

Columban Mission

PILGRIMS FOR CHRIST

ISSUE NO. 36

According to Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, "we need to recover the awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging and of a future shared with everyone."

Thus, the relevant question to ask in this context is:

WHO DO WE WANT TO BE?



climate365.tumblr.com / go.nasa.gov/climate365

by John Din, Regional JPIC Co-ordinator

In the face of the current climate emergency, of the fact that we only have eight years left to do bold, fast, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in our politics, economy and culture to limit the rise of global temperature to 1.5 °C, the common question asked is, "What are we to do?" It is an important question, but not the most appropriate one to ask if we are addressing a more complex situation like the climate emergency.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis outlines the human roots of our ecological crisis. "A certain way of understanding human life has gone wrong." (LS 101) Over the years, we drifted from the truth about life. Pope Francis said that this acquired

incorrect understanding of human life is a product of our lack of awareness of our common origin, our mutual belonging, and a future shared by understanding God's creation. Human life, as well as other forms of life, thrives in a web of life.

If the current human activities, for example, addiction to coal and to the comfort of technology, have resulted to the current climate emergency, then recovering the true condition of our becoming, of how we humans came to be, of who we are, is the key from which our actions should emanate. In the story of Genesis, we humans came out of the earth. Now we are honored to have the scientific knowledge that we come from a universe that is continually evolving since 13.7 billion years ago. Both the Bible story and the scientific story tell of the interconnectedness of everything, a wisdom that is present in all indigenous worldviews. These conditions of the human emergence should inform our culture, our vision, and our actions.

We are on a journey of becoming and we have the innate capacity to change. This is where our hope lies. There is hope in recognizing that we are part of an evolving universe, and a web of life. Thus, the most important question for all of us to address today is: "Knowing that human activities are the main drivers of the current climate emergency, and knowing that we are dependent and interconnected with all forms of life, WHO DO WE WANT TO BE in this context?"

Thus, the relevant question to ask in this context is:

WHO DO WE WANT TO BE?



Launching of Withdraw from Coal Campaign

Are you ready now to answer the question?

Deep Journey into *Laudato Si'* Symposium with Columban Mission Partners



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From the Vice Director

Fr. Leo Distor, SSC



This is the first issue of this year's, 2020, Columban Mission newsletter. At the start of the year, the country had to grapple with the eruption of Taal volcano which affected hundreds of thousands of Filipinos. Then, COVID-19, the virus from China, has spread to many countries in the world. These calamities, along with other happenings around the globe, are reminding us to be mindful of the decisions we make in life, no matter how small, because these will affect the world we live in. Let us be intentional in our efforts; and may the blessings of God enable all of us to continue spreading the message of the Gospel in our commitment to the poor and the exploited earth.

Last year was spent in great jubilation for our 90 years of Columban mission in the Philippines. We, Columban Missionaries, will always be grateful to the Filipino people, the Philippine Church, our mission partners and friends for the continued trust and support you've given us through the years. This year, we celebrate with the Missionary Sisters of St. Columban in the Philippines their 80th missionary presence in the country.

Stories of hope ignite the embers of love in our hearts. May the stories shared in the succeeding pages of this newsletter inspire us to commit evermore to work for justice and peace, the healing of our wounds and the wounds of the earth, and the restoration of beauty that is innate in all of God's creation. As Pope Francis said, "We must hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor," to bring about the transformational changes that we need.

GOD BLESS US ALL!

Columban Regional Assembly 2020



THANK YOU!



The Columban Society is grateful to Mr. Jackpoy P. Deguira for his dedicated service as caregiver to the elderly priests from June 15, 2018 to June 30, 2019, and later as Assistant to the Mission Promotion and Vocations Team. We cherish the time he spent as a member of the Columban Society. We wish him well as we hope for the best in his next endeavors! God's blessings be upon you, Jackpoy.

80th ANNIVERSARY OF COLUMBAN SISTERS



Columban Sisters with Bp. Jesus Cabrera, DD

The Columban Sisters in the Philippines celebrated their 80th Anniversary of missionary presence in the country on November 30, 2019 in San Juan, Metro Manila. It was a joyous occasion graced by the family and friends of Columban Sisters and their mission partners from Malasiqui, Lingayen, Labrador and Olongapo, Zambales.

