

The Far East

COLUMBAN MISSION MAGAZINE

March 2015



Leo's last wish

We remember Fr Leo Donnelly

Reflection - Christ dying, Christ rising in the Peruvian Andes

The prison visitor

Visiting prisons in Hong Kong



ST COLUMBANS MISSION SOCIETY

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The Far East

March 2015
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An Easter procession in the Peruvian Andes (see pages 8-9).

Photo: Jaime Quispe

From the Editor

Transformational Experiences

One of the great transformative experiences of life is to experience good liturgy. Through the Church's liturgy Christ continues to become present, shaping our lives, our culture and our world.

In this issue of *The Far East* Columban Fr Donald Hornsey shares with us the celebration of Easter by the indigenous Quechua people of the Peruvian Andes Mountains. The Easter Liturgies are celebrated with great spiritual depth, vibrant sound and colour, much participation and interaction by the people with lots of outdoor processions around the local area.

Through entering into the great Easter events of Christ's life, his passion, death and resurrection, liturgically actualized in the Peruvian Andes, one cannot but help be profoundly moved, transformed and changed.

Following a similar note Columban Fr Barry Cairns writes to us from Japan of the importance of good Catechetical Visual Aids in the Church's Liturgy to lead the participant into a deeper faith encounter with Christ.

During the Good Friday Liturgy, for example, in his parish church in Japan, Fr Barry has placed great emphasis

on the cross used for veneration and on other visual aids that were part of Christ's Passion.

The March issue of the magazine has a whole range of other articles that reflect transformational experiences in people's lives. This may take the form of a last wish, such as that of Columban Fr Leo Donnelly RIP, or the desire to do something positive and constructive by Columban Fr Pat McInerney during the siege at Martin Place in Sydney last December.

In this year of the 1400th anniversary of the death of St Columban in the year 615, Columban Fr Frank Hoare writes of the missionary experience in continental Europe of St Columban and his fellow Irish missionaries.

In this issue we particularly remember Columban Fr Vincent Batchelor who recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of his ordination to priesthood. Fr Vincent lives in retirement in Melbourne.

Assunta Scarpino works at the Columban Mission Centre in Melbourne. In this issue, she shares with us transformational experiences which have been a part of her journey in life and as a co-worker with the Columbans.



May the Easter season and liturgies be a time of profound transformation as we seek to be changed more and more into true discipleship and missionary commitment.

Fr Daniel Harding

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CRASH FOLDING *The Far East*

By folding the magazine, we are reducing the cost of postage by up to 28%. We are committed to sending *The Far East* to you in ways that keep costs low and show care for the environment, so that you can continue to receive and enjoy the real life stories that arise out of Columban Mission.

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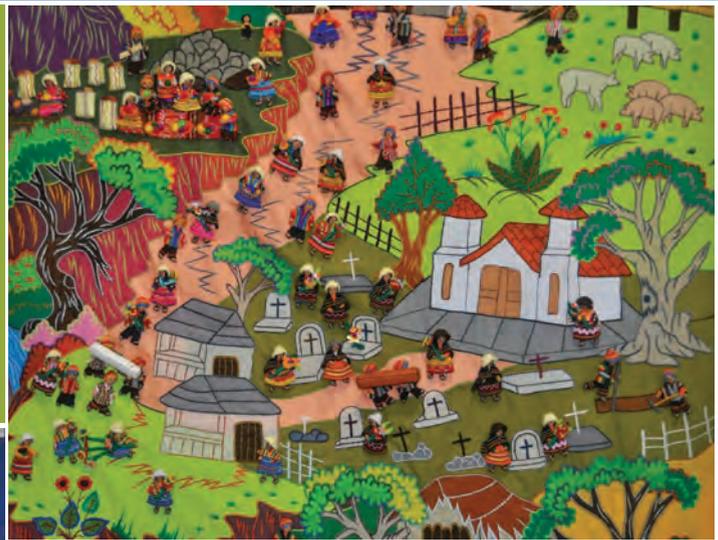
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It was October 2013 when Fr Leo commissioned Maria to prepare an 'arpillera', a tapestry made from scrap cloth material with multiple figurines, to cover one of the walls of his tiny residence where he lived in retirement at the Columban Centre House in Lima.



The tapestry was to represent the town of Huasa Huasi in the Peruvian central highlands where Fr Leo had been to hell and back for some 12 years accompanying the local indigenous potato growers and towns-folk.



The kids are lined up in the school yard and a procession heads for the cemetery carrying a coffin to where a prepared grave lies open and waiting.



The corn, the fruit, the potatoes and the wool are all being gathered into sacks and loaded onto a truck.

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PERU

FR JOHN HEGERTY

Leo's last wish

vast splash of colour, full of figures and events. From a distance it is a blur, but up close you see the details of all the activities typical of an isolated Peruvian mountain village.



masterpiece now hangs in our Centre for Mission Studies at the Columban Centre House in Lima.



February 4, 2015 marked the one year anniversary of the death of Columban Fr Leo Donnelly in Peru.

There had to be a truck bringing into town the freshly picked fruit and it had to be white. There must be pigs grazing in a paddock. And the cemetery where Sr Irene McCormack and her five fellow victims who were executed in 1991 by the Shining Path Guerrilla Movement lay resting in peace must have people in it. And of course the long majestic church that runs one side of the plaza, and the school.

These are some of the instructions Fr Leo Donnelly gave to Mrs Maria Reyes of the ladies cooperative in the parish of Sts Peter and Paul, Independencia, Lima, Peru.

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The purpose of the tapestry was to cover one of the walls of his residence to help deaden the echo he constantly heard as a part of his severe hearing loss. It would also provide a scene where he could sit, contemplate and give thanks to God and the people of Peru for a long life among them.

I heard about the tapestry in May last year some months after Fr Leo's death in a hospital in Lima on February 4, 2014. He would never see the fruit of the six months artistry by Maria, executed in accordance with his wishes. Conscious that Maria would be left with many months of work on her hands, I asked for a viewing of the 'magnum opus' (great work).

It is a vast splash of colour, full of figures and events. From a distance it is a blur, but up close you see the details of all the activities typical of an isolated Peruvian mountain village. The corn, the fruit, the potatoes and the wool are all being gathered into sacks and loaded onto a truck. The kids are lined up in the school yard and a procession heads for the cemetery carrying a coffin to where a prepared grave lies open and waiting.

