



COLUMBAN MISSION

"Pilgrims for Christ"

Issue No. 32

In line with the centenary celebration of the Columban Society, we have adopted a banner reflective of what the Society is all about – reaching out to the ends of the earth as Pilgrims for Christ. The logo [symbol at the left] is the official centennial logo. As we move forward, we continue to share in the mission of Christ, walking with those in the margins and with the exploited earth.

MEET THE NEW GENERAL COUNCIL



L to R: Fr. Alvaro Martinez (Chile), Fr. Tim Mulroy (Ireland), Fr. Joseph Kang (Korea), Fr. Brian Vale (New Zealand)

Fr. Timothy Mulroy (Ireland) has been Regional Director in the US for the past six years, a role he continued until his election as Superior General of the Society this year. Father Tim was ordained at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Swinford, County Mayo, Ireland in 1995. His first mission assignment was in Japan.

Fr. Brian Gerald Vale (New Zealand) was ordained on May 17, 1975 in New Plymouth, New Zealand. He was assigned to Japan in August 1976 and in later years, he was assigned to Australia and New Zealand. In November 2017, he was appointed Regional Director for ANZ region and moved to Melbourne until his election as Vicar-General.

Fr. Joseph Kang (Korea) has been elected Second Councillor and so leaves the role of Vice-Director in Korea. He was ordained priest in 2002. He studied theology in Maynooth, Ireland, did his First Mission Assignment (FMA) in the Philippines and spent six years on mission in Peru.

Fr. Alvaro Patricio Martinez Ibañez (Chile) has been elected Third Councillor. Father Alvaro was ordained priest in May 2003. He was the Regional Director in Chile from 2011 till 2017. He had been due to take up a new assignment in the US region but will now take up his position with the General Council in Hong Kong.

SUBANEN CHRISTMAS CARDS



by: Fr. Vincent Busch

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"When human beings perform creative acts of imagination and do so with reverence and joy, they are praying."—Pattiann Roger

I agree that such reverential art can be spiritual; but the motivation I live by is to create art that is connected to the common good of the Earth-Human Community. Thus, the choice of crafting Christmas card designs that depict Jesus, Mary and Joseph as fleeing refugees was motivated by the plight of Subanens in Midsalip. The Subanens are forced to leave their ancestral lands due to hunger and violence, which stems from people exploiting their lands and fighting over who gets the "benefits" of that exploitation. /Fr. Vincent Busch



Thank you, Jaki!

We thank Jakilu J. Tagailo for his committed service and support to the Columban Missionaries for nine years and five months; seven years of which he worked as Regional Bursar, a role he carried out with joy. God bless you always.

Columban Lay Missionaries New Leadership Team



L to R: Son Seon-Young (Korea), Vida Hequillan (Philippines), Kevin Sheerin (Ireland)

FROM THE DIRECTOR



As we come to the end of 2018, we prepare for the joyous season of Christmas. We do so with great gratitude to God in our hearts. Like the Blessed Virgin Mary, we can look back at all the blessings we have received this year and we can truly say: “The Almighty has done great things for me” [Lk: 1:49]. We should thank God, Who has given us everything, for all the blessings each of us has received in 2018.

As we come to the end of our year-long celebrations, marking 100 Years since the Foundation of the Missionary Society of Saint Columban, we truly give thanks for all the wonderful things the Lord has done and continues to do. All of those who have supported us through their prayers, friendship and generous donations are one of God’s greatest blessings to us. They make it possible for us to respond to Christ’s call to: “Go and make disciples of all nations” [Mt: 28:19].

To all of our mission partners and friends who have supported us during the various centenary celebrations we have enjoyed around the country, *“Maraming salamat po sa inyong walang sawang pagsuporta sa amin, mula noon hanggang ngayon!”*

On May 30, 2019, we will be celebrating the 90th anniversary of the arrival of the first Columban Missionaries in the Philippines. As once these Columban priests from overseas came here to the Philippines in answer to Christ’s call, today young Filipinos are answering that same call and are being sent to bring the Good News to far distant lands. Recently, the newly ordained Fr. Erl Tabaco, from Agusan Parish, Cagayan de Oro City set off for his new mission in Peru. Rev. Louie Ybañez, God willing, will be returning to his mission in Pakistan next year following his ordination to the priesthood. After 100 years, members of the Columban Missionary Society are, indeed, grateful to God that our Filipino young priests and lay missionaries are now at the forefront of our missionary work.

