my way into other jobs.

Four churches in Shanghai now have Masses for the English speaking community and I help out with these Masses in two places. As is the custom with many priests, I greet worshippers at the church door after Mass.

Through such contacts I have made

a few friends who have helped me greatly. I've taught a bishop, priests and sisters English and I am ready to help in the translation of documents or in polishing up English translations.

I do what I can to help in the pastoral care of the large and scattered expatriate Catholic community in Shanghai. I have a good relationship with Bishop Jin who was born in 1916 and who has supported me in my life here. On some occasions I join in the celebrations in the cathedral at significant moments in the local Church's life, such as ordinations and anniversaries.

During my second year in Shanghai, Cecilia spoke to the Fudan University authorities in the school of philosophy. The University sent

out Rachel Zhu Xiao Hong to see whether I was worth talking to. I then met Professor Zhang Ying Xiong who invited me to teach a course the following semester. I have now been teaching philosophy there for nine years. This university, founded over 100 years ago, is one of the top schools in China with an enrolment of around 50,000 students.

The comments and questions of the students often allow me to introduce ideas and perspectives quite unfamiliar to them. In one paper a student wrote: "Those who lived in the Age of Enlightenment gradually cut the doctrines of Christianity out of their brains. They then filled them with scientific knowledge." I then in response remarked that, "Such

An observer may wonder why we put so much effort into doing so little in the face of such a massive challenge, such as the injustices suffered by the millions of migrants in Shanghai.

an imbalance led to the greatest slaughter of human beings in the 20th century wars and revolutions," which of course prompted a lively discussion.

On the topic of the Renaissance one student wrote: "On the one hand it (the Renaissance) released man from the bondage of religion, on the other hand it made later generations have a bad obsession with individualism and money worship." This opened up a similarly good discussion.

On the topic of religious faith and science, one student wrote: "Just as science gives us the eyes to perceive the physical realm, faith grants us the eyes to discern the spiritual realm. Science and faith are not mutually exclusive," a position that flies in the face of so much of what they have been taught.

On the topic of Jesus of Nazareth, the thoughts expressed in student papers are many and varied: "The deed of Jesus reminds me of those Communist Party members and warriors who died in wars for a new China. Just like Jesus, in order to

make people have a happy life, they sacrificed their precious lives."

Rachel, the university's scout who first contacted me, was teaching in the same department, so we got to know each other and became friends. The whole family has in fact become Catholic. Then, once it was clear to them that I intended to remain in China for some years they invited me to be godfather of the younger son.

About five years ago I was talking to friends about the difficult lives of internal migrants in this city of 20 million inhabitants, six to seven million of whom are migrants. By "internal migration" I mean people who have moved to the big cities but were born and brought up elsewhere in one of the 32 Provinces outside Shanghai Province. With a concerned group of Catholics, both expatriates and Chinese, the You Dao Foundation was formed.

We felt we were responding to a need that no government, individual or organisation would be able to solve alone. Every day each one of us saw migrants sleeping rough on the street

or on building sites and in make-shift shanties. We knew that the majority of their children were not receiving any education. The foundation raises awareness about the plight of migrant workers; it offers scholarships for their children to attend kindergarten; it helps with some of their health needs; it encourages volunteers from the universities to help run recreation centres for them; and it works to support the ongoing formation of migrant's children.

An observer may wonder why we put so much effort into doing so little in the face of such a massive challenge, such as the injustices suffered by the millions of migrants in Shanghai. My response can be summed up in the saying: "Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness!" The origin of this is uncertain but some maintain that it is derived from a Chinese proverb.

Columban Fr Warren Kinne has worked in China for 14 years. More details about the foundation can be found at www.youdao.org.hk

