

far east



MAGAZINE OF THE COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES



Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

A Columban who helped thousands of Koreans

NEW SERIES: SYNODALITY

What does it mean for the Church?

EMBRACE OF PEACE

An icon of Saints Peter and Paul by a Columban artist



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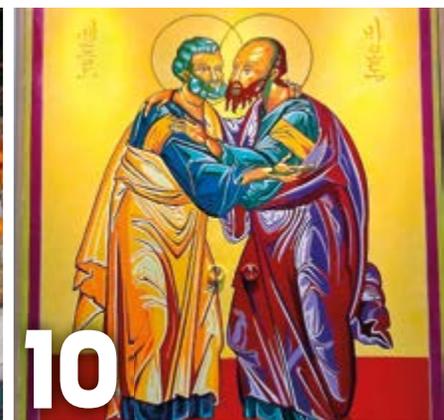
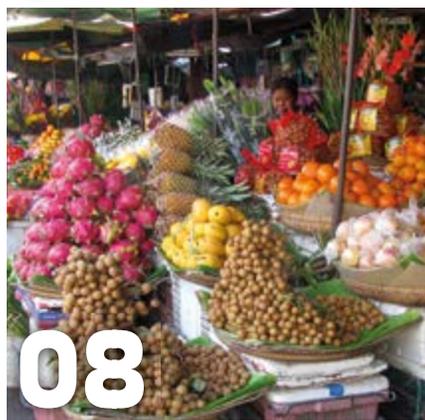
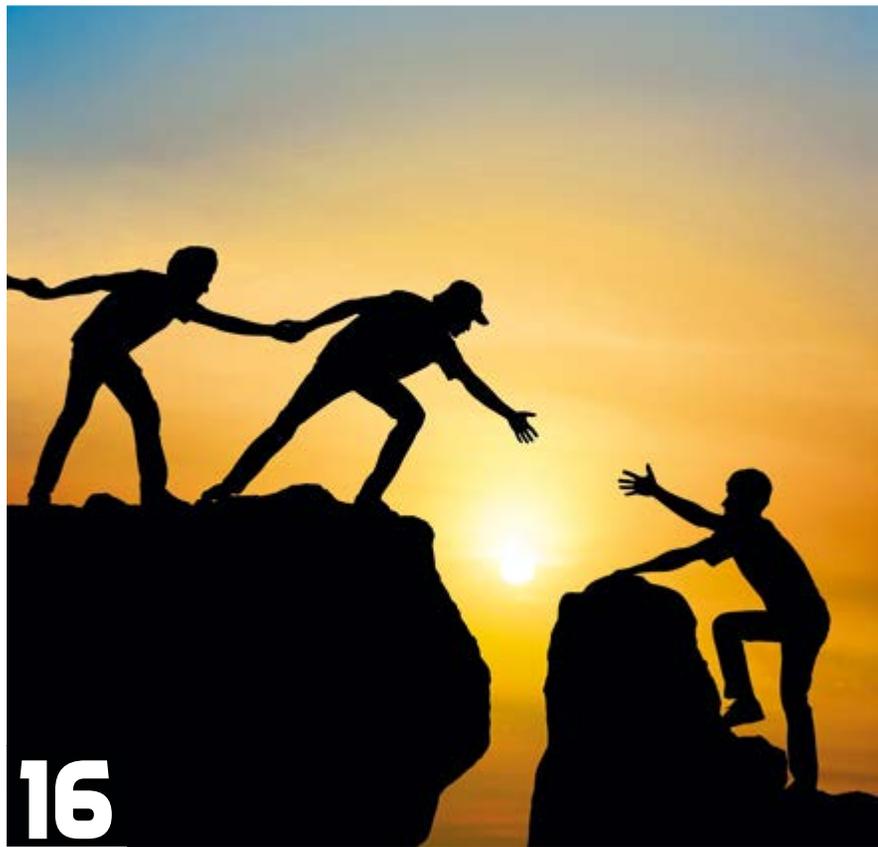
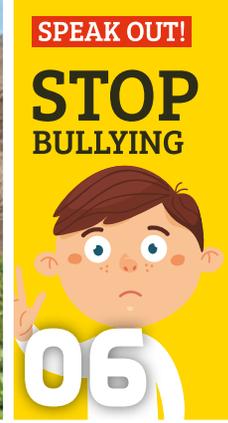
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THE FAR EAST

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Front Cover

Official Logo of the Synodal Path
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Pope Francis arrives for his weekly general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican. Image: Shutterstock



**THRICE BLESSED:
COLUMBANS - FRANCIS - SYNOD**

To be blessed on one count is good enough. To regard yourself blessed three times over is quite overwhelming. However, this is how I am feeling as we start a new year.

Blessing N°1 came when I was appointed as Regional Director of the Columbans in Britain, following the retirement from the post of my illustrious predecessor Fr Peter Hughes. I have spent nearly all my 25 years of priesthood abroad, mainly in Peru, so this is a God-given opportunity to repay my own people for their generosity to the missions.

Blessing N°2 is that I am able to minister in the Church during the pontificate of Pope Francis, a truly outstanding leader and prophet. It appears to me that his emphasis on topics such as ecclesiastical reform, social justice, inter-religious dialogue and environmental protection simply echo the policies followed by the Columbans for decades. Thus, while he has been termed a 'Jesuit pope' for his congregation, and a 'Franciscan pope' for his adopted name and lifestyle, I think he could also truly be called a 'Columban pope'.

Blessing N°3 comes in the form of Francis's historic call to hold a worldwide synod and a universal consultation process over the next year or two, aimed at creating a more synodal (or participatory) Church. The preparatory document repeats the message of Vatican II that the Church is not merely a hierarchical institution but rather the entire People of God, journeying

through history under the guidance of the Spirit.

The same document reminds us that Church authorities are required to teach but also to listen and to act on what they hear, in the same way that Our Lord did. The example of Jesus and the Canaanite woman is cited, whereby her famous riposte, "Even the puppy dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table" (Mt. 15:27), convinced Jesus that His mission was to the gentiles as well as to the Jews.

Now, we have been here before. Clifford Longley in an article in The Tablet (13/11/21) recalls how in 1980 the Church in England and Wales held a National Pastoral Congress, "a synod in all but name", which proposed some fundamental reforms in the Universal Church, but whose recommendations were rejected by the Vatican. ("A door had been slammed on our fingers," remarked Cardinal Hume.) Given the present administration in Rome, it is highly unlikely that the same would happen this time.

And that might turn out to be the greatest Blessing of all.

On behalf of all Columban Missionaries I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to you our readers for your continued support of the **Far East** Magazine and the work of our missionaries. May 2022 bring you and your families many blessings. Happy New Year! ●

Fr John Boles

Regional Director of the Columbans in Britain



BACK TO THE ROOTS

01

Columban missionary Fr John Hegerty never thought he would be able to go back to his life as a farmer, writes Fr John Boles, until the pandemic struck!

When Covid-19 appeared on the scene, Columbans throughout the world had to react to the emergency. We all had to ask ourselves, "How can I carry on serving the People of God in these strange new times?" For Australian John Hegerty, on mission in South America, it was a case – literally – of going back to his roots. He responded to the pandemic by combining his current role as, 'Father', with his original one as 'Farmer'.

Born in 1941 in Redesdale, Victoria, John grew up on his parents' 1,700 acre sheep, cattle and rotational holding. "From the word go I helped with all the jobs around the place", he recalls. He worked on the property right up to joining the Columbans when he was 23. "I never had a city job. I went into the seminary as a 'hayseed'. I was the 'boy from the bush', a 'country hick!'"

During his holidays from the seminary in Sydney, 'Hegs' as he is known within the Columbans, returned home and helped his parents with whatever was needed. He even managed to host some of his fellow seminarians for a week or so. "This was cheap labour!" One thing that still makes

him laugh is how some of these big, burly footballers and surfies wilted under the pressure of sheep work. When "crutching" (removing wool from areas where flies might strike), their backs would pack up. When pruning hooves to avoid footrot brought on by the lush springtime grass, their hands would swell up. Maybe 'Hegs' couldn't keep up on long runs in the bush or on the football field, but on the farm he was out in front!

After ordination John was posted to Peru, where he has been for most of the last fifty years. By 2020 he reckoned he had filled just about every missionary role imaginable. Then, Covid came knocking.

He was in semi-retirement in our Centre House in Lima, a pleasant spot set amidst a kind of oasis (Lima lies in the world's driest desert). Peru was hit very hard by the pandemic and the economic collapse which followed. The Columbans were in lockdown for months, leaving them with two challenges – how to keep themselves and the people they cared for sane, given the new restrictions.