Since our arrival here in 1929 until the present, we feel privileged to have been able to experience the immense generosity of so many ordinary Filipinos. Because of you, we are able to train more young Filipinos who are answering the call to preach the Gospel throughout the world. We know that you will continue to support them by saying a little prayer for them each day and by continuing to send your donations, however small. Your support will help us train more Filipino seminarians who will continue to respond generously to Christ’s call. *Maraming salamat po!*

Fr. Paul G. Ryan, SCSJ

A Pilgrimage for Fr. Vernon’s 75th Death Anniversary

The Columban priests, sisters, lay missionaries, seminarians and co-workers, with Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) members and staff of Malate Church went on a pilgrimage to Morong and Pililla in Rizal, and Paete, Laguna commemorating the 75th death anniversary of Fr. Francis Vernon Douglas on July 27, 2018. The parishioners of both Pililla and Paete joined the celebration at St. James the Apostle Church, Paete.



Fr. Vernon Douglas by Gigi Arevalo



Prayer Service at the Sala of St. Mary Magdalene Parish convent, Pililla

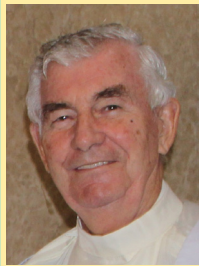
As we thank God for their faithfulness, we wish them AD MULTOS ANNOS!

GOLDEN JUBILARIANS



Fr. Brian Gore, from Australia, was ordained in 1968. He came to the Philippines in 1969 and was assigned to the southern part of Negros Occidental. He served as Regional Director in the Philippines from 2005 to 2008. Father Brian is in-charge of San Columbano Mission House in

Batang, Himamaylan and continues to be actively involved in the Diocese of Kabankalan doing projects on farming and weaving in Bantolinao, organizing widows and widowers around San Columbano, and in the human rights and educational work of the Negros Nine Human Development Foundation.



Fr. Shay Cullen, from Ireland, was sent to the Philippines in 1969 and was assigned to St. Joseph Parish, Olongapo City. Over the years he has worked protecting women and children from sex slavery, and promoting peace, human rights and non-violence. He is the Founder and President of People's Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance (PREDA) Foundation since 1975.

THANK YOU . . .

We thank Edgar Mecasio, Franco Abrillo, Jr. and Amelita Batellano for their service to the Columban Missionaries for many years. Edgar started working at the Columban House of Studies in Cebu in 1987 as electrician and maintenance staff. When the Cebu house was closed, he was hired again by the Columbans, at a later time, to work at Singalong House until May 2018.

Franco began working with the Columbans in 1998, mainly as a driver and later also in security and at the Information Desk, until May 2018.

Amelita, known as Milet, was the main chef at Singalong House from 2005 until September of this year. Her expertise in cooking and food preparation of various menus will be sorely missed.



Edgar



Milet



Franco

We wish each of them the best in the next phase of their journey in life. *Maraming salamat po!*

SILVER JUBILARIANS

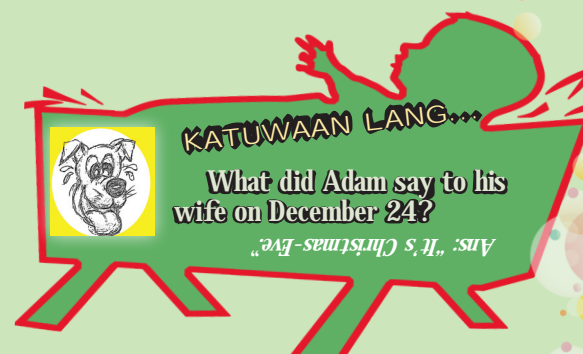
Fr. Brendan Kelly, from Ireland, was ordained priest in 1993. His First Mission Assignment was in Zambales in 1991. In 1995-97, he was assigned to Midsalip, Zamboanga del Sur; later to Katipunan Mission Station, Misamis Occidental, where he ministered to the Subanen community from 1997 to 2007. He was *Socius* to the Spiritual Year Program in 2011-12. Currently, he is assigned to Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Station, Don Victoriano Chiongbian, Misamis Occidental, and is the Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. He speaks Subanen, Cebuano and Tagalog fluently.



Irma Cantago, from Ozamiz City, joined the Orientation Program of the CLM in 1992. She was assigned to Brazil in 1993 until 2000. The following years she spent in Peru, until her return to the Philippines in 2015 where she was involved in mission promotion and as a volunteer at the Community of Hope Special Education Center, Ozamiz. She finished her mission assignment in September 2018. We thank Irma for the many years she spent on mission with the Columbans. God's blessings as you start a new chapter in your life.