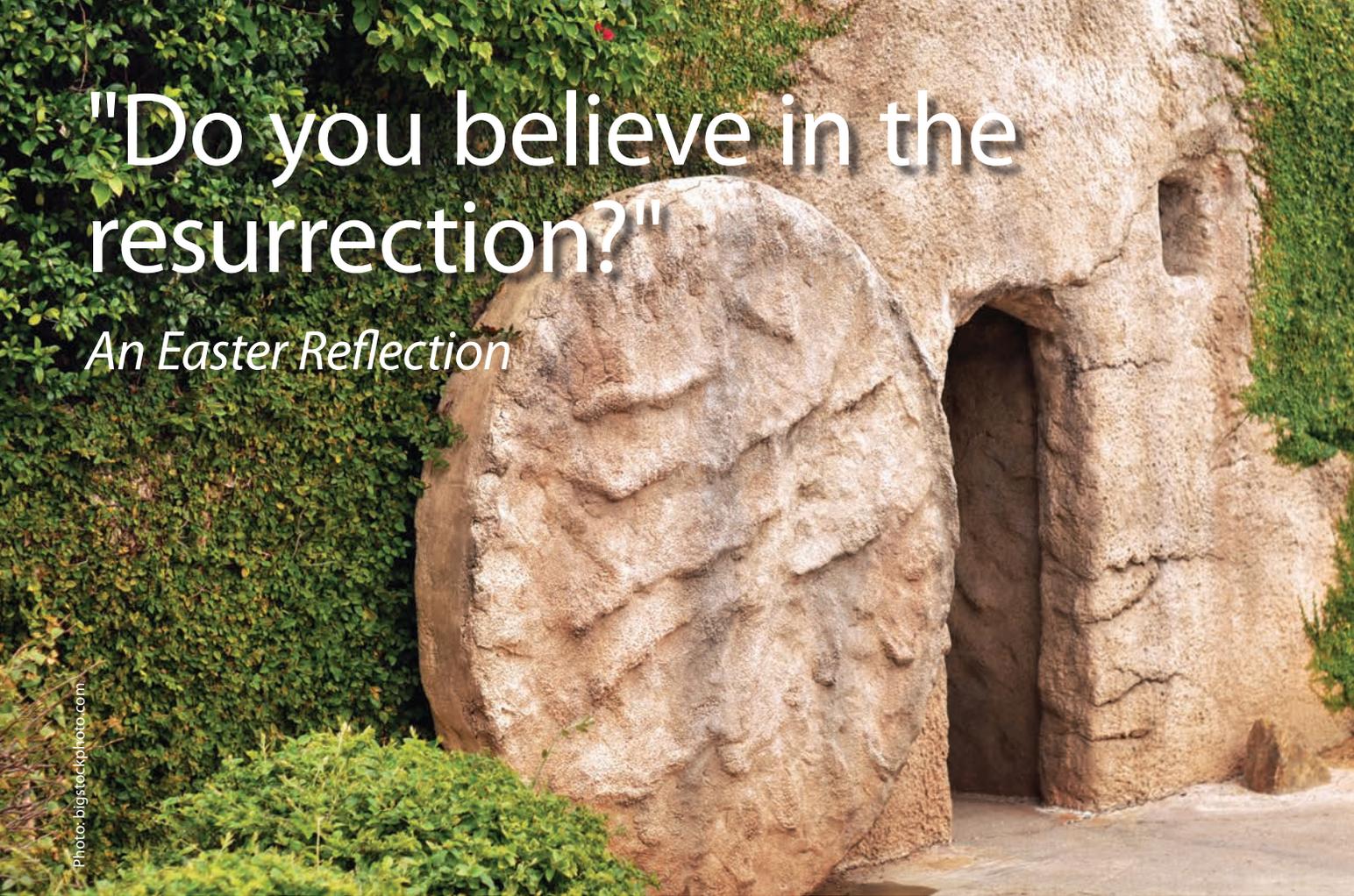
A university student helps out at the You Dao Foundation.

Fr Warren Kinne has a good rapport with Bishop Jin.



"Do you believe in the resurrection?"

An Easter Reflection



Entrance to the tomb of Christ's resurrection.

This was the question Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane was asked on ABC radio last year. In a homily he gave at a Commissioning Mass for Pastoral Councils last year, he refers to this question. He then explains how belief in the resurrection is central to our Christian faith. Below is the transcript from Archbishop Coleridge's homily:

One of the many things I did during the past week was a pre-recorded interview with ABC radio and I thought I had heard all the questions in these kinds of interviews but I was asked one that I have never been asked before at least not on air and it was simply this, "Do you believe in the resurrection?"

What sort of a question is that? I felt like saying well course I do because I am a Christian. But then He said, "No, but do you believe in the bodily resurrection - that it was something more than just spiritual or metaphoric?"

I said, "Yes of course I do because I am a Christian and I happen to be a

Christian Bishop charged with the teaching of the faith at the heart of which there is the resurrection of Jesus not as some fable or fabrication, not as something merely spiritual or metaphoric but as an astonishing reality that gathers up the whole reality of the human being and indeed the whole of the reality of creation.

As St Paul says, if He is not risen from the dead then we are the most pathetic people of all and if He is risen from the dead, brothers and sisters, then we are entrusted with the truth at the heart of every truth.

If He is not risen from the dead then Jesus is just back there somewhere

as a wise teacher. Who needs another one of them? Or as a wondrous miracle worker. Who needs another one of them? Or as a peerless role model. Who needs another one of them?

Without the risen Christ, the Church is just a corpse, not a living body glowing with the life, the immortal life of the Risen One.

The spirit who raised Jesus from the dead against all the odds and even against the laws of science and biology; the spirit of God who raised Him, the breath of God which is what the spirit is – gives life to the church and makes her, even in Paul's astonishing phrase, the Body of Christ.

Without the risen Christ, the Church is just a corpse, not a living body glowing with the life, the immortal life of the Risen One.

Christ not back there but here and now as presence and power.

In the Gospel, we hear about the Risen Christ, not some wise teacher, commissioning the Apostles to go out absolutely everywhere. Not just to their own or not just to those with whom they are comfortable but to go out to 'all the nations' says Jesus at the end of Matthew's Gospel.

The same Jesus commissions you here and now in exactly the same way. Not just to those whom you know and to those whom you feel comfortable, nor even just your parish or your deanery.

The one who sends us out, who commissions us, sends us on mission, is the one who is with us. He doesn't just say see you later at the end of time He says, I will be with you.

The same Jesus, risen from the dead, commissions you and commissions me to go out and speak to all nations the truth that we call the Trinity. What do I mean by the truth of the Trinity? That there is, at the heart of all things, a perfect love.

Who could believe it in a world so often loveless and where love is often threatened and violated there is at the heart of all things a perfect love, so perfect we speak of three persons but only one God – this is the love, the infinite abyss from which everything comes and everything must return.

This is the great truth, the triumph of love over every lovelessness. The love that is perfectly violated on Calvary is the love which is perfectly vindicated only when Jesus rises from the dead.

The one who sends us out, who commissions us, sends us on mission, is the one who is with us. He doesn't just say see you later at the end of time He says, I will be with you. So He sends us out and He promises He will be with us not just as presence but as power.