This masterpiece now hangs in our Centre for Mission Studies at the Columban Centre House in Lima. On another wall is one of Leo's paintings representing the rape of Peru by the uncontrolled export of minerals.

Columban Fr John Hegerty has been a missionary in Peru since 1971.

Speechless in the face of evil

FR PATRICK McINERNEY

The Martin Place Siege in Sydney on December 15-16, 2014 shocked Australia and the world, but in the face of evil, goodness and decency will triumph over wickedness.



Photo: By ABC western Sydney reporter Mohamed Taha @Mo_Taha1

Columban Fr Patrick McInerney meets with (left-right) Rabbi Zalman Kastel and Sheikh Wesam Charkawi after the Martin Place Siege in December 2014.

*O*n the morning of December 15, as I heard the breaking news of the hostage crisis unfolding in Martin Place, my thoughts immediately went to the hostages. Some years ago I had been held at gunpoint for several hours during an armed robbery in the Columban house in Pakistan, so I know what it feels like to be a hostage, to be stood against a wall expecting to be shot! I felt also for the Muslims across the city who would be saying, "oh no, not again!"

Their hearts would have been weary, fearing yet another backlash. In a sense they too are being held hostage, by criminal elements in their midst who give them and their

religion an undeserved bad reputation. I resolved to visit the Lakemba Mosque as a gesture of solidarity.

On social media I read intimations of an interfaith prayer service. The ABC news confirmed it. I have often visited that mosque on Eid days so I am a familiar figure there. When I arrived, somewhat to my surprise, I was greeted by name, which was a tribute to the bonds of friendship that had been established. Previous visits were happy occasions, feast days, celebrations. This was a sad occasion. The mood was sombre. Some expressed fear that the work of interfaith dialogue would be set back. I said, "No! Those who are prejudiced and ignorant will take the situation as proof of their

narrow-minded suspicions, but those of us who are committed to interfaith dialogue, this tragic event will not distract us or deter us from the path of dialogue to achieve mutual respect, understanding and collaboration for the common good. It will only serve to strengthen our resolve."

At that stage, there was little or no information on the situation, only concern for the hostages and hope for a peaceful and speedy resolution. We could do nothing, so we did the only thing we could do, turn to God in prayer.

After the regular Muslim night prayer, we gathered together on the forecourt of the mosque. Sheikh Wesam Charkawi, Rabbi Zalman Kastel and I commented and prayed. Then the Hon. Mr Tony Burke MP, Federal Member for Watson, spoke about preserving the values of multi-culturalism.

Some years ago I had been held at gunpoint for several hours during an armed robbery in the Columban house in Pakistan, so I know what it feels like to be a hostage, to be stood against a wall expecting to be shot!

After the formalities, I was touched by the many Muslims who came up to us and thanked us for our presence. They genuinely appreciated our expression of solidarity. They assured us that such friendship between people is what our respective religions teach.

Early next morning the police intervened to save lives and to lift the siege. Tragically, three people lost their lives, including the perpetrator. We offer our heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones, whose selfless actions saved the lives of others.

We hope that all the hostages traumatised by the long drawn-out terrifying drama will be comforted by family, friends, professionals and eventually find healing. We commend the police and law enforcement agencies for their bravery under duress.

All evidence indicates that the perpetrator was a sole, disturbed, deranged person. We trust that no other individual or community will be blamed for his desperate, fatal actions and that the people of Sydney and Australia will come together to preserve the respect and acceptance that have forged our multi-cultural, multi-religious society.

Later during the day, Ashleigh Green and Ash Prasad from the Columban Mission Institute joined the throng of citizens of every race, religion and status - from Prime Minister to the homeless - who visited Martin Place to pay their

respects. They offered flowers on behalf of our staff, as well as a copy of *The Golden Rule Poster*.

This poster contains the ethic of reciprocity - treat others as you want them to treat you - in the sacred texts of 13 different religions and spiritualities. It is common to all the world's religions and is a guiding principle in how we should behave towards one another. May it guide us today and in the weeks to come as we mourn, ponder and re-commit ourselves to the peace with justice that God desires for all people, here in Australia, and around the world, especially where there is violence and conflict. May believers from all religions unite in making God's name a voice of peace, a beacon of hope and a witness to love.

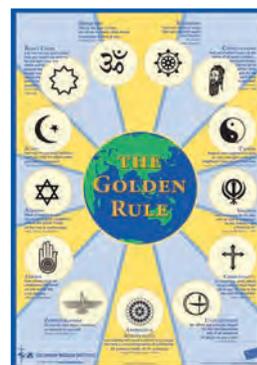
The contrast between the siege in Martin Place and the breaking news from Pakistan of the cold-blooded killing by the Taliban of over 140 people, most of them children, shows how "lucky" Sydney has been. Here the perpetrator was a single, sick person; there it was a group following a perverted ideology. Even a single victim is one too many. The number of victims in Pakistan is appalling. In the face of such evil, we are speechless. Our hearts go out to the families and to the nation, our grief mixed with theirs, steeling our resolve that goodness and decency will triumph over wickedness.

There has since been the murders at Charlie Hebdo and the Jewish bakery in Paris, which in turn pale into insignificance compared with the murder of 2,000 people by Boko Haram terrorists in Baga, Nigeria. No wonder our world calls out for a redeemer. Thanks be to God, he has come, in the infant whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.

May Christians join with other believers and people of good will in promoting peace with justice between all peoples.

Columban Fr Patrick McInerney is the Director of the Columban Mission Institute, North Sydney.

The Golden Rule Poster



The Golden Rule Poster includes sacred texts from 13 different religions; it promotes mutual respect and harmony in our multi-religious society and provides discussion topics for schools, homes, offices and congregations.

A1 Poster: \$18.99

A4 Poster (pack of 25): \$28.80

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Christ dying, Christ rising in the Per



Photos: Jaime Quispe



*H*oly Week “*La Semana Santa*” is the most important time of the year for Christians. Pope Francis reminds of this when he writes, “*In the heart of the Gospel, what shines forth is the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead.*”

For this reason the three main days of Holy Week, called **the Easter Triduum**, is a particularly sacred time across the whole Catholic world. Amongst the indigenous Quechua peoples of the Andes Mountains of Peru, **the Easter Triduum** is celebrated with widespread community participation, with spectacular dramatization and bright colours and with deep personal devotion.

