



far east

MAGAZINE OF THE COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES

HOSPITALITY HOUSE

Columbans at the
US/Mexico border

CHRISTMAS IN 'PARADISE'

Mass at a Temple Complex
in Peru

SHOUT FOR JOY

Hope Special Education
Centre in Ozamiz

CONTENTS

- 04 Christmas in 'Paradise'**
Fr John Boles recalls Christmas Day last year when he celebrated Mass at a 4,000-year-old temple complex in Peru.
- 06 Shout for Joy**
Columban missionary Sr Cecilia Cuizon is the Director of the Hope Special Education Centre in Ozamiz. She writes about the centre's work with children with disabilities.
- 08 My Miracle Cure**
John Scally speaks to Marion Carroll about her miraculous cure at Knock shrine in 1989, and her esteem for the Columbans and the **Far East** magazine.
- 10 A Columban Thread**
Peter Delargy has worked as an English teacher in China with Aitece. In Chongqing he discovered links between the city's World War II history, his own family history and Columban missionary Fr James Stuart.
- 12 'Why are you still with us?'**
A new book on missionary priests prompts Fr Barry Cairns to think back over his long service in Japan.
- 14 All in a Day**
Sr Louise Horgan, a relative of Columban co-founder Bishop Edward Galvin, talks to Fr Alo Connaughton about her 50 years of working to empower women in Thailand.
- 16 My Back Tooth**
Fr Bobby Gilmore recalls an incident of bullying on the rugby pitch at school which woke him up to the existence of unexpected, mean, aggressive, wanton violence.
- 18 Hospitality House**
Columban lay missionary Sai Tamatawale works at the Casa Acogida or Hospitality House on the US/Mexico border. She believes the response to migration can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.
- 20 Reflection**
- 21 Stories from the Bible**
- 22 Children's Section**
- 23 Nature: The Mistletoe Bird**



THE FAR EAST

Published seven times yearly by the Missionary Society of St Columban (Maynooth Mission to China).

THE PURPOSE OF THE FAR EAST IS

To promote an awareness of the missionary dimension of the Church among readers; to report on the work of Columban priests, Sisters and lay missionaries; and to seek spiritual and material support for missionaries.

far east

Subscription

£10 a year.
Contact the Mission Office:
Tel: (01564) 772 096
Email: fareast@columbans.co.uk

Editor

Sarah Mac Donald
editorfareast@gmail.com

Assistant Editor

Sr Abbie O'Sullivan

Layout & Editorial Assistant

Breda Rogers

Manager

Stephen Awre

Original Design

Gabriel German Carbone
ggcarbone@gmail.com

Printers

Walstead Bicester, Oxfordshire

Columban Websites

News, reports, reflections etc.
www.columbans.co.uk
www.columbansisters.org

Follow us

Twitter: @fareastmagazine
Facebook: www.facebook.com/fareastmagazine

Missionary Society of St Columban

Widney Manor Road, Solihull,
West Midlands, B93 9AB.
Tel: (01564) 772 096

Columban Sisters

6/8 Ridgdale Street, Bow,
London E3 2TW.
Tel: (020) 8980 3017

Front Cover

A man and woman are seen in silhouette after breaching a border fence on the southern border of the USA. Image: Shutterstock



CHRISTMAS RUSH IN FIJI
DASHING FROM ONE PRAYER MEETING TO THE NEXT!

While the rest of the world shops and parties frenetically in December, the people in Fiji busy themselves too - in providing retreats, carol singing and charitable outreaches to the less fortunate.

Last 14th December was one such pre-Christmas Saturday for the Columban seminarians undertaking their spiritual year.

We began by offering our house to the 'Legionaries of the Sacred Heart' (a men's group from the cathedral parish) to have a morning's recollection, consisting of input, quiet times, confessions and Mass.

The men, ranging from their early 20s to mid-60s, greatly appreciated a few hours of peace in our rural, forest location. We provided hospitality and food but had to leave them at midday to go the Juvenile Detention Centre where 20 teenagers were awaiting us eagerly for their Christmas prayers and counselling.

We get them to share a favourite Bible passage and sing songs, before going out under the trees or to the sheds for individual sessions. Most of the boys ask for prayers for their upcoming court appearances, share tough family stories and ask for phone calls home. On this day, we shared soft drinks and chocolate with them, all of which was gleefully devoured!

From there (still not having had lunch) we rushed to the 'Home of Compassion' - a nursing facility for the old and infirm, where along with our Fiji Columban Bursar, Lillian Bing, and her 'ukulele group', we regaled the residents with carols, Fijian lullabies and dancing. We also helped feed a number of

the patients, and then enjoyed a late snack.

A dash home for a shower and then it was back to the city where the Columban Interreligious Dialogue Office had organised a Youth Christmas Programme, where members from the Sai Baba, Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharm (Hindu groups), the Suva Multicultural Centre, and three Catholic parishes entertained us with song, nativity plays and more dancing!

After sweeping and cleaning the cathedral crypt, we went home with a number of the youth to celebrate one of our seminarians' 26th birthday. More laughing, singing, and festive kava drinking occupied the hours to midnight when we eventually turned in so as to be ready for 7am Sunday Masses - one (in English) in the local parish and the other (in Fijian) for retired Sisters who live a 20 minute walk away from our house.

That walk, already in 30C+ heat at 6.30am, most certainly sweated out any residual grogginess in me! A busy, fulfilling and very Columban type of weekend. ●

Fr Pat Colgan

Fr Pat Colgan, a native of Belfast, was ordained a Columban in 1994 and spent 18 years in Fiji before he was appointed to the Society's General Council in 2012. He has now returned to mission in Fiji.

01. Three Fijian shepherds! Members from the Hindu Sai Baba, Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharm groups in Fiji, along with members of the Suva Multicultural Centre, and three Catholic parishes staged a nativity play in December 2019. Pic: Fr Pat Colgan.

*Wishing all our subscribers, readers and supporters
a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for 2021!*



CHRISTMAS in 'PARADISE'

01

Columban Father John Boles celebrated Christmas Mass in 'Paradise' last year. It was not the future paradise we all aspire to but something from the past - a 4,000-year-old temple in Peru.

People often boast about having celebrated Mass in churches that are centuries old, such as the great cathedrals of Europe. But what about celebrating in a place of worship that is over 4,000 years old?

This was the privilege extended to me when I was invited to preside at Christmas Mass in a desert shanty town on the northern edge of Lima, the capital of Peru. The settlement has only recently been established and has grown up around an incredible but little-known archaeological treasure - the Temple Complex of *El Paraíso*.

A common error amongst us Christians is to think that missionaries take the Faith to 'pagan' lands where the people know nothing of God. In fact, this is a fallacy. God has been revealing himself to peoples since the dawn of humanity. All the evidence suggests that, ever since humans began walking the earth, they've had a sense of the divine. The missionary encounters people to whom God is already present, and simply needs to relate existing beliefs to a faith in one God and Jesus as our Saviour.

Spanish missionaries came to Peru five hundred years ago. They found a religion deeply embedded in the native population - not exactly our religion, but a religion nonetheless. Furthermore, for thousands of years these inhabitants had been constructing huge temples to their

gods, from long before Europeans settled here, before even the Egyptians built their giant pyramids.

Beginning around 3,500 BC great cities began to appear on the Pacific coast of Peru, alongside rivers nourished seasonally by rainfall and snowmelt from the nearby Andes Mountains. These cities were dominated by temples built in the form of step-pyramids. *El Paraíso* was one of these. All the houses have long since crumbled into heaps of dust, but the central stone-built temple survived. It was covered by wind-blown sand until discovered and unearthed in the 1960s.

The new village of *El Paraíso* as yet has no church. Columban missionaries only started serving the population there a few years ago. Mass is celebrated in the open air. Then, one day close to Christmas time, our friend, Santiago Morales, chief archaeologist of the temple site, came to us with a novel suggestion. He invited us to have Christmas morning Mass there.

