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COVER: Images of Centenary Celebrations of Columban missionaries together with local communities in Britain, Peru, Ireland, Myanmar, South Korea, Philippines, Taiwan, Pakistan, Australia, Chile and Fiji; and images of the Centenary Altar Cloth.

Section 1 | Annual report from Australia

From the Director report

Dear Columban Friends,

The 2018 year was significant on many levels. The Columban Mission Institute (CMI), based in Sydney, ceased operations in September 2017. A new Regional Director and Regional Council were appointed in November 2017. In addition, St Columbans day on 23rd November 2017 marked the start of celebrations of the Society's centenary. Janette Mentha was appointed editor of The Far East in July 2017, the first layperson to assume this role in Australia.

On my appointment as Regional Director, I moved to Melbourne from Sydney where I worked in the Christian Muslim Relations ministry.

My thanks for their wonderful service over the past six years to Fr. Gary Walker, former Regional Director, and Fr. Ray Scanlon, former Vice Director. I have enjoyed working with a new group of Columban priests, a new Regional Council, Co-workers and Advisory Board in Essendon.

Although CMI closed its doors, its key activities – Christian Muslim Relations, Peace Ecology and Justice and Mission Studies continue as separate units. The Columban Centre for Christian Muslim Relations moved to Blacktown in Western Sydney under the leadership of Rev Dr Patrick McInerney, Peace Ecology and Justice moved to Melbourne with Fr Peter O'Neill as coordinator and Mission Studies continues through the engagement of Frs Noel Connolly and Dr Patrick McInerney.

On the closure of CMI we farewelled Anne Lanyon who for nearly 15 years worked tirelessly in the area of Peace Ecology and Justice.

During the year, we welcomed the return of Frs Kelvin Barrett from Korea, Warren Kinne from China and Peter O'Neill from Taiwan. Fr Dan Harding, former Far East editor, returned to Chile as the parish priest of San Columbano, Santiago.

The year was also significant for two Australian Columbans. Fr Peter Woodruff celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination and Fr Kevin O'Neill celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination. Fr Peter works in the Columban Mission Centre and Fr Kevin is the Superior General of the Society based in Hong Kong.



In August 2017 The Far East magazine won, “*Most Improved Publication*”, at the Australasian Catholic Press Association’s annual conference. The magazine informs and nurtures our benefactors on the Columban story that has been retold for nearly 100 years.

In March 2018 our Columban Regional Convention acknowledged that the Catholic Church is in an era of change after the publication of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse. We acknowledged the suffering of so many vulnerable children. As we planned for our General Assembly we were conscious that we were being conscientised by the laity about the need for change in the governance in our church.

I look forward to meeting many benefactors and supporters of our Society as we gather to celebrate the centenary of the Missionary Society of St. Columban this year.

The Society cannot thank you, our benefactors, enough for your support over the past year. You are continually in our prayers.

With every blessing,

Fr Brian Vale
Regional Director
Australia/New Zealand Region
director@columban.org.au

Section 1 | Annual report from Australia

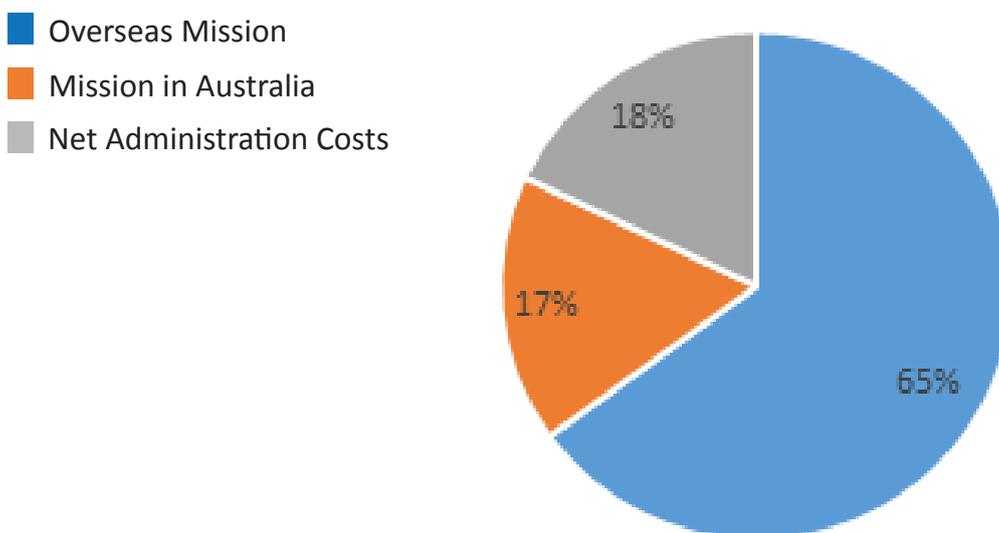
Financial summary

During the year ended March 31, 2018 Columban benefactors donated \$3,657,351 (2017: \$3,215,067) to support the work of Columbans in Australia and overseas.