Bishop Jesus Cabrera was the main celebrant with Fr. Paul Glynn, SSC as co-celebrant. The guests present included the Columban family, priests, students and lay missionaries. Some Sisters from other religious congregations were also present. Monsiñor Cacho, Director of the Columban University in Olongapo, also graced the occasion.

A sumptuous meal was shared after the Mass. It was catered by a former student of Malate Catholic School which was administered by the Columban Sisters many years ago. Students from Sister Bella's ministry entertained the group with song and dance performances. A band was provided by one of their benefactors, a relative of the late Sister Sally.

It was a day of meeting old friends, telling some funny stories and remembering the Sisters, who worked against all odds to bring the Gospel to the people wherever they were, be it in the barrios, schools or communities.

The day ended with words of gratitude and jubilation with people taking pictures.

(From Sr. Divina's letter to the Columban Sisters, edited version)

HOMECOMING IN NEGROS A Call to Earth

by Expedito "Popoy" Villarín

The *Amigo Columbano*, an alumni association of former Columban seminarians and priests, had their Alumni Homecoming celebration on October 18-20, 2019 at San Columbano Mission Center, Batang, Himamaylan City with the theme, "Let's Build a Sustainable Future Together".

Hosted by *Amigo Columbano* Negros Chapter, the focus of the discussions and inputs was on caring for the environment particularly on sustainable living. There was a total of 42 alumni present; among them were three Columban priests and two Diocesan priests.

The said homecoming facilitated opportunities for reconnecting, renewing friendships, reaching out, strengthening of the organization and reaffirmation of the group's commitment to be partners in mission with the Columban Missionaries. The group enjoyed and drew inspiration from the tree growing activity and the visit to the weaving project of the Negros Nine Human Development Foundation at San Columbano, Bantolinao.

There were thematic lectures and in-depth discussions on how the group can move forward in their advocacies on ecology and support for Columban projects and ministries. During the homecoming, *Amigo Columbano* officially adopted a hectare of land in Bantolinao and handed the financial support for its reforestation requirements in the next five years to Fr. Brian Gore.

The group decided to defer the election of officers and instead extended the term of its current officers for another two years to implement their agreed plans and projects. The next alumni homecoming is in October 2021, Cagayan de Oro City. *Amigo Columbano* Mindanao Chapter and Batch '88 will host said upcoming gathering. Previous homecomings were held in Cebu (2005 and 2015), Cagayan de Oro (2006), and Manila (2018).



Jon del Rosario



Amigo Columbano 2019 Homecoming with Fr. Brian Gore

VOCATION UPDATE – LUZON

by *Marvin Magat, Vocation Animator-Luzon*

The Vocation Promotion team, together with some Columban seminarians and lay missionaries, and the occasional team up with the Mission Promotion team attended vocation campaigns held at various schools: Pangasinan – St. Columban’s Institute, Domalandan (Nov 6) & St. Columban’s School, Labrador (Nov 7), St. Columban College-Olongapo (Nov 14), St. Columban College-Barretto (Nov 15), St. Louis College, San Fernando, La Union (Nov 18-22), & Centro Escolar University, Manila (Nov 26). The team also attended the Vocation Festivals in San Rafael Bulacan (Nov 9) and in the Diocese of Imus (Dec 7); Vocation Jamboree in the Diocese of Legazpi (Nov 17-23) as well as in Cabanatuan Diocese (Jan 11); Diocesan Youth Day in Novaliches (Dec 8); and the Vocation Awareness Week at the University of the East (Jan 15-17). The team also gave a career talk at St. Joseph College, Olongapo (Nov 14).

Two interested candidates to the Columban formation for priestly vocation joined the Come & See program. One of them took the psychological examination on January 18, 2020. We continue to pray for vocations.