As we thought about it, the idea seemed to make more and more sense. The ancients who had raised up that place had worshipped the gods of Water, Sun and Moon. These were the elements that gave them life - not so different, he suggested, from modern Christian beliefs. "Do we not use water in Baptism, the sacrament which gives us Life in Christ?" As for the sun and moon, "did not Jesus

02





03

refer to himself as, 'The Light of the World?' And, "did not that Light come into the world at Christmas?" Santiago's suggestion had been inspired.

So, early on Christmas morning we gathered, singing carols, on what had been the ceremonial square in front of the temple building. A canopy had been set up to protect us from the ferocious summer heat. A plain table from the archaeological workshop served as an altar. As fellow Columban John Hegerty and I presided at the Eucharist we were aware of the connection across the ages, as the birth of Jesus was commemorated just as the sun was born at the dawning of a new day.

For the Gospel, a group of local youngsters acted out the Nativity. Afterwards, we shared a traditional Peruvian Christmas picnic of sweet bread and drinking chocolate, as Santiago reminded us that those long-ago worshippers had also feasted at their ceremonies. "They had even presented foodstuffs like corn and llama meat as offerings, while we offered bread and wine to be the Body and Blood of Christ."

Later, I remembered how in Athens, St Paul had seen an altar dedicated to, "An Unknown God". He had gone on to congratulate the 'pagan' Athenians for being so pious, and said he'd come because, "the unknown God you revere is the one I now proclaim to you" (Acts 17:23). He foresaw the success of Christianity there precisely because God had already revealed so much of Himself, albeit in an indirect way.

Similarly, maybe one of the reasons Christianity spread so quickly in South America was that the Holy Spirit had done so much of the groundwork before the missionaries arrived. Perhaps it was prophetic that the name of the temple setting for our Christmas Mass was *El Paraíso*, for Paraiso in English is Paradise! ●

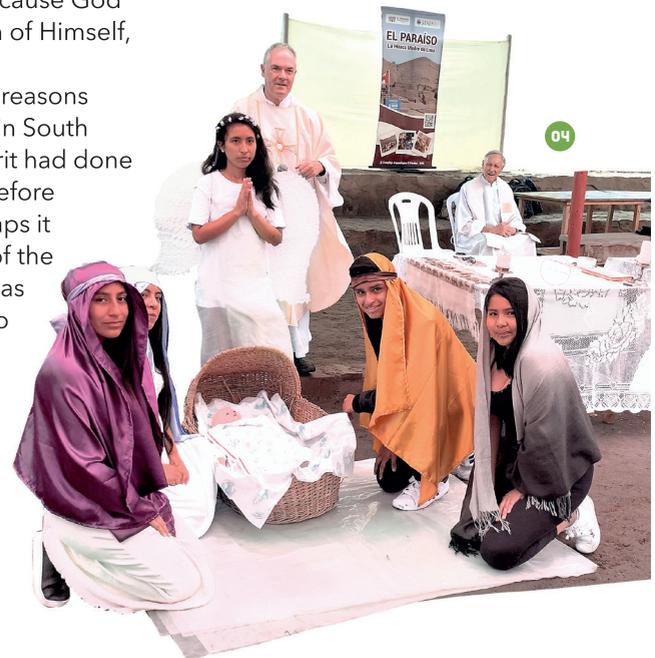
Fr John Boles is a Columban Missionary from England and has worked in Peru for over 25 years.

01. Fr John Boles on a terrace of the 4,000-year-old Temple Complex of *El Paraíso*, with the makeshift Christmas Day 'chapel', under the red canopy, visible at the foot of the ancient ceremonial square in the background. All photos: Diego Villalobos, Columban Communications Coordinator in Peru.
02. Chief Archaeologist Santiago Morales and Fr John Boles in front of the Temple Complex of *El Paraíso*.
03. Columban missionaries Fr John Boles and Fr John Hegerty presiding at Christmas Day Mass at the Temple Complex of *El Paraíso* last December.
04. Young locals acting out the Nativity during Christmas Day Mass.

To make a comment on this article go to:

 [facebook.com/fareastmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/fareastmagazine)

 [@fareastmagazine](https://twitter.com/fareastmagazine)



04

THE TEMPLE COMPLEX OF *EL PARAÍSO*

Set before a ceremonial square, it consisted of a stone-built step pyramid topped by a sanctuary, where offerings were received and burnt in ritual celebrations. It flourished between 2,300 - 1,500 BC. The people of this culture had a profound knowledge of astronomy. Their gods were apparently those of Water, Sun and Moon, represented by animals such as the Frog, Eagle and Fox.

A priestly elite was supported by agricultural surpluses of cotton, maize and sweet potato. These items were also traded for products obtained from groups in the mountains. The local diet was supplemented by fish and other seafood.

The site was abandoned when local climatic change caused the drying up of neighbouring rivers. Remarkably, before withdrawing, it seems the inhabitants ceremonially 'buried' the temple under rubble excavated from nearby hills.

Similar valley civilisations along the Pacific coast of Peru rose and fell from 3,500 BC until about 500 AD. From then on, the area came under the control of various Andean empires. The last of these (starting in around 1430 AD) was that of the Incas, who built Peru's most famous temple-palace complex at Machu Picchu. A century later, the Incas in turn were conquered by the Spanish.



SHOUT FOR JOY

Columban missionary Sr Cecilia Cuizon is the Director of the Hope Special Education Centre in Ozamiz. She writes about the centre's work with children with disabilities.

The Community of Hope Special Education Centre is a religious and charitable organisation run by the Columban Sisters. It delivers services to children and youngsters with disabilities in Ozamiz City, and its neighbouring towns in Misamis Occidental aimed at making a difference to their lives. The love of God becomes a reality for them as they see their own transformation.

Leslie is a youngster with autism and an intellectual disability. In addition, she also has a potassium deficiency. Eating bananas and more exposure to the sun are not enough anymore. The medication she gets at the Centre strengthens her muscles to enable her to stand and walk. She was only 10 years old when she was referred to the Community of Hope Special Education Centre by the principal of her school.



She was defiant and disobedient with her teachers as she hated school. She was being bullied both in school and in the community. They felt that she was different from them.

Her mother wanted to give her a good education in preparation for her future. She worked hard selling cakes to add to her husband's meagre income. He was an alcoholic and had no regular job. Later he died of depression. Her older children got married and had families of their own. She herself was sickly and died when

Leslie was only 13 years old. Leslie was the youngest in the family of four.

With her parent's dead, she suffered intensely. She was moved from one relative to another. At one time she stayed with her married older sister who has three children and whose husband does not have a steady income. It did not work. Leslie was back to her old problematic behaviour. God, who is rich in mercy and compassion, touched the heart of her paternal married aunt who decided to take her as part of her family. At present she is living with them. Her aunt has become her legal guardian and it is with Leslie's aunt that we are carrying out the rehabilitation process.

The Community of Hope's social worker drew up a rehabilitation plan for Leslie. The intervention includes pre-academic one-to-one intervention and activities for daily living (ADL) which covers simple, practical and appropriate livelihood skills training. Socialisation among her peer group has helped her develop her self-confidence.

Every year, the Community of Hope organises a Youth Summer Camp. Leslie

At present the Centre is providing a service to 125 children and young adults with disabilities. They receive physiotherapy and other rehabilitation services. Their smiles and simplicity reflect the compassionate love of God for all people without distinction. Sr Cecilia says, "Our call and challenge is to love them as they are and to act according to what is appropriate." Over the years since it was opened the Community of Hope has lived up to its name. It has served more than 1,000 children and young adults who suffer from autism, cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome, club foot, cleft palate, hearing impairment, as well as those with an intellectual disability. Thanks to the programmes at the centre, some have been able to find work in the local community. In the opinion of Sr Sophia, who manages the livelihood skills training programme, "With faith and trust in God, we are very grateful that we are able to continue to offer these services. Thank you, God, for choosing and giving us the privilege to love, cherish and journey with these youngsters. God is indeed good!" ●

01. Exercise class for one of the children attending the Community of Hope Special Education Centre in Ozamiz City.
02. Sr Ashwena Apao (left) and Sr Cecilia Cuizon (right) take the children from the centre on a trip.
03. Sr Tomasa Saberon and Sr Cecilia Cuizon with some children and their parents.
04. The Community of Hope has served more than 1,000 children and young adults who suffer from autism, cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome, club foot, cleft palate, hearing impairment, as well as those with an intellectual disability.



always looks forward to it. It is the one time of the year that she experiences psychological and emotional security. During this event, there are young people who volunteer to accompany our young people with disabilities. Each one gets a friend/companion for the duration of the summer camp. The volunteer accompanies the young person and shows care and appreciation for their gifts and talents. Our youngsters feel that they are loved and appreciated. Their whole experience is one of empowerment.