John Din, the fourth of thirteen siblings, is from San Miguel, Zamboanga del Sur. He was first assigned to Brazil in 1993 till 2000 when he was sent to Peru. In 2011, he was assigned to the Philippines as Coordinator of Columban Lay Missionaries (CLM) in the region. John has always been passionately active in working for justice, peace and integrity of creation (JPIC). Currently, he is the Regional Coordinator of JPIC-Philippine region and the contact person for the Society Invitation to Mission.





CLM Annual Meeting 2018, CDO

Columban Lay Missionaries

by: *Lilibeth Sabado*

CLM-Mindanao hosted this year's CLM Annual meeting held in Cagayan de Oro on July 30-August 3. It started with a day of reflection on the Care for Our Common Home facilitated by Fr. Vincent Busch and John Din. Then we visited the ministries of the LMs in Mindanao followed by a trip to the Columban gravesites. The next two days were allotted for business meetings, and then a group outing to Bukidnon to balance work with play.

On August 5, 2018, a Thanksgiving Mass was held at Sto. Niño Cathedral, Pagadian City to celebrate the gift of vocation in the diocese and the many years of Irma Cantago and Aurora Luceño as long-term Columban lay missionaries. This was followed by a simple gathering at St. Columban hall. *Congratulations & blessings!*

Gratitude for the opportunity to learn the language and culture that resulted in a better understanding of one's self is a shared reflection of Vasemaca Ratu, Haiti Muller and Liliani Ma'afu during their end of term review in Cagayan de Oro. *Thank you for your three dedicated years of mission in the Philippines. May the Spirit guide you in your journey.*

We welcome Lanieta Tamatawale back to the Philippines. She is taking some short courses in preparation for her future ministry in the region.

Columban House of Studies

by: *Fr. Felisiano Fatu*

The formation staff for the Academic Year 2018-19 consists of Fr. Felisiano Fatu as Rector and Fr. Finbar Maxwell as Vice-Rector. Fr. Cireneo Matulac is on study leave.

Six new students have joined the formation community this year. They are Matthew Wa and Joseph Feng from China, Uakeia Tawaia

from Kiribati, Joseph Seong from South Korea, and Marvin Salarda and Paul Calipusan from the Philippines. This brings the total number of students to eighteen: four Filipinos, five Myanmarese, two Chinese, five Fijians, one Korean and one Kiribati.

The year began with the students' annual retreat at Sacred Heart Retreat House in Novaliches. Fr. Jovito Dales led them into days of prayer, in their journey with the Lord.

The students, together with the CLM and Mission-Vocation team, did promotion work and mission appeals in various parishes, particularly in Malate Parish. The students also participated in the monthly

recollection of the mission partners in Cubao.

At present, there are four students studying English at Assumption Language College, ten are studying Philosophy and five in Theology at Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University.

Alongside their academic studies, fifteen of the students are doing pastoral work in various places: *Bilibid* Prison Minimum Security section; Pasay cemetery with children and teenagers; *Kuya* Center with street children; San Lazaro Hospital-TB Section; and in Parola-Binondo with the urban poor community.

There is good morale in the formation community in Manila.



Columban Seminarians from China, Fiji, Kiribati, Korea, Myanmar and Philippines

The Global Catholic Climate Movement-Pilipinas (GCCM-Pilipinas) together with organizations from different groups and sectors, schools and institutions celebrated the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation dubbed: "Walk for Creation" on September 1, 2018 at the Shrine of Jesus the Divine Word (Christ the King Mission Seminary) in E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City.

Laudato Si' Animators' Training is another initiative of GCCM-Pilipinas launched this year. Three training workshops were conducted in different groups, namely: the dioceses around the Sierra Madre mountain ranges; Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and schools in Metro Manila; and the four dioceses of Eastern Samar (Borongan, Naval, Catarman and Calbayog) and the Archdiocese of Palo. /J. Din



JPIC Update

*Deep Journey into Laudato Si' Animators' Training
Francesco Guest House, Palo, Leyte, October 8-11, 2018*

Mission and Vocation Promotions

We continue to raise awareness of mission and invite people to participate as our mission partners or by joining the Columban Missionaries. We visit parishes, schools, organizations, companies and individuals conducting masses, distributing Columban Mission newsletters, brochures, posters, *Alkansya* and mite boxes. We also hold recollections and prayer reflections for students, mission partners and young professionals.

The **Luzon team** revisited Pangasinan where the Columban Missionaries served for many years, especially in the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan. In reconnecting with its parishioners, beautiful stories were shared by people who have journeyed with the Columbans from 1933-2012. The team also did mission promotion in the same Archdiocese on September 25-27, 2018.