In other words, the one who sends us out also equips us for the mission, and were He not to do that the mission would be simply impossible. So He is the one who equips us and He equips us with himself, that is why we gather in this sacred moment where we hear His word not some human wisdom but the power of His word and we will eat the body and drink the blood, not just bread and wine, we will eat the bread that becomes His body and drink the wine that becomes His blood. He equips us for the mission by giving us the gift of Himself and were this not true the mission would be impossible.

We are in the *Year of Grace* and this is the time given to us to see Him anew and to hear Him anew. To see Him, who is with us on the journey, out into the streets of the world, to hear Him, who is with us on the journey, and then in seeing and hearing Him, to understand the journey that we take as His disciples and His missionaries. In seeing and hearing Him we understand where the journey begins, we understand how the journey unfolds and we understand how the journey will come to its end.

Where does it start? How does it unfold? Where does it end? The answer to all those questions is Jesus Crucified and Risen. The first and the last, the beginning and the end. We have heard the Book of Deuteronomy

read to us. The Book of Deuteronomy was compiled in a time of political, military and religious crisis. It was a serious attempt to make a fresh start in the face of looming catastrophe.

The very name is Greek for second law Deutoros (2nd) nomos (law). It was an attempt to start afresh in Ancient Israel in this moment of crisis and to start afresh from the law. The law understood is God's greatest gift to Ancient Israel, the law which in being obeyed opened a path of endless exodus, a liberating law. If people sought freedom they must start afresh with obedience to the liberating law of God, such was their understanding.

This *Year of Grace* for each of us and all of us together is also a time to start afresh. It may not be a moment of crisis quite like ancient Israel's but it is a moment of challenge and deep complexity, so we must start afresh leaving nothing behind but making a fresh start.

But we start not from the law. The call of this *Year of Grace* is to start afresh from Christ, not some written law however liberating it may be but from Christ risen. He is the living law that God gives the world the word made flesh, the one who leads us into the abyss of perfect love, from which we come and to which we must return.

"Glory be to Him whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory be to Him in the Church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation. Amen." (Eph 3:20-21)

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Fire in my heart

Listen to: Fire in my heart

GLORIA CANAMA

Columban Lay Missionary Gloria Canama from the Philippines shares her missionary vocation story of over 20 years of mission working in Pakistan.



Photos: Fr Peter Woodruff

Gloria Canama with Pakistani brick kiln workers.

*M*y childhood dream was always to be a religious sister. The seed of this dream must have been sown by the Columban missionaries, sisters and priests, who were my educators and friends from my early years. I was baptized by the late Columban Fr Paul Cooney.

I worked as a teacher for several years before deciding in 1990 to join the first Columban Lay Missionary team from the Philippines.

Why did I chose to join the Columban Lay Missionaries? Partly, it was because of a special affinity with them. Not only had they been significant in my life formation, but the Columbans I knew deeply inspired me by their commitment and way of mission especially their option with the poor,

their passion for justice and the care of the earth. There's a deep resonance with my own passion and commitment in life.

Assigned to Pakistan

After completing the lay missionary preparation course, we were assigned to Pakistan. We arrived in Lahore on Mission Sunday. It was one of those synchronistic moments confirming my "yes" to God and his calling. Whenever we experienced difficulties and doubted our decision, the three of us women in the team found it helpful to remember why we had come. All three of us had long connections with Columban missionaries as friends and mentors.

Now as Columban lay missionaries, we joined them as

partners, sharing Columban life and mission and witnessing a new way of being church. Still, I questioned God. My "yes" was to a missionary life as a lay woman but only in the Philippines. How could I leave home for three years especially to Pakistan, with all those restrictions on single women.

It is over 20 years now since I first set foot in Pakistan, the "land of the pure" as they call it. My first years in mission were difficult years, years of purification. I had come with excitement and confidence. "I am a woman of experience," I thought, "I've brought with me my faith, my lived-experiences of working for a living and my involvement in Christian communities. Moreover, I know the Columbans!"

Still, I questioned God. My "yes" was to a missionary life as a lay woman but only in the Philippines.

Learning the language alone was like being back in first grade, struggling and getting excited when I was able to read the word Lahore in Urdu script. My first big difficulty was the many "don'ts" for women in the culture, myself included. What I considered as a simple piece of cloth to cover my head was a cultural symbol as to whether I was a good woman or not.

Working with women and ecological awareness

In the Philippines, I had worked in parishes with both female and male leaders. In Pakistan on the other hand, I found myself confined to working with women and their aspiration to be treated with dignity and justice. My years in the Columban parish of Sheikhpura were very meaningful and fulfilling, a lived-experience of Jesus' words: "I have come that you may have life, life to the full," (Jn 10:10).

I left that parish over 10 years ago now, yet I continue to enjoy the friendship of many families there. My experience there was a lasting missionary gift, a living well where I continue to draw water of joy, nurturance, strength and hope. On the other hand, I continue to share the pain of my women friends still carrying the multiple burdens of being a woman and being poor. Whenever I wonder whether my presence with them had made a difference, these women assure me it did.

My present ministry for the last five years has been with the Columban Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation team focusing on ecological awareness about God's creation through workshops, talks and developing organic gardens. I also support the Filipino migrant community in Lahore.



Gloria with Pakistani grandmother.