Columban missionary Sr Cecilia Cuizon is administrator of Community of Hope in Ozamiz. She was missioned in Chile, South America before returning back to the Philippines.

To make a comment on this article go to:

 facebook.com/fareastmagazine

 [@fareastmagazine](https://twitter.com/fareastmagazine)

MY MIRACLE CURE



John Scally speaks to Marion Carroll about her miraculous cure at Knock shrine in 1989, which was officially recognised by the Church last year, as well as her admiration for the Columbans and the Far East magazine.

Marion Carroll grew up in a very different Ireland, where the arrival of the **Far East** magazine every month was a highlight, providing a glimpse into a world and peoples far away from her home town of Athlone.

Marion travelled to Knock in 1989 at death's door after 17 years of life with Multiple Sclerosis. Then her life changed forever.

"When we got to Knock they brought me into the nurse and she settled all the things you do with an invalid. I was too sick to be brought to the Basilica immediately, so I was taken to the rest and care centre. Eventually, just before Mass, we went over to the Basilica and they put me under the statue of Our Lady of Knock and when I looked up at the statue, that's the statue they carry in the procession, I thought she was the most beautiful and friendliest statue I had ever seen in my life."

"I wanted another housewife, another woman to talk to me who would understand what was within me and I looked back up at the statue of Our Lady and I said to her, 'You are a mother too, you know how I feel about leaving my husband and children!'"

"It wasn't a prayer, it wasn't a statement, it was just one woman chatting to another. I then prayed to her to look after my husband and children and to give them

the grace to accept my death as the will of God."

During the Blessing of the Sick, Marion experienced a new sensation. "I got this magnificent feeling - a wonderful sensation like a whispering breeze telling me that I was cured. A nurse opened the stretcher and my two legs swung out and I stood up straight. It was the first time in three years I had been able to do so. I am absolutely convinced it was a miracle. My speech was perfect and my hands and arms were perfect. I was standing unaided on my own two feet."

"Standing there that moment I saw my own heart right in front of me. And it was so full of joy and peace and a love without end. It was shining, looking directly into the sun. Then the rays came towards me and I got all these gifts of joy and peace and love and a lot of other things."

In September 2019, thirty years after that experience the Catholic Church officially recognised her cure. In her new book *My Miracle Cure* Marion shares her story for the first time. Over 30 years on she continues to enjoy good health.

Marion is convinced that her cure is a gift from God so that she can help congregations like the Columbans in their work. "I am enthralled by the compassion of God and Jesus to people. There are days when I'm very far away from this, but

I'm always inspired by the image of Jesus in the Gospels. He was someone who brought the compassion of God to people, someone who didn't judge or condemn. He was someone who was with people wherever they were, especially those who found themselves on the margins of society. That is why I really admire people like the Columban Fathers because of the work they do with people who are unable to help themselves."

"Unlike the Columbans I am not called to be a missionary. However, I can help them. Prayer is an important component in my life. When I pray I do so for groups like the Columbans. Since I was a young girl I have been very familiar with the work they do through reading the **Far East**. I draw strength from my God who is compassionate, supportive and understanding. He is hard to shock."

"I feel it is a privilege to use my very limited talents to pray for people like the Columbans who are playing their part in alleviating the suffering of this world and who strive to bring about change for those who are poor and oppressed."

"The Columbans bear witness to a Christianity which has a vital, personal quality rather than being something worn ostentatiously like a religious emblem and a spirituality that is deep, mysterious and beautiful, a religion that gives sympathy to our hearts and understanding to our minds. They are particularly conscious of the wisdom of Brendan Kennelly's incisive words, 'Self knows that self is not enough.'"

"A community where everyone's needs are met through the caring and sharing of each one in the community, where everyone feels loved, valued and respected, would surely be the Kingdom of God on earth. If Jesus Christ today is to offer hope to those who are struggling, who live on the edge, who feel unwanted, that hope is in people like the Columbans. I will keep praying for them to help them build the kingdom on earth as in heaven." ●

My Miracle Cure is published by Black and White Publications and is available in all good bookshops now.

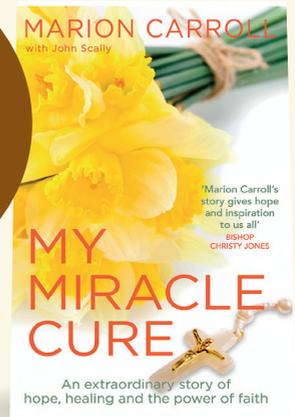


Photo: Matthew and the bones of St. Columban

- 01. Marion Carroll at her home in Athlone.
- 02. *My Miracle Cure* - the story of Marion's miraculous healing at Knock Shrine in 1989.

To make a comment on this article go to:

- facebook.com/foreastmagazine
- @foreastmagazine



from the Columbans for your support and prayers.

You can help us continue our mission work in solidarity with the poor on the margins around the world by giving us a donation.

Read more about our work and donate online at www.columbans.co.uk/donate or send us your gift to Missionary Society of St Columban, St. Columban's, Widney Manor Road, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9AB.

I had never taken much interest in China or its culture. Even today people ask: why go there? Inspiration came from reading about Matteo Ricci, the Italian Jesuit missionary who arrived in Macau towards the end of the 16th century and gradually progressed to the Emperor's Court in Beijing where he greatly influenced the educated members of Chinese society through his erudition and scientific prowess. Other Jesuits followed, notably Johann Adam Schall von Bell. Today Matteo Ricci is favourably regarded in China.

Arriving in Chongqing, a mega-city in southwest China, I wanted to find out more about its history and culture and so with one of my students as a guide I explored the city at weekends. There was lots to see and learn but no guidebook or map in English; tourism was limited to organised

Another of Stilwell's efforts was to improve land and air corridors for supplying the Chinese forces. With the invasion of Burma by the Japanese in 1942 the Burma Road providing supplies from Rangoon was cut off and with the capture of the airfield at Myitkyina in northeastern Burma, materials could only come from India to China by being flown over the Himalayas.

Churchill, influenced by Stilwell and the Chindit military expedition, formed by the British to penetrate the Japanese lines in Burma, (Johnny McQuade, the former DUP MP, was a Chindit), persuaded Roosevelt to organise a US equivalent to disrupt the Japanese in Burma. Over 3,000 volunteers were recruited and trained in late 1943 to advance from India into Burma in early 1944. The now oldest living survivor of that campaign is my cousin, Gabriel Kinney, whose father came from Glenariff.

A COLUMBAN THREAD

boat trips down the Yangtze River to see the huge Three Gorges Dam.

Chongqing had been the capital of China during World War II, which was known as the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression. Today there are derelict wartime foreign embassies dotted around the hills south of the city. For China the war began in the early 1930s with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in the north. Moving southwest the Japanese were unable to take Chongqing. Instead they bombed it repeatedly and left the medieval city in ruins.

Among the local places of interest in Chongqing I visited was the Stilwell Museum in Yuzhong District which preserves the former residence of General Joseph W. Stilwell, the Allied Chief of Staff in China during World War II. Stilwell's role during the war was to try to encourage the Nationalist Government forces to join with the Communists in a combined effort against the Japanese - not an easy task since Chiang Kai-shek's focus was on defeating his Communist enemies.

He'd been in Guadalcanal and joined up on the understanding that after a few weeks fighting in the Burmese jungle they would be discharged leaving him free to return home early to Alabama. That didn't happen.