A typical parish in the Andes, such as Combapata, where I was formerly the parish priest, consists of a main town with a lot of outlying farming communities. Cars are very rare in these villages and public transport

is minimal. Therefore, so that the communities can participate in the **Holy Thursday Liturgy**, the parish arranges for trucks to bring the people in to the main parish church. To highlight the Liturgical Celebration each community is asked to select a representative for the foot washing. These representatives wear their traditional dress and often women are chosen because of their colourful costumes.

After Jesus had washed the feet of his disciples he said, “*I have set an example for you so that you should do just what I have done*” (Jn 13:15). Participating in the same gesture is a powerful lesson teaching all of us that our union with Jesus in the Eucharist is a call to serve our brothers and sisters with the same humility. This gesture is not lost on the people of Combapata.

The majority of people in Latin America still struggle against poverty and different types of oppression.

The indigenous Quechua people, descendents of the Incas, are a conquered people. Discrimination against these small farmers continues today. Low prices for the small scale agricultural products of these farmers makes survival on two hectares of land very precarious.

Perhaps this is one of the reasons that move many of these people to identify more with the Suffering Christ than with the Risen Lord. This means that there is often a much greater participation on Good Friday than on Easter Sunday.

Good Friday is a day full of powerfully dramatized liturgies. The day begins in Combapata at 5:00am with “*the Way of the Cross*” acted out around the town plaza in a dramatic manner by the parish youth group. A striking moment occurs when the “*soldiers*” seize a man in the crowd to carry the cross. He is just as surprised as Simon from Cyrene would have been.



Each of the parish's many communities also dramatize their own "Way of the Cross" around the hills and fields of their village. In the afternoon the official parish liturgy of the Veneration of the Cross is held. It is an emotional experience to witness hundreds and hundreds of people in traditional dress approaching the Cross on their knees for at least the last 10 metres of the church aisle.

When the Veneration of the Cross finishes the church is full to overflowing for what the people consider is the main event of the day. This is a double procession - a men's procession and a women's procession.

First the men of Combapata lift a glass sided coffin containing a life-size image of "Cristo Muerto" - the "Dead Christ" which they carry on their shoulders around the streets of the town accompanied by sorrowful hymns. At each corner the coffin is placed on a specially decorated table

provided by the residents of that street. Here prayers are said, Holy Water is sprinkled and Incense is offered.

Meanwhile the women of Combapata have their own procession carrying a large statue of "Maria que sufre" - "The Suffering Mary." The culminating moment occurs at the entrance to the plaza when Mary and Jesus meet and are carried together around the plaza to finally arrive back at the church where they will await the coming Resurrection.

As the people of the Andes Mountains are early risers, we begin the Easter Vigil outside the church at 4:00am, when we light the Easter fire. During the Easter Mass the rising sun lights up the church which of course reminds us of Christ rising from the dead.

It reminds us also of the ancient Inca practice in the famous Temple of the Sun in nearby Cuzco, long destroyed

by the invaders to plunder the golden and silver treasures. On the day of the Winter Solstice in June, the sun shone directly through a small hole accurately placed in the eastern wall so that it completely dazzled a giant golden mirror set on the opposite wall.

What a wonderful image to for us to recall the Light of the Risen Lord, much more powerful than the light of the sun of course.

The light of the Risen Christ illuminates the lives of the Quechua speaking agricultural families - the *campesinos* - of Combapata, inviting them to a better life in this world and in the world to come.

Columban Fr Donald Hornsey first went to Peru in 1975.

Good Friday in Japan

FR BARRY CAIRNS

Columban Fr Barry Cairns tells us about his display for the Adoration of the Cross.

When I was a very young priest just out of language school in Tokyo, my Japanese vocabulary was somewhat limited! To give me confidence and help me get the message across I used many visual aids in my classes with those preparing for Baptism.

Gradually as proficiency in the language increased I continued to use visual aids because I found that they conveyed the message of Jesus far more effectively. This is especially the case with the Japanese culture which emphasizes the concrete rather than the conceptual.

Here I am 55 years later still using visual aids in my Catechumenate Programme, Homilies and Liturgies! The Good Friday Liturgy is one example. For the Adoration of the Cross there is quite a display. Centre-piece is a large crucifix. I found it in the sacristy store room. It was broken with only wires protruding from the plaster arms. A recently baptized parishioner is a sculptor. He gave the image of Jesus new arms. This repair work meant a lot to him.

I had previously seen a crucifix from Ireland that was used during the persecution there. On it was not only the outline of Jesus, but also depicted were the instruments of the Passion. Using this Irish crucifix as our resource we assembled various concrete objects.

The women in charge of the altar flower arrangements plaited a crown of thorns. In my carpenter's workshop I made the scourge and a large pair of dice. (Dice were used by the soldiers to decide who won the seamless cloak

of Jesus). From my carpentry kit we added a heavy hammer three large nails and pincers (to take the nails out after Jesus' death).

Another amateur carpenter made a very realistic looking lance, a pole topped with a sponge and a miniature ladder (to take down Jesus' body from the cross). At first we had only a tiny rooster to recall Peter's denial. Then a parishioner gave us an heirloom from her deceased father. It was a big, very much alive-looking rooster made in the atelier of the famous Japanese chinaware company, Noritake.

That love is not just 2000 years ago, but a love that is alive and active for each of us today. We can all say with St Paul: Jesus 'loves me and gave himself up for me' (Galatians 2:20).

Our parish uses these visual aids on Good Friday during the liturgy which includes the Adoration of the Cross. At first we slowly read the relevant passages in St John's Gospel and the fourth Song of the Suffering Servant (*Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12*).

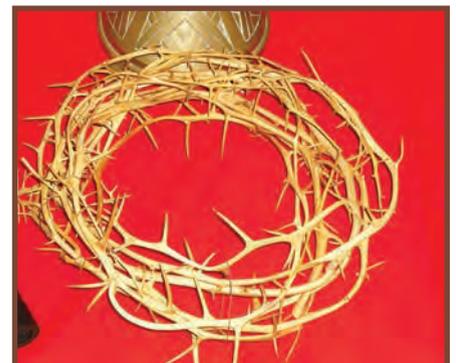
The lights are then turned off and only a spotlight shines on the area of the Cross. Then each person comes up in procession two by two while a chanter gently sings in Japanese those haunting liturgical hymns for Good Friday (*Improperia*). In twos they lay their hands on the Cross and looking at Jesus on the Cross commune with their Saviour in silent prayer. It is a supremely sacred moment.