We thank St. Joseph College–Elementary Department, Olongapo City, its students and faculty, for being our first school partner in the “Columban Mission Envelope” project. /CMVP-Luzon



Mission Promotion at St. Columban College, Lingayen

A Life of Service to the Columbans

by: Fr. Pat Baker

Asthor Yecyec, 64, died on May 10, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Teresita, and their four children. Interment was on May 19 in Pagadian.

In 1971 Asthor was invited by Columban Fr. Peter O’Neill to become a working high school student in the *convento* in Dimataling, a remote parish in Pagadian Diocese. When the whole town of Dimataling became the scene of intense fighting between Muslim rebels and the military, the *convento* was often in the line of fire. It was Asthor who persuaded Father Peter to put a wall of sand-bags around his bed. Asthor himself built the wall. At times, because of great danger, they had to sleep in the long cogon grass. Asthor stayed with Father Peter and Fr. Jerry Murphy, foraged for food and prepared their meals under very difficult circumstances.

Father Peter was adamant that Asthor was his savior at that time.



Scribbling Memories from the Heart

On August 11, 2018 the **Mindanao team** conducted a recollection with 66 Columban friends at San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish in Mambajao, Camiguin Province. This was the first ever gathering of parishioners on the Island who knew the Columbans assigned in Camiguin from 1952 to 1978, and the beginning of a new relationship with them as mission partners. It was a day of reminiscing memories of encounters with the Columbans with gratitude, joy and hope. The sharing was truly inspiring. We are grateful to the Parish Priest, Fr. William Salva, and the Parish Pastoral Council for their great support. /B. Durangparang

As we continue with our mission appeals in the parishes in Luzon, Negros and Mindanao, it’s heartwarming to see the smiles on the faces of those whose instant glance at the photos of the Columban priests once assigned in their area awaken memories in their hearts. This, in effect, enlivens our spirit in working for Columban mission.

When Father Peter moved into the parish of Pagadian he brought Asthor with him. Asthor finished his studies while working zealously as a sacristan in the Cathedral for a number of years. Later, he was hired to work with the Mission Awareness team distributing MISION magazines to the schools and parishes in the various Dioceses throughout Northwest Mindanao for seventeen years until he retired.



As Father Peter said, “We can never forget Asthor. What a lovely personality, always smiling no matter what the danger. I had full trust in him, especially as a boatman. His knowledge and understanding of the sea were uncanny”.

Fr. Don Kill echoed those sentiments when speaking of Asthor as a companion on the many journeys the Mission Awareness team made.

His peace and his smile will make heaven an even brighter place.

ate



100 YEARS OF COLUMBAN MISSION



On June 28, 2018 the Columban Missionaries in the Philippines celebrated their 100th founding anniversary at Our Lady of Remedies Parish, Malate, Manila. The jubilant moment was shared with Columban friends, benefactors and mission partners.

**Our Lady of Remedies Parish
Malate, Manila**



St. Columban Parish, Olongapo



Another centenary celebration was held on July 3 with the people of Zambales. The event was hosted by Iba Diocese as a way of showing their gratitude to the Columban Missionaries for the contributions the latter

had made to the diocese and her people. The mass took place at St. Columban Parish, followed by the blessing of the columbarium located at the side of the church, where the bodies of the six Columban priests who died in Zambales were placed, and the unveiling of the statue of St. Columban.

MEMORIES FROM THE HEART

My close encounter with Fr. Dick Pankratz started when I was a seminarian. He would come to Catarman and train us for a drama presentation. He's the kind of person who does not need a microphone. After ordination, I was assigned to Anakan, one of Father Dick's mission areas at that time. One day he visited me and I thought he was just passing by. Instead, he requested confession! I was a bit surprised that an older brother priest would seek confession from a young and newly ordained priest. It was a humbling experience for me. Father Dick is a welcoming fellow and treated us younger priests as his equal. With my many encounters with Columban priests, I could say that they were the ones who really molded the faith of the people of Camiguin.



~ **Fr. Ricardo Dancela, Catarman, Camiguin**

Noong 1995, nakilala ko si ate Emma Pabera na isang Columban lay missionary na taga-Negros. Siya po ay kapamilya ng dating pinagtrabahuan ko. At noong September 1997, ang Columban Lay Mission house ay nangangailangan ng housekeeper at ako po ay tinulungan ni Ate Emma na makapagtrabaho dito. Dalawampu't isang taon na ang nakakaraan at hanggang ngayon ay nandito pa rin ako. Ako ay masaya at lubos na nagpapasalamat. "Congratulations sa tanan nga Columbans sa isa ka gatos nga tuig nga anibersaryo!"