"We had Irish Columban, Fr Tom Hanley, who works in Chile staying with us as he was left stranded by the lockdown,"



John explains. "Tom had gained a lot of experience on the land back in Ireland, so he suggested he would use his time digging and planting part of our grounds. Not only would it keep him occupied, but it would also make us partially self-sufficient. He sowed vegetables, corn, herbs and some potatoes. The experiment was a great success, they all grew like mad!"

This combination of greenery in the Columban grounds combined with the unaccustomed peace and quiet, due to the surrounding educational establishments all being closed by the lockdown, resulted in an explosion of tropical birdlife, with many species nesting in or around our garden.

As Covid restrictions eased, Fr Tom Hanley was able to return to Chile, leaving the post of farmer vacant at the Columban house in Peru. John suddenly felt those old green fingers twitching again. Fond memories of life back on the farm in Australia came flooding back. So he filled the vacancy.

"Not that I was alone", he remarks. Full-time local gardener Gaspar lent his expert advice as well as two young Columban seminarians from Fiji, Atonio Saula and Iowane Naio. "This was the perfect match,"

says John. "Not only were they two strong bucks from a farming background in Fiji, but they were also working in a poor parish where there were a number of comedores." Comedores are subsidised canteens. The Columbans set up a series of them at this time to help feed families who had lost their sources of income. Each comedor caters for up to a hundred of the needy at each midday sitting.

A regular routine has now emerged. John and Gaspar look after the day-to-day running of the mini-farm. As required, Atonio and Iowane come in and prepare new beds, add manure, do the watering and harvest the produce. Some is kept for the Columban houses, but the majority goes to one or more of the comedores. It is planned to continue this system even after the coronavirus emergency ends for, as John points out, the effects of this virus on the poor will last for years.

'Hegs' insists this has resulted in the best of all worlds. The poor are helped, Columban running costs are defrayed and, "it is great therapy for me. I love it. I go out working every afternoon after lunch. Much healthier than a long siesta. It's doing me good." ●

Fr John Boles is a Columban missionary from England who worked in Peru from 1994 until 2021. He is now Regional Director for the Columbans in Britain.

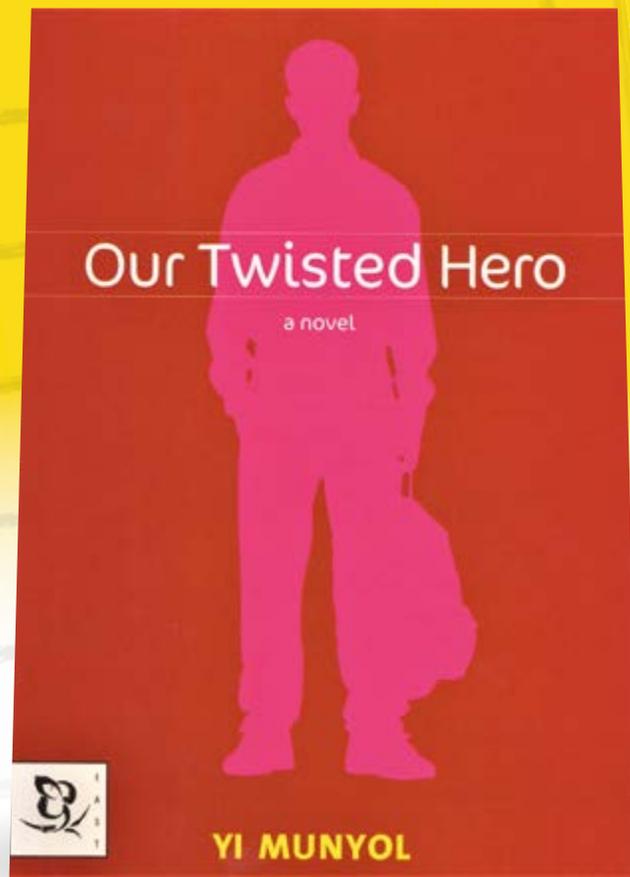
01. View of the large slum of San Juan de Miraflores on the edge of Lima, Peru. Photo: Shutterstock
02. Fr John Hegerty and gardener Gaspar water some of the crops growing in the Columban house on the edge of the Lima desert. Photo: Juan Diego Torres, Communications Officer, Columban Missionaries, Peru.
03. Columban seminarian, Atonio Saula from Fiji, brings produce to one of the local Comedores or canteens set up by the Columbans to feed the needy during lockdown in Peru. Photo: Juan Diego Torres, Communications Officer, Columban Missionaries, Peru.
04. Columban seminarian, Iowane Naio from Fiji, collects ripe tomatoes. Photo: Juan Diego Torres, Communications Officer, Columban Missionaries, Peru.

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BULLYING AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM



Fr Cyril Lovett believes a book on bullying by Korean writer Yi Munyol, which was translated into English by Columban Fr Kevin O'Rourke, should be on the school curriculum.

Columban Fr Kevin O'Rourke died in Korea on 23 October 2020 after a prolonged illness. He had spent more than fifty years as a Columban missionary and was recognised as an expert teacher, writer and translator of Chinese and Korean literature. He gained many awards including the Korean National Prize and honorary citizenship. NUI Maynooth conferred him with an honorary PhD in recognition of his services to Korean and English Literature through his many translations.

One of his translations was the novel **Our Twisted Hero** by Yi Munyol (Hyperion East, NY, 2001). Yi Munyol is one of Korea's most acclaimed writers and has published numerous novels. **Our Twisted Hero** was the first of his books to be published in the United States. Kevin's decision to translate this particular novel about bullying in primary and secondary school was an effort to underline the damage caused in so many cultures by this very destructive phenomenon.

When the twelve-year-old narrator of **Our Twisted Hero** moves from the capital Seoul to a small provincial town and enrolls in the local school, he is confident that his big-city

sophistication will establish him as a natural leader. But he immediately falls victim to a charismatic and corrupt class monitor who uses fear and violence to keep other students under his spell and to assure his supremacy in the school's social hierarchy.

The teacher, grateful to have such a well-behaved class, turns a blind eye to the monitor's abuse of power. As the narrator attempts first to seek justice and then to inspire his fellow students to revolt, he finds himself in a fierce battle not just for his rights, but for his soul.

This riveting allegory, in the tradition of **Lord of the Flies** by William Golding, starts as a simple power play within the children's classroom, but turns into a chilling tale about the lust for power and the desperate need for acceptance that resides within us all.

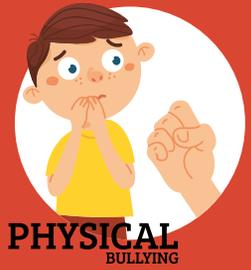
Many of us will have memories of bullies who made life miserable for students who were physically or psychologically weaker with appalling consequences for the latter's mental health and development. The novel notes correctly that teachers, who must be alert for bullying and its awful consequences, can and must intervene to stop this abuse at an early stage.

SPEAK OUT!

STOP BULLYING



VERBAL BULLYING



PHYSICAL BULLYING



SOCIAL BULLYING



CYBER BULLYING

This novel was set and written in the pre-computer and smartphone era. We are all much more conscious today of what is known as cyberbullying, i.e. a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means. Cyberbullying and cyber-harassment are also known as online bullying. It has become increasingly common, especially among teenagers, as the digital sphere has expanded and technology has advanced.

Cyberbullying is even worse than physical or psychological bullying because it is almost always conducted anonymously. It is now recognised as one of the chief causes of depression, self-harm and even suicide among adolescents. Multiple abusive texts appearing on the most popular platforms do untold damage to young people who are striving to establish their personalities and are often so dependent on the good opinion of their contemporaries.

As so many are caught up in social networks, misuse of this access is all too easy, and one false derogatory rumour can destroy a young person's life. Parents have a role to play in educating their

children about the advantages and pitfalls of 'smart phones'. Teachers have an even more important role. Open discussions in class about the abuses of social media are crucial. There are any number of sad stories on the internet that can be used to spark such discussions.

One would hope that a text like **Our Twisted Hero**, or its equivalent on cyberbullying, is already part of the prescribed texts for the Junior and Leaving Certificate. It needs to be. ●

Fr Cyril Lovett was Editor of the Far East magazine between 2003-2016. Ordained in 1963, he served on mission in the Philippines and Brazil. He is now retired in Dalgan, Ireland.

01. **Our Twisted Hero** by Yi Munyol (Hyperion East, NY, 2001) which was first translated into English by Columban Fr Kevin O'Rourke.