The purpose of a catechetical visual aid is to lead the viewer to a deeper faith truth. The aid must not become a mere transitory entertaining gimmick! An aid is a parable in the concrete.

In other words we do not concentrate on the actual wounds themselves, but rather on the love behind them. 'By his stripes we are healed' (*Isaiah 53:5*).

That love is not just 2000 years ago, but a love that is alive and active for each of us today. We can all say with St Paul: Jesus **'loves me and gave himself up for me'** (*Galatians 2:20*).

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



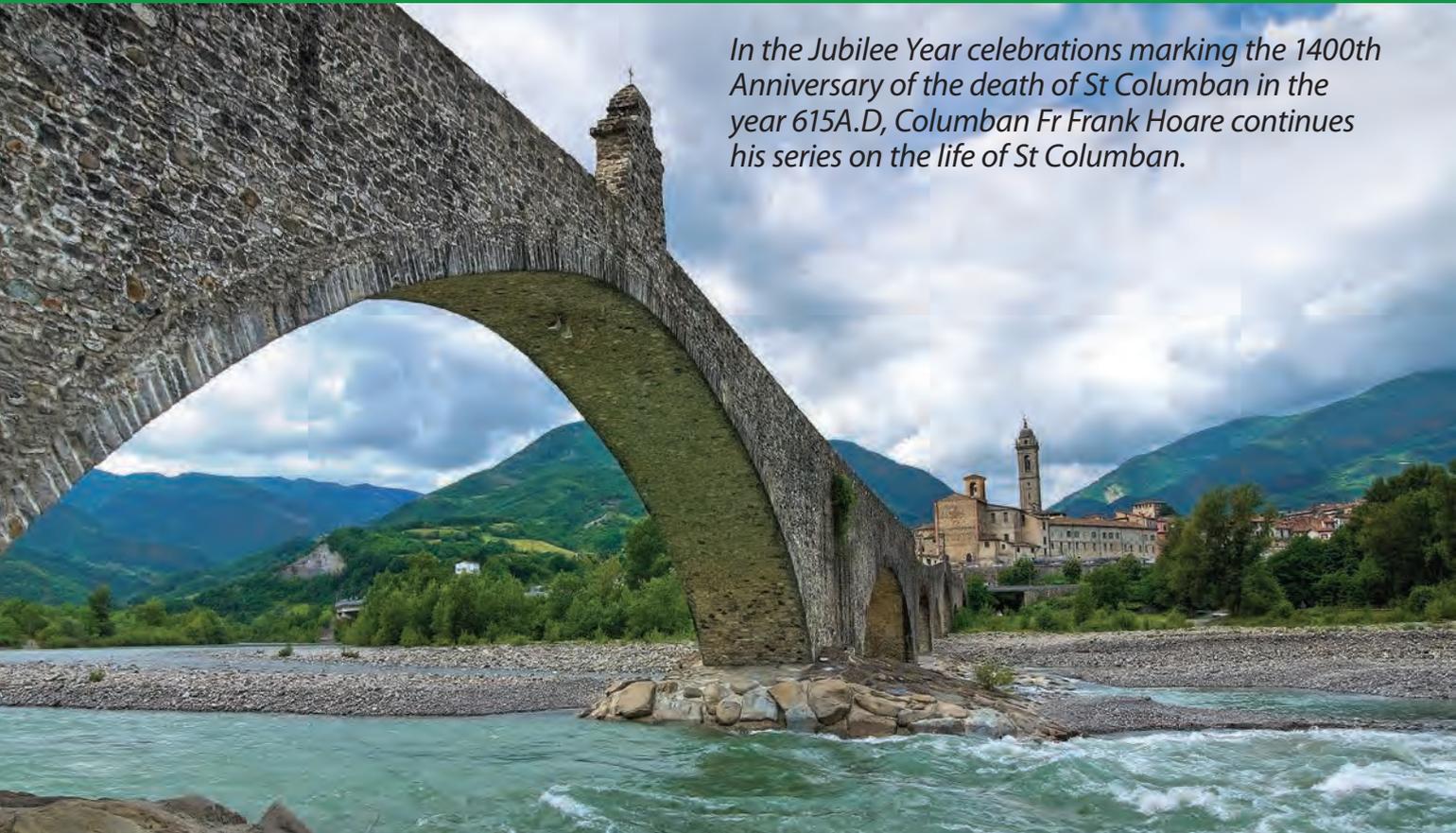


*Scáin agus Máire Ó Gallchoiré
Ni Yotte Kifusaréta
Furui Ireland
No Jujika No Fukusei*



Photos: Fr Barry Cairns

The Europe to which St Columban w



In the Jubilee Year celebrations marking the 1400th Anniversary of the death of St Columban in the year 615A.D, Columban Fr Frank Hoare continues his series on the life of St Columban.

DUBLIN
(IRELAND)

LUXEUIL
(FRANCE)

BREGENZ
(AUSTRIA)

DISENTIS
(SWITZERLAND)

OLIVONE
(SWITZERLAND)

BOBBIO
(ITALY)

ROME
(ITALY)

St Columban labored in Europe from 590A.D. to his death in 615A.D. During that time he had struggles with the Papacy, with bishops and with kings and queens over the date for celebrating Easter and orthodox Christian faith. The background to these controversies will help to clarify these issues.

The Roman Empire

St Peter and St Paul were both martyred in pagan Rome. But by the fourth century the Empire supported the Church. In fact, the Church and Empire became synonymous. This was the beginning of Christendom – European states which made Christianity the state religion and where secular leaders

defended the Church and upheld the rules of Christianity. But the Christian emperors at times acted as theologians, judging what was orthodox Christianity (to be upheld) and what was heretical (to be persecuted).

Emperors sometimes put severe pressure on bishops and Popes, to the detriment of the Church. Some Bishops also began to live as secular princes and this gravely distorted the gospel.

By the early fifth century A.D. the Empire was collapsing and Rome was sacked by pagan German tribes. Many Christians, like St Augustine, felt that the end of the world was near. The Christian Emperor moved first to

Bobbio, Italy, the final resting place of St Columban.

Ravenna and later to Constantinople in the east and ruled his smaller empire from there.