The increase in total donations received in 2018 can be sourced to the increase in bequests. In the 2018 year bequests made up 66% (2017: 60%) of donation income.

The pie chart below provides a high-level breakdown of how donations received in the 2018 year were expended

Application of donations received in 2018 year



Overseas Mission Funds are remitted to the Society’s General Council. The General Council allocates the funds received from Australia, Britain, Ireland, New Zealand and USA to the overseas mission units that require financial support.

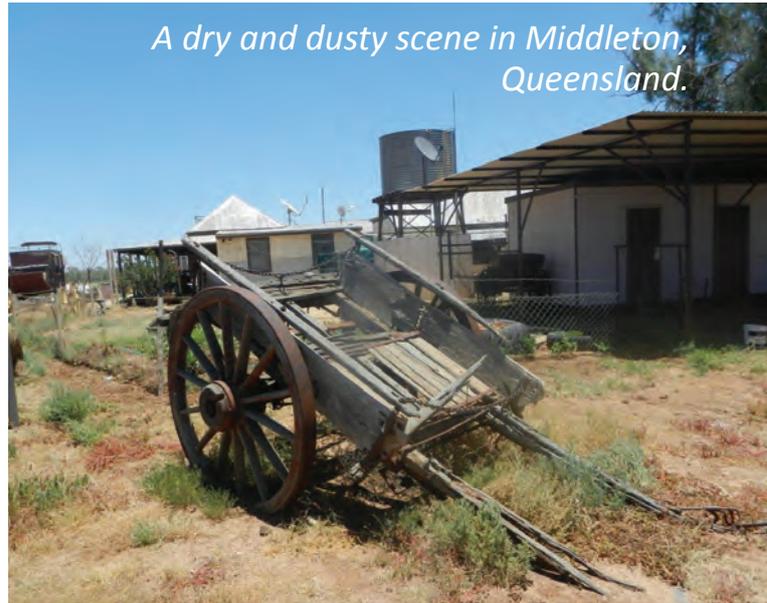
Mission in Australia expenditure covers the work of Columbans in Australia. Income earned by Columbans and any contributions made to the Society by Columbans are used to reduce Mission in Australia costs. Also included is the financial support for the work of the Columban Mission Institute in Sydney for part of the year, the Columban Centre for Christian Muslim Relations, the cost (net of subscription revenue) to publish *The Far East* magazine and the surplus from the sale of the 2018 Columban Art Calendar.

Net Administration Costs is inclusive of the expenditure to administer the Society and its membership and the activities of the regional office located at Essendon in Victoria. Interest income has been allocated against this cost.

Mission in Australia



Ecumenical and interfaith gathering



A dry and dusty scene in Middleton, Queensland.

Overseas Mission



Peru



Fiji



Pakistan



Myanmar

Section 1 | Annual report from Australia

Thank you

We thank all Columban friends who so generously supported us during the 2017/18 year.

We also acknowledge the following Archdiocese, dioceses and parish priests who gave us permission to promote *The Far East* magazine in their parishes.

- Canberra/Goulburn Archdiocese
- Ballarat Diocese
- Sandhurst Diocese
- Toowoomba Diocese

Your Columban Legacy

St Columbans Mission Society has been able to work with the poor in many countries throughout Asia and South America because generous people had the vision to contribute to our work through a gift in their Will.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of all those who left a gift to the St Columbans Mission Society during the 2017/18 year.

For more information about a bequest to Columban Missionaries, please contact:

Michael Mooney

Columban Mission Centre

Ph: (03) 9375 9475

E: bequest@columban.org.au

Vocations

Missionary priests are as needed today as ever they were in the past to bring Christ to the nations of the Earth.

As Columban benefactors and friends, you can help promote vocations to the priesthood through your prayers, and by actively promoting priestly vocations amongst young people.



Fr Daniel Harding celebrates Mass. Photos: Missionary Society of St Columban

Fr Kelvin Barrett
Columban Mission Centre
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E: vocations@columban.org.au

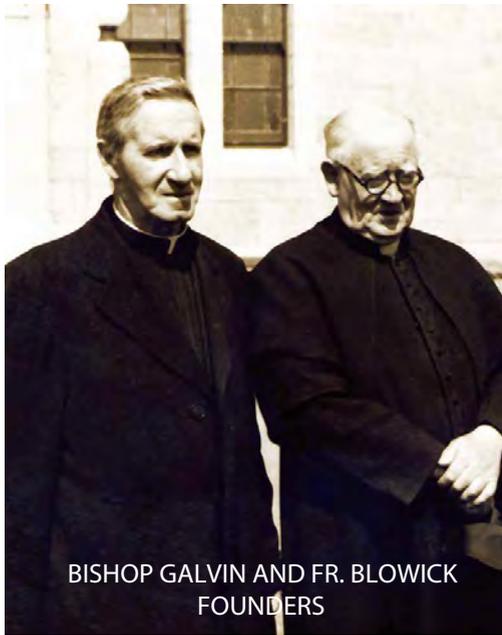


MISSION STATEMENT

The Missionary Society of St Columban is sent by the Church to proclaim and witness to the Good News in Jesus Christ. We cross boundaries of country, language and culture, and live in solidarity with the poor and the exploited earth:

- To establish the Church among peoples to whom the Gospel has not been preached;
- To help churches mature until they are able to evangelize their own and other peoples;
- To promote dialogue between Christians and those of other religious traditions;
- To facilitate interchange between local churches especially those from which we come and those to which we are sent
- To foster in local churches an awareness of their missionary responsibility.