Conditions in the jungle were dreadful and dysentery and scrub typhus were rampant. As the men were ready to return, Stilwell ordered them to take Myitkyina many miles further east. If Myitkyina could be captured, then supplies to China could fly further south avoiding the Himalayas. En route they came across Fr James Stuart, a Columban missionary from Moneymore, Co Derry living with his Kachin parishioners. Risking his life, he guided the volunteers while hearing the confessions of the 2nd Battalion to which Gabriel Kinney belonged.

Fr Stuart had managed to survive the arrival of the Japanese by assuring them that Ireland was situated somewhere in the mid-Atlantic. The Japanese officer remained unconvinced but thanks to a warning given by a Japanese Christian,

Peter Delargy has worked as an English teacher in China on the Columban's Aitece programme. In Chongqing he discovered some links between the city's World War II history with his own family history and the Columban missionary Fr James Stuart.

he avoided execution. (His experience was more fortunate than that of another cousin, Fr Kevin Flatley, then a recently ordained Columban. Writing to his mother in May 1937 about being sent to Burma, he mentions Fr Stuart as being already in place adding that Burma was an attractive posting. However, he was later arrested by the Japanese and spent years imprisoned and never fully recovered.)

The most dangerous event was the defence by the 2nd Battalion of Nhpum Ga, a hilltop in Northeast Burma. There my cousin Gabriel Kinney, ensconced in a foxhole, with a Browning Automatic Rifle helped fend off the repeated assaults by the Japanese. The conditions were appalling. There was little or no water; and any water was heavily polluted; ammunitions were running low and only supplemented by airdrops; the stench of decay was everywhere. Finally, after 16 days' resistance the men at Nhpum Ga were relieved by the two other battalions and then moved on over mountainous terrain to take the Myitkyina airstrip.

With others Gabriel was then flown back to India to recover, having been wounded twice and diagnosed as "suffering from just about everything". But



true to his reputation 'Vinegar Joe Stilwell' ordered those survivors, now recovering in India but not utterly incapacitated, to return to defend the captured airfield from Japanese attacks and Gabriel was obliged to return to Myitkyina for four more months until August 1944 when the Japanese at Myitkyina were finally overcome. ●

To make a comment on this article go to:

 facebook.com/foreastmagazine

 [@foreastmagazine](https://twitter.com/foreastmagazine)

01. Some parishioners, Peter Delargy and a student at a mission church three hours from Chongqing. The inscription reads 'Catholic Church'.
02. Columban missionary Fr James Stuart who saved the lives of many refugees and American airmen in Northern Burma during World War II.
03. Irish pianist Barry Douglas with Peter Delargy and some students after a concert in Chongqing, China.
04. In appreciation of the valuable service Fr Stuart rendered British and American Intelligence, the 'Fighting Father', as he was referred to afterwards, was awarded the OBE.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TEACHING IN CHINA?

Cultural Exchange with China (CEC) offers those looking for a life-changing break an opportunity to share their English language skills with students while getting to know China.

Skills Needed: Competence to teach third level English language. A degree or teaching diploma. A TEFL diploma is a decided help and essential for those without teaching experience. A fluent speaker of English with clear enunciation and a lively teaching style.

Other valued subjects are: Journalism, Law, Engineering, Import & Export Trade, Computer Science, Biology, Pharmacy and Costume Design.

Mission Dimension: This is mission in the sense of integral human development of both teacher and students.

Accommodation on campus is usually provided free to teachers. The salary is adequate for the needs of a simple lifestyle. Upper age limit for candidates is 65.



For Further Information:

Contact: Ann Milner

Email: oliasah-china@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.cecchina.co.uk

'WHY ARE YOU STILL WITH US?'

A new book on missionary priests prompts Fr Barry Cairns to think back over his long service in Japan.

I never thought that my photo would be on the front cover of a book - admittedly with 14 others! All of us, in our 80s, are foreign missionaries still working in Japan. The book in Japanese is titled **Father, why did you come to Japan?** with the further question: **Why are you still with us?**

The fifteen missionary priests were interviewed by a Paulist Sister for the book. I am 88 and now semi-retired. I am a pastor and missionary in a very small parish in Yokohama City. In my last year of high school, at times I had a realisation that I possessed a great treasure in being a follower of Christ. I felt that I would like to share this treasure with others not so blessed. But then I also considered becoming a carpenter to build houses. I was better with my hands than my head. Well, I thought, let's give the seminary a go! So in 1949 I went to St Columban's to test my vocation as a missionary in other lands.

There followed seven up and down years in the seminary. The two years of philosophy were agony! In the following four years of theology and especially scripture I felt more at home. But mission history and anthropology were my favourite classes.

In 1955, at 24, I was ordained in my

home parish of Sts Peter and Paul, Lower Hutt, New Zealand. I received a letter from my superior: "Barry, you are appointed to Japan." To tell you the truth, I was not happy at all! Could I survive another two years of intensive study of a difficult foreign language? (I had failed Latin in my University Entrance Exam. Good marks in history got me through!)

I arrived in Japan in 1956 after 31 days on a cargo ship from Sydney, with six port calls. After language school I was appointed to fishing villages. Japan was still staggering from the after-effects of war. There was poverty, sickness (especially TB) and down-heartedness. TV had not yet come to the country villages where ancient customs and ways of thinking had not changed for centuries. I had learnt in my anthropology class that it was important for an expatriate to have a "cultural curiosity" about one's adopted country. Ask questions: Why? How? When? That was great advice! I came to know Japan and the Japanese. And also to learn the language.

But more was to come. I started teaching a class for people preparing for Baptism. I met Japanese with no religious affiliation and saw and felt the stark emptiness of their lives. One man said

his religion was the Osaka Hanshin Tigers baseball team. My own faith grew stronger together with the newly-given faith of those in the class. The feeling of sharing a treasure that I had felt in High School came back to me strongly.

After eleven years in Japan I got sick. I had big, fat swollen legs. It was Beriberi and other complications. I had nine months in hospital. My faith, and consequently my call to be a priest, was sorely tested. The support of my Columban confreres and my parishioners helped me. I went home on sick leave. I was desolate. I thought that I had lost my faith. It took me three years before I realised that behind the sickness and desolation Christ was with me at all times. I feel I matured, both as a person and as a missionary priest. There is a Japanese proverb that says: "Suffering makes a jewel of you." How true!

Then for thirteen years I was on the staff of the Columban seminary in Sydney as a spiritual director. I returned to Japan in 1983 after being away for sixteen years. It was a different Japan. My second culture shock was worse than the first! I was posted in three large and busy city parishes for 32 years. I am now, at 88, semi-retired as pastor of the smallest parish in Yokohama City (about 70 at Mass on Sundays).

I stay in Japan because I feel called to live among the un-evangelised. I want to be beside the aged of Japan who feel so insecure about their future. I feel "at home" here, and likewise feel that the Japanese like me in their home. I also believe that the foreign missionary has a very small but important role. We foreigners can act as a concrete example that the Church is for all nations - that it is truly catholic. Island countries, and their churches, can become insular.



When the Paulist Sister asked me: "What has been your most unpleasant experience in Japan?" I explained that though trivial, I still feel it! I was born in the southern hemisphere in New Zealand. Christmas means summer picnics and swimming in the sea. I still find a cold winter Christmas hard to take. I hear the popular song in Japan, 'I'm dreaming of a white Christmas'. It is never my dream! But I do let my snow-white beard grow long. I dress up as Santa Claus for the children. We give them a small present and I ask them to give their mothers and fathers a present by showing them at least one kind act. One mother told me that she wished there were 52 Christmases a year!

I feel called to be living among the un-evangelised and pray with them and for them. I want to proclaim in a small way that our gentle God loves everyone unconditionally, as they are. It is by the grace of God that my enthusiasm for mission is still with me. ●

Fr Barry Cairns was born in New Zealand in 1931. After studying to be a Columban missionary in Australia, he went to Japan in 1956. After eleven years in parish work in Japan, he spent the next 13 years on the staff of the Columban seminary in Sydney before he returned to Japan in 1983. At 88 years of age he still serves in a small parish in Yokohama City.