~ **Rustica Eufre, Cubao**

I was the convent boy of Frs. Peter O'Neill and Noel Lynch in Anakan Parish when I was still in high school. In 1982, I started working at the Columban house in Patag. I worked with Fr. Bernie Steed as driver for Vocation Promotion from 1992-94. Father Steed was strict at work, but he was kind and understanding particularly when it concerned the family. We had a good working relationship. I'm proud that Darwin Bayaca was ordained priest during our time. I'm truly grateful to all the Columban priests, especially to all those I have the privilege of working with, for helping me and my family live a dignified life.



~ **Jaime Ordaniel, Cagayan de Oro**

The best thing about working with the Regional Directors, and the Columban Missionaries, in general, is that, whoever you are and whatever you do every day is recognized and appreciated. The world moves forward at the speed of light and people tend to forget virtues such as caring and gratitude, but thankfully, they are present here and that makes working with and for the Columban Society a privilege and also a pleasure.



~ **Crissy Mendoza, Singalong**

Noong Abril 22, 1992, ako ay pumasok dito sa Columban Lay Mission house bilang kusinera. Si Fr. Michael Martin po ang tumanggap sa akin. Marami akong ipinagpapasalamat sa Society of St. Columban. Unang-una, noong ako ay nakapagtrabaho dito, ako ay nakatulong sa aking pamilya. Noong 2009, dumating ang isang dagok sa buhay ko nang ako ay na-diagnose ng endometrial cancer. Sa kabutihan nila, hindi nila ako pinatalsik sa trabaho o pinabayaan sa aking sakit. Kaya malaki ang aking pasasalamat sa buong Society at sa mga indibidwal na talagang tumulong sa akin sa anumang paraan. Galing sa akin at ng aking pamilya, "Maligayang ika-100 na taon, Society of St. Columban."



~ **Marifi Saysay, Cubao**

I worked at the Columban house in Baguio for twelve years (2003-2015). When Fr. Sean O'Donnell was the priest-in-charge of the house (2003-2008), I was happy to do all the work as maintenance man, housekeeper, driver, cook, *labandero* and others. When Fr. Frank Carey came, I learned a lot from him about gardening, farming and livestock raising. He had the ideas while I was the one who executed them. Father Frank designed the houses for the chicken, goats, rabbits and dogs while I did all the carpentry work. I will always be grateful for the experience, knowledge and skills I acquired while working at the Baguio house.



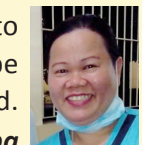
~ **Alex Sumagang, Cagayan de Oro**

I started working with the Columbans in Patag in 1978. I appreciate the trust that they have given me, especially when I was just starting and knew nothing about office work. Fr. Thomas McGuire helped my mother out of her sickness. Their generosity helped me finish my studies and has inspired me to help my siblings and send my nieces and nephews to school, so they, too, can help their own families out of poverty. I learned humility from them, treating all people as equal. I love the way they say "please" and "*daghang salamat*" even at the smallest request, and the greetings they give to everyone as I did not grow up with this in my family. I pray for more years for the Columban missionaries.



~ **Nenita Cabañez, Cagayan de Oro**

"Lord, make me your instrument. Allow me to take care of every patient as if I am taking care of You." This is my prayer always. It is through God's grace that every case, no matter how difficult, is made light and easy for me. Taking care of the Columban priests, especially in their sickness and pain, is a privilege. It is already fulfilling for me to see them relieved of their pain. I am happy to be of service to them. It is my own offering to God.



~ **Ninfa Paraon, Muntinlupa**

A Step at Ground Zero

by Cesar Jay-R Ramirez

Jay-R, from Barra, Cagayan de Oro, is the assistant vocation animator for Mindanao.

Filthy things were everywhere. Remnants of missiles scattered. Bullets were all over the place. I got teary-eyed at the heartbreaking scenario at Marawi Ground Zero.

I was with Jesuit seminarians and a Columban aspirant when we went to Barangay Bito Buadi Itowa, Lanao del Sur on May 3, 2018. The area was less affected during the Marawi siege so it became a shelter to internally displaced persons (IDPs). Before going there, we went through the Immersion Orientation program where we had a briefing about the Maranao culture. This was held at Xavier University–Ateneo de Cagayan.