We are called to build collaborative relationships with our supporters in order to nurture their faith while encouraging them to provide spiritual and financial support for our missionary endeavors.



BISHOP GALVIN AND FR. BLOWICK
FOUNDERS



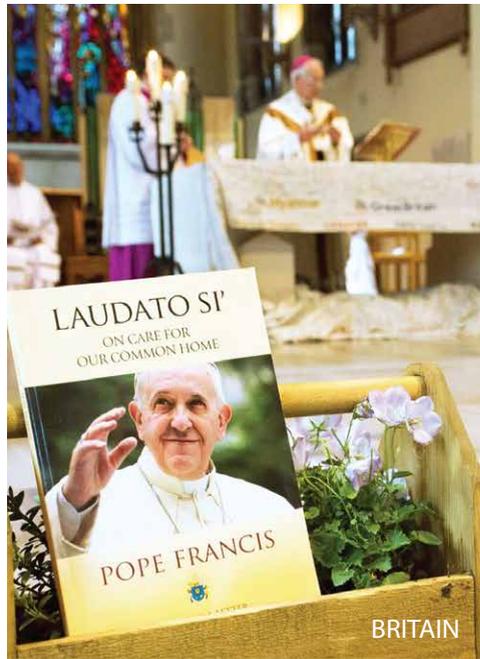
PAKISTAN

“ MY HOPE IS THAT THIS ANNUAL REPORT WILL SERVE TO REMIND YOU THAT EVERY BAPTIZED PERSON SHARES IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST, AND THAT TOGETHER WE ARE MAKING GOD’S REIGN OF LOVE REAL IN OUR WOUNDED WORLD TODAY. ”

Tim Mulroy



PHILIPPINES



BRITAIN

LETTER FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Dear Friends and Partners in Columban Mission,

As our centenary year draws to a close, I am pleased to be able to share with you this annual report on our missionary endeavors. Looking back not just on this past year, but rather on a century of mission, Columban missionaries are more deeply aware than ever that our lives and all of our ministries have been made possible thanks to the faithful and generous support of our benefactors.

During our centenary year we recalled on many occasions the legacy of our founders, Bishop Edward Galvin and Fr. John Blowick. While Bishop Galvin labored for many decades in China, Fr. Blowick spent all of his life tending the home fires in Ireland. Without Fr. Blowick's dedication on the home front, Bishop Galvin would have lacked the personnel and resources that he needed to continue his mission in China. Both Bishop Galvin and Fr. Blowick were exemplary Columban missionaries, but their paths in life were very different. Both were filled with zeal for God and had hearts that were open to all of God's children. They understood that the most important aspect of being missionary is not where one lives, but rather how one loves God and shows concern for one's neighbors.

While I was helping to prepare this annual report, I was reminded once more that those who faithfully tend the home fires by providing the personnel and resources needed for our missionary endeavors today are, like Fr. Blowick, true Columban missionaries. Their prayers, sacrifices and generosity enable those who follow in the footsteps of Bishop Galvin to continue sharing the Good News of God's love through word and action with people in seventeen different countries. My hope is that this annual report will serve to remind you that every baptized person shares in the mission of Christ, and that together we are making God's reign of love real in our wounded world today.

As Columban missionaries embark on a new century of mission, we remain confident that God, who has been faithful to us throughout this past century, will continue to lead and guide us. We also trust that our friends and supporters will continue to accompany us on this next stage of our missionary journey.

With gratitude in Christ for the blessings of this past year,

Rev. Jim Mulroy, SAC





Centenary

CELEBRATIONS

FAMILY AND MISSION DAY | IRELAND

In his words of welcome, Fr. Pat Raleigh, the Director of Columban Missionaries in Ireland, told the large crowd assembled at the Home of the Columbans for an open-air Mass celebrated by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin, “This is truly a day for us Columbans to rejoice with you, our families, benefactors, supporters and friends, as we come together to celebrate our Centenary, 100 years of Columban Mission.”

In his homily, Archbishop Martin recalled how on 29 June 1918, the setting-up of a missionary society of Irish diocesan priests was approved by the Bishops of Ireland and what was then called the Maynooth Mission to China was born.

Archbishop Martin continued, “You will find Columbans in many parts of the world. Yes, in China, but also in Korea, Myanmar, and the Philippines and in other parts of Asia, in Latin America and here in Europe. I think of the contribution of the Columbans to the coordination of Irish emigrant chaplaincy in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s”.