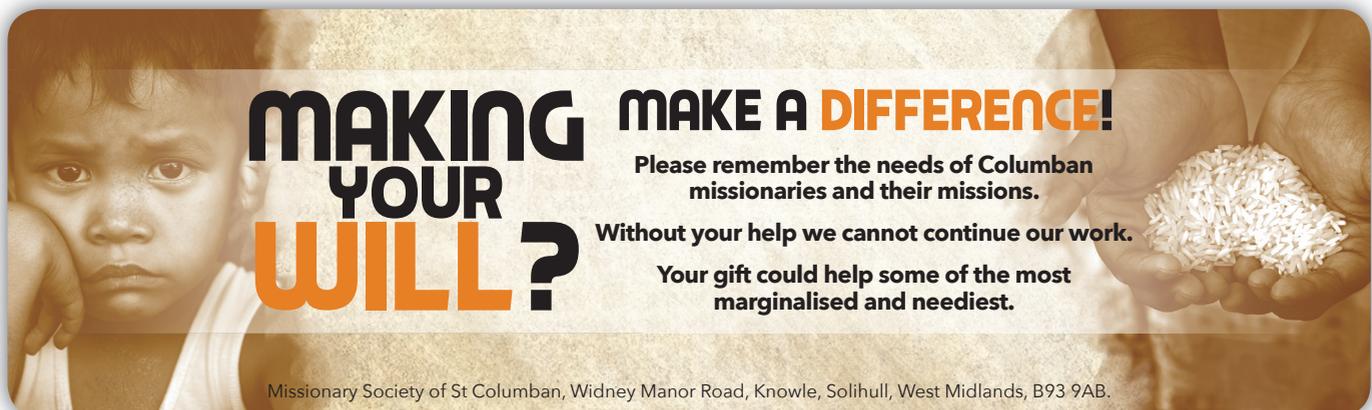
01. Fr Barry Cairns as Santa Claus

02. Fr Barry with parishioners and children after receiving their Christmas gift.

To make a comment on this article go to:

 facebook.com/foreastmagazine

 [@foreastmagazine](https://twitter.com/foreastmagazine)



MAKING YOUR WILL?

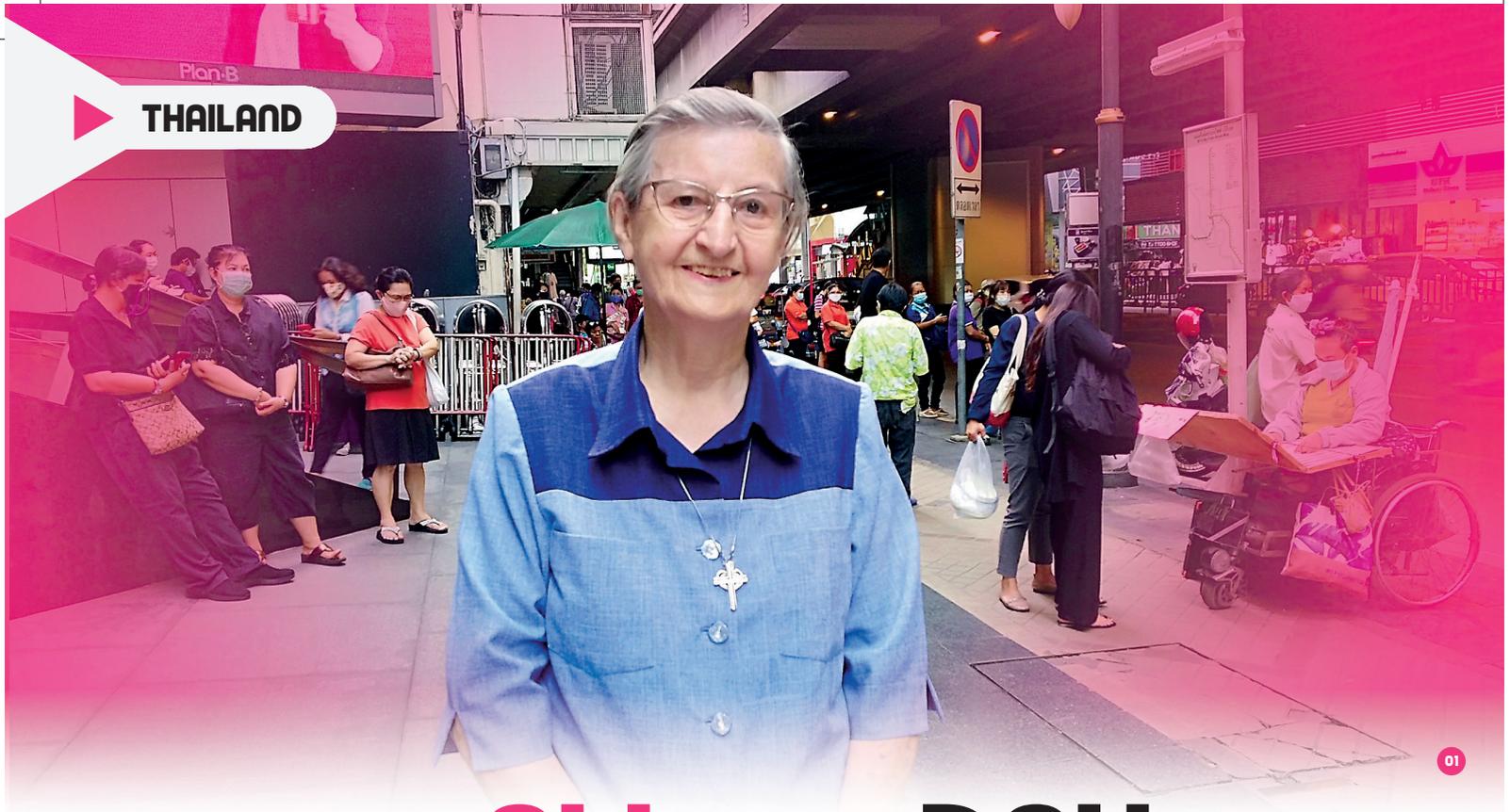
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Please remember the needs of Columban missionaries and their missions.

Without your help we cannot continue our work.

Your gift could help some of the most marginalised and neediest.

Missionary Society of St Columban, Widney Manor Road, Knowle, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 9AB.



ALL IN A DAY

Sr Louise Horgan is a relative of Bishop Edward Galvin, co-founder of the Columbans. Fr Alo Connaughton talks to her about her 50 years of working to empower women in Thailand and helping those in vulnerable situations.

Sr Louise Horgan is a Good Shepherd Sister from Newcestown, Co Cork and a distant cousin of Columban co-founder, Bishop Edward Galvin. She came to Thailand in 1966, having been forced to leave Sri Lanka. Her 'start-up capital' was just £10 in her pocket, and an assurance from her superior in France that providence would take care of the rest. She is a founder of the Fatima Self-Help Centre in Bangkok where a small active team of Sisters and a big number of volunteers and co-workers carry out a wide range of activities.

"Up to the start of the Coronavirus we had a lot of activities in the Fatima Centre. One of our biggest activities was what you could call an empowerment programme with people from some of the very poor localities in our area. We started many years ago to offer training to poor women. They came every day to learn skills such as hairdressing, dressmaking, manicure, Thai massage and other skills. Initially these were training programmes, but the women were poor and needed to earn as well as learn."

"For many years now we have had a craft centre where 120 women make a great variety of handicrafts. We were able to sell these through various channels and the women made enough money to pay their rent, electricity and water bills. Apart from

the skills we were also able to provide adult education to those who did not have the opportunity to go to school. This enabled many mothers to help their children with their homework. Later, we added other courses including computer skills."

"The women came to work in the morning, so we needed a day care centre for their small children. This has expanded and we now accept older children. We have five classes of 20 children each, with



a teacher for each class. Uniforms are a feature of Thai education. We are able to make the uniforms in our workshop."

"From 2014 up to the virus outbreak, we had been taking care of the education of children of over 200 refugees and families from countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Mongolia. In the Centre we offer residential care at the moment to 60 teenage girls that are in a vulnerable situation. The life stories of some of them, before they come to us, are disturbing."