Missionary struggles

In over 20 years as a lay missionary in Pakistan, I have experienced sickness; the deaths of fellow lay missionary Pilar Tilos and two Columban priest friends; armed robbery in the Columban house, deportation from Karachi airport and the challenges of being here as a lay woman who is part of the minority Christian community in an Islamic country which has been fighting against terrorism, violence, intolerance and the many forms of poverty and injustice.

Recently, I received news from home that both my parents were in hospital. It was too much to bare. I cried to my God in the depths of my being. I couldn't make sense of what was happening. Was it time to go home for good and be with my ageing parents?

I have been through this struggle and insecurity many times before regarding my concern for my ageing parents and my commitment to my missionary vocation. In the end, I know that I will make a responsible decision through prayer and trust in God.

I realise that all is grace. I am not alone in the journey, never have been, thanks to my family, the Columbans and the widening circle of friends as a member of the earth community. It's a privilege to be involved creatively in ministries that I love such as promoting awareness of God's creation, an important missionary challenge.

"Only in burning itself, a candle gives light".

Filipina lay missionary Gloria Canama has worked with the Columbans in Pakistan since 1991.

Instruments of Christ

JAPAN
FR BARRY CAIRNS

Fr Barry Cairns tells us about two young women in his parish and how the young are perceived in Japan.



Photo: Fr. Barry Cairns

Fr Barry Cairns with Izumi (left) and Mina at the "Coming of Age Ceremony" on January 13, 2013.



Izumi and Mina are two 20-year-olds of Hodogaya Parish Church, Yokohama. Here they are in traditional *kimono* as they celebrate "Coming of Age Day." This is a Japanese national holiday celebrated on the second Monday of January. This celebration of adulthood at 20 comes from a custom that started in the year 714 when the young Imperial Prince of 20 donned a new style robe and hairstyle. This custom gradually broadened until today it embraces all.

Young men usually wear a suit and tie for the occasion and only a few wear traditional male *kimono*. On the other hand most young women dress up in colourful *kimono* with long sleeves, with a special *obi* and *zori* sandals. A visit to the hairdresser is usual. We at the Church have a special blessing for the new adults on Sunday. We pray that they receive help and strength from the Holy Spirit and that they grow in wisdom, courage and knowledge of God. The priest lays hands on them and gives them a gift from the Church.

On Monday they go to the city hall to be feted. They often meet classmates that they have not seen since grade school. A talk is usually given by the mayor on the rights, privileges and responsibilities of adults. From 20 they can legally, vote, drink and smoke.

This year (2013) the media frequently talks about the grim future for these new adults. One published survey said that 80% of 20-year-olds have a gloomy view of Japan's future. They see poor prospects for a job for life. Another 75.6% said they expect little or nothing from politicians. This gloom is topped off by a fear that permeates all Japan since the earthquake and tsunami and consequent nuclear disaster on March 11, 2011. Almost every day the media tells us of a new earthquake fault found, of the scant protection available and the thousands projected dead. On top of this the deteriorating condition between Japan and China sounds ominous.

These young adults now live in a Japan where an insidious mist of uncertainty and anxiety permeates society. Hope for the future is at a low ebb. But in this atmosphere of darkness we have our two 20-year-olds from Hodogaya. Izumi is in second year university to become a school teacher. She already helps her mother in the church Sunday School. Mina is in her second year of a six year course at Pharmacy University. Mina is active in the deanery Catholic Youth Group and in the Diocesan Catholic Students' Guild.

Jesus asks his followers to be lights shining in the gloom, and tasty salt giving society flavour. Izumi and Mina are just that. They exude the joy of faith. They have smiles which bring light to those they meet. Mother Teresa said, "A smile is the beginning of peace."

In an interview, the Japanese Nobel Laureate (Literature) said of his own people, "We Japanese ... a crisis. We are a people without hope." Izumi and Mina are missionaries in their own milieu. They are instruments of Christ's light, joy and hope.

Columban Fr Barry Cairns has been a missionary Japan since 1956.



Photo: Fr Chris Baker

New garage for special bus

FR CHRIS BAKER

In the September 2012 issue of The Far East we published the article "New bus blessed." With more assistance from Columban benefactors we now have a garage to house our 'special bus'.

The response to our appeal for a special bus for the special people of Manuel Duato School and ASPHAD (Association of People with Special Abilities) has been so generous that the bus has now been finished and paid for. A special word of thanks goes to Irish Aid which sent a substantial grant through Mísean Cara based in Dublin.

Next step was to find funds to build a garage for the bus in the grounds of Manuel Duato special school. Once again your response to our appeal for help to build such a garage has been wonderful. The garage has now been built and paid for.

The bus is snugly parked and protected from the elements. It is high time to thank you all on behalf of the children and adults with

disabilities, as well as of their families, teachers and managers involved in Manuel Duato or ASPHAD. The bureaucracy to get the bus registered as a Special School Bus has taken till the start of this year (2013). That means that the long summer holidays are in full swing, hence normal classes will not resume until the start of March.

From then on the bus will be in daily use, especially to help those with wheelchairs or other problems in using public transport. In the morning it will get students to and from Manuel Duato, then in the afternoon it will serve the youths and adults who come to the ASPHAD Centre for various workshops.