In his address, Fr. Pat Raleigh emphasized that “As a Society celebrating 100 years of Mission we are hugely indebted to people like yourselves, to our families, benefactors, living and deceased for your wonderful generosity over the years and which still continues today.” He concluded, “On this the occasion of our Centenary, I genuinely thank you.”



REMEMBERED WITH LOVE | MYANMAR



In Myanmar, the Columban Centenary Year began in the Diocese of Banmaw in November 2017 and concluded in the Diocese of Myitkyina in November 2018.

During the year there were also celebrations in Mandalay at the Higher Education Center and with the Kachin community in Yangon. The Columbans worked in Myitkyina and Banmaw from 1936 to 1979. The people remember them with love, and when they heard of the centenary celebrations they responded with enthusiasm and the usual Kachin generosity.

In both Banmaw and Myitkyina, thousands attended Mass and danced the traditional Manau dance in celebration of the Columban contribution to the Kachin people. The Kachin people are grateful for the faith that was passed on to them by Columbans and for our ongoing support for the Church in Myanmar today.

Columban lay missionaries started working in Banmaw diocese in 2008, and Columban priests returned to work in Myitkyina in 2015. The Columban Sisters have been back in Myitkyina since 2003.



GROWING 100 TREES | PHILIPPINES

In celebration of the Missionary Society of St. Columban's 100 years of mission, the Society, in partnership with the Pinintoan Cultural and Economic Center, is growing 100 indigenous rainforest trees at the Higaonon ancestral domain in Pinintoan, Canaan, Dansolihon, Cagayan de Oro City, the Philippines. The trees are a fitting tribute to the continuing mission of the Society and affirm our commitment to care for creation.

CALLED TO MISSION

As missionary disciples of Jesus, we are called to heal, reconcile, build bridges, and create mutual understanding through prophetic dialogue. Our commitment to interculturality, inter-faith dialogue, solidarity with marginalized people and the exploited earth are ways to participate in God's mission, calling us forward into communion with our triune God. Our proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus challenges us to build communities of peace.

EVANGELIZATION AND EDUCATION



Bringing the gift of the Gospel of Christ to those who need it the most is still the focal ministry of the Missionary Society of St. Columban. In a sense, all other facets of Columban missionary work are reflections of this call.

Ensuring that Christ's gift is available to those who seek to embrace it while educating them about the Church's teachings, is critical to formation in the faith.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE POOR



Recognizing that all of God's people deserve the opportunity to experience the joys and blessings of the love of Christ, we promote economic and social projects that bring the fullness of that love to the poor and marginalized. Our socio-economic programs support sustainability and the elimination of poverty in the communities that we serve.

INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE



In our increasing multicultural and interreligious world, Columban Missionaries engage deeply with peoples of other cultures and various religious traditions. Such dialogue deepens our own Christian faith and helps to build inclusive communities. During this time of increased tension and conflict with certain groups within Islam, we are conscious of the urgent need to promote greater understanding, respect and harmony between Muslims and people of other religions in order to bring about the universal communion desired by God.

“ EVANGELIZING PRE-SUPPOSES A DESIRE IN THE CHURCH TO COME OUT OF HERSELF. THE CHURCH IS CALLED TO COME OUT OF HERSELF AND TO GO TO THE PERIPHERIES, NOT ONLY GEOGRAPHICALLY, BUT ALSO THE EXISTENTIAL PERIPHERIES: THE MYSTERY OF SIN, OF PAIN, OF INJUSTICE, OF IGNORANCE AND INDIFFERENCE TO RELIGION, OF INTELLECTUAL CURRENTS, AND OF ALL MISERY. ”

Pope Francis on Evangelization

JUSTICE AND PEACE



We recognize ourselves as an intercultural group called to communion with all God’s people. We live out our calling for justice and peace in solidarity with the poor and with those who have no voice.

We commit ourselves to collaboration and networking with other religious and social justice organizations to preserve human dignity and secure peace throughout the world.

INTEGRITY OF CREATION



The earth is our God given home. It gives us nourishment, shelter and respite. God has entrusted unto us its care and safe-keeping. Therefore, we recognize that we can be a voice for the exploited earth - a voice of reason and of education and sustainable practices.

Columban agricultural and economic projects throughout the world stress the value of bio-diversity, while emphasizing ecological learning and living.

VOCATIONS



The foundation of our life as Columbans is a call to cross boundaries to participate in the Mission of God creating true communion among all peoples.

We continue to invite young men to join us as ordained Columbans, and to invite men and women to join us as Columban lay missionaries. Our formation programs encourage, support and challenge them to respond generously and faithfully to the missionary call.

APOSTOLIC PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS



COLUMBAN JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC) | **BRITAIN**



Members of the team place Columban JPIC stories in the press and social media and are often asked to lead workshops, retreats and talks about JPIC themes and approaches.