The Merovingian Dynasty in France

What is now France was, at that time, full of forests with wild animals and dangerous outlaws. Roman law and order had collapsed when the barbarian tribes poured in. Many Roman towns and cities were destroyed and even the Roman roads, which facilitated travel, fell into disrepair. People travelled by river where possible.

About the year 500A.D. Clovis united the tribes under himself in what is now France and he was baptized. His successors, members of the Merovingian dynasty, were a mixture



Thousands of Christian martyrs sacrificed their lives throughout the Roman Empire until Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313A.D. After that Christians no longer had to witness to their faith with their blood.

of pious devotion and extreme violence and passion. By Columban's time there, most of France was roughly divided into Neustria in the west, Austrasia in the north east and Burgundy to the south.

The people in Columban's time were a mixture of Christians, some nominal and some fervent, and pagan tribes. Some saintly bishops administered their towns and tried to provide welfare for the poor. The educated people spoke Latin, the indigenous Gauls spoke their language and the Germanic tribes spoke Frankish.

Columban was given permission by King Gunthram, to build monasteries in Annegray, Luxeuil and Fontaine, close to where the three kingdoms came together. Many monasteries of Columban rule were later founded in the three kingdoms. The monks preached the Gospel and deepened and reformed the Christianity of the people.

Queen Brunhilde of Austrasia was prominent in a 40 years' war between Neustria and Austrasia which resulted in much death and destruction. She is blamed for having Columban and his Irish monks expelled from Luxeuil in 599A.D. The monks needed the patronage of the secular rulers but its continued protection was very uncertain.

The Papacy and Heresies in Christendom

A priest named Arius taught that Jesus, the Word of God, was not equal to God the Father. The Council of Nicaea in 325A.D. condemned this Arian heresy and proclaimed that Jesus, God the Son, was equal to and of the same being as God the

Father. The Council of Chalcedon in 451A.D. condemned the Monophysite heresy which claimed that Jesus only appeared to be human and the Council asserted that Jesus was true man as well as true God.

Around 550A.D. when Columban was a boy in Ireland, Pope Vigilius and his successor, Pope Pelagius, were put under great pressure by Emperor Justinian to side with the Monophysites. They resisted, but then gave in. Many bishops in the West then refused to accept these Popes until they returned to orthodox teaching. Some bishops continued to view them and their successors with suspicion at the time Columban arrived in Milan in 612A.D.

The Lombards were a Germanic tribe that settled in northern Italy. They were a fierce people who took the land off the earlier inhabitants and forced them to work for them. Columban on finding that the king and the Lombards were Arians, preached some strong sermons defending the orthodox belief in the Trinity during the 18 months he spent there.

Some bishops were still accusing the reigning Pope Boniface IV of being sympathetic to the Monophysite heresy. The Arian king and his Catholic queen asked Columban to appeal to the Pope to unite the people in one faith. Columban should have avoided this controversy because much of what he knew about it was only hearsay. But he wrote an elaborate letter to the Pope challenging him to give clear witness to orthodox Christian faith and to call a council to clear his name against the accusations made against him.

The Easter Controversy

Controversy arose early between Jewish and Gentile Christians about the date for celebrating Easter. Later, the Church in the East and West celebrated the Resurrection on different dates.

For a time Rome and the West, including Britain and Ireland, observed an 84 year cycle with Easter falling between March 25 and April 21. The Irish continued to cling to this computation as something ancient which was introduced to them with the faith. Rome changed the way of calculating Easter a couple of times. Gaul followed the reformed Roman cycle but Columban continued to follow the Irish computation of Easter. So the monks in Columban's monasteries often celebrated Easter a week before the rest of the Christians in Europe.

Columban and the Bishops

Kings had some laymen, their followers, appointed bishops in exchange for money. Many bishops at that time were also the rulers of the cities where they lived. Some of these king's appointees had little interest in spiritual responsibilities but were renowned for hunting, feasting, lust and avarice.

Given this situation and because he came from Ireland where abbots were more important than bishops, Columban was not impressed when a council of bishops, some of whom were unworthy men, summoned him to their meeting to answer accusations against him. These included celebrating Easter on a different date. Columban refused to attend but sent a strong letter



IRELAND



FRANCE



GERMANY



AUSTRIA



SWITZERLAND



ITALY



defending his position and urging them to attend to their duties and to leave him and his communities in peace.

Columban's Influence on Europe

Thousands of Christian martyrs sacrificed their lives throughout the Roman Empire until Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313A.D. After that Christians no longer had to witness to their faith with their blood.

Zealous Christians then became monks, cutting themselves off from worldly pleasures and temptation.

Monks went to the deserts of Egypt and other wild, lonely places. Gradually monasticism, known as green martyrdom, spread to Greece and onto France where St Martin of Tours and St John Cassian praised this lifestyle in their writings. St Patrick introduced monasticism into Ireland where it spread widely and rapidly.

There were about 200 monasteries in Gaul when Columban arrived in 590A.D. but 50 years after his death this had increased to almost 600. Most of these were founded by monks from Columban's monasteries and followed his rule. Columban and his monks thus reformed the Church in France and in surrounding countries.

Columban Pilgrimage 2015 "In the footsteps of St Columban"

August 17, 2015 - September 6, 2015

*For more information: Ph: Janette Mentha (03) 9375 9475
Email: info@columban.org.au*

Terminally ill - sources of income



FR ROBERT McCULLOCH

Home-based Palliative Nursing at St Elizabeth Hospital, Hyderabad, Pakistan.

In Pakistan terminally-ill patients are treated as sources of income by the medical profession and the hospital culture. Their illness is not relieved and the financial situation of their families is wrecked as they seek for a cure or for pain relief.

In 2005 the administrative council of St Elizabeth Hospital, of which I was chairman until November 2011, began discussing the need for and the possibility of commencing home-based palliative care for the terminally ill in Hyderabad, a city of 4,000,000 in the south-east of Pakistan.

Its introduction has enabled St Elizabeth Hospital to continue to offer in a very new way the best possible care at the lowest possible cost to those in need and to manifest compassion and mercy in a practical and outstanding way in Pakistan. At St Elizabeth Hospital, we are convinced that the best and only answer to violence is compassion.

An important benefit of St Elizabeth's home-based palliative care service is that it facilitates inter-faith harmony through the caring ministry of committed Christian nurses, male and female, in the homes of people of different faiths, and through the meeting and mutual support of the religious ministers of Muslim, Christian and Hindu patients.