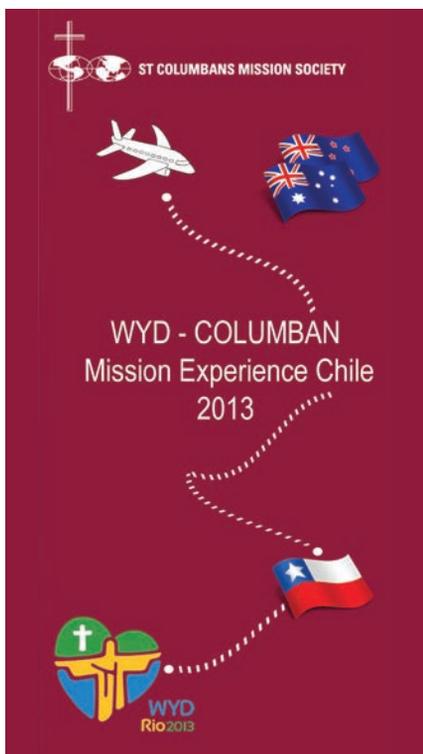
The bus has had a very successful day in service for the annual summer

outing for the special people of ASPHAD and those who accompanied them. It took two bus trips each way (to and from the country recreation centre, an hour's drive from the Centre).

Those in wheelchairs were happy to be lifted in or out of the bus by its lift at the rear door. Once the school year gets under way, we will be able to capture a few more joyful moments as primary school children at Manuel Duato avail of their new bus.

In the meantime, thank you heartily for making all this a reality. In both Centres we will continue to ask the Lord to bless you abundantly.

Columban Fr Chris Baker first went to Peru in 1977.



Columbans invite WYD pilgrims to Chile



One of the churches the pilgrims will visit in the Columban parish in Valparaiso, Chile.

In July, 2012 Fr Gary Walker, Regional Director of St Columban's Mission Society in Australia and New Zealand sent a letter to the Catholic Bishops of Australia inviting pilgrims for World Youth Day (WYD) 2013 from their dioceses to participate in a four-day parish-based mission experience in Santiago, Chile en-route to Rio de Janeiro.

Eight dioceses from Australia and one from New Zealand accepted the invitation, resulting in around 200 pilgrims participating in the Columban Mission based experience in Chile.

The pilgrims will experience first hand the mission of the church *Ad Gentes*. We expect to create awareness of the importance of the New Evangelization, of overseas and cross-cultural mission and to promote

vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

There will be many young people in Chile who will not be able to attend WYD Rio. We see this experience as a mini World Youth Day for all participants. Chilean youth from Columban parishes in poor areas will have an encounter in faith with the young Australian and New Zealand pilgrims.

The Programme will include:

- Opportunities for faith sharing through the daily Eucharist, liturgies, bible studies involving both groups.
- Catechetical Workshops on the New Evangelization, including the "Continental Mission" which the Latin American Church is actioning as a result of the 2007 CELAM Conference in Aparecida, Brazil.

- Pilgrims will be able to witness and participate with the Parish Mission Teams in the task of evangelization.
- Opportunities to partake in pastoral action through visits to the sick and elderly, shantytowns, rehabilitation centres for substance abuse, homework centres for children and youth, ecology programmes.
- Pilgrimages to the Shrines of local Chilean saints such as St Albert Hurtado SJ and Carmelite St Teresa of the Andes.

In late February, a two day seminar was held at Columban Mission Centre, Essendon for the WYD Co-ordinators in preparation for the trip. They are excited about the opportunity to participate in the mission experience in Chile.

The WYD programme offers us a unique opportunity to engage young people in Columban mission in some of the poorest parishes in Chile.

We invite you to support the programme which will assist the host parishes in Chile and some of the administration costs.

The Far East and the website will be publishing regular updates leading up to WYD. During the mission experience in Chile and WYD Rio, there will be daily postings from pilgrims to the Columban website. www.columban.org.au



Mission World

We ask your prayers: *The prayers of our readers are requested for the repose of the souls of friends and benefactors of the Missionary Society of St Columban who died recently: also for the spiritual and the temporal welfare of all our readers, their families and friends.*

New Pope shifts Church's centre of gravity away from Europe

*P*ope Francis, formerly Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio SJ was born in Buenos Aires on December 17, 1936. On December 13, 1969 he was ordained a Jesuit priest. Subsequently he was a novice master, teacher of literature and psychology, and has been Archbishop of Buenos Aires since 1998 and a Cardinal since 2001. He was Jesuit Provincial in Argentina from 1973-1979.

He is known for commitment to doctrine and social justice, and is a humble man of simple lifestyle. His appointment as Pope on March 13, 2013 is a sign to the Catholics of Latin America and the whole world of the invitation given to all to follow Jesus closely. He has served as member of a number of offices in the Holy See.

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio has had a growing reputation as a very spiritual man with a talent for pastoral leadership serving in a region with the largest number of the world's Catholics.

The surprise selection of an Argentine Cardinal as the new pope has shifted the gravity of the Roman Catholic Church from Europe to Latin America in one fell swoop, and served as an emphatic salute to the growing power of Latinos across the Americas.

The new pope took the name Francis and is the 266th pontiff of the church. He is the first pope from Latin America, and the first member of the Jesuit order to lead the church.

"I would like to thank you for your embrace," the new pope, dressed in white, said in Italian from the balcony on St Peter's Basilica as thousands cheered joyously below on the day of his election. "My brother cardinals have chosen one who is from far away, but here I am."

The selection electrified Latinos from Los Angeles to Buenos Aires, and raised the hopes especially of those in Latin America, where four of every 10 of the world's Catholics now live.

But the choice also may provide a strategic boost to the church in the United States, where its following would have lost ground in recent decades were it not for the influx of Latino immigrants, who have increasingly asserted themselves as a cultural and political force, and played a critical role in President Obama's re-election.