Columban JPIC education programs help young people and educators explore the relationship between faith and action. A particularly exciting project over the last year has been planned encounters between teachers in Catholic schools and asylum seekers who are studying English.

Our JPIC team is actively involved with many networks, including the Nation Justice and Peace Network, the Climate Coalition, and the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation. We work closely with partners, including Pax Christi, on challenging militarization and promoting peace, and with Operation Noah, in campaigning for Britain to do more to reduce its carbon footprint.



INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE | BRITAIN

In Britain, Columban Missionaries engage in initiatives and projects which promote life-giving relationships amongst people of diverse faiths and cultures. The COMMUNITAS project is a Christian/Muslim collaborative project involving Columbans in Sparkhill, Birmingham. This project entered its fifth year delivering well-being activities for the elderly. Beneficiaries of the project have backgrounds as diverse as Irish, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese and Afro-Caribbean.

FATIMA HOUSE continues to offer hospitality to destitute asylum seeking women in Birmingham. Since the project opened in 2016, twenty-five women have benefited from the welcome offered by Columbans in collaboration with diocesan agencies of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Most of them have now become eligible for various forms of government support, which is the aim of the project. Christians from different traditions and Muslims have enjoyed together the hospitable atmosphere of the project.

The official opening celebration of the Columban centenary year in November 2017 provided us with an opportunity to highlight our commitment to promoting inter-religious dialogue in Britain. People from different faiths and backgrounds attended our Centenary Year Mass at St Catherine's Church in central Birmingham. Referring to the work of Columbans, Archbishop Bernard Longley thanked the Columbans involved in this work 'for the way in which they enable us, as an archdiocese, to sense and experience that link right across the Catholic world'.

APOSTOLIC PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS



LIGHT OF HOPE PRISON MINISTRY | PHILIPPINES

Prison ministry is one of the many ministries in which Columban lay missionaries are involved as we strive to recognize the dignity inherent in our neighbor, no matter how far they have fallen, trusting that no one is beyond Christ's love and power to redeem.

Lay missionary Haiti Muller set up a candle-making project called the 'Light of Hope' in the Philippines to help the families of inmates and released prisoners to make a living. During the course of her ministry she recognized that it's not only the inmates themselves that need care and attention, but also their families. The 'Light of Hope' candle-making project is passing Christ's light of hope to families.



The drug problem in Kachin State, Myanmar, is of epidemic proportions. In 2015, the Catholic Diocese of Myitkyina, where Columbans work, set up a drug rehabilitation center called Pratt Nnan Ginra (Rebirth Rehabilitation Center). In November 2016, Columban Sister Ashwena joined the staff as program manager. Columban Father Eamon Sheridan joined the staff in June 2017 as Chaplain.

The center offers a safe environment where clients are helped to understand that they are suffering from a disease not a moral failing. Many clients are thin and worn when they first arrive, but thanks to a healthy diet at the center they soon become healthy again. Those suffering from medical conditions are referred to the appropriate medical charities operating in Myitkyina in order to receive the necessary treatment.

The center offers various programs to help clients come to a new understanding of themselves and to embrace a new way of living. It offers the 12-Step Spirituality Programs of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. It is at the center that clients move from hopelessness to hope.

SENG NAW'S STORY



“Hello! My name is Seng Naw, and I was 16 when a friend invited me to try heroin. Heroin addiction soon followed.

One day I was taken to the Prat Nnan Center. Columban Fr. Eamon Sheridan arrived and introduced me to the 12-Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous.

The program in Prat Nnan Center really helped me get sober, and the 12 Steps gave me the hope of recovery. It has saved my life. Now I have a job, and I feel my future is bright. My hope is to help other addicts find sobriety.”

APOSTOLIC PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

POOR AND NEEDY PROJECT | PAKISTAN

For Pakistanis who experience discrimination and oppression in their daily struggle to survive, an emergency, such as the serious illness of a family member, can be a matter of life and death. Through years of experience Columban Missionaries have learnt that the way to helping such vulnerable people is through establishing long-term, income generating projects - for example, setting up a barber shop or a fruit stall, providing a donkey and cart for the delivery of goods around town, or providing tools for banner making. These livelihood projects enable people to provide for themselves and their families.

Landless peasant farmers living in villages are very poor and suffer from malnutrition. During this past year, the people of Stella Maris Parish in Christchurch, New Zealand, raised a generous amount of money and sent it to the Columbans in Pakistan for the purchase of milking goats. Thanks to that gift, eleven goats were purchased. These have been given to widows and other needy people. Goat milk is a very nutritious food and is used in the making of a local tea beverage, called Chae.

A recipient of one of the milking goats was an elderly woman called Monika. She and her family live in small mud huts and are very poor. They were very surprised and happy when we delivered a goat to them. We told Monika that when the goat gives birth, if she has two kids, then she ought to make a gift of one of them to another needy family. Young male goats can be reared and sold for meat. Such meat is in great demand before the Muslim feast that commemorates Abraham's sacrifice.