02. Korean writer Yi Munyol.

03. Image: Shutterstock

“No one is too small to make a difference, everyone can do something. If everyone does something, then huge differences can happen.”

Climate activist Greta Thunberg to Channel 4 News.

SCHOOLS MEDIA COMPETITION

We are looking for students (Year 9 to Year 13) to submit an original piece of writing or an original image on the theme:

ANYONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

21ST CENTURY CHANGEMAKERS

Who in the world today is doing something about inequality, injustice, exclusion and environmental degradation? What can they teach us? How can we draw on our own faith and personal experience to be changemakers?

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BEGGAR MY NEIGHBOUR

The eco system of the mighty Mekong River is on the verge of irreversible collapse warns Columban missionary Fr Alo Connaughton.

The Mekong River, *Mae Nam* (mother water) *Kong*, as the Thais call it, starts from the melting snow of Tibet and flows for 2,800 miles through five other Southeast Asian countries on its way to the South China Sea. Students from Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos attend classes in the college where I work in Bangkok. The families of many of them are among the 60 million people that, in one way or another, depend on the Mekong for a livelihood. These days they have many reasons to be worried.

The biggest concern is the building of dams on the river. China has already built six huge dams on its section of the river in Tibet and Yunnan and has plans to build 21 more. This gives it considerable power to 'turn a tap' on or off, especially in dry seasons, as it controls much of the water in the upper stretches of the river.

Laos, ruled by a totalitarian regime since 1975, one of the poorest countries in the region, has about 1200 miles of the Mekong. It has built 46 hydroelectric plants along the Mekong and its tributaries and hopes to reach 100 functioning hydroelectric dams by 2030 (projections vary). Eleven are planned to span the main river. The *Don Sahong* Dam beside the

Cambodian border will be capable of trapping nearly half of the river's water in dry season. Almost all the electricity generated is now or will be exported. The declared intention of Laos is to be 'the battery of Southeast Asia.' Most of the financing for the dams comes from China, Malaysia, Thailand, and Korea. Investor profits appear to be the driving force.

In 2018, a partially completed dam in Laos collapsed sending 175 billion cubic feet of water (equivalent of two million Olympic swimming pools) surging across the surrounding countryside. Some 80 people were drowned and 6,000 homes, mostly of poor people that had already been 'resettled' because of the dam project, were destroyed. Analysts say that several existing dams lack the strength to withstand pressures that will come from torrential rains caused by climate change.

The building of dams brings massive biodiversity damage and evictions of rural communities that occupied the land for generations, but never had any legal documentation because they were the first owners and reclaimers of the land. They are forced off by powerful corporations. A study of international rivers says that 6,700 people will have to be relocated to build the *Pak Beng* Dam, with 25 villages in Laos already directly affected by work being



02



03



04

done in preparation for its construction.

Another report on the *Nam Theun 2* hydropower dam says that 6,200 people, mostly ethnic minorities and indigenous people, have been forced to relocate to make way for the project's reservoir. Tens of thousands of these poor ethnic peoples are being evicted with little compensation for property or livelihood and no return benefits. If the dams do produce great wealth, it is highly unlikely that the 100,000+ poor people they displaced will see much of it.

Thailand's director of International Rivers, Pianporn Deetes has warned, "If these dams keep moving forward, one of the world's most productive fisheries will be eviscerated and the region's vital lifeline changed forever..." The effects are already evident but worse are predicted. A Danish water consultancy firm, DHI carried out a study of the Mekong at the request of Vietnam in 2016. The future for fish is grim according to DHI. About 25% of all freshwater fish caught in the world is from the Mekong. The report says that overall, the presence of the dams is expected to cause a very steep decline in total fish yields, by as much as 50% in both Vietnam and Cambodia.

Essential routes for migrating fish have been blocked. The report concluded that vital vitamins and minerals crucial for fish and the growth of rice are seriously diminishing in the Mekong waters. Dams in Laos are trapping sediments in the river, depriving fish, rice and vegetables of the minerals they need to grow properly. The study says that the planned 'cascade dams' in Laos will permanently damage a unique system of international heritage and will place social and economic burdens on regional economies.

One example given is an area of seventy villages in the delta in Vietnam that is likely

to see its agricultural produce drop by up to 90%. Another problem is that as water levels drop, seawater now flows back 40 miles upriver. Farmers used to depend on the river to irrigate their rice fields. Now thousands of acres have been destroyed by salt water. Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, all 'Mekong countries' produce about sixty-two million tons of rice a year or 13% the world total. Much of this depends on water from the river and its tributaries. About 50% of Vietnam's food depends on the Mekong; 80% of Cambodia's protein comes from its fish.

Dr Jian-Hua Meng, a World Wildlife Fund hydropower consultant, sees the environmental protection promises made by hired European agencies on behalf of the dam builders as having little credibility. "They are playing roulette with the livelihoods of over 60 million people. It would not be acceptable in Europe, so why is it different in Asia?"

In May 2021 Singapore's government-sponsored Yusof Ishak Institute reported that, "The Mekong River ecosystem is on the verge of irreversible collapse due to the accumulative effects of climate change and increased numbers of upstream dams as well as other human-made activities such as deforestation, sand mining, extensive irrigation for agriculture and wetland conversion." The title of a recent book by another Asian expert, Brian Eyler, **Last Days of the Mighty Mekong**, captures the urgency and the tragedy - one that is planned and foreseen. On its journey from source to sea *Mae Nam Kong* used to be a nourishing mother for all irrespective of nationality. She is in danger of being strangled by those who now see her only as a resource to be exploited. An added tragedy is the absence of any global institution with power to prevent the death or defend the rights of 60 million people. ●

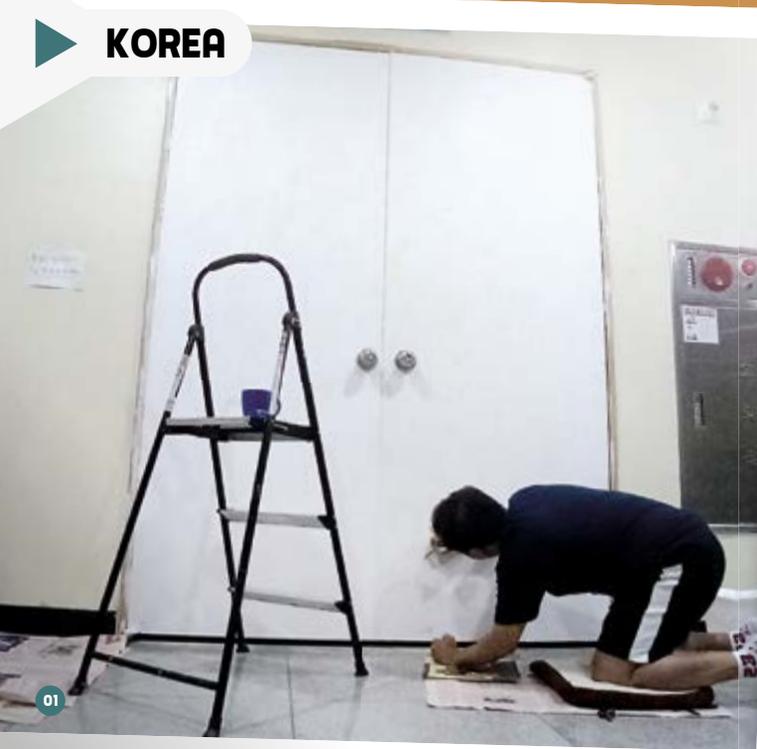
Fr Alo Connaughton is from Ballinacree, Co Meath. A former editor of the **Far East** magazine, he worked as a missionary in Chile from 1974 until 1993 and in Myanmar from 2004 until 2007. He is now based in Thailand where he teaches at Saengtham College, Bangkok.

01. Aerial view of The Mekong River, Luang Prabang, Laos. The Mekong has been vital for the poor people of Laos. It is their 'highway'. The river has a lot of traffic. In recent years tourist boats, rafting etc brought villagers important income. Experts fear that with all the dams, the river will become 'pools of stagnant water with little life.' Image: Shutterstock
02. The fruit market at Phnom Penh. Image: Alo Connaughton
03. The mineral rich waters of the Mekong River produce abundant crops and rice, particularly in Cambodia. Mekong Delta. Image: Shutterstock
04. Fish is a big item in Cambodian markets. 80% of people's protein comes from fish, much of which is sourced in the Mekong. Image: Alo Connaughton

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01



02

EMBRACE OF PEACE

Over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, artist and Columban missionary Fr Jason Antiquera worked on an icon of Saints Peter and Paul for the Columban seminary in Seoul. He explains his inspiration and the symbolism behind the mural.