Diocesan Youth Day, Novaliches

Centro Escolar University

Vocation Jamboree, Cabanatuan Diocese



Bicol University, Legazpi

Vocation Jamboree, Diocese of Legazpi

St. Columban Institute, Domalandan

VOCATION UPDATE - MINDANAO

by *Jay-Ar Ramirez, Assistant Vocation Animator-Mindanao*

We had an exciting month in December with the following activities: Mission Appeal & Vocation Promotion at Igpit Chapel and Youngsville Chapel, Opol (Dec 8-9); Overnight Vocation Recollection, Columban House, Patag with five participants from Davao City (1), Bukidnon (1), Opol (2) and El Salvador City (1) on Dec 14-15; Climate Strike & *Laudato Si'* Symposium, Camp Philips Deanery, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon (Dec 16); and Recollection at Divine Mercy Village, Opol with the theme “Youth of Today” (Dec 29).

On January 11-12, the San Columbano Youth in Mission had their first gathering and overnight vocation recollection with the theme, “An Overnight Encounter with God: Prayer & Discernment” at the Columban house in Patag with fourteen participants coming from Bukidnon (6), El Salvador City (4), Barra (3) and Youngsville (1). On January 16-18, the San Columbano Youth in Mission visited 17 parishes in Misamis Oriental for the posting of vocation materials with Father Leo, Vocation Director of the Franciscan Missionaries.



Vocation Recollection, Patag

Recollection at Divine Mercy Village, Opol

San Columbano Youth in Mission

FORMATION UPDATE *by Felisiano Fatu, Rector*



Columban students with Fathers Felisiano and Cireneo

We all had wonderful Christmas vacations. The students have arrived back from their Christmas break as the second semester begins on January 22, 2020. Our new students from Myanmar, Dominic Zawng Lum and John Grawng Naw had already started their English classes on January 6 at the Tongues of Fire English Language Hub.

In this update, I would like to highlight the efforts done by the formation community in giving more focus on Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) issues and other Columban priorities, such as Inter-Religious Dialogue (IRD), in their program of activities. The students, especially from the JPIC Committee, suggested that there would be different themes for our monthly JPIC mass and these would be highlighted throughout the month. Last semester, there were two themes. First, the situation of those incarcerated and the second was on children's rights. The JPIC committee assigned one

member to shed light on the theme during the homily in our JPIC mass. Articles related to the theme were posted on our notice board. Students were asked to peruse and read them so as to gain knowledge and understanding of the issue and to prepare them for group sharing and discussion. Lastly, three of the students who worked in the prison ministry facilitated the sharing and discussions made within the group. In relation to children's rights, Mr. Robert Samson, Child Protection Consultant, conducted a joint workshop with the spiritual year students on Columban Policies on Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

I am happy with the initiatives of the JPIC Committee. These initiatives will continue in the second semester. We hope that the workshop on IRD will materialize in the second semester. We are looking forward to this workshop with the hope of deepening our understanding of Islam and finding ways of moving forward in dialogue.

We continue to pray for the various intentions of our mission partners and benefactors in our community prayers and Masses, as we thank them for their ongoing generous support to the formation community. God bless them and their families.

We invoke the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we begin the second semester.

SPIRITUAL YEAR UPDATE

by Finbar Maxwell, Director of Spiritual Year

On 8th January 2020, seven Spiritual Year students and two formation staff regrouped after the Christmas break to begin the second semester of Spiritual Year. It's hard to believe we have crossed its half-way mark, since it began on 1st August 2019. Our first semester was filled with a blend of courses offered by Our Lady of Peace Guidance Center (OLPGC), and both Exodus and Sojourn formation programs, all of which focused on personal, spiritual, community and vocational learning and growth. Other courses offered 'in-house' included Sacred Scripture, Columban History and Chapter Documents, the founding of the Society of St. Columban, incorporating early Columban life in China and expansion of the Society throughout the world, and Prayer and the Spiritual Life. A number of these courses will continue in the second semester including a three-day module on Mary as Mystic. Concurrent with these courses for the students was weekly pastoral work at New Bilibid prison, youth formation work in Parola, and ministry to the children, youth and mothers who live on the grounds of Pasay Cemetery.