THE MANUEL DUATO SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL | PERU



The Columban Fathers began their work in Peru in 1951 and continue working in various parts of that country up until today.

In Peru, families with children who are disabled or have hearing impairments face many hardships. If they are not able to access a school, they remain home-bound and entirely reliant on their family.

The Manuel Duato Special Needs School provides a safe learning environment for such children. It provides them with a free-of-charge, well-rounded education.

More than a decade ago, the school added a new gymnasium and classroom for students with Down's syndrome. Later, it augmented its computer lab with twelve computer stations. Since then it remains heartwarming to see the excitement of students during computer classes as they learn subjects such as mathematics, language, arts and music, online.



The school also provides occupational therapy, giving students a chance to participate in workshops that provide life skills for their adult years. Students can learn needlework, woodwork, cooking and general cleaning.

The Manuel Duato Special Needs School is one of the longest running Columban projects in Peru, serving poor, vulnerable children and their families. While the majority of the parents are unable to assist the school financially, they generously volunteer their time. The ongoing commitment by Columban Missionaries to this project is made possible thanks to the generous support of our friends in other countries. It remains a privilege for us to continue helping children with disabilities reach their potential.



MISSION MAP

“ AND JESUS CAME AND SAID TO THEM, “ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE.” ”

Matthew 28:18-20



AUSTRALIA



CHINA



MEXICO



PERU



BRITAIN



FIJI



MYANMAR



PHILIPPINES



BRAZIL



IRELAND



NEW ZEALAND



SOUTH KOREA



CHILE



JAPAN



PAKISTAN



TAIWAN



UNITED STATES

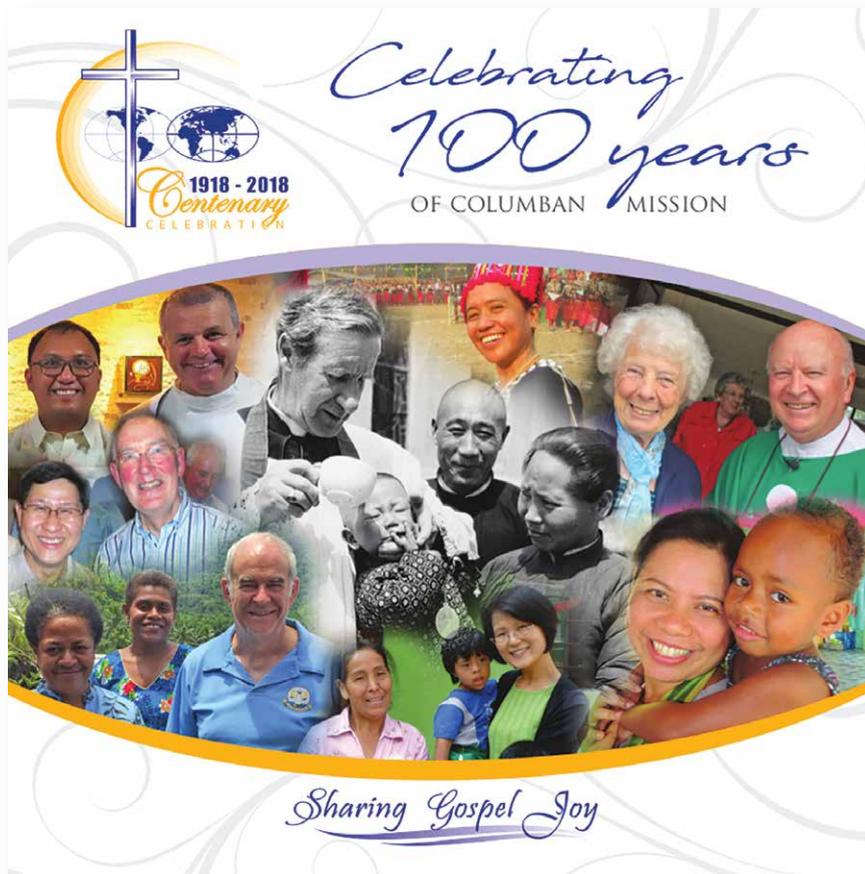
OUR PARTNERS IN MISSION



Joe Froggatt, a regular donor to Columban Mission from Yorkshire, recalls fond memories of Fr. Pat McCaffrey and the Columban ministry in Bradford from 2002 to 2007.

“I first met Fr. Pat in 2002. He had come to England from Pakistan and was sent to Bradford, where he was to be involved with the many different faith communities in the City, in the company of fellow Columbans Fr. John Collins and the late Fr. Sean Rainey. Fr. Pat had loved Pakistan where he had spent the previous fifteen years. With this background and understanding of Asian cultures, not to mention his warm personality, it took him no time at all to establish a very positive rapport with local Muslims in particular, but also with Sikhs and other religious groups in the City.

I attended many interfaith gatherings in the house that Frs. Pat, Sean and John shared, and every one was a delight. The warm welcome ensured that the large lounge, dining room, the kitchen and sometimes the garden were overflowing with so many people of such ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. After Fr. Pat’s untimely death in 2010, there was a gathering in a Bradford Muslim community hall where representatives of over a dozen Faiths were present. Each group, without exception, took the opportunity to speak with love for Fr. Pat, praising his generosity of spirit which all had experienced.”