I thought it would be a strange and scary experience to have an interfaith immersion in Marawi. I entertained a lot of thoughts from what I had heard about the attitude and customs of the people and the place itself. I had so many “what ifs”: What if I will be killed there? What if we can’t go back home? What if they will be uncomfortable with us? But these thoughts and what ifs vanished when I immersed into their way of living on the day we arrived. It was a day full of laughter with the kids. We spent our time chatting with them, telling stories and learning several Maranao words. It was a cloud nine experience for me to see their natural smiles as we entertained them. Happiness did not allow any sorrow from the siege to take hold of them. We



stayed there for three days. Being immersed in another culture, especially at a time of crisis, was a blessing to be treasured.



On our way home, we took a detour leading to Ground Zero of Marawi and the sight of it astonished me all the more. I was stunned as I stepped down to a place full of bullets. No structure escaped the destruction. It was heartbreaking to see the place and to think of the lives destroyed by the tragedy. I felt its brokenness. It brought me to a realization of the world’s suffering

today – racism. I have lived with history’s prejudice against Muslims. But that view has changed after my immersion. My experience has proven to me that Maranaos are open-minded, friendly and helpful even toward Christians. Goodness comes from God. And goodness is innate in the Maranaos.

This insightful experience of stepping on the ground, where the Marawi siege shook the country, awakened me to a life-changing mission.

MEMORIES FROM THE HEART

My first encounter with the Columbans was in 1988 when Fr. Michael Martin brought his desktop computer for repair to the company I was working with in Bacolod City. I was truly amazed to see a hairy white man with blue eyes and thick eyebrows, who could wiggle his ears, and spoke the local language fluently. I was even more amazed that he showed interest in us, asking about our family and work. It was Father Martin who invited me to join the Columban Society. I agreed to help out for two months, but those two months became 26 years, filled with pride, joy and gratitude. I have been a witness to the kind spirit, generous heart and inspiring words not only of Fr. Michael Martin but also of Frs. Michael McGuire, Michael Mohally, Peter Leonard, Brendan Lovett, and Colm McKeating. The three Michaels left a very significant impact on my life prompting me to name one of my twin boys after them. Congratulations and God bless you on the next 100 years!

~ Marivic Mercene Hidalgo, Cubao



My parents were married by a Columban priest. I was baptized by a Columban priest and I grew up in a Columban community. Now I am serving with the Columbans in Barra. I love the work of the Columban life. My heart is Columban.

~ Helen Abella, Cagayan de Oro



Presence, A Source of Healing

by **Elbert Balastro**



Elbert is a Columban seminarian, currently on his First Mission Assignment (FMA) in Pakistan

"I want to be healed. Please help me." This is a common petition of the patients at San Lazaro Hospital, Manila, where I experienced my pastoral exposure for eight months visiting Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS patients.

In my journey as a Columban missionary, I found this ministry to be the most difficult one by far. The patients are very vulnerable. Many of them are on the verge of losing hope. Aside from poor health, most of the patients are also financially poor. TB and HIV/AIDS patients are placed separately from other patients in an isolated area. Some patients have no watchers to attend to their needs. They feel alienated or condemned because of the stigma brought by the disease. People are shunning them.

Along the way, I had learned to love this ministry because it taught me a lot of things. First, I learned that I need to listen. Sometimes, that is the only thing the patients need. Second, I need patience and understanding because the patients can easily become irritated, impatient and, sometimes, even unkind. Third, regardless of their religious beliefs, I must minister to them – a venue for interfaith dialogue experience. Once I encountered a Muslim father whose only son was on the verge of dying. Reluctant at first, he eventually asked for my prayers. When he realized that I was not there to convert anybody, he shared his sadness. It was a meaningful encounter. Lastly, I have learned to intensify my prayer life, not only for myself but especially for the patients.

It makes me sad and even angry whenever a patient expressed his/her fear of going to hell simply because he/she got HIV/AIDS. They deserve our love, not humiliation and condemnation. Just as Christ brings life to this world, we, too, can bring a life-healing presence to them.

I met *Kuya Boy* who was suffering from HIV/AIDS with TB. Listening to him, I asked what he wanted from God. I was not expecting his answer to be, "I hope my enemies are here so that I can ask forgiveness from them. I hope that my family and friends are here so that I can say how grateful I am for their love. I hope I can embrace them. I have accepted the fact that I will die today and what I need now is emotional healing." I asked *Kuya Boy* if he was willing to do it with me, pretending that I were his enemies or friends or relatives. The experience went well. Some patients just needed someone to express their thoughts and feelings with, and that could already be their source of healing.