The significance of the choice was not lost on church leaders. "It's been more than 500 years since the first



Former Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio SJ was elected Pope Francis on March 13, 2013.

evangelization, and this is the first time that there is a pope from Latin America," said Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles, who is originally from Mexico.

"It's a huge role that we never had before," he said.

The new Pope, known for his simple, pastoral ways and his connection to the poor, is in some ways a contrast to his predecessor, Benedict XVI, an aloof theologian who resigned the office - the first pope to do so in 598 years - saying he no longer felt up to the rigours of the job.

- Reprinted from Cath News, March 14, 2013

Mission Intention for April

That mission churches may be signs and instruments of hope and resurrection.



From the Director

Death and Resurrection

*S*eventeen years ago, on March 27, 1996, seven Cistercian monks from the monastery of Tibhirine in Algeria were kidnapped by unknown assailants. On May 21 their headless bodies were found. A film of these events, *Of Gods and Men* won the 2010 Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

The film portrays the feelings and the emotions of the monks who are caught up gradually in the Algerian Civil War; their fears about staying when confronted with the possibility of being murdered and their desire to live are told simply and movingly. Finally they decide to stay and seven of them are kidnapped and killed. The film shows them talking together, praying together, eating together, sharing their lives as they try to decide what to do. They are so human and ordinary.

Last month, a Muslim mob of 7,000 men attacked Joseph Colony, a residential area of low to middle class Christians, in East Lahore, Pakistan, looted and burned 160 households, 18 shops and two churches. Special chemicals were used to intensify the flames so that even the metal crossbeams melted; this was a premeditated act. The cause for the attack was another alleged charge of blasphemy by a Christian man.

When those Christians embraced the Cross on Good Friday, the truth of their situation was laid bare. Like their Master they know suffering and pain and fear.

The police had advised the Christian people to leave - which they did - before the mob arrived so there were no casualties; the police made no attempt to stop the mob, in fact, in advising the people to leave, they knew the violence was coming.

Here is a minority community under siege, not unlike the monks in Algeria. How do you celebrate Easter with the threat of death hanging over your head? My answer is that

I don't know. I hope I would remain faithful to the Lord though full of fear as many Catholic people have been through the centuries.

I attended a protest in front of the Egyptian consulate in Melbourne early in 2011, after an attack on a Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria on New Year's Eve 2010, which left 21 people dead and many injured. The protest was against the Egyptian government for doing nothing to protect its Christian communities. The following week when the Coptic Orthodox Church celebrated Christmas, thousands of Muslims stood as human shields outside Coptic Churches. This is the type of support the Christians in Joseph Colony in Lahore need.

It is true that Christians and Muslims attended demonstrations in Multan, Karachi and Lahore after the Colony was torched, protesting against this fundamentalist violence. When those Christians embraced the Cross on Good Friday, the truth of their situation was laid bare. Like their Master they know suffering and pain and fear. It has been remarked that the torching was not about religion but securing the real estate of the Joseph Colony for financial gain; but their Christian faith was being used against them.

How do these Christians respond? They demonstrate and seek justice. They hope that the media will highlight their plight and force the government to protect them, they endure difficult times. Their lives are more about sharing the suffering of Jesus Christ than His Resurrection but they cling to both; they imitate their Lord and Master in this life and their fidelity to Him gives them the hope and promise of glory in the next.

Fr Gary Walker
director@columban.org.au

My praying friend

Listen to: My praying friend

SR MIHUA KIM

I used to see him every day in the street as I passed him on my way to our centre, the *Community of Hope*. At first I did not realize who he was, but after he came to an activity in our centre, I realized that he was one of our oldest members with a disability. We introduced ourselves, but he knew me from my work as a staff member in the centre. After that he would greet me every morning.

He is developmentally disabled and probably in his 40s. What most struck me was that he had his rosary with him every day. Whenever I saw him he had his rosary in his hand. That's how I remember him even before I got to know him. He is big and walks slowly; he is always praying.

I recall one morning seeing him coming towards me and then entering the chapel behind our centre. He made the sign of the cross

a few times and then stood in front of the statue of our mother, Mary. As a Korean I was so moved by this man freely expressing his faith in God in public, as we don't do that in Korea. However, here I see people everywhere saying in some way or other that God loves us.

My praying friend inspired me because I was having a bad morning and he was praying in front of the Virgin Mary. So often I had passed by that chapel, but I never entered to pray to Mary or make the sign of the cross, so seeing him praying made me say to myself, "I am saying to the people that I am a Sister and a missionary, but this man puts me to shame." He made me ask myself, "What am I doing here?" He was really a great teacher for me.

The Philippines is my first mission and with it being a Catholic country, I wonder why I am here. As a missionary, what should I do? Every morning when I saw him this question came to me. It was not just shame that he prompted in me, but he left me with this question that continued to come back to me.

I like to see him. One time I saw him near the centre of the city; I was on my way to the centre. I asked him where he had been and he replied, "in Cota," which is a shrine in honor of the Virgin Mary. He had been there to pray, part of his daily routine. It is quite a long walk and his fidelity to his religious practice amazed me. Comparing myself with him I feel that he is a much more religious person.

By being who he is, this Filipino man has helped me work out why I am here on mission. There are many ways of life, many ways of responding to God's call. This is my way of responding to God's call. As a



Photo: Fr. Peter Wobdruff

Sister I came to know myself better than before. Some might say that I'm selfish being here, because I feel that this is in part a response to my needs too.