"There is a separate section for young expectant mothers. At the moment there are three pregnant teenagers and five young mothers. This shelter provides support and counselling for those who are trafficked or forced into migration and those subject to all forms of gender-based violence."

"All our programmes are geared to empower lives, restore rights and uphold the dignity of those who are marginalized and broken. We do our best to reach out and welcome each person with respect, accompanying each one with care and compassion."

The Irish missionary explains that the lockdown brought a halt to many of their activities and it also meant that they could not sell their craftwork. "But our volunteers and benefactors helped us to pay for and prepare food parcels on a regular basis for the 120 women and others whose income only brings them from one day to the next."



"We also delivered food packs to refugees and asylum families and to the nearby slums and housing estates. Over the recent months we have prepared and delivered many thousands of parcels."

"At the time of the Coronavirus outbreak there were thousands of tourists from China in Thailand, including a big number from Wuhan. The country reacted quickly; face masks were immediately obligatory everywhere and many restrictive rules were imposed. The country has managed to limit the cases to 3,564 with 59 deaths (1 October 2020). When we were allowed to have a limited reopening, we had a bit of luck. Many agencies and embassies heard that we were producing face masks in our workshop and we got orders for thousands of these and so were able to bring some of the women back to work."

This inspiring woman is still one of the driving forces behind the Fatima Centre, despite her age. She underlines the importance of prayer to keep her dynamo going. "Amid all this activity our community of Sisters are blessed to be able to set aside time each day for prayer and reflection to nourish our spiritual life. Who knows what will happen in the near future? The spread or containment of the Coronavirus will decide a lot about what we and so many others will be able to do in the coming months." ●

Fr Alo Connaughton is a former editor of the Far East magazine. Ordained in 1969, he is now involved in the formation of seminarians in Thailand and China.

01. Good Shepherd Sister Louise Horgan from Newcestown, Co Cork, who is a distant cousin of Columban co-founder, Bishop Edward Galvin.
02. Babies of young, single women. Buddhist doctors, who refuse to carry out abortions, often send the babies to the Fatima Centre.
03. Some of the young women in vulnerable situations who are given support by the Fatima Centre.
04. Skills training includes hairdressing.

To make a comment on this article go to:

-  facebook.com/foreastmagazine
-  [@foreastmagazine](https://twitter.com/foreastmagazine)



MY BACK TOOTH

Fr Bobby Gilmore recalls an incident of bullying on the rugby pitch at school which woke him up to the existence of unexpected, mean, aggressive, wanton violence.

In 1953 I was in my second-year class at a boarding school. It was a school that played rugby. Coming from rural Ireland our sports interests were confined to Gaelic football. Hurling had not reached that part of the country where I grew up. Arriving in boarding school in 1952 I was introduced to rugby. Our coach selected us for the various team positions and then taught us how to take our field positions, pass, run and sidestep with the oval-shaped ball. To my surprise, forward passing of the ball to a teammate was not part of the game of rugby. Then he taught us how to safely and legally tackle an opponent. He insisted it was legal only when an opponent had the ball.

Tackling or blocking an opponent off the ball was illegal and penalised. It took him a long time to explain the meaning and implications of offside. Having done that he took great patience to teach those who were chosen as forwards to line out, bind, form a set scrum as well as what was a ruck, maul and loose scrum. What really surprised me was the acceptance of the physical aspects of the game, the tolerance and the camaraderie during and after the game. Gradually, I and my first-year companions became acquainted with various aspects of the game under the observant eyes of our excellent coach. We enjoyed the games

each week and looked forward to game days throughout the winter.

Our coach affirmed smart play, corrected and role-played mistakes. As we progressed, he changed positions as he saw how each of us adapted to the various positions. If he was aware of over aggressive physical play, he immediately took the player aside and privately cautioned him without a put down or embarrassment. Any kind of bullying by the stronger over the weaker was taken on and sternly dealt with. Our coach was well aware of the issue of bullying as it was present in all boarding schools. Those who had tendencies to bully others were well-known and sternly dealt with when observed or reported. However, that does not mean that it did not happen when unobserved.

During second year, depending on ability, one was promoted to more competitive teams playing against other more senior students competing for places on the college team. It was during one such game I was caught in possession of the ball unable to safely pass it to a teammate. In the loose maul an older opposing player put his arm around my neck holding me in a chokehold which is illegal and punishable. Having released the ball, he tightened the arm lock taking my breath away.

It was so severe I felt my lower back tooth cracking. There and then to survive, I dug my elbow into his ribs. He grunted and released his lock on my neck. His action was not seen by our coach who was also the referee. This particular student was a known bully and got away with it until this encounter. He did not apologise. From then on we respected each other as equals.

Personally, this incident was a deep shock for me. I never had experienced that kind of traumatic event in my young life. The incident woke me up to a level of unexpected, mean, aggressive, wanton violence. Surprisingly, it didn't diminish my self-esteem or my bitterness towards this student. It somehow encouraged me to be an assertive team player. But it put me on my guard to make sure that it would not happen again. It made such an impact that if I saw it happening to others I would be impelled to intervene. There is nothing as devastating as bullying particularly against those who are unable to defend

“If you turn your face the other way when someone is being bullied, you may as well be the bully too.”

(Unknown)

themselves. It destroys self-esteem, drains confidence and wellbeing. I am daily reminded of this incident as my back tooth is still cracked sixty-seven years later. When the issue of verbal, physical, mental or emotional bullying is reported, I understand the pain of victims dealing with its effects as they try to rediscover and maintain selfhood and express a positive view of life. There is a constant struggle in the hearts of all who have been bullied to become prisoners of anguish unable to forget rather than remember and use the memory as a positive agent in confronting it, whatever form it takes.

Over the years my back tooth is my in-built antenna for debasement perpetrated against whatever colour, sex, creed, ethnicity or status. I have always felt it to be a reminder rather than a burden. There were occasions when I failed to act on the activation of my antenna and for those I am ashamed. My back tooth is my constant reminder. ●

Fr Bobby Gilmore was ordained in 1963 and assigned to the Philippines from 1964-78. From 1978-92, he was Director of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in Britain and he also chaired the campaign for justice for the Birmingham Six. He was a founding member of Village of Hope, Montego Bay, Jamaica, where he worked from 1992-99. In 1999, he returned to Ireland. He conducted an education programme on migration for the Irish Refugee Council before establishing the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland.

Image: Shutterstock

To make a comment on this article go to:

 facebook.com/foreastmagazine

 [@foreastmagazine](https://twitter.com/foreastmagazine)

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!

The work of missionaries is often described as the Church's good news story.

Learn more about what the Columban missionary family is doing to create a better world for those on the margins.

Subscribe to the **Far East** by calling the Columban Mission Office on 01564 772 096 with your credit or debit card details, or email your subscription request to foreast@columbans.co.uk

Alternatively, you can complete the subscription form below and send a cheque or postal order payable to 'Columban Missionaries' to: Columban Mission Office, St. Columban's, Widney Manor Road, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9AB.