More Than a Hug by Jao Resari

Nagsugod ko ug puyo uban sa mga pari nga Columbano sa Ozamiz isip working student niadtong 13 anyos pa ko, pagsugod nako sa high school. Daghan ko ug kasinatian uban nila sulod sa 11 ka tuig isip usa ka estudyante, ug sobra sa 20 ka tuig isip Vocation Animator. Usa sa dili nako malimtan mao si Fr. Joe Murtagh nga akong nakauban sa Columban house gikan pa sa akong pagsugod sa Columbans hangtod sa iya'ng pagbiya sa Ozamiz. Gitawag namo siya ug "Tatay Murtagh", kay mora siya ug among amahan, ilabina kanako. Usa ka hapon, paspas siya nga naglakaw padulong kanako nga puno sa pahiyom ug nagbitbit ug newspaper. Gitawag ko niya ug miingon, "Bernie, nakapasar ka sa Exam for Teachers!". Pwerte niya'ng lipaya nga nakapasar ko sa exam, labaw pa sa akong kalipay. Gusto unta niya nga magtudlo ko apan sa dihang nakita niya nga nilambo ko sa ako kaugalingon ug malipayon sa Vocation Ministry sa Columbans, nagmalipayon ra pod siya. Ninong siya sa among kasal ni Laga.

~ **Bernie Durangparang, Ozamiz City**



I graduated from St. Vincent's High School, Inc., La Castellana, Negros Occidental, a school administered by the Columban Priests, in 1984. In that same year, Fathers Desmond and Peter Quinn sponsored a college scholarship for the first time in our school and I was the first recipient of the many who took the examination. Growing up in a poor family, this was my ticket to earn a degree. I was truly blessed and grateful to get the scholarship from the Quinn Brothers for it also gave me the chance to pay it forward by sending my siblings to college.

~ **Marjorie Oñate, Bacolod City**



GUIDE FOR GROUP REFLECTIONS ON MISSION AWARENESS

These guides are adapted from “Life for the World” by Columban Frs. Peter Leonard and Sean McNulty. They are a continuation of the first eight sessions found in previous issues of the Columban Mission (Nos. 29, 30 & 31).

These are meant to help us appreciate more deeply our common calling to be “light to the world and salt for the earth” and to help others to live out the same calling, to be missionaries in our world – to heal, to restore, to affirm, to care for and to promote LIFE in all its diversity.

Session Nine: Whom Shall I Send?

Aim: To deepen the missionary dimension of one’s vocation

1. **Opening Song:** Here I Am, Lord (or another suitable song)
2. **Reading:** Isaiah 6:1-9; Reflect on its message for you
3. **Sharing:** What feelings do the song and/or the reading evoke in you? What are the challenges you encounter in responding to the call?
4. **Deepening:** Many Expressions of the One Call are addressed to each one of us. In virtue of our baptism, each of us is called to be a disciple and to be sent out on mission in one form or the other. The issue is not whether I am called or not. The issue is: “To what way of being life for the world am I being called?”
5. **Activity:** Write down or draw some of the ways in which you may be “life for the world”.
6. **Closing prayer/song**

Session Ten: Life in Abundance

Aim: This is the last reflection on the theme “Life for the World”. This is meant to sum up the learning and reflections and to look towards the future.

1. **Opening Prayer or Song** (on Gratitude)
2. **Questions for reflection:** What struck you most in the reflections we have been doing for the past months? What do you think is the next step for you?
3. **Deepening:** It is important for all of us to keep the enthusiasm for mission to be alive amidst the difficulties and rejections. “God so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son” (Jn 3:16) despite the world’s sinfulness. We, in turn, share in everything Jesus does and is. As Jesus is life for the world, we, too, become life for the world: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (Jn 10:10).
4. **Activity:** In silence, think of ways in which you (or the group) can fan the flame of enthusiasm for mission. In a prayerful atmosphere listen to where the Spirit is calling you.
5. **Closing:** End by reading Isaiah 61:1 (or you may also sing a closing song).



Columban Mission Partners who died from June to August 2018

We thank them for their faithfulness and support through the years. May they rest in peace.



Felipa Reserva
Bugo, CDO
Born: May 1, 1927
Died: Aug. 15, 2018

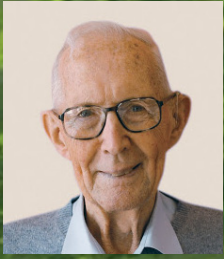


Leonil Halina
Bugo, CDO
Born: Nov. 26, 1978
Died: Aug. 11, 2018

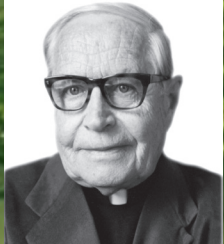


Ester Causin
Cagayan de Oro
Born: Dec. 27, 1924
Died: Jun. 6, 2018

Those who journeyed with us . . .