Margaret Corless, from Preston, is one of 3,500 regular and long-standing supporters in Britain. She was sent a Centenary Booklet to mark 100 years of Columban Mission. This was her reply.

“I was thrilled to receive a personal copy of the Centenary Booklet. It was grand to see Father Jim Fleming’s smiling face on the cover and on the bookmark, along with Father Shay inside the Booklet in one of those colourful waistcoats that he so favours.

No one does a ‘thank you’ better than the Columbans and please be assured that I do feel very much thanked and always appreciated. It is wonderful to feel so included in this mission, without the need for me to venture overseas or learn complicated languages. I am in awe of the courage of those who do so fully answer the call to ‘go and make disciples of all nations’, giving up home and family, along with personal freedom. It is very humbling to think that with the very small effort of a daily prayer and a few donations I can actually be included in the great mission of St. Columban. It is I who should thank you, all the Columbans, who make it possible for me to answer the call in my own, very small way.”

OUR PARTNERS IN | **MISSION**

2018

Annual Report
St Columbans Mission Society

LETTERS FROM OUR DONORS

I am writing to tell you that I have been receiving The Far East for many years as did my grandmother before me. My oldest cousins used to read to me about “Mickie Daly’s Diary” which we all thought was very amusing. My grandmother, Jane McGrath (nee Douglas) was the sister of George Douglas, Columban Fr. Francis Douglas’ father. He used to visit her whenever he was in Sydney. My mother Mary Footer (nee McGrath) thought the world of him and used to tell me many stories of his visits.

I have a photo of him taken on his day of ordination which he sent to my grandmother after his ordination. Everyone who comes to visit me are taken by the beautiful photo, and they all want to know his story. I never met him, since I was seven years old when he was martyred, but he is my mentor. I pray to him and ask him to pray for me. I pray for Columban Missionaries every day.

Many thanks for your beautiful magazine.

Many thanks for your beautiful magazine.

Helen Bridges

From my childhood I remember mum receiving her “Far East” and commenting on the stories in it. The magazine was an integral part of our household. Soon after she died, the yearly reminder to renew arrived, and I was going to return the form saying she had died. Then I thought “maybe it would be nice to get it this year in her memory.” That was 35 years ago, and I really love to read the stories of our Catholic world.

I have used your articles on Fukushima as a base for an environmental article at my Writers’ Group. I share the magazine with two ladies from our Rosary Group. One lady is particularly interested in stories about China as her husband’s great uncle (St. Cesidio Giacomantonio OFM) was martyred there in the Boxer Rebellion. He was canonised with others in 2000.

Thanks Far East.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Maureen Wilson



This little note ringing in the New Year is to say thank you for producing the calendar. Your calendar has served well. In addition to keeping track of the days it has been used to make Christmas and birthday cards sent to loved ones. The calendar was kindly provided by the Chaplaincy, God bless them. Many of residents here have called past to ask about days and dates to meet their needs.

While not much can be done just now to support your good cause, other than enjoy your wonderful calendar. There will come a time when support in kind or otherwise will be provided. The favor will be returned.

Peter Costa

INVITATION TO MISSION

Columbans have a tradition of inviting people to cross-cultural mission. We believe that the missionary vocation, which begins with baptism, needs to be nurtured in various forms throughout one's life. We see that there is a desire among people to engage in mission in new ways. Therefore, Columbans are providing our friends and supporters with various opportunities to nurture a missionary spirit and foster global solidarity. Our hope is to an ongoing relationship between younger generations and Columbans so that together, as people of faith, we make a difference in our world.

OPPORTUNITIES

COLUMBAN MISSION EXPOSURE AND PILGRIMAGES



Participants grow in understanding of mission and their own faith through educational experiences in places of Columban mission

Sending countries: Australia, Britain, Ireland, Korea, USA

Receiving countries: Britain, China, Fiji, Ireland, Philippines, USA
1 - 3 weeks

COLUMBAN INTERNSHIPS



Participants gain practical skills through part-time or full-time service and experiential learning either in their home country or in another country, which prepares them for future service in the Church.

Locations: Britain, USA
1 - 3 months

COLUMBAN VOLUNTEERING



Participants engage in international or domestic full time missionary service to vulnerable populations while assisting with education and advocacy in pursuit of Columban mission priorities.

Location: Britain, China, Philippines, Taiwan, USA
3 - 12 months



The Columban Centenary Youth Mission Exposure (CCYME), which was held in Korea in July 2018, was as one of many events that commemorated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Missionary Society of St Columban.

Thirty-nine young adults from seven different countries participated in the 15-day program. While visiting various places, they experienced both directly and indirectly the history, culture, politics and religions of Korea. They also learned about the history of Columban mission, especially during such difficult periods as the Japanese colonization, the Korean war, and the movement from military dictatorship to democracy.