Please send 7 copies of the Far East and a calendar to:

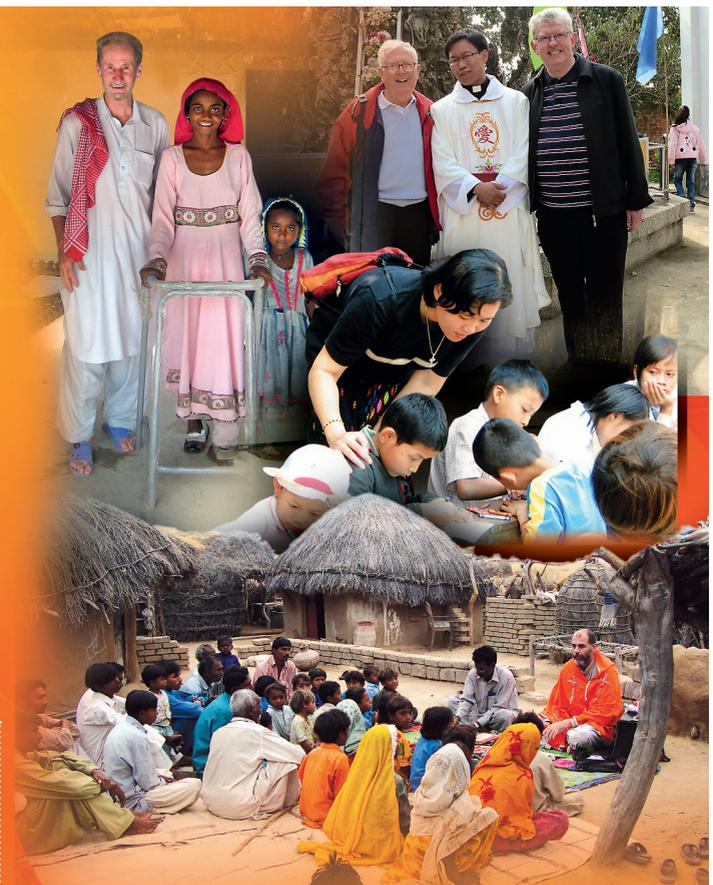
Name:

Address:

Subscription by post: £10

Tel:

Email:



far east

HOSPITALITY HOUSE



Columban lay missionary Sai Tamatawale works at the Casa Acogida or Hospitality House on the US/Mexico border. She believes the response to migration can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

The grim realities here at the US/Mexico border of El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, are the twin plights - migrants and poverty. We, the Columban missionaries living and working in this area, are accompanying the migrants. We welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants when they arrive at the border, both in Juárez, Mexico, and in El Paso, Texas. This has been my mission over the years I have been working here.

During those years I've heard a lot of stories of suffering from the Mexican people. They migrated from their home provinces to Juárez, fleeing from violence and poverty, to find a better living and dreaming of crossing the border to work in the US. I journey with them, cry with them, and accompany them in their joys and painful moments.

Sometimes I don't know how to talk to them about God's love for them. My presence in visiting them and greeting them is a

way of showing God's love. By being here, comforting, listening and giving hope, I am showing them God's love. Their experiences of suffering can make them angry with the Church, God, and other people. They do not know who to trust. My role as a lay missionary is to show them that there are still good people who welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants into their communities. Together we form community. Together we help and care for each other, and the process of healing and peace begins.

Over 2018 and 2019 when migrants arrived from Central America, we, Columban missionaries and the community of Rancho Anapra, reached out to help our sisters and brothers from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. It was challenging to hear many sad and painful stories every day. I felt their suffering and pain every time I listened and sometimes I even cried with them. This made me pray more.

One day, as I was coming home, I felt tired and entered the chapel. There I asked God, "Until when, Lord?" Tears were my prayer that day during holy hour at our parish adoration. I felt the peace of God after that week. I believe that God listens to



our cries; He helps us and is with us always. These migrants drew me closer to God and strengthened my faith.

God is with me and guides my journey every day to show His love to migrants. God loves humanity, and He uses me to show migrants that God is with us in our suffering. Assisting them with our presence and love is what the migrants need today, because they have been treated inhumanely by so many people. My country, culture, tradition, language, skin colour are different from them, but God's love made me part of this family.

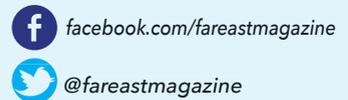
We are all migrants, forming a Eucharistic community of nationalities from Mexico, the US, Fiji, South Korea, Philippines, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. We all live in Rancho Anapra, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. We are practicing what Pope Francis said about migrants in his 2019 Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees: "Dear brothers and sisters, our response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate." ●



Originally from Fiji, Columban lay missionary Sai Tamatawale lives and works in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

01. Representatives of the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach protest the inhumane detention of migrants.
02. Columban Fr Robert Mosher who is based at the Columban Mission Centre in El Paso in the US. Columbans stand with the poor, the migrant and the victims of violence, living out our faith in the practice of ecological and social justice.
03. Some of those who took part in a recent Columban Exposure Visit to the US-Mexico border through the Columban Mission Center in El Paso, Texas, which began its work in 1999.

To make a comment on this article go to:



COLUMBAN MARTYRS 1929-2001

Over a 72-year period, 24 Columban missionaries died violently on mission for the Gospel.

Their witness is a reminder of how God works through ordinary people in extraordinary ways. They were often urged to leave dangerous situations, but, as these stories illustrate, they consistently opted to stay with their people and paid the ultimate price for this choice.



ORDER NOW
£10
including postage & packing

Order Now! Call 01564 772 096
or email office@columbans.co.uk or send a cheque payable to 'Columban missionaries' to St. Columban's, Widney Manor Road, Solihull B93 9AB.

COLUMBAN MARTYRS 1929-2001 • ORDER FORM

Name:	Nº of copies:
Address:	
Tel:	Email:

Daily Mail

Daily Net SALE Six Times as Large as That of Any Penny London Morning Journal Except "THE TIMES"

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1914 LONDON MANCHESTER PARIS NO 5,848

CHRISTMAS TRUCE AT FRONT

STORY TOLD IN
LETTERS FROM
THE TRENCHES
TO DAILY MAIL

SNOWBALLS
AND JOKES
WITH THE FOE

"Silent night, Holy night
All is calm, all is bright."

These words were written in 1816 by a young Austrian priest, Joseph Mohr after the destruction brought about by the Napoleonic Wars. His friend, Franz Gruber wrote the music in 1818 and said, "Song of praise and love. Saviour of the world - a Baby born to peasants. He is God with us - Jesus." The contrast between the message of peace and hope, of tranquillity and goodwill and the violence and destruction of war is obvious.

On 7th December 1914, Pope Benedict XV suggested a temporary ceasefire in the Great War so that people could celebrate Christmas as best they could. However, the warring countries refused to agree. But in spite of that some soldiers in the trenches declared their own unofficial truce.

On Christmas Day 1914, some German soldiers left their trenches and called out "Merry Christmas" in English across no man's land. The German troops were unarmed. The British soldiers began to realise that it wasn't a trap and so dropped their arms. Both sides shook hands and exchanged gifts of plum puddings and cigarettes. Together they sang Christmas carols and songs. Truly the Spirit of Christmas and goodwill was in the air.

German Lieutenant, Kurt Zehmisch described it afterwards. "How marvellously wonderful yet how strange it was! Christmas, the celebration of Love managed to bring mortal enemies together as friends for a time." It proved that beneath the brutal surface of the atrocities of war the essential humanity of the soldiers endured. Not even a World War could destroy the Spirit of Christmas.

In the depths of our beings is a longing for peace - personal, familial, social and international. Jesus came to bring peace to you and to me. And yet, wars and rumours of wars are still with us.

This Christmas, when we stand before the Crib or look at it on a Christmas card, perhaps we could contemplate the scene anew. Christmas has lost much of its real meaning. Carols blare out from supermarkets and department stores.

Who listens to the message they give? The aim is to entice us into spending more and buying goods we don't need and which will likely be discarded in the New Year.

This year let's spend a little time in silence before the Crib and let the Holy Family speak to us. They always have something valuable to say to us. Did you notice that there is always a space at the front of the Crib? That space is for you or me. We are welcome to stand there for however long and in silence listen to what the Holy Family has to say to us personally. The new-born Baby is there. He is beautiful and innocent as any other new-born. We are fascinated and awe-struck as we ponder the mystery of life in its infancy. How everyone delights and admires a little baby. Words fail us at times, and we find it difficult to express our emotions as we gaze on the mystery of life.

But this Christmas Baby is more than an ordinary baby. He is much more. He is human and divine and destined to be the Saviour of all humankind. In Faith, let us go to Him this Christmas and ask Him to tell us His own story. Let's be fascinated again with the true story of Christmas. ●

"Let's be fascinated again with the true story of Christmas."

Sr Abbie O'Sullivan

BIBLE STORY

WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

After Jesus was born, three wise men came to Jerusalem from the East, guided by a star. They were looking for the promised Messiah. As soon as they had seen the brilliant new star in the sky, they knew that this was the sign they had been waiting for.