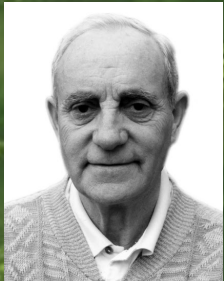
Fr. Seán Joseph McGrath was born on June 15, 1930 in Ireland. He was ordained priest on December 21, 1954. His first twenty years as a Missionary Priest were spent in pastoral work in Mindanao, Philippines, mainly in the cities of Ozamiz and Iligan. In Iligan, he established a new parish named Corpus Christi in Rosario Heights, Tubod. Being a gifted fund-raiser and a cheerful extrovert, Father Seán was very effective in promoting mission. He died on April 27, 2018 and was buried in Dalgan.



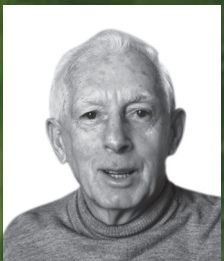
Fr. Thomas Kilkenny was born on July 23, 1922 in Ireland. He was ordained priest in December 1946 and was assigned to Japan in 1947. Apart from his vacations and a year or so working in Ozamiz, Mindanao, Philippines in the 1950s, he spent the next fifty-five years working in Japan in a variety of pastoral assignments. He died in Ireland on May 7, 2018.



Fr. Francis Keaney was born on November 4, 1934. He was ordained in June 1966 at St. Columbans Major Seminary, Milton, Massachusetts, USA. In July 1967 he was appointed to the Philippines. He became Assistant Pastor in Holy Rosary Parish in Oroquieta City. In the years that followed, Father Frank ministered in the churches of San Isidro Labrador, Aurora, St. Michael the Archangel in Iligan City, St. Francis Xavier, Lopez Jaena and St. Matthew, Aloran, all in Mindanao. He died in the USA on May 13, 2018.



Fr. Martin Ryan was born on January 23, 1929 in Ireland and was ordained priest on December 21, 1953. In 1954 he was assigned to Mindanao, Philippines, where he worked in various pastoral assignments over the following fifty years: Gingoog City, Dumalinao, Mambajao, Maranding, Linamon and Maigo, and in Corpus Christi-Iligan. With typical frankness he wrote of his alcoholism in his memoir, *Muckalee to Mindanao and Back: A Missionary Round Trip*, "My sobriety today is a precious gift which I cherish". With the help of Columban Sister Inday Bernad and trained therapist, Rene Francisco, he founded a treatment center in Ozamiz City called "IT WORKS". Father Martin died in Ireland on June 15, 2018.



Fr. John Roderick Long was born on November 13, 1934 in Ireland. He was ordained priest on December 21, 1959. He was first assigned to Burma (now Myanmar) in 1962 and later to the Philippines in 1967-1995. He was part of the Columban group who served in the Dioceses of Lingayen and Alaminos in Pangasinan. At various times, he served in the parishes of Sual and Labrador, and in the sub-parish of Lingayen. He died in Ireland on September 13, 2018.



Sr. Mary Neylon, 78, died in Dublin on February 19, 2018 after a short illness. She was from Ireland. She joined the Columban Sisters in 1962 and was sent to the Philippines. She worked in Ozamiz City. In 1989, she was assigned to Peru and opened the "Center for Women" in Huaycan, a place of new life, encouragement and hope for the women of that area and beyond.



Sr. Teresita Bernad was born on May 31, 1930. A Columban Sister for 60 years, she died on May 16, 2018 in Ozamiz City. Sister Teresita became the first President of Immaculate Conception College, now La Salle University Ozamiz, in 1975 and the first Filipina Regional Superior of the Columban Sisters in 1976. She served in Chile for 20 years from 1983 to 2003. She supported the Columban Mission Awareness Program in the Philippines and her connections with many schools opened doors for the Mission Promotion Team to go in and share awareness of our "Mission Today".



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Account Number: 200006345793

Bank/ Branch: Banco de Oro (BDO) - Paco

Account Name: The Regional Director of the Missionary Society of Saint Columban in the Philippines Inc.

Account Number: 001650-143220

SEND THRU:

ML Kwartá Padala (MLhuillier)

Account Name: Columban Missionary Foundation Inc.

Phone Number: 0932-245-0300

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