As shared by the participants, these experiences have given them a deeper understanding of their own baptismal calling and of cross-cultural mission.

“ THE EXPERIENCE ALLOWED ME TO MEET WITH YOUNG PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD WHO ARE ALSO INVOLVED IN THE WORK OF THE COLUMBANS, TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MYSELF AND THE WAYS IN WHICH I CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE MISSIONARY WORK AS WELL AS IMMERSING MYSELF FULLY IN THE KOREAN CULTURE I WAS SURROUNDED BY. ”

Emily Tierney, CCYME Participant



For more information about Columban Invitation to Mission opportunities, please contact us at: simc@columban.org.hk.

FORMATION



FORMATION PROGRAM | PHILIPPINES

During the academic year 2018-2019, in true Columban spirit, we warmly welcomed eighteen young men from five countries into our international seminary in Manila, Philippines. These included Fijians, Filipinos, Kiribati, Korean, Chinese and Burmese (from Myanmar). Their mentors were two Columban priests, one from Tonga and the other from Ireland.

The Columban international seminary program provides students with opportunities to pursue studies in various fields, engage in pastoral ministries, and participate in local Columban activities such as our recent centenary celebrations.

All of our seminarians strive hard to improve their command of the English language before pursuing studies in philosophy and theology at Loyola School of Theology at Ateneo De Manila University.

They engage in pastoral ministry to prisoners in Bilibid Minimum Security Prison, to tuberculosis patients in San Lazaro Public Hospital, to grieving families in Pasay Public Cemetery, and to youth in the Pasig Public Market. They also help with vocation promotion and mission appeals. Through such a wide range of activities and encounters with various people, they learn about different aspects of life and of the world around them.

Throughout this past year there has been a strong collaboration among Columban seminarians, international seminary staff and lay missionaries, which has helped to keep morale high in spite of busy schedules and long days.

AN EASTER SURPRISE!

When the last group of Columban missionaries left Myanmar in 1979, they did so with heavy hearts. Their sadness in saying goodbye was deepened by the fact that no one was coming to replace them: the military-socialist government had long decreed that no new missionaries were welcome. Both Columban missionaries as well as the Kachin tribe mourned the end of an era.

However, during the succeeding decades the Kachin people treasured the Gospel message, as well as the memory of those Columban missionaries who had lived amongst them. Then, in 2015, in response to an invitation, Columban missionaries returned to Myanmar and prepared to resume their ministry amongst the Kachin people. They were delighted to see that the seeds of the Gospel sown by their Columban colleagues several decades previously were still bearing fruit. Consequently, they decided to invite Kachin youth to consider a Columban missionary vocation. To their surprise, within a short time five young men entered the Columban seminary.

Among these five Kachin seminarians, two have the baptismal name Columban. From different villages, both Columban Hkun Myat Aung and Columban Aung Li were born more than a decade after the earlier group of Columban missionaries had said goodbye to Myanmar. However, their parents and families wished to keep their memories alive by naming their sons Columban. When they did so, could they possibly have imagined that one day they would become Columban missionaries?

While growing up, those two boys listened to stories told by their parents and relatives about Columban missionaries who had drawn them closer to God. They had heard about the sacrifices that Columban missionaries had made to help the Kachin tribe. Without ever meeting Columban missionaries, they came to know and admire them... and would later decide to follow in their footsteps.

Leaving Myanmar in 1979 seemed like a Good Friday chapter in Columban history. However, God was already planning this Easter surprise for our Centennial Year!



Columban Hkun Myat Aung and Columban Aung Li in front of a statue of St. Columban in Manila.

LEADERSHIP



General Council (L-R): Fr. Alvaro Martinez, Fr. Tim Mulroy, Fr. Kang Seung-Won, Fr. Brian Vale

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FR. SEAN DWAN (IRELAND)



Every six years Columban representatives from our various mission countries gather for a General Assembly in order to review all of our ministries, examine our organizational structures, prepare plans to meet future challenges, and elect a new international leadership team. Last September, we held this international gathering in Taiwan. Since 2018 was our Centenary Year, this General Assembly also provided us with an opportunity to give thanks for a hundred years of Columban ministries in various countries and commit ourselves to a new century of mission.

It was very evident during our General Assembly that Columban missionaries have undergone a major transformation in recent decades. Many of the older participants were priests from New Zealand, Australia, USA, Ireland and Britain, while the young members included priests from Fiji, Chile, Korea and the Philippines, as well as lay missionaries – both male and female – from the Philippines, Korea and Ireland.

During our General Assembly, Columban missionaries confirmed our commitment to sharing the Good News with the poor and forgotten. We re-committed ourselves to challenge injustices that oppress those on the margins of society. We dedicated ourselves anew to promoting greater understanding and collaboration among people of different faiths. Finally, in the spirit of the papal encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, we promised to continue caring for creation so that present and future generations might enjoy God's blessings and give thanks for his abundant goodness.



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