A major focus for the seven students in this new

semester will be their 30-Day retreat (the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola), which will take place from the 3rd of February until the 5th of March at the Sacred Heart retreat center in Novaliches. After the retreat, Spiritual Year will continue in its various components: growth in greater self-understanding, a deepening relationship with God and with Jesus at the heart of our lives, and clarity on what it means to be a Columban missionary in the world today – discernment of which, for each of the students, is a main component of Spiritual Year. At this point of Spiritual Year, we are grateful for how well it is going, and we trust that it will continue in this way till its conclusion at the end of May, after which five of the students will begin theological and missiology studies in Manila, and two will take up the "First Mission Assignment" (FMA) stage of their formation journey. Please keep the Spiritual Year community in your prayers.



Columban Spiritual Year students with Fathers Taemooon & Finbar

In Memoriam of a Gentle and Serene Presence

by Daniella Clemente

This article is based on the interview done by the writer, Assistant Editor of the Columban Mission newsletter, with Thelma Patapat, Assistant Archivist of the Philippine region, on the latter's experience with Fr. Patrick Baker, Archivist of the region, who died on October 17, 2019.

Thelma Patapat, who worked closely with Fr. Patrick Baker, fondly remembers the most, the time she spent with Father Pat on the road, usually off to Rizal and Laguna where resources for their research on martyred Columban Fr. Vernon Douglas, are available. On these trips, she usually struggled to stay awake in the passenger seat, but did her best to keep her eyes open, because she could not afford to sleep while her boss sat behind the wheel. It's not a conventional picture, an employee being driven around by her own supervisor, as if a personal chaperone. But then, Fr. Patrick Baker was anything like the standard.

They met in February 2011, when she came for an interview for a position of Assistant Archivist of the Columbans in the Philippines. Two months later, she began working alongside Father Pat. He was strict and uptight, or so she thought. In reality, he was straightforward and understanding as a boss; as an

archivist, he was organized, sharp and keen on details.

Thelma will always be thankful for being accepted into the position. As a gesture of gratitude, she worked hard to earn his trust in her abilities. In return, Father Pat had given his utmost respect in what she could do and had to say.

"It doesn't feel real to me. It's just like he's on vacation," she remarked when asked about her immediate reaction to the news of his passing. "I had no idea that his illness had even progressed that far. When we last communicated he was so detailed and precise in his instructions on what to do with his things in the Singalong house."

Yet another thing she'll remember him by was his sharp mind, along with his gentle and serene character even during times of extreme duress. Most importantly, she'll think about how he's the kindest boss she has ever had and the best missionary she has ever known.



Fathers Arturo (L) & Pat (R) Archives office - Philippines



The Baker brothers: Columban Fathers Pat, Leo and Chris



Jubilee Celebration of Frs. Pat Baker (+), Frank Carey (+), Michael Doohan, Dave Clay and Colm McKeating (+) in 2012

PEOPLE OF HOPE

by Fr. John Keenan, SSC

The author is a Columban priest from Ireland who first came to the Philippines in 1966. He is based in Manila.

The village of Parola, Tondo is a shanty town where the Pasig river and Manila bay waters meet. It has been five years since it was completely gutted by a huge fire.

No one is sure as to how the fire started but since the houses were closely-packed, they were completely destroyed, along with the community chapel and everything inside it. Fortunately, 20,000 people escaped with

little more than the clothes on their backs. Though many of them were small children, elderly and infirmed people, no life was lost.

One woman said, "As long as no one died, we are grateful." This was expressed joyfully in the vibrant liturgies celebrated in the aftermath.

Since the government made no effort in reconstructing the area and making the streets fire-breaking and accessible to fire engines, people began rebuilding their shacks little by little. Unemployment is high and wages are low, yet they gradually improved their humble dwellings.

Now, the houses are restored up to four storeys of small one-family rooms linked by very narrow stairways. Because of overcrowding, residents have to live in sub-human conditions. There is also a lack of recreational facilities.

Living in this kind of environment naturally brings many deaths. Wakes are frequently held along the narrow pathways,



Fr. John Keenan visiting the elderly in the area

since the houses are too small. Often, the grieved family cannot afford the funeral expenses, so the neighbours play cards for the winners to share the money with the family until enough is raised. That is why some wakes last for a few days or longer.

The chapel, in honour of St. Ezekiel Moreno, has now been completely restored and has been serving as the scene of inspiring liturgies and other community activities, such as feeding programs and regular meetings.