Generally, I am not enthusiastic about giving explanations of my works of art. I would rather that the art speaks for itself to those gazing on it because I feel that words are not adequate. An art professor once told me, "The worst thing you can do to art is to explain it."

Despite that, I would like to write a little about my intended symbolism and the process of painting the mural on the entrance door of the Martyrs Chapel at the Columban Formation House and Lay Mission Centre in Seoul. The painting is entitled *St Peter and St Paul's Embrace of Peace*.

The idea of painting the doors to the chapel was proposed by the Columban Formation House in Seoul. The goal was to transform the bare look of the chapel doors and make them stand out.

It was a major challenge due to the door size, its metal surface, the subject, the type of materials I needed to use and my own concern about my ability to do this kind

of artwork. Honestly, I felt overwhelmed. However, I saw it as a challenge for my art ministry. My confidence lies in my strong belief that God has given me this talent to serve others; so even though I felt inadequate; I trusted God would guide me.

The first task was to discern what subject to paint. Choosing a subject was tough. I had to decide what the subject would be because there was no instruction regarding a theme given with the commission. I immediately thought of two human figures when I saw the double-door entrance to the chapel. A figurative work would also be in keeping with most of my artwork, which tend to be portraits and human figures. The next question was who these figures should be? After some suggestions from fellow Columbans, one wisely encouraged me to follow my heart.

As a result, I chose Saints Peter and Paul. On the surface level, the two of them seemed unlikely figures for a Columban. Usually, the saints I encounter in many of the Society's places are those of St Patrick, St Isidore, Mary and St Columban. However, my diaconal ordination took place on 29th June 2014, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. On that feast day in 1918, the Society of St Columban was canonically recognised as a missionary society by Bishop Thomas O'Dea of Galway.

The entire mural, from its images to its



colours, is rich with symbolism that I used to convey certain messages. *Saints Peter and Paul's Embrace of Peace* has been interpreted many times and in different ways by various artists, where Peter and Paul greeted each other with a *Holy Kiss of Peace*, which is an early Christian expression of love and peace. The Apostle Paul, in some of his epistles, has instructed Christians to "Greet each other with a holy kiss of peace (Romans 16:16)". Later on, this expression, which was derived from the Hebrew *Shalom Aleichem* (May peace be upon you), turned into the 'Sign of Peace' in the Mass.

Secondly, I selected colours representing all of the Church's liturgical colours for all seasons. They also convey various cultural and religious virtues. For example, courage and martyrdom are red, passion and zeal are purple, warmth and light are yellow and orange, and life, hope and serenity are green and blue. Thirdly, Peter and Paul's faces touch each other but their eyes do not meet. This symbolises the relationship of the two apostles, one a fisherman and the other a Roman citizen, whose opinions on faith, Gospel and Church were often different. However, their embrace embodies unity and acceptance of differences.

Lastly, the act of people entering into and coming out of the chapel through the door mural itself; we usually relate to art by gazing in front of it. However, the

mural of Saints Peter and Paul invites us to enter from a place of appreciation and participate with Peter and Paul; it's entering into a space of prayer, peace and love, and participating in the shared mission of Peter and Paul, whom Christ called and sent to "preach the Gospel to all nations."

The mural took seven months to complete. In the middle of the pandemic, I kept painting whether I was sad or happy, anxious or calm, annoyed or pleased, lonely or joyful, bored or excited; I kept brushing as I mourned the death of three great Columbans in the Korean Region over the course of the year I was painting the mural. They were Frs Pat Murphy, Kevin O'Rourke and Frank Ferry. While I painted in solitude, I was deeply aware and confronted by what was happening in the world, within the Society, and in myself. I found deeper meaning and personal connection with it as the work progressed towards completion.

The mural speaks in its own way to different viewers, in different ways, in different times. One nun commented on seeing it that it looked like a male counterpart to the visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. Let art speak the way God speaks to us. As you gaze upon any artwork, it is worth bearing in mind this quote from a Croatian artist: "Art speaks its own language: heart-to-heart, soul-to-soul." ●

Fr Jason Antiquera is from Binalbagan, Negros Occidental in the Philippines. He was ordained in January 2015 and he is on mission in Korea.

01. Fr Jason begins his work on the blank white canvas of the entrance doors of the Columban Chapel of the Columban Formation House and Lay Mission Centre in Seoul.
02. A work in progress: the figures of St Peter and St Paul begin to emerge.
03. The icon of St Peter and St Paul's Embrace of Peace is blessed.
04. The icon incorporates all the colours representing the Church's liturgical seasons.

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THE SYNODAL PATH

01



Synod
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For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Launching the Far East's new series on Synodality, Fr Tom O'Reilly explains how walking and discerning together and listening attentively to each other are at the heart of the synodal process.

We are familiar with adversarial debate in our parliamentary systems. The government is expected to present policies and pursue its agenda with vigorous determination. The role of the opposition is to expose with equal vigour the flaws in the government's positions and present alternatives. One enters negotiations to promote and defend positions, often having red lines beyond which one is unwilling to go. The whole process is driven by robust debate which usually produces winners and losers.

The synodal process is very different. We embark on a journey, seeking together the way forward for the Church. We speak and listen with the conviction that each one has something to contribute to the search and something to learn from others. We share openly and honestly, not ideas or theories, but our lived experience of Church life and mission – the

joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, the successes and failures. We do this in the context of a global pandemic crisis which has exposed and amplified fault lines running through humanity and is challenging all to seek new ways of living together. Reflecting together on our experiences, we hope to discover processes which help the Church live in communion, achieve participation, and open itself to mission.

Attentive listening is more important than speaking. Pope Francis speaks of the "dynamism of mutual listening" which drives the synodal process. We listen to one another, including those on the margins and those who have drifted away from the Church. We listen to voices outside the Church, paying special attention to the cry of the poor and excluded ones in our world and the cry of the exploited earth. Ultimately, all our listening leads to discernment, a sifting through what we are hearing to detect the voice of the Spirit indicating the way forward. This calls for periods of silent reflection and prayer. With the help of the Spirit, we hope for consensus or a harmony in which diversity is not divisive but enriching as we respond to our common baptismal call to be missionary disciples of Jesus.

As we reflect together on our lived experiences at a time of change, we listen to the living Word of God. In recent talks on the synodal

02



process, Pope Francis has been reflecting on the Acts of the Apostles which he calls “the first and most important manual of ecclesiology.” In the story of Acts we get many glimpses of the early Church striving to remain open to the guidance of the Spirit in its internal life and external mission. A good example is the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), the event which for centuries is taken as the model for synods celebrated by the Church.

The predominantly Jewish Church was at a major crossroads with the influx of large numbers of non-Jews. Some argued that Gentiles, in becoming Christians, must adopt Jewish laws and practices. Others insisted this was not necessary. The question gave rise to “no small dissension and debate” (Acts 15:2). The breakthrough came when the participants in the Council shifted from an argumentative to a listening mode. They listened to Peter sharing his experience in receiving the Gentile centurion Cornelius into the Church (see Acts 10-11). Peter had been very reluctant to do anything contrary to strict adherence to Jewish ritual regulations. He needed a vision from God and the prompting of the Holy Spirit to change his mind. He was also “converted” by listening to Cornelius’ experience of God. Only then did he share the Good News of Jesus with him. It became increasingly clear to Peter that the Spirit was at work in the lives of Cornelius and his household. Peter’s role was to confirm what the Spirit was doing. He learned by listening that Jews and Gentiles are saved by the gift of the same Spirit, rather than any law, and this was the message he shared with the Council of Jerusalem. After Peter finished speaking, the meeting remained silent and listened to Paul and Barnabas sharing their experience of what God was doing in their Gentile mission.

James, the local leader in the Jerusalem church, pointed out that the experiences shared gave a deeper insight into what is said in the Word of God (Acts 15:15-18). He then went on to propose a way forward with which the whole assembly concurred. They reached a consensus which “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15:28). The decision was to press on with mission among Gentiles without imposing Jewish laws on them. Steps were also taken to foster common life between

**I WILL
POUR OUT
MY SPIRIT
ON ALL PEOPLE**
Acts 2:17

Jewish and Gentile Christians, while respecting their diverse cultures. Mission and communion go hand-in-hand.

The aim of the present Synod is to foster and develop the Church’s synodal nature – the people of God walking in communion to pursue a common mission through the participation of all. If this is to come about, we must heed the advice in the Book of Revelation: “Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches” (Rev 2:7). ●

Columban missionary Fr Tom O’Reilly has served in Pakistan, Ireland and Britain. He holds a degree in scripture studies from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and he has lectured in St Columban’s Seminary, Navan, and in the Kimmage Mission Institute in Dublin. His book, **Acts of the Apostles – a Reading for Mission Today** was launched in April 2021.