However, since I realized how much Jesus loves me, I feel happy to be with other people, here or anywhere else. I can sense Jesus' compassionate love in others. I just enjoy seeing how Jesus loves me and others. I don't get tired of this.

I am not here to give to them but to simply be with them, to give myself to them, to empathize with them, to help them feel that I am truly with them.

Before I joined the Sisters I never experienced being loved by other people. Of course I would always say that my mother and father love me, but it seemed like something coming out of my head, not my heart. During my novitiate I realized that Jesus really loves me.

Though I may be very weak, though I am not perfect, Jesus still loves me. Even with my faults and mistakes He accepts me as I am. He understands me, because He knows me. He has known me totally since I was born. In the Gospels it is easy to see His love. I want to help people come to understand that Jesus loves them. That's why I am here – so that others may know that Jesus loves them.

I am not here to give to them but to simply be with them, to give myself to them, to empathize with them, to help them feel that I am truly with them.

Columban Sr Mihua Kim from Korea works in the Philippines.





Out of weakness hope and strength

The story of a Columban priest who struggled for many years with an addiction to gambling.

I started matching pennies with my father when I was four years old. I distinctly remember the thrill of winning four pennies and said to my Dad, "Let's do it again." However, he replied, "No, that's enough for now." It took me 45 years to get around to saying, "That's enough." That was when I went to my first Gamblers Anonymous (GA) meeting in 1980.

In 1959 I took on an overseas mission assignment, but I struggled with the language and during my early years did not find the support I needed to get on top of the language or the job. A lively game of poker was a great release from all that. Later I began to go to casinos and soon realized that I was addicted to gambling. It was not just something in my head, but rather

something physical, something I felt; the urge to gamble gripped me. In fact, I felt miserable but did not know that until after I began to go to GA meetings.

In 1980 four things happened for me that helped turn my life around: first, I worked as a chaplain on an Air Force base in Omaha, Nebraska, for six months; second, I did a three month renewal course that was run by the Maryknoll Missionaries; third, I began to attend GA meetings; fourth, I was invited to attend a three day marriage encounter retreat. You might say that 1980 was truly a year of grace for me.

As an auxiliary chaplain at the Air Force base, I heard the phrase "self image" for the first time. In the course of my work on the base I realized that I had very low self-confidence. I had

never felt appreciated in my mission work; I felt inadequate in the parish as I did not understand much of what people were saying to me even though I did manage to say what I wanted to communicate.

Nor had I learned to think for myself through the education system that I had been through; I had merely learned what others wanted me to know. However, on the base, others affirmed me, and I discovered I was reasonably good at helping those (especially couples) who came to see me about religious and other matters.

During my years on overseas mission another Columban had dubbed me "an incurable conservative." In the renewal course I discovered that there are other valid ways of understanding our Catholic faith. I had locked

During my years on overseas mission another Columban had dubbed me “an incurable conservative.” In the renewal course I discovered that there are other valid ways of understanding our Catholic faith.

myself into what I had learnt since childhood and so had become quite rigid in my attitudes towards many aspects of Catholicism. The renewal course helped me on the way towards flexibility and acceptance of difference.

When I went to my first GA meeting I did not speak, but soon after I did and realized immediately that those present understood me. My story was their story and theirs was mine, so I continued to assist regularly at the meetings.

After a year I returned to my mission, was assigned to another part of the country so was able to make a fresh start. I was appointed as pastor to a parish where the head of the parish council (who ran a hardware store) would come to visit me in the evenings, and we would just talk.

There was no deep discussion about anything and my friend kept the language simple. During my three years there I learnt so much more and gained confidence in my ability to both speak and understand the language. Also the circumstances of my life were easier. The weather was better – no driving through three feet of snow. I eventually felt welcomed

by the people of the island where I was working. I also found the local bishop, most respectful and easy to work with.

However, after two and a half years I returned to gambling in the casino. I honestly thought it would be just an experiment to see whether I could gamble small and with control. After 12 trips to the casino I had won about \$300. But I was beginning to realize my desire to play the games longer and for higher stakes was becoming ever stronger. I knew I had to stop completely.

Also, I was a heavy smoker, and my sinuses were badly infected. I returned to the U.S. and reconnected with the GA group, who expressed surprise that I had kept away from the gambling for so long without the help of weekly GA meetings. They helped me understand that we cannot combat our addiction alone and that we need the GA group.

Again I returned to my mission, but this time with the intention of establishing GA groups. The Columban leadership supported me, so I became the pastor of a parish near the capital of the country and started Gamblers Anonymous. I also

hired a man to give me classes in language. He also helped me with the GA work. We worked well together for about twelve years, setting up GA groups, which have continued and increased to 43 weekly meetings all over the country in response to a seriously felt need in that country.

Fifteen years ago, after 37 years a missionary in that country, heart disease prompted me to return home for good, and since then I have continued with GA and keep my heart going with numerous pills, golf and other things.

In the strength and vitality of youth I may have dreamed of achieving great things, but in fact my main contribution to God’s Kingdom on earth has come out of my struggle against my addiction to gambling.

So, I say with St Paul: “Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”
(2 Cor. 12:10)

Editors Note: The Columban priest about whom this article is written needs to remain anonymous as per the guidelines of Gamblers Anonymous.



Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice

A Culture of Peace

"God's creation is one and it is good. The concerns for non-violence, sustainable development, justice and peace, and care for the environment are of vital importance for humanity," said Pope Benedict XVI in his World Youth Day address, Sydney 2008.