As of November 2014, St Elizabeth's Palliative Care visits 30 terminally ill patients. Nineteen are in terminal condition stage 4, nine in stage 3 and two are undergoing chemotherapy and radiography. Twenty are male and 10 female. Eighteen are Muslim, nine Christian and three Hindu.

An important benefit of St Elizabeth's home-based palliative care service is that it facilitates inter-faith harmony through the caring ministry of committed Christian nurses, male and female, in the homes of people of different faiths, and through the meeting and mutual support of the religious ministers of Muslim, Christian and Hindu patients. The palliative care team comprises four male nurses, one female nurse, and a doctor.

In preparation for beginning the palliative care at St Elizabeth Hospital, one of the nurses, Patras Inayat, completed a year-long Certificate in Palliative Care Nursing at Calvary-Bethlehem Hospital, Melbourne, in 2011. Members of St Vincent de Paul conferences arranged accommodation and hospitality for Patras in Melbourne.

Another nurse, Eric Siraj, completed his specialized Certificate in Paediatric Nursing in Hyderabad and further course-work in paediatric oncological nursing at the Children Cancer Hospital in Karachi. He went to Assisi Hospital, Singapore, in March-May 2012 for further palliative care training. This training and linkage has been on-going.

St Elizabeth Hospital is a member of Singapore-based APHN (Asia Pacific Hospice Network). In August 2014, the administrator of St Elizabeth Hospital, James Francis, and the head of the Palliative Care Department, Patras Inayat, attended the Catholic Health Australia annual conference in Brisbane. An outcome of their visit is that professional development linkages have been established with Cabrini Hospital, Melbourne.

The Palliative Care Department at St Elizabeth Hospital depend on donations. The Melbourne Overseas Mission of the Archdiocese of Melbourne helped to purchase a small car to enable the palliative care nurses to visit patients.

The generosity of Columban supporters has enabled us to purchase equipment such as syringe drivers for continuous pain-killing medication which is expensive. The families of patients have little, there is no insurance cover and the government gives nothing. I would like to personally thank Columban benefactors for their support. It is only through their generosity that St Elizabeth's can continue this palliative care nursing.

Columban Fr Robert McCulloch was a missionary in Pakistan for 34 years. He is currently the Procurator General at St Columbans Mission Society in Rome.



The home-based palliative nursing team is facilitated by nurses and doctors at St Elizabeth Hospital, Hyderabad, Pakistan.



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 and for the spiritual and the temporal welfare of all our readers, their families and friends.*

Three missionaries killed in Peru in 1991 will be beatified because they were close to the poorest.



Two of the three missionaries killed in Peru - Franciscans Frs Michael Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strazalkowski.

The path for beatification has been opened for three missionaries in Peru. The Vatican has announced that the Polish Conventual Franciscan Frs Michael Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strazalkowski (above), along with Italian diocesan priest Father Alessandro Dordi, had been killed "in hatred of the faith" in Pariacoto and Rinconada, in Peru on August 9 and 25, 1991.

Frs Michael Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strazalkowski, who were 30 and 32-years-old respectively at the time, were killed on August 9, 1991, after being abducted in front of many parishioners while attending the sick in their parish. Fr Alessandro Dordi was murdered on Sunday, August 25, 1991, while returning from the Vinzos community to his parish in Santa, after celebrating Mass.

Bishop Luis Armando Bambarén Gastelumendi, Bishop Emeritus of the Peruvian city of Chimbote and former president of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference, opened the cause of beatification of the three victims.

Fr Angelo Paleri, the Franciscan Postulator of the cause of beatification, writes, "At the time, the Shining Path guerrillas in the area had created a kind of parallel government. This meant the integration of existing authorities and the elimination of elements that were against this purpose".

The report from the Peruvian Government's "Truth and Reconciliation Commission", which is attached to the cause of beatification, highlights the terrible actions committed by the Shining Path guerrillas against the Church.

At the time of the killings the editorial of "The Journal of the Shining Path", the guerrillas own journal, announced with satisfaction that "the Maoist forces have murdered three priests". The same editorial denounced the two Polish priests, who distributed the aid of Caritas, as agents sent by the Pope, and who are part of a conspiracy that "seeks to exploit the religious faith of the people to strengthen the system of oppression in the country".

Source: Fides New Agency - Rome 04/02/15

Mission Intention for March

That the unique contribution of women to the life of the Church may be recognised always.

Listen to: From the Director: We are now well into Lent,
how is it going



From the Director

We are now well into Lent, how is it going?

*L*ent is traditionally understood as a time of repentance and penance and it is easy to focus on ourselves as sinners. Fortunately, the liturgical readings for Lent focus our attention on the goodness of God and the blessings that flow from this into our lives, rather than on human sinfulness and any attempt to make amends for it through Lenten practices.

Again it is easy to turn our eyes inwards and conduct a 'search and destroy' on our sinfulness, promising to do better from now on.

We are now well into Lent, how is it going? It is never too late to turn our gaze from ourselves during this time and focus on the goodness of God.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are three major actions in Lent.

Prayer keeps us in touch with God.

Fasting helps us 'make space' for God in our lives as well as teaching us discipline.

Almsgiving encourages us to be generous, especially to poor and disadvantaged people.

Since Lent is about having a change of heart, of seeing things differently, I have decided to take a different tack. In what is left of Lent, I am taking some time to recognise my shortcomings and be at peace with them by keeping my focus on the goodness of God. (A scary option might be to ask someone who knows you well what your shortcomings are).

When I think about almsgiving, it reminds me of a comment which has given me pause for reflection. When I go to town I buy *The Big Issue* (*The Big Issue* is a not-for-profit social enterprise that develops solutions to help homeless, marginalised and disadvantaged people to positively change their lives). I mentioned this to a friend of mine,

who works for St Vincent de Paul. He asked me if I ever offered to shake hands with the vendor? I was surprised to realise that all I wanted to do was to buy the magazine. It had never occurred to me to shake his hand. My friend pointed out the importance of this simple act for both of us. A handshake or a pat on the shoulder can make such a difference in the day of someone who is feeling lonely, disadvantaged or depressed. This gave me a lot to think about. I know that I can do better.

We can be perplexed and anxious about Lent because it brings out the issue of doing better and being better. The imperative to be 'as perfect as my heavenly Father is perfect' (*Matt 5:48*) has always been a struggle for many people including myself!