- 03
01. Official Logo of the Synodal Path: A large, majestic tree, full of wisdom and light, reaches for the sky. A sign of deep vitality and hope which expresses the cross of Christ. It carries the Eucharist, which shines like the sun. The horizontal branches, opened like hands or wings, suggest, at the same time, the Holy Spirit.
 02. The people of God from the official logo of the Synodal Path. They are not static but on the move, a direct reference to the word synod, which means “walking together”. The 15 silhouettes represent humanity in all its diversity.
 03. Image: Shutterstock

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**Resources for the entire synodal process:
www.synod.va/en/resources.html**

This includes an explanation of the Roadmap for the Diocesan Phase; the Preparatory Document; Tools for Facilitating the Synodal Consultation; Prayers for the Synodal Process; Explanation of the Logo and the Vademecum or Handbook for the Synod on Synodality.

NO TIME TO DIE



There is 'No Time to Die', Sr Rebecca Conlon concludes, as she considers the 200 years of service given by her jubilee group. Young people today want action, not words, she highlights.

Not long after celebrating my Golden Jubilee with my fellow Columban Sisters in Magheramore, I found myself on the plane back to Pakistan. The Jubilee was a different celebration to the usual as we could not invite family and friends due to the Covid pandemic. Nevertheless, we gathered the graces and blessings, successes and failures, light and darkness of the combined 200 years in service to the Mission of Jesus Christ to go to the ends of the earth.

As I look at the picture of the four of us at this celebration, Kathleen Melia, (Philippines) Roberta Ryan, (Korea, Pakistan, Britain, Ireland) Kathleen Geaney (Philippines, Britain, Myanmar) and myself, (Korea, Scotland, Ireland, Pakistan) not forgetting our companion Ann Rita in the Philippines (Chile, US, Philippines) and of course Kathleen O'Riordan (Chile, Ireland) who already knows the secrets of the Kingdom, as she has gone before us, RIP.

I am specific about stating *whose* mission we are on because there are all kinds of missions nowadays with their own specific mission statements and vision, all for the greater good. As I was coming to terms with leaving Ireland recently, I was attracted to two topical stories: James Bond and Greta Thunberg. I saw both on YouTube. The première of the latest James Bond film, with all the glitter and excitement, was breathtaking even though Daniel Craig had already announced his retirement as James Bond. At the other end of the spectrum was Greta

Thunberg challenging the Youth4Climate summit in Milan saying: "This is all we hear from our so-called leaders...blah, blah, blah. Words that sound great but so far have not led to action. We hear many fine words, but science does not lie as we know by living through this Climate Change."

You will notice that I am stealing the title of the Bond film for this story: *No Time to Die*. That's it! When we entered in 1967 the world was in turmoil - not too unlike our current state of affairs, which makes one question why so, 50 years on? Violence and the fear of violence was omnipresent in 1967 - the war in Vietnam, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East of the Arab-Israeli war, race riots in the US and protests against the Vietnam war, Martin Luther King's non-violent stance, unrest in Ireland and the threat of nuclear annihilation everywhere. An extraordinary movement was underway. There was not a trace of a mobile phone not to mention Wi-Fi but the Spirit was our Wi-Fi and it was moving!

The Church experienced its own kind of turmoil - the Vatican Council had ended in 1965 - but the change called-for had just begun - sweeping liturgical reforms, ecumenical efforts towards opening windows to dialogue with other religions, and the universal call to holiness that turned everything upside down. Within Congregations, the total renewal of religious life as it was lived was underway causing great confusion. At the time, when people

began wondering about the relevance of religious life, this small band of five of us came to the Columban Sisters. Three were from the Civil Service, and another followed us later as we joked about giving up a good pensionable stable job! As we came to religious life, many left because of the challenges of Vatican II. It was a gloriously

but *run* to the boat for safety. Through the disobedience of one, they all survived on the Yangtze River because she stole a bottle of brandy from a cupboard on her way out and they sipped it with great intention and survived! They heard the same call, and the hymn we chose for our celebration was appropriate: it was called 'The Summons'. It

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challenging, confusing time which became an asset to us for survival 'on the missions'. Here we met with both welcome and opposition. In new cultures, where we were welcomed and made our home, we also encountered fear, attack, joy-filled liturgies full of soul, learned different languages, depended on people of other cultures and creeds to make our mission work. There were also floods and earthquakes.

One quality of the missionary is to always feel 'a stranger in our Father's house'. We belong nowhere, only to God. We know that we are standing on the shoulders of those who went before us and their courage showed 'James Bond-like' stamina in the early days of mission. The outbreak of war in 1939 did not stop the call to mission as Mother Mary Patrick, Congregational Leader at the time, travelled to the missions in the Philippines, China and the US to meet the Sisters. She and her companion were shipwrecked in 1940 when the ocean liner they were travelling aboard was torpedoed, but they survived the wreck, huddled for nine hours on a lifeboat 400 miles west of Scotland. The survivors were rescued by a passing coal boat and 67-year-old Mother Mary Patrick was hauled on board in a coal bucket.

Others came from *Cumann na mBan* (volunteers during the War of Independence in Ireland) bringing a fighting spirit for mission and others were on the run in China and were told to take nothing with them

spoke to all our experiences.

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same? Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name? Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same? Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare? Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name? Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same? Will you kiss the leper clean and do such as this unseen, and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same? Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around?

The world is opening up after Covid. On my flight, students were returning to Pakistan from Italy and Switzerland after two years of Covid restrictions on travel. Another from Central Africa where he is working for the UN. But there was a buzz in the air in spite of the current travel demands and a longing to meet their loved ones in a changed world. There is 'No Time to Die'. 'The Summons' continues for each of us, you and me. Greta and the youth of today do not want words but action. 'Let us use the faith we have found to reshape the world around' and 'then the world will never be the same! Let us turn and follow you and never be the same.' ●

Sr Rebecca Conlon is a member of the leadership team of the Columban Sisters. After profession, she trained as an occupational therapist in London before she was sent on mission to Korea where she worked with the St John of God Brothers in Gwangju at their psychiatric day clinic. She was one of the first group of Sisters to go to Pakistan in 1990.

01. The latest Bond film 'No Time To Die' advertised at a cinema in London's Leicester Square. Image: Shutterstock.

02. Columban Jubilarians (from left) Sr Roberta Ryan (Korea, Pakistan, Britain, Ireland), Sr Rebecca Conlon (Korea, Scotland, Ireland, Pakistan), Sr Kathleen Geaney (Philippines, Britain, Myanmar), and Sr Kathleen Melia (Philippines).

03. At a Covid-restricted celebration in Magheramore (from left) Sr Kathleen Geaney (Philippines, Britain, Myanmar), Sr Roberta Ryan (Korea, Pakistan, Britain, Ireland), Sr Kathleen Melia (Philippines), and Sr Rebecca Conlon (Korea, Scotland, Ireland, Pakistan).



COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

New Year sees many of us resolve to tackle our destructive habits. Kwon Byung-hee [Augustine] recalls Fr Paul White who established a recovery programme for gambling addicts and helped thousands of Koreans turn their lives around.

01. Image: Shutterstock

02. Fr Paul White SSC

Fr Paul White played a major role in helping Korean society admit that compulsive gambling was an actual disease. Up to then it was merely considered a sin that needed to be confessed. It was Fr Paul who helped open the way to recovery for some of those whose humanity had been destroyed by this addiction. Recovery brought peace to families destroyed by gambling. Fr Paul was an apostle of healing and recovery, saving the souls of those that were afflicted by this disease.

He was ordained in 1958 and when he read the notice that he would be missioned in Korea, he was delighted, seeing it as an opportunity to start a new life. He found himself ministering to people in a mountain valley in the province of Kangwon at a time when they were still coming to terms with the legacy of pain and destruction of the Korean War.

Unable to communicate fully with the poverty-stricken people that were living in dire circumstances he suffered stress with the result that his health deteriorated. He started playing cards and other games in the nearby American Army Camp as a way of switching off from the demands of parish ministry. Gradually he fell into the habit of gambling. When a casino opened in Walker Hill Hotel, he found that his jeep automatically turned towards Seoul and that hotel. He explained that when he later ministered on Jeju island he was drawn to a local casino just like steel is attracted to a magnet.