Every Sunday morning, I go to this place along



Columban students with Frs. J. Keenan & T. Mulroy in the restored chapel

with four of our seminarians to celebrate Mass with the people and to visit the sick and the housebound. After visiting the families, the seminarians meet with the youth and try to organize them into a cohesive youth club. These children are very talented, all they need is facilitation and guidance. It is all in accordance with Pope Francis' call to go to the peripheries of society and the poor.

The seminarians gain much from their exposure to such poverty and deprivation. The people's innate belief in God enables them to look to the future with hope for better days ahead. That dream is slowly being realized.

FR. BRIAN GORE: *Reflections on His Vocation as A Missionary Priest*

After more than 50 years as a missionary priest, I sometimes ask myself, "If I were a young man today, would I make the same choice again? Have I wasted my life? Was it all worthwhile?"

It is easier to be wiser with hindsight, but we don't often have that luxury while making choices in our life's journey. We are, to a great extent, the product of our own time. Today is different, both in Church and in our world

At the age of 16, I believed strongly that God was calling me to be a missionary priest because in my opinion, it was the best and most-challenging way I could serve God.

Seminary life was a partial eye-opener in terms of understanding my vocation. My real education and formation as a priest began the day I stepped off the "The Changsa" in Manila harbor in 1969. At 25, I thought I had all the answers tucked away in my trunk! I was in for quite a shock.

I did learn a lot of the basics through the seminary formation, but there were no textbooks that discussed how to be a good priest during a time of revolution. As time went by, I learned that there is no one way of exercising my priestly ministry.

Every year, I always ask, "Well, God, what surprises

have you in store for me this year?" It is never the same as it was before, but they all teach me to be open to the many challenges and opportunities to do good deeds, both great and small, that come my way.

When Columban Father Niall O'Brien (+) and I were charged with multiple murders under the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship, I thought to myself, "Well, God, this one takes the cake!" You wouldn't want too many surprises like that in a lifetime. Still, I must admit, I have dined out very nicely on that, many times during the past 20 years.

My priesthood today is very much the product of 50 years of trial and error, of reflection and prayer, of struggle and commitment, and of accompanying people in their desire for the fullness of life. I have grown as a person and have been able to do a lot of good with the help of wonderful people.

This brings me back to the first question, "If I were a young man today, would I make the same choice, knowing what I know now?" Now that I think about it, I just might be foolish enough to try it again!

(This is an edited version of the original article published in negrosnine.com (<http://www.negrosnine.com/n9-frgore-ffc>))



Fr. Brian Gore on his Golden Jubilee in 2018

COLUMBAN LAY MISSIONARIES (CLM) – PHILIPPINES



John, Lili, Beth, Mereani, Sunny, Ana, Arlenne, Lata I, Haiti & Lani

CLM Philippines hosted the year end Columban Family Gathering in the newly renovated CLM house in Cubao with a simple meal. The airconditioned multi-purpose room can now accommodate a group of twenty to thirty people for meetings.

Liliani Ma'afu returned to Mindanao to take on a full-time ministry with women and children in Barra sub-parish, Cagayan de Oro City. Lili spent a month taking-up a language refresher course in Davao and another month in a home-stay program with a local family in Agusan, Cagayan de Oro. We thank the Ramirez Family for their hospitality. May God bless them abundantly.

Lanieta Tamatawale completed a refresher course in

by *Lilibeth Sabado, Coordinator*

sign language in Manila. She returned to the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro after nine years, to serve in the Deaf Ministry.

CLM-Philippines continues to host Lay Missionaries (LM) from other Regions/Mission Units who need to spend a few months of study in the country. These LMs are also encouraged to help out in the Vocation and Mission Promotion activities of the region. Febie Gonzales has gone back to Taiwan after taking modular courses for three months here in the country.

We welcome with joy the arrival of two new lay missionaries to the region: Lata I Muller (Tonga) and Mereani Nailevu (Fiji).



L-R: Lata I Muller, Lilibeth Sabado & Mereani Nailevu

We continue to offer everything to God. We pray for vocations and for all who are on discernment and those in the accompaniment program.