By way of introduction and context, the Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice (PEJ) is situated within the Columban Mission Institute in Sydney. It has two other Centres - Christian/Muslim Relations, Mission Studies - each reflecting an aspect and focus of the Society's broader mission.

Australia is an affluent nation and is often referred to as the "Lucky Country" and, indeed, compared with many others, this is so. But affluence also brings with it its own baggage. We see our mission as challenging people to step out of their comfort zones and connect with the realities of environmental damage, poverty, injustice and the myopia that can come with self-interest. This means relating the local to the global and vice versa.

We do this by raising awareness in the Church and society of the connections between peace, ecology and justice. Through our programs, we hold up a culture of peace as a vision for our society towards which we work.

In practical terms it means we work in partnership with other agencies, cultures, groups within the Church and within the wider Christian tradition, other faith groups and with people who have no particular religious affiliation but who share the same vision and care for the world and all in it. Thus we offer workshops and conduct forums on such diverse issues as chocolate and its relationship to slavery and debt, Eucharist as the call to justice and peace, ecology and its very real connectedness to justice and the future of humanity and the planet.

An example is the *Growing a Culture of Peace Formation Programme* for teachers from both secondary and primary schools. It has proven to be an effective way of enabling participants to reflect on and apply aspects of Catholic Social Teaching in the learning environment of the school, particularly with regard to a range of local issues relating to justice and ecological concerns.

Being on the Australian Catholic University campus in Strathfield, Sydney, has also given us the opportunity to run similar programs for students training to be teachers. This usually involves lectures and running tutorials over a three-day period.

We publish a variety of resources. Our humble newsletter, *Columban Connections*, keeps our supporters in touch. Electronic bulletins provide news, reflections and action ideas for parishes and schools. One really effective collaboration with Columban JPIC UK led to an Australian version of the *Stations of the Forest* DVD which has now received almost 3000 hits on YouTube. Keeping the theme, we published *The Grace of Forests*, an online Lenten resource.

We were part of the original *Jubilee 2000 Drop the Debt* campaign and have continued with Jubilee Australia which researches and campaigns on the impact of Australian economic policy on impoverished communities and countries overseas. We see our role as an advocate in faith communities on the issues of GM food, climate change, ecology militarism and globalization.

From our centre we facilitate the Faith Ecology Network (FEN). This interfaith network, which has representatives from 10 different faiths, shares insights and news about ecology using electronic media, but also holds public forums on themes such as water, food, mining and climate change. One really enjoyable activity we run is an enrichment day for FEN members where we go into the bush somewhere to learn about the natural world.

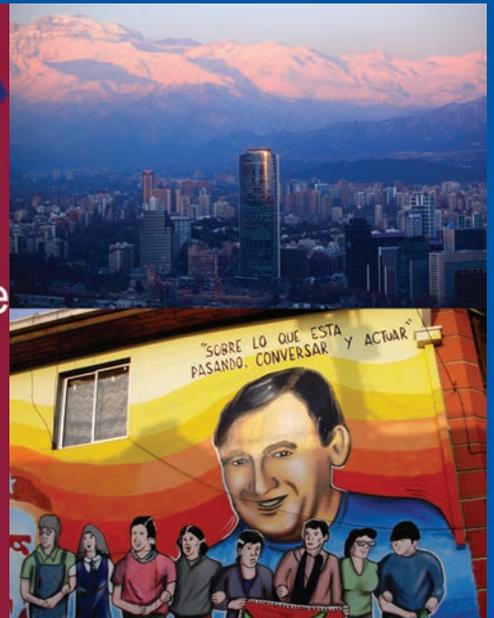
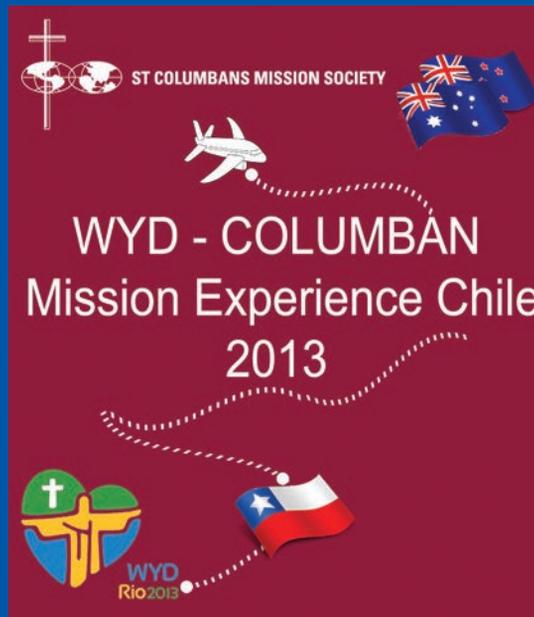
We are a small centre with only four people, but we reach a wide and diverse network in an effective manner. We are constantly amazed by and grateful for the generosity of the committed, knowledgeable people and groups with whom we work. Our work continues to embrace the message of Pope Benedict XVI at World Youth Day 2008 when he asked them to look to the future with hope.

Fr Jack Evans is a member of the Columban Mission Institute, Centre for Peace Ecology and Justice in Sydney, Australia.



World Youth Day Experience in Chile

We invite you to support the programme which will assist the host parishes in Chile and some of the administration costs.



Your **kindness** and **support** make it possible for Columbans to meet and minister to many people. Your "stringless" gift helps us to respond with flexibility to the most **urgent needs** of people.



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