Having realised he was grappling with an addiction to gambling he returned to Omaha in the USA and while undergoing treatment he discovered Gamblers Anonymous [GA]. He attended GA meetings for nine months,

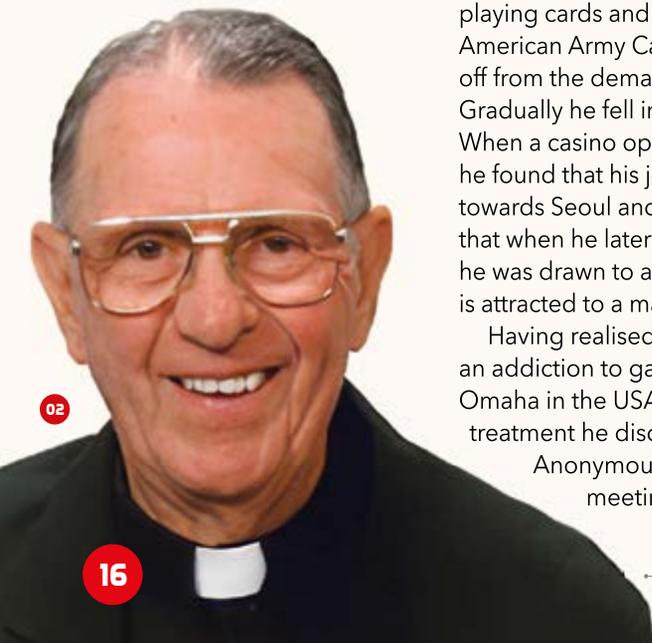
and during this time he realised that the programme was needed in Korea. He returned to Korea on 13th June 1984 and set up a meeting of Gamblers Anonymous. He also established the first Gamblers Anon meeting for the families of gamblers.

The programme worked well until September 1987 when Fr Paul had a relapse. As the priest who had established the programme there was a danger that the rest of us would lose trust in it. We were also open to being criticised and having people point their fingers at us. We felt like running away to hide but Fr Paul assured us that anyone can suffer a relapse and that when such a relapse occurs the person needs to admit it openly and then recover. That became our model.

Having established the programme, Fr Paul was keen that Koreans would take responsibility for its development as quickly as possible. He continued to encourage us and observe us running the meetings. He worked continuously to make sure that the programme was on solid grounds and had developed deep and lasting roots. However, as his heart condition deteriorated, he was forced to return to America in September 1996.

Thanks to Fr Paul White this programme to help those afflicted by compulsive gambling was brought to birth in Korea. The GA programme has now grown and developed into 61 groups today. He made it possible for tens of thousands of people to recover from their addiction and live a life.

After leaving Korea, Fr Paul continued to work tirelessly for those addicted to gambling in both Los Angeles and Omaha in the US until 23rd October 2018 when he passed to his eternal reward. ●



COLUMBAN MISSIONARY HONOURED

Noel Mackey recalls some of the work done by Fr Donal O’Keeffe in Korea with marginalised workers which led to his receiving the ‘Immigrant of the Year’ Award.

01. Fr Donal O’Keeffe is presented with the ‘Immigrant of the Year’ Award 2021 by the Korean Minister for Justice. Photo: Courtesy Irish Embassy of Korea.

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For the past 14 years Korea has been honouring individual immigrants who have made significant contributions to the country declaring them ‘Immigrants of the Year’. Columban missionary Fr Donal O’Keeffe, a native of Bantry, Co Cork was the latest recipient of this honour. On 20 May 2021, ‘People of the World Day’, Fr Donal was awarded a presidential citation by the Minister for Justice in recognition of his over forty years of dedicated service to marginalised people in Korean society.

Fr Donal first arrived in Korea in 1976, and got involved in the workers apostolate. In 1980 he moved to Bucheon, in Gyeonggido province, and began working in a team with the Sacred Heart Sisters who operated an ‘open house’ where young workers could gather. There were many small factories in the area where teenagers, who had moved from the countryside, now worked. They were only given one day a month to rest. Many of these workers came to the open house where they were invited to participate in courses on self-development, worker’s rights and labour laws. According to Fr Donal, many of the young workers who took those educational courses later became key people in the formation of labour unions in the late 1980s.

Having spent ten years in the young workers apostolate, Fr Donal, together with fellow Columban Fr Charles [Chuck] Lintz, became involved in the Archdiocese of Seoul’s Urban Poor Apostolate in 1992. Living in a shanty town in Bongcheon, Gwanack District of Seoul, they became aware of the plight of the tenants who lived there. At that time the authorities in Seoul were engaged in a process of ‘redevelopment’. Large construction companies were allowed to appropriate portions of lands on which to build high rise apartments. The poor renters were being left on the side of the street with their few belongings. Neither the construction companies nor Seoul’s authorities were willing to assist them in any way.

Frs Donal and Charles formed a Residents Association and they ran educational programmes to help the tenants become aware of their rights and demand their rightful compensation during the redevelopment process.

During this year’s presidential award ceremony, Fr Donal got an unexpected surprise. While the Justice Minister was congratulating all those that had received different awards he stopped and asked Donal to stand up and take a bow. He then revealed that he himself had lived as a “binmin” or a poor person in the very shanty town that Donal had helped establish a tenant’s association.

In another coincidence, the Minister added that having qualified as a lawyer he had established a workers counselling centre in Bucheon where many years earlier Fr Donal had operated the ‘open house’ for young factory workers. ●



SURPRISING AND INSPIRING



On the first Sunday I was at home for the long Christmas holidays, the catechist in the village church surprised me when he said in his homily, “Elia, your coming home for holidays is a source of encouragement and strength for me.” I took it lightly, considering it a polite compliment. But when I was back in formation and reflected on my holiday, his words had a deeper impact on me.

Soon after I arrived in my village of Koromakawa in Labasa parish for the break, I noticed six or seven youths gathering around my house. My parents noticed it too. They said the youths hadn’t come around when I was away in formation, and they suggested that I must be the attraction.

The youths later came camping with me to our land a few miles from the village where we all weeded the crops or sowed new seedlings during the day. In the evenings we divided into work groups. One group would prepare food for cooking, another would get the log fire going and the third group would do the cooking.

After dinner we used to share a basin of yaqona (our traditional social drink) and chat. They would ask me about the seminary and the formation programme. The length of it shocked them. I explained how we studied the books of the Bible and the doctrines of the Church. At the same time, we attended daily Mass, did daily meditation, and prayed the rosary and the divine office or breviary in our Columban formation house.

I described our weekly pastoral practice. We visited ethnic Indian families or poor indigenous families in squatter settlements and encouraged them to form Christian communities where they could weekly reflect on the gospel. We Columban students have regular personal sharing with our formator and spiritual direction with another priest. We play games and plant crops too. The youths asked many questions and were really interested in a life that seemed very different from

theirs. They were fascinated to learn how I have grown in confidence through these activities.

We men are not as good as women at sharing our feelings, discussing important matters or deepening our relationships. We normally compete on macho things like how late we can stay up drinking yaqona or how well we can play rugby. We tend to joke and tease each other.

In our nightly sessions I stressed to my village friends their worth and dignity as human persons. I reminded them that they would not always be youths free from responsibilities. The time would come to get married. They would then need to look after their families and elderly parents. Now was the time to dream about the future and how to fulfil their responsibilities. I asked them to think about the land resources they have and the good living that can be made from growing and selling yaqona, not just drinking it! They began to talk about targets for themselves.

I see now how the Holy Spirit works in the little things we do and in our personal sharing with others. The Holy Spirit doesn’t just influence us within the four walls of the church but in our daily interactions.

I was surprised again when, the day before I was due to return to the seminary, the youths invited me to a going away party. I had not realised how they had appreciated our ‘chat sessions’. So, holidays are for relaxation, but they can also be rewarding and fruitful in ways that we might not anticipate. ●

01. Columban seminarian Elia Poasa from Koromakawa in Labasa parish in Fiji.

02. A group of Columban seminarians. Elia Poasa is seated on the left.

03. Young people from Koromakawa with Indo-Fijian visitors.

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A seminary break is usually a time for relaxation. However, Columban seminarian Elia Poasa’s recent holiday was also an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to inspire and surprise.