MISSION PROMOTION-LUZON

by *Fr. Rolando Aniscal & Team*

On November 30, 2019, the mission partners in Luzon gathered for a whole day activity on “Deep Journey into *Laudato Si*” facilitated by Fr. John Leydon, John Din and Arlenne Villahermosa. There were 98 mission partners from Pangasinan, Zambales, Manila, Binangonan and Cubao, with ten Columban seminarians and three lay missionaries. Indeed, it was a day full of learnings and understanding, a wake-up call for all. It was also a day of celebrating and strengthening the bonds of friendship and being part of the Columban mission. The day ended with a Eucharistic Celebration presided by Rev. Fr. Paul Glynn, SSC.

With joy and gratitude, we continue to build and foster relationships with our mission partners, groups and individuals, through mission appeals in parishes, putting *alkansyas* in the different learning institutions, visiting families and facilitating recollections in Zambales, Pangasinan, La Union, Rizal and Negros Occidental areas.



Columban Mission Partners' Annual General Assembly 2019



Columban Frs. Rolando Aniscal (l) & Andrei Paz (r) with mission partner, Mrs. Caridad Ramil, Principal of St. Christopher's Academy, Bangar, La Union



St. Michael's Academy, Hinobaan, Negros Occ. Mission Partners



Katuwaan Lang

Q. *Who was the fastest runner in the race?*

A. *Adam, because he was first in the human race.*

MINDANAO COLUMBAN STAFF RECOLLECTION AND RECREATION

by *Bernie Durangparang*

Columban Vocation and Mission Animator-Mindanao

We, the staff, had our recollection and recreation from November 17 to 19 in San Agustin, Surigao del Sur. San Agustin was one of the four parishes formerly ran by the Columban Missionaries in Tandag Diocese. From 1981 to 1995, the Columbans helped out in the diocese, with Father Patrick Reidy as the last Columban assigned in a parish. Some parishioners who remembered the Columbans gave us a warm reception. We had good accommodation at the new convent and were served with good food. Recognizing the contributions of the Columbans to the parish years ago, they expressed how happy they were because of our presence.

Recollection

We had a short reflection in the evening followed by a group sharing, facilitated by Fr. Jovito Dales. The following morning, we joined the community in a Mass celebrated by Father Jovito, as a culmination of our



L-R: Lloyd, Jimboy, Bebot, Benjo & daughter, Nita, Fr. Vito, Bernie & Alex

recollection. All went well. We thanked God for this opportunity.

Recreation

After the recollection, we had a great time being together and getting to know each other better to further strengthen our relationship.

Special thanks to Fr. Glenn C. Infiesto for accommodating us in their newly-finished parish convent. Our gratitude also goes to Sir Alan Gascon, the principal of St. Augustine High School, and to Vice Mayor Mamie Milo. We extend our utmost appreciation to Ms. Anselma Gascon who tirelessly went out of her way to make us feel at home and comfortable. "San Agustin is a home of the Columbans too," she said.

Alkansya Update (Mindanao)

by *Jay-R Ramirez*

We are happy and grateful to introduce our new partners in mission in Cagayan de Oro:

- Discovery Hotel & Restaurants
- Harbour City (Dimsum House), Centrio Ayala Mall
- Legacy Sales & Printing Press
- Philtown Hotel
- Circuit and Beads (Electronics)



Circuit and Beads (Electronics)

MISSION PROMOTION UPDATE – MINDANAO

by *Bernie Durangparang*

As part of our Columban Mission Partners' ongoing spiritual enrichment, the Mission Promotion team gave a series of recollections to our Mission Partners in the different parishes in Mindanao.



Gingoog, Nov 16, 2019, facilitated by Fr. Jovito Dales with about 20 participants



Pagadian, Nov 30, 2019, facilitated by Ms. Lilibeth Sabado, CLM, with 30 participants



Mambajao, Camiguin, Nov 23, 2019, facilitated by Fr. Jovito Dales with about 20 participants



Iligan, Jan 11, 2020, facilitated by Ms. Lanieta Tamatawale, CLM, with 90 participants

Guide for Group Prayer and Reflection

This series of ten topics aims to help us reflect and discern where in our world are we called to be “light to the world & salt for the earth” & to help others live out the same calling. This is an adaptation of the Gospel of Life resource published by the Columban Center for Peace, Ecology & Justice, Australia.

