

## Formation for missionary priesthood

Are you ready to accept the challenges of an exciting and challenging period of priestly and missionary formation?

1. Australian and New Zealand Columban students begin their formation by living together in a formation community in the Sydney suburb of Strathfield.
2. This community consists of Columban students and the Columban priests responsible for the formation of the students.
3. Columban students do their academic studies at the Catholic Institute of Sydney, located nearby in Strathfield.
4. At a later stage, they may continue their studies in one of several possible overseas locations with Columban students from other countries.
5. The formation programme includes a "Spiritual Year," a special time of prayer, discernment, reflection and pastoral work done in another country with other Columban students.
6. The formation programme includes two years on mission assignment with Columbans overseas.
7. Ordination to Missionary Priesthood is a wonderful day for the new Columban, his family, friends and parish community.



### Discernment

*"New skins are needed for the new wine." Lk 5:38*

Is God calling you to become a new skin, to be changed, to grow, so as to receive the new wine of the Kingdom as a priest and as a missionary in a new culture?

*"The fig tree may still bear fruit next year." Lk 13:9*

Is God calling you to still bear fruit in your life as a Columban Missionary Priest?

Are you ready to be shaped in the priestly and missionary formation process, to be dug around and fertilized, so as to bear fruit next year?



**COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES**

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**COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES**

## Columban Missionary Priests

Is God calling you to something new, exciting, challenging and different?



## Who are the Columbans?

The Missionary Society of St Columban was founded in 1918 in Ireland as a Missionary Society of Priests for the evangelization of China. Today over 480 Columban priests and Lay Missionaries work as missionaries in 16 countries: Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Chile, Peru, the United States, Mexico, the Philippines, Myanmar, Pakistan, China, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Ireland and Britain.

St Columban, our patron saint, was an Irish monk who preached the Gospel in Continental Europe. After establishing monasteries in what is now France, Germany, Austria and Italy, he died in Bobbio, northern Italy, in 615.

## Columbans are Missionaries

From the high Andean tablelands of Peru, the desert of northern Mexico and the Atacama Desert of northern Chile to the teeming urban barrios of Santiago, Chile and Lima, Peru, Columban missionary priests seek to build God's Kingdom of justice, peace and solidarity.

From the deserts and cities of Pakistan, to the tropical islands of Fiji and the Philippines, Columban missionary priests are crossing boundaries of religion, race, culture, social class and geography to preach the Gospel.

From the great cities of Korea, China, Japan and Taiwan, to the cities of Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, the United States and Britain, Columban missionary priests proclaim the Gospel and work to make the missionary dimension of faith come alive in the local Church.

Is God calling you to the life of a Columban Missionary Priest?

Are you ready to go into these global fields, where the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few? Lk 10:2



## Columbans are Priests

### Reflections on the priesthood by Pope Francis at the Chrism Mass 2013

- Priests are called to carry on their shoulders, write on their chasubles and in their hearts the names of the people entrusted to their care.
- Priests are anointed to go to the poor, the sick, prisoners and those who are sorrowing and alone.
- Our people like it when the Gospel we preach touches their daily lives and when it brings light to moments of extreme darkness.
- When we have a close relationship with God and his people, grace passes through us. We become mediators between God and humanity.
- We need to go out to the outskirts where there is suffering, bloodshed and blindness that longs for sight.
- The power of grace will come alive when we go out and give ourselves and the Gospel to others.
- Priests are anointed to be shepherds living with the smell of the sheep, shepherds in the midst of the flock, fishers of men.

## Columbans have stayed at their posts

Columbans are part of a great missionary tradition.

Quotes by Columbans from books and letters about their missionary experience especially during times of war, civil unrest and natural disasters.

- “...it is essential for the priest to learn the language... the one I am trying to learn is called Tagalog.” Letter from New Zealand Columban Fr Francis Douglas in 1940 in the Philippines to a friend back home. Fr Douglas was tortured and killed in 1943 by the occupying Japanese Military.
- “Then came a noise like a clap of thunder. My very first bomb!” New Zealand Columban Fr Thomas Rillstone in Burma just before the arrival of Japanese occupation troops in 1942.
- “When living dangerously becomes your lifestyle, surviving one danger in time to grapple with the next can become very invigorating.” Irish Columban Fr Luke O’Reilly in China 1949 at the time of the Communist takeover of China.
- “I raised my hands. Then the questions came. What place was this? Who was I? What was my name, my nationality? I gave the replies. Then the officer pointed to the church building.” Australian Columban Fr Phillip Crosbie in his parish in 1950, being interrogated by a North Korean officer as soldiers occupied his parish at the beginning of the Korean War.
- “We remained very still inside the presbytery as the Shining Path Guerrillas walked past the door. We could see their movements underneath the door.” Australian Columban Fr Leo Donnelly in 1991 in Peru when Shining Path Guerrillas entered his parish church in the town of Huasahuasi in order to murder those they considered their enemies.