Since Lent is about having a change of heart, of seeing things differently, I have decided to take a different tack. In what is left of Lent, I am taking some time to recognise my shortcomings and be at peace with them by keeping my focus on the goodness of God. (A scary option might be to ask someone who knows you well what your shortcomings are).

For all of us our focus for Lent ought to be on the goodness of God and not on ourselves.

Because we are not perfect Lent can be a joyful season because we are reminded that we are always in need of God's mercy which is always there waiting for us.

Have a joyful Lent.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr Gary Walker
director@columban.org.au

More than just a job

ASSUNTA SCARPINO

AGOSTO	SEPTIMBRE	OCTUBRE	NOVIEMBRE
...



Assunta Scarpino was inspired by this little Chilean girl.

Janette Mentha and Assunta Scarpino (centre) visited Peru in 2013.



Photos: Assunta Scarpino

After graduating in Public Relations at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 2008 I looked for permanent employment to suit my qualifications. As there were very few Public Relations positions available, I had no choice but to look for employment in other areas.

Having to give up my dream I decided to complete a makeup course. When I qualified, I began working on a casual basis for a makeup company, MAC Cosmetics.

During this time, I was still looking for a full-time position, and as luck would have it, I was notified by an employment agency about a three month "maternity leave" position in marketing and website administration at the Columban Mission Centre in Essendon, Melbourne. I decided to look further into the position and investigate who the Columbans were.

My interest in the job grew after discovering that the Columbans were a Catholic organization of priests who worked closely with the poor.

Having been brought up Catholic and educated at Catholic schools, I had a strong belief in my faith which was very much a part of belonging to an Italian family, so I decided to apply for the position. It gave me great hope to know that if I was to get the job I would be working for a good cause.

I was quite nervous when I went for my interview with the Columbans. I felt out of touch with the marketing scene and knew so little about them.

I was greeted by Fr Gary Walker, the Editor of *The Far East* at the time and Janette Mentha, the Director of Mission Programs. I sat through the interview with an open mind and was honest with my answers.

A couple of days later I received a call from Janette offering me the position.

I was grateful for the opportunity to work with the Columbans.

Working in the office gave me an opportunity to meet many Columban Missionaries. I came to understand that not only did the Columbans offer spiritual and pastoral assistance, they responded, where possible, to the material needs of the poor, in the countries where they worked.

My job is working FOR and WITH the marginalised. That's what makes me realize that what I do is MORE THAN JUST A JOB.

As the maternity leave position was coming to an end, I was offered a full time position in the Columban Mission Office working across the Programs Department with Janette Mentha and the Finance Department with the Director of Finance, Maha Shawayky.

Then, to my surprise, in 2013 I was invited to travel to Chile to assist with the World Youth Day Mission Experience for 150 Australian and New Zealand pilgrims who were to spend time in some of the poorest parishes in Chile. The experience also included a short trip to visit and see the work of the Columbans in Peru.

I travelled with Columban Fr Dan Harding, the Editor of *The Far East* magazine and Janette Mentha. Fr Dan had spent over 20 years as a missionary priest in some of the poorest parishes of Santiago.

In Chile, I met many Columbans, local parishioners young and old and the youth of the parishes. The experience of meeting, listening and speaking to these people was an 'awakening' into understanding the Chilean culture, the people's struggles, their commitment to their faith and their honest offers of friendship.

I was especially moved in Chile by the Eucharistic celebrations where Catholics joined in much more enthusiastically than I've seen here in Australia. They danced in the churches, sang with enthusiasm and followed images of Jesus, Mary and their patron saints in street processions. The parishes were also places of community where people gathered and had fun.

All the photos and stories in the world would never replace the experience of being in Chile. I began to understand why the Columbans were committed to working in solidarity with these wonderful people, not only in Chile but in other Columban countries.

During my time in South America I began to wonder how we might work towards ensuring that Columban Mission continues. Columban priests are ageing and there are few vocations. However, I know there is a strong band of youth (Australian, New Zealander and South Americans) interested in and committed to mission. I am certain this 'first time event' was an effective way of engaging with both the Australian, New Zealander and Chilean.

I am hoping that we can offer youth similar cultural exchanges to other countries where Columbans work.

During my time working in the Columban office I have learnt to appreciate the generosity of the Columban benefactors who support the many works of Columbans and give a voice to the poor who would otherwise be silent.

My job is working FOR and WITH the marginalised. That's what makes me realise that what I do is MORE THAN JUST A JOB.

Assunta Scarpino has worked at the Columban Mission Centre in Essendon since 2010.

The Prison visitor

FR PATRICK COLGAN

Filipina Salvacion (Sally) Napano, full-time domestic worker and volunteer prison chaplain in Hong Kong is interviewed by Columban Fr Patrick Colgan.

Sally, can you tell us something about your childhood and your early involvement in the Church?

I was born on Guimaras Island (Iloilo), the Philippines, on September 14, 1961. I am the fifth of eight siblings, five boys and three girls. My father was a rice farmer and my mum a busy housewife. Although our church was far away from the village, we always went to Mass. I can remember dreaming about one day being a nun.

Tell us about your working life.

Well, first I went to work as a domestic helper in the Middle East in Kuwait. I worked there for a local family who were very considerate to me, not demanding that I dress in full Arab robe and veil.

When the Gulf War drew near, the Philippine Government urged us all to evacuate and paid part of our flights out of

Kuwait. It was a nightmare journey, going by Jordan and Iraq. In Jordan we had to sleep on the street for a week. In Iraq the government found an empty warehouse for us, where we were fed tinned sardines, cucumber and lettuce, every day, every meal, for a whole week. I can never eat sardines again.

In 1991, I came to Hong Kong. My first employers were a British couple for whom I worked for eight happy years. I thought I had enough money by then and planned to go back home for good. But within two years, and with hospitalization costs for my sick mother growing all the time, I realized I would have to return. So I came back in the year 2000, first to a Chinese family and then an Australian family. I am now with a Korean couple with young children.

How did your interest in prison ministry begin?

In late 2008, I attended a seminar run by a Filipina catechist on "Suicide Counselling." I was very interested in this because



I have seen miracles even among my employers' families (who are not believers) when I pray for them.

a number of close and distant family members as well as neighbours in my village, had committed suicide. I often wondered if I should have seen the signs and been of greater help to them.