SESSION ONE: GOSPEL WITNESS: LIFE OF THE WORLD

INTRO: Fullness of life is possible for all. In the act of creation, God brought forth life & ‘it was good’. We are led to ask what the global family needs to value in order to make life in abundance a reality. A new vision & a change of heart are needed for life to flourish in this world.

OPENING PRAYER/SONG

READING: The Prodigal Son – Lk 15:11-32 (*A few minutes of silence after the reading*)

REFLECTION: A crucial phrase in this parable is ‘then he came to his senses’. The son had lived in the house of his father & enjoyed its gifts of love & material goods. He decided to leave and wasted his inheritance. Like the father waiting & looking for the return of his son, God is waiting to welcome us back if only we come to our senses & choose what is life giving.

SHARING: Identify the blessings/bounty you see/receive, & the challenges you face. With the gifts you have, in what concrete ways can you contribute in fulfilling God’s vision for the world – fullness of life? Within your family, parish, community, nation or globally? (you can also draw or write a poem or other creative expressions in your answers)

CLOSING PRAYER/SONG

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING PRINCIPLE: The Common Good: The freedom & good of the individual must be balanced with the good of society.

SESSION TWO: THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

INTRO: The intrinsic dignity of each human person is founded in his/her image & likeness of God (Gen 1:26). This dignity reaches its peak & its fulfilment in the person of Jesus. Jesus honoured the dignity of the people he met regardless of their status. He did not discriminate, rather he invited them to live with dignity.

OPENING PRAYER/SONG

READING: The Good Samaritan – Lk 10:25-37 (*moments of silence after the reading*)

Reflection: In answer to the question, “Who is my neighbour?”, Jesus tells the story of a man who has been assaulted & left for dead; his need ignored & his right to assistance denied. The action of the Samaritan, ‘moved by compassion’, restores the dignity of the victim. The final words of Jesus are also addressed to us: “Go, & do the same yourselves.”

SHARING: How do we respond when we hear & see people being treated unjustly or abused physically, verbally or sexually? What can you do to promote the dignity of human persons? What can the community do?

CLOSING PRAYER/SONG

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING PRINCIPLE: Every person, created in the image of God, possesses dignity regardless of nationality, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, etc.

SESSION THREE: INTEGRITY OF CREATION

INTRO: God loved the world into being. Thus, began the history of salvation and the journey of humanity as part of a God-created web of life.

OPENING PRAYER/SONG

READING: The Conscientious Steward – Mt 24:45-47 (*Moment of silence; feel your oneness with God’s creation – air, water, plants, animals, galaxies, universe*)

REFLECTION: As conscious part of creation, humans read “the book of nature” & learn. God has entrusted humankind with the responsibility of being conscientious stewards of creation. Sadly, our world is dominated by greed & economic exploitation where both people & the natural world suffer. Our behaviour must change; crying “Lord! Lord!” is not enough.

SHARING: We are called to stand with those fighting to safeguard the integrity of creation. What steps are we, as individuals & as a community, doing to help save our common home? How will we answer when God asks us, “Are you a wise and faithful servant of the Lord?”

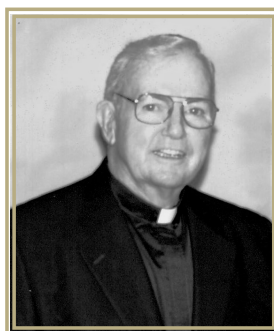
CLOSING PRAYER/SONG

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING PRINCIPLE: Ecological Responsibility: Both earth & humanity must be in partnership with each other for their mutual survival.