"Where is the infant king of the Jews?" they asked everyone. "We have come to worship him. We have followed his star and have gifts for him."

When King Herod heard of the strangers looking for a king, he sent for them and listened to their story, pretending to be as deeply religious as they were and carefully concealing his anger and fear.

"Go to Bethlehem," he told them, "and when you have found the child come and let me know, so that I may go and pay homage too."

As the wise men left Jerusalem, the star they had seen appeared before them and led them to Bethlehem, to where Jesus and his parents were staying. They knew they had found the one they were looking for.



They knelt down in front of Jesus and gave him their gifts: gold for a king, frankincense for the worship of God, and myrrh, an oil used when burying the dead.

Afterwards, they returned home a different way. They had been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, as he only want to kill Jesus.

It was the wise men who brought the good news of the Saviour to the world beyond Palestine. ●

Read also: [Matthew Chapter 2](#)

Illustration by Val Biro from One Hundred Bible Stories for Children. Published by Award Publications Ltd.

BIBLE QUIZ

NUMBER 89

- 1 In John ch.11, after Lazarus died who went out to meet Jesus as he came to Bethany?
- 2 In Acts ch.27, the Roman centurion rejected Paul's advice that they should winter near Lasae, and decided to sail on towards what port?
- 3 In Judges ch.16, where did the Philistines take Samson when they captured him?

- 4 According to Acts ch.27, how many travelling companions did Paul have on board the ship that was shipwrecked?
- 5 In Mark ch.16, which city were Jesus and the disciples leaving when they met Bartimaeus?
- 6 In 1 Samuel ch.1, who took her young son to Shiloh but returned without him?

£15 vouchers for the first three correct entries received!

Consult your Bible, answer the questions above and send your entry to: Bible Quiz N° 89, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 9AB, before 31st December 2020.

Bible Quiz N° 87 Winners: Constanza Procter, Pontypool • Joan-Angela Warner, Horncastle, Lincs • Celia Monks, Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

Name: _____

Address: _____

THREE
£15
VOUCHERS
TO BE WON!

WORD SEARCH

Match these words with their correct spaces - straight across or down:

- SANTA
- SWEATER
- SNOWMAN
- CANDLE
- GINGERBREAD
- WREATH
- TREE
- GIFTS

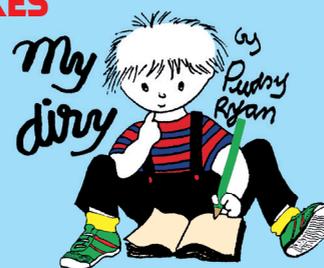


www.shutterstock.com

PUDSY'S DIRTY - FIND THE 10 SPELLING MISTAKES

At skool Ms Flinn sed Christmas may be just around the corner but it may be different this year but nobody knows yet. And Bump whispered if we knew where it was maybe we could peep around and see. But I'm thinking our cuzzin Conor, the fella with the beard and all the gizmos might have something that could look into the future except I dunno would there be anything there the way people are talking. We always had our Nativity play but this year we have to zoom it. And if we go zooming the three wise men they might be a bit cross.

Every year our class colects old newspapers for the missions. And what will our naybor Mr McHugh say when we tell him he will have to zoom his newspapers. Maybe we cant visit Grandad and hear all the storys we heard last year again and the small cuzzins wont be able to tell us what Santy is going to bring. That's when Ms Flynn was telling us to keep our minds aktive but I'm thinking if we keep zooming back at anyone who zooms at us it could be grate fun and keep us all on our toes as Aunt Mamie always tells us...



Help Pudsy correct his spelling to win a £15 voucher.

Rewrite the story and send to Pudsy's Dirty, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9AB, before 31st December 2020.

HA! HA!

1. Why did Rudolph have a bad report card?
2. What is a cat's favourite colour?
3. What did the egg say when it was late for breakfast?
4. Why was the rabbit happy?
5. Why don't scientists trust atoms?
6. Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?

1. Because he went down in history!
2. Purr-ple!
3. I have to scramble!
4. Because somebodyunny loved him!
5. Because they make up everything!
6. He didn't have the guts.

COMPETITION WINNERS SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020

<p>Lois Scott Ayrshire, Scotland</p> <p>1</p> <p>Colpaint - Aged 7 and Under</p>	<p>Caitlin Vaughan East Dulwich, London</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Isla Shanley Coventry</p> <p>1</p> <p>Colpaint - Aged 8 and Over</p>	<p>Jade Hounslow</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Josie Smith Chiswick, London</p> <p>1</p> <p>Pudsy's Dirty</p>
---	--	--	---	--

The Mistletoe Bird

By Elizabeth McArdle



Christmas will soon be upon us and, as we prepare for the festive season, our time is often taken up with a flurry of activities and busyness. Many of our Christmas traditions are closely connected with nature and go back a very long time such as bringing holly into our homes and decorating a Christmas tree.

Mistletoe is another one of these very ancient nature traditions. Did you know there are around 1,500 species of mistletoe worldwide? It grows as a 'hemiparasite', latching onto tree branches by a structure called the 'the haustorium', through which it extracts water and nutrients from the host plant. However, mistletoe is not a true parasite as it makes some of its own food from the sun by the process of photosynthesis.

Did you know there is a bird, native to Australia, called the mistletoe bird? It is not hard to guess this tiny bird's favourite food. Yes, mistletoe berries, which are rich in protein but toxic to humans, so never, ever consider tasting mistletoe, as the effects could be very unpleasant.

The mistletoe bird is locally nomadic, flying from place to place in search of fruiting mistletoe plants. Having consumed the berries, the fleshy part is digested, and the intact seed, which is covered with a sticky coating, is excreted. The sticky seed adheres to the tree branches and unintentionally, the mistletoe bird plants more mistletoe plants which will feed future generations of mistletoe birds.

This Christmas, in shops and especially in garden centres, there will be evergreen wreaths with pinecones and beautiful Christmas trees. Seek out mistletoe and study its wonderful berries and unusual branching system and remember the mistletoe bird far away in Australia. We know that all of nature is connected and like God, is never far away. Covid-19 may have separated us from our family and friends but we are never far from nature or from God. ●

www.shutterstock.com

WIN A VOUCHER WORTH £15/£10!

Colpaint★



Colpaint★

FOUR PRIZES TO BE WON!

Colour the drawing and send it with your name and address to: COLPAINT, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 9AB, before 31st December 2020.

Name:

Age:

Address:



END RACISM

SCHOOLS MEDIA COMPETITION

We are looking for students (aged 14-18 inclusive) to submit an original piece of writing or an original image on the theme:

'LET'S CREATE A WORLD WITHOUT RACISM'

The winning entries will be published in the Far East magazine and online on Columban websites in Ireland and Britain and shared on Columban social media. This is a chance to engage with an issue that addresses equality, justice, inclusion and also draws on faith and personal experience.

PRINT PRIZES
1ST £300
2ND £150 • 3RD £100

IMAGE PRIZES
1ST £300
2ND £150 • 3RD £100

“We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.” POPE FRANCIS, June 2020

THE COMPETITION IS BEING LAUNCHED ON MONDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2020

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES:
SATURDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2021



For more information on entry guidelines see:
www.columbancompetition.com
or email hello@columbancompetition.com

SUBANEN CHRISTMAS CARDS

Connecting the nativity story with the story of the Subanen people in the Philippines

The Subanens face eviction from their homes by logging and mining companies. With assistance from the Columbans, they use their traditional crafting skills to make jewellery, mandalas, children's books and cards to sell. The income generated provides food, education, housing and healthcare for their families.

Why not support the indigenous Subanen people of the Philippines by buying their traditionally crafted cards?



£5*
FOR
5 CARDS
+ Postage



To place your order contact: Marie in the Mission Office • Tel: 01564 772 096 or Email: office@columbans.co.uk
Or write to: Subanen Christmas Cards, Columban Missionaries, Widney Manor Road, Solihull B93 9AB.

* Subanen Christmas cards are sold in packs of five, with envelopes. They cost £5 per pack (£6 including postage). Cheques payable to Columban Missionaries.