REST in PEACE



Fr Seamus Egan



Fr Sean Brazil

Fr Seamus Egan was born in Ballybrehony, Claremorris on 2 February 1943. Educated at Ballybrehony NS and St Colman's College, Claremorris, he came to St Columban's, Navan in September 1960. He was ordained a priest on 21st December 1966. In 1967 he was appointed to Chile as his older brother Pat had been seven years previously. After language studies, he was appointed to San Luis Parish. Due to his talent for group process, in 1976 he spent two years in Worcester, MA, USA, studying Clinical Pastoral Education and graduated as an accredited supervisor. On his return to Chile, he spent four years supervising the First Missionary Assignment of two groups of Columban seminarians. During that same period, he was also assigned to work along with two other priests with a group of fifteen lay-led chapel communities, known as *Diaconias*. The role of the priests was focused on formation and lay empowerment. Towards the end of this time Seamus suffered the first of a series of periods of ill-health. As part of his recuperation, he returned to Ireland and spent some time in Dublin's Balcurris Parish. Returning to Santiago, he worked in Maria Missionera Parish in Renca, and Corazon de Maria Parish in Valparaiso. Ill-health forced him to return to Ireland in 1997. Seamus was known as an intelligent man with a searching mind, extremely insightful, sensitive and a good judge of character. Over his years in Dalgan and more recently in the Nursing Home, we remember Seamus as a gentle, conscientious priest, a good listener, a quiet unassuming person who bore his illness with extraordinary patience. Seamus died on the morning of 21st October 2021.

Fr Sean Brazil was born in Dublin on 14 January 1932. He attended the Christian

Brothers in Synge Street, Dublin before joining the Columbans in Dalgan in 1948. Ordained there in December 1954, he went to Korea in 1955. His mission began as an assistant in one of the oldest Columban parishes in the southwest Korean coastal town of Mokpo. Within two years he became the first pastor of Huksan island. After incipient TB hospitalised him, he was reassigned to the parish of Pius X in Mokpo City. After vacation in Ireland, he was assigned to the Leper Colony of Sorokto before he was transferred to Holy Cross parish Mokpo. He was there from 1964-1970. After his next vacation he was assigned to Seoul Diocese to serve people migrating from rural areas. He started a new parish in Sangbong Dong. He later began a second parish in Chang Dong. Both parishes started on an empty building site, with just a tent under which to offer Masses. These parishes grew quickly, and both soon became four parishes. Back from his next vacation he was asked to go to the Diocese of Suwon where he served in Sung-Nam from 1978 to 1982. At that time there were two parishes in the city with a Catholic population of about 6,000. Over fifteen years it grew into five parishes with a Catholic population of 32,000. At the end of that four-year term Sean was given the job of Office Manager of the Far East in Ireland. In 1990 he was hoping to get back to Korea when he was asked to go to California to take over the Korean Ministry in the Diocese of Orange. Over the next twenty years, one Mass in Korean grew into twelve Masses each Sunday. Sean returned to Ireland in May 2002. Gradually ill health took its toll, but he kept active to the very end and died peacefully in the Nursing home in Dalgan on 8th October 2021.

May they rest in peace.

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.

'Tempus fugit' - 'Time flies' as the ancient philosopher proclaimed. How right he was! We are now beginning 2022. Some people will make New Year Resolutions to try to live in a more authentic and meaningful way. Many of us quickly forget our promises or are faithful just now and then.

Perhaps for 2022 we could be counselled by the Prophet Tobit who advised, "Do to no one what you would not want done to you. Give your bread to those who are hungry. Ask advice of every wise person. Bless the Lord God in everything. Beg Him to guide your ways and bring your paths and purposes to a good end." (Tobit Ch. 4. V. 15-20) How simple! But how beneficial it could be.

Sometimes we can become blind and insensitive to reality. We need to know and be convinced that nothing can separate us from the love of God. He gives us strength to stand up to all that would alienate us and tear us away from Him. Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." If we allow this to influence the way we live and what we do then we would have no fear. We need to remember that we are not almighty nor all powerful. Only God is and He cares for us.

One of the saddest comments on our times is that there are so many people without any purpose or goal in their lives. They free-wheel day after day but they are really adrift with no destination in mind. They are being tossed by whatever prevailing wind blows. Often their attitude is 'why bother'. But dealt

properly 'bother' can become positive and life enhancing. Without commitment nothing can be achieved.

In the Book of Joshua we are reminded to, "Put more trust in God. Remember that He has commanded you to be determined and confident. Don't be afraid or discouraged for I, the Lord your God, am with you wherever you go." In the New Testament we read that,

"Where your treasure is there is your heart."

If we keep our hearts open to God, and to others, miracles will happen. Our hearts are where the beauty and wonder of our human spirit come alive.

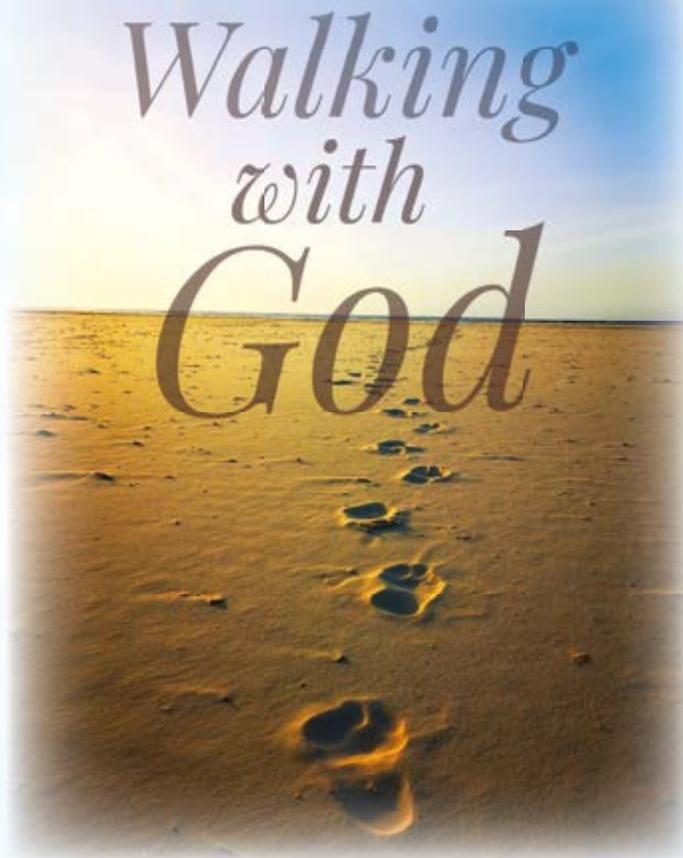
Often because our minds are preoccupied with present things we forget who we are. The heart is the archive of all our memories and it never forgets. Each of us carries the Book of our Life within our heart. So it is wise to tune into our heart and listen to what it whispers. The

heart will never betray us because it knows that it is the storehouse of our joys, our sorrows, our successes and failures and of our sufferings.

Let this New Year be one in which we open our hearts to God and to others. An open heart is always ready to be enriched and to be nourished because it is in giving that we receive.

Lord God, deepen our Faith, strengthen our Hope, and enkindle our Love so that we may obtain what You promise. ●

Sr Abbie O'Sullivan



THE MARRIAGE FEAST AT CANA

One day, Jesus was invited with his mother, Mary, and his disciples to a wedding at Cana. During the feast, Mary noticed that the wine was running out. Soon there would be nothing for the wedding guests to drink!

"Please do something," Mary asked Jesus, "or the feast will be spoiled and the bridegroom and his family will be embarrassed."

Jesus reminded his mother that the time to do his heavenly Father's work had not yet arrived, but Mary was sure he would help. She called the stewards over.

"Just do whatever he tells you," she told them.

It was the custom in those days for guests to wash themselves before an important meal, and large jars of water were provided for them to use as they came into the house. Jesus noticed the row of six large water jars standing against the wall: each could hold about twenty or thirty gallons.

"Fill these jars with water," he told the servants. They quickly filled them all to the brim. "Now pour some

out and take it to the wine steward to taste," he said.

They did as he said. The wine steward tasted the water and it had turned into delicious wine!

"I see you've left the best wine until last!" he said to the bridegroom. Of course, he had no idea where it had come from.