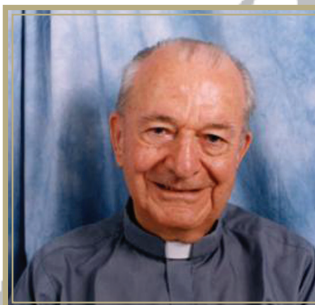
Those Who Journeyed With Us



FR. PATRICK JOHN BAKER was born on March 26, 1938 in Cobden, Victoria. During his time in St. Patrick's Christian Brothers College, he decided to follow the footsteps of his older brothers, Fathers Leo and Chris, in becoming a Columban missionary and was ordained at St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1962. In 1972, Father Pat was appointed to the Philippines. He served in various parishes in Mindanao, including the war-torn parish of Dimataling. He was District Superior for some years. From 1990, Father Pat worked in the areas of Columban Formation, Overseas Training Programme, Priest Associates and Lay Mission. His meticulousness in taking notes and in filing and classifying documents was put to use in the decade he was an archivist for the Philippine Region of the Columbans. Father Pat's patient and courageous battle with cancer over the last years of his life was inspiring. His commitment to Columban mission and to all his associates and friends throughout his life is the legacy he left us.



FR. WILLIAM SULLIVAN was born on April 24, 1929 in Lynn, Massachusetts (MA), USA. After graduating high school, Father Bill thought of becoming a priest and joined the Columban formation program in Milton, MA. He was ordained on December 21, 1956 and was appointed to the Philippines where he was assigned to St. William's parish in San Marcelino, Zambales. In 1964, he became pastor of St. Columban's Parish, Olongapo City and was named Director of Columban College the following year. Later he was assigned to different parishes in Olongapo while serving as Director of Social Action for the Diocese of Iba, Zambales. In 1986, he was assigned to the College Formation Program in Cebu City until November 1994 when he returned to the US and became the Superior of the Bristol Retirement



FR. MICHAEL SINNOTT was born in Clonard, Wexford on December 17, 1929. He joined the Columbans in 1948 and was ordained six years later. His first assignment in the Philippines was in Iligan before he was appointed to the seminary staff in Ireland. He returned to the Philippines and for the next ten years, worked in the Pagadian area where he gained the reputation as a fearless defender of people's rights against military abuses and local corruption. He lived a very simple lifestyle; a gentle and humble missionary who became a voice to the voiceless. After his four-year stint as the Vice Director of the Philippine Region, he founded the Hangop Kabataan Foundation for children with special needs in 1998. In October 2009, he was kidnapped by Islamist group for thirty-one days before being released. He returned to Ireland in 2012. Father Michael was taken ill one day after lunch and died in Our Lady's Hospital, Navan in the afternoon of November 23, 2019.

Center in 1996. November 29, 2019 at 7:12 AM he went home to God, having been blessed with about two weeks to say goodbye to his family and many friends.



MANOLITA "LILET" COLE was originally from Iligan. She joined the orientation program of the Columban Lay Missionaries in 1997 as member of RP7. In 1998, she, together with her three team mates, was assigned to Korea. She finished one term and came home in 2001. Her family moved to Cagayan de Oro around that time too. Later, she got married to James Lynch. They lived in Montana, USA. James died of bone cancer in January 2011.

After fighting a good fight with colon cancer, Lilet joined her creator on January 16, 2020, ten days after her 60th birthday.

Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord.

JOIN US

Columban Priest
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Lay Missionaries
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Columban students helping in promoting mission



Filipina Columban Lay Missionary, Jake Lunor in Fiji



Filipino Columban Priests & Lay Missionaries

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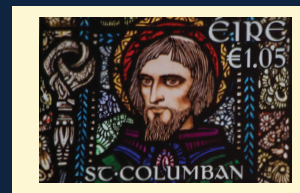


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Account Name:	Columban Missionary Foundation Inc.	Mindanao: Mr. Bernie Durangparang (09501837474)
Phone Number:	0932-245-0300	Visayas: Fr. Brian Gore (09561663898) Mr. Jayson Arcamo (09258768666)
		Luzon: Ms. Evelyn Sabate (09177074250)

For more copies, you may contact the following:

Luzon: Ms. Evelyn Sabate at 0917-707-4250 (Globe)
Mindanao: Mr. Bernie Durangparang at 09501837474 (Smart)
Visayas: Mr. Jayson Arcamo at 0925-876-8666 (Sun)



COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES

1857 Singalong Street,
Malate, Manila
(02) 8523-3361

www.columbanmission.org.ph
colcomphil@gmail.com
FB: Columban PH Missionaries

PUBLISHER:
Fr. Paul Glynn
Regional Director

Editor:
Arlenne Villahermosa

Assistant Editor:
Daniella Clemente

Layout Artist:
John Din