During that seminar I met the wife of a Filipino prisoner here in Hong Kong who happened to be the friend of my cousin. I went to see him and he gave me the names of two others who wanted a visit. It has mushroomed since then.

I now visit four prisons in Hong Kong every Sunday in rotation and am in frequent contact with the families of seven prisoners (from the Philippines, Benin, Suriname and Colombia). I help them to get email messages in and out (they are only allowed to send one foreign letter every three months), as well as buying them batteries, soap, magazines, Bibles and whatever they need and ask for.

Do you find the work difficult?

Yes, I often find it challenging. My only day off is Sunday, and I spend it going long distances to jails and then waiting for all the security procedures to be completed. When I eventually do see a prisoner it is behind glass and we are using phones. It is often hard to hear them and especially difficult when their English is poor.

Do you feel your visits help them?

I have one Filipino *kuyo* (big brother) in prison who is paralysed. At the beginning he was very silent and sullen. I used to cry on my side of the glass, trying to encourage him. I organized lodgings for his wife when she visited two years ago. Then last year I kept her in my room with my employer's permission. He is now more positive, praising his wife's love and his children's' good education. He even joked with me last week asking me not to cut my long hair.

I have told him, that even though the weather is so hot, I will sacrifice cutting my hair, as a prayer for him.

What gives you the strength to continue?

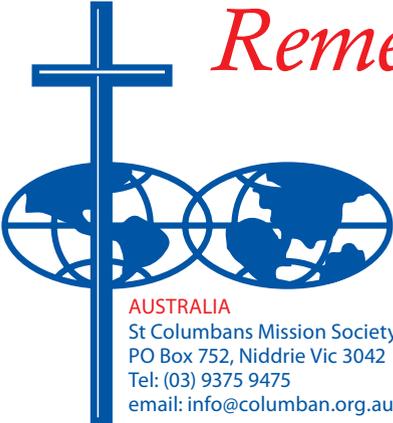
Even though I am not a formal member of a Church group such as the Legion of Mary, my attendance at Sunday Mass is very important to me. I often cry inwardly during the priests' sermons. It is as if the Lord is speaking to me directly. I had promised God that once all my family debts and obligations were cleared, I would live and use any disposable income totally for Him.

I have seen miracles even among my employers' families (who are not believers) when I pray for them. For example, the total healing of my Korean "grandfather" from a stomach complaint. I do wonder sometimes if I am really helping the prisoners enough in what I say, because I am not an expert in the Bible. Often it is their words to me that inspire me and keep me going.

Do you have any message for other domestic workers here in Hong Kong?

Yes. I would like to encourage them to use their gifts, especially the gifts of listening and healing that God has given to us Filipinas, for our brothers and sisters in jail. Sometimes we waste our day off sitting around the streets and parks, when we could give just an hour or two to someone worse off than ourselves. Jesus did say, "I was in jail, and you came to see me..."

Columban Fr Patrick Colgan is on the General Council for the Missionary Society of St Columban which is based in Hong Kong.



Remember the Missions

in your WILL

We cannot take our earthly possessions with us, but we can so dispose of them that our good works will continue after we are gone.

A bequest to help missionaries being God's saving message to non-Christians is a practical way of showing our love for Christ.

Why not speak to your lawyer about it?

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A missionary for 70 years



AUSTRALIA



FIJI

FR RAY SCANLON

Fr Vincent (Vinnie) Batchelor celebrates 70 years of his ordination to the priesthood.

Last December 2014
Columban Fr Vincent

(Vinnie) Batchelor celebrated the 70th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Fr Vincent was the fifth child in his family of five brothers and four sisters who grew up in Cohuna, a town on the Victorian side of the Murray River. After attending primary school at St Mary's, Cohuna, he received his secondary education at St Patrick's Christian Brothers College, Ballarat, an experience which he remembers with much pride and gratitude.

Fr Vincent's brother, John, is a Jesuit priest, now in his 102nd year. Another brother, William, now deceased, was a priest of the Sandhurst Diocese and two of Fr Vincent's sisters, Jessie and Mary, joined Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) Sisters and worked as missionaries in the Philippines, Darwin and South Sudan.

In 1941, along with a number of other Columban seminarians, Vincent travelled to Omaha, Nebraska, USA, to study theology and complete his seminary formation. The war in Europe at that time prevented travel to Ireland where Australian Columbans normally studied theology in those times. He was ordained in Omaha on December 21, 1944, and in the following year made the long journey back home by ship across the Pacific.

Back in Australia Fr Batchelor began his priestly ministry in various parishes in Australia and New Zealand and became a chaplain to Asian students for a number of years before joining



Fr Vincent Batchelor.

the staff of St Columban's Seminary. For many of us younger Columbans he was our Spiritual Year director.

In 1967 Fr Vincent was appointed to Fiji where he served for 40 years in many parishes and as a teacher and chaplain at Xavier Secondary

College in Ba. Fr Vincent now lives in retirement at Nazareth Care in Camberwell, Victoria.

Columban Fr Ray Scanlon is the Vice-Director of St Columbans, Australia & New Zealand.

60 years in Japan

Columban Fr Barry Cairns from New Zealand has worked in Japan for almost 60 years. He runs a very active and welcoming parish reaching out to all those in need in the area.

He is very active amongst the elderly parishioners providing social activities, friendship and support. In the photo Fr Barry anoints and baptises a young man who will be one of his newest members of his parish.

Columbans are grateful to their benefactors who enable them to work amongst the poor and disadvantaged.

Thank you.

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.



Photo: Fr Barry Cairns



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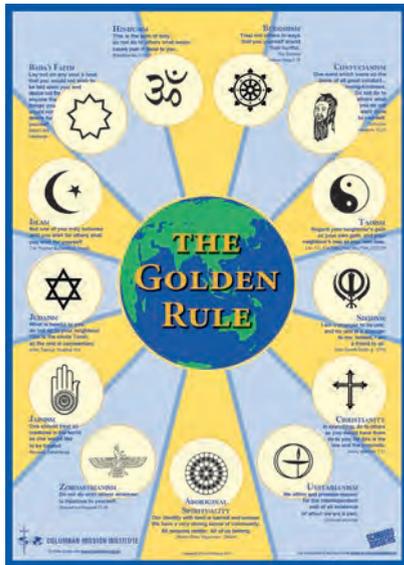
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