This was the first miracle Jesus performed, and it showed his disciples that he was indeed from God. ●

Read also: John 2:1-11

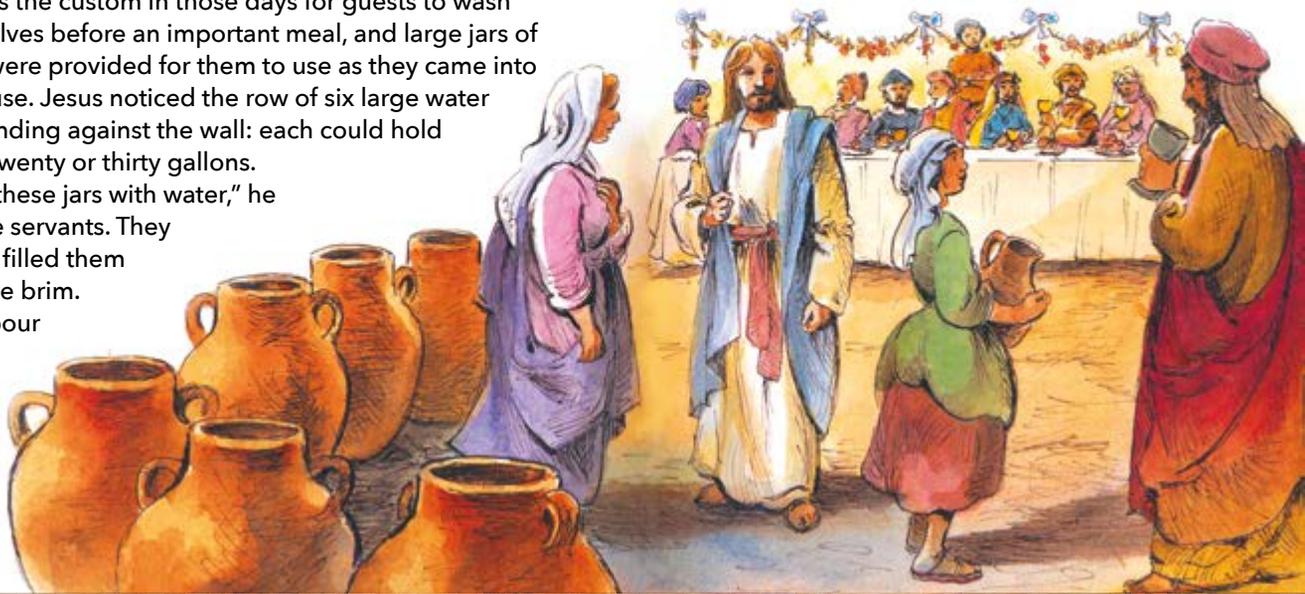


Illustration by Val Biro from One Hundred Bible Stories for Children. Published by Award Publications Ltd.

BIBLE QUIZ

NUMBER 97

- In Acts ch.19, when Paul was at Ephesus, he sent Erastus on ahead to Macedonia. Which of Paul's friends accompanied Erastus?

- In Exodus 13, when the Hebrew slaves left Egypt, what did Moses take with him?

- In Ruth ch.1, which mother-in-law arrived in Bethlehem with her daughter-in-law at harvest-time?

- In Joshua ch.10, when Joshua received the message from the men of Gibeon, he said, 'Fight your own battles', true or false?

- In Matthew ch.4, fill the gap "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the ... to be tempted by the devil"?

- In Matthew ch.2, whose route was guided by a star?

£15 vouchers for the first three correct entries received!
 Consult your Bible, answer the questions above and send your entry to: Bible Quiz N° 97, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 9AB, before 28th February 2022.

Bible Quiz N° 95 Winners: Carol Beckett, Welwyn Garden City, Herts
 • Francisco Thomas De Brito, Leicester • Roger Payne, Nuneaton

Name:

Address:



WORD SEARCH

Match these words with their correct space in the Puzzle:

- SEAL
- POLARBEAR
- WALRUS
- PENGUIN
- ARCTICHARE
- ARCTICFOX
- PINKGULL
- BIGHORNSHEEP

CROSSWORD

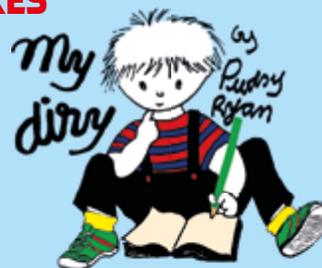
Arctic animals



PUDSY'S DIRTY - FIND THE 10 SPELLING MISTAKES

Back in school after Xmas ms Flinn always tells us to share about the presents we got. And I was telling my fren Bump that I did'nt want to hear about the lovely dolls and things the girls got. But he said surprise surprise! he heard some of them got football boots - imagine! And I said mebbe they are not real boots only things for dancing or running around in. But he said no they are the real thing with all them fancy stripes and colours just like ours. So before we know it they might even be better than us. And if that happens

we will be aful ashamed becoss they beat us at spelling and have the right answers for that big inspektre fella and everything. And worse us boys have'nt won a match for ages so I am thinking what Grandad said when the cows broke out - if it is'nt one misforchun its another. And when I was telling them this at home they said nonsins. When the girls start winning the boys can say they taught them how and cheer them on. And Ms Flinn will be so happy and saying how wonderful you all are. But I am thinking yes mebbe.....but I am wundering.



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

Rewrite the story and send to Puddy's Dirty, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9AB, before 28th February 2022.

HA! HA!

1. What happened to the man who shoplifted a calendar on New Year's Eve?
2. What's a New Year's resolution?
3. Why are there so many vampires out on New Year's Eve?
4. What did the farmer give his wife on New Year's Eve?
5. What was the caterpillar's New Year's resolution?
6. What happened to the fireworks who were arrested on New Year's Eve?

1. He got 12 months!
2. Something that goes in one eye and out the other.
3. For old fangs time.
4. Hogs and kisses.
5. To turn over a new leaf.
6. They were let off.

COMPETITION WINNERS NOVEMBER 2021

<p>Clara Swift Eastbourne, Surrey</p> <p>1</p> <p>Colpaint - Aged 7 and Under</p>	<p>Sam Doyle Bury, Lancashire</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Hanna Sutton Surrey</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Grace Tong Gillingham, Kent</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Saoirse Carney Old Marston, Oxford</p> <p>1</p> <p>Puddy's Dirty</p>
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Sensational Swans

By Elizabeth McArdle



If you are out and about and see large, white birds on the water, chances are you will know their name. The Mute Swan is one bird which is familiar to all of us. These stately, serene creatures were originally wild but now frequent human neighbourhoods such as urban lakes, farm ponds, sheltered bays and wetlands. Their primary food source is submerged vegetation with a small quantity of frogs, water insects and fish. Humans love to feed swans with delectable items such as grain, corn, grapes, salad leaves and defrosted peas. Bread, chips, cakes, cookies, dairy products, and junk food should never be fed to swans as their digestive systems cannot cope with these food items.

Their nests can be elaborate affairs, built above the water level from waterside vegetation, which is reused from year to year. Reusing materials is always good for the planet and we humans could learn a lot from the example of these 'eco-friendly' birds. Nest building is done by both parents, the male bringing the nest

material to the female, and it is she who does the structural work. They remain together for life and their brownish, grey chicks, known as cygnets, are defended with tooth and claw. If you hear a hoarse whistling sound or loud snorting noises near a swan's nest, the likelihood is they are protecting their precious young, so don't venture near. When the family wish to move across the water, the tiny cygnets snuggle into the soft feathers on the backs of their parents and travel in style. After twelve months, their feathers gradually turn snow white.

Getting to know the names of God's creatures is always worthwhile. It connects us to nature and to God, the creator of all. The sensational swan is a good one to start with as you already know its name. In no time, many more names will be added to your lengthening list of knowledge. ●

Image: Shutterstock

WIN A VOUCHER WORTH £15/£10!

Colpaint★



Colpaint★

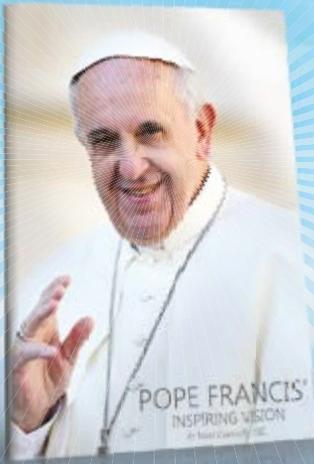
Colour the drawing and send it with your name and address to: COLPAINT, St Columban's, Widney Manor Rd, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 9AB, before 28th February 2022.

Name:

Age:

Address:

FOUR PRIZES TO BE WON!

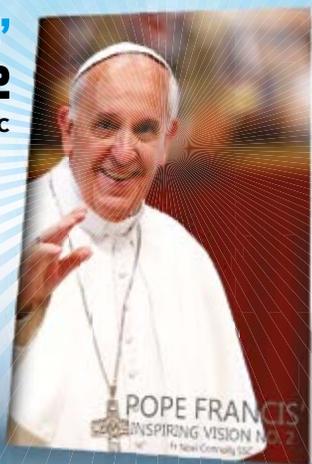


POPE FRANCIS' INSPIRING VISION

Fr Noel Connolly SSC

POPE FRANCIS' INSPIRING VISION n°2

Fr Noel Connolly SSC



Fr Noel Connolly (1945-2020), a Columban missionary from Australia, was inspired by Pope Francis to write two booklets to accompany us on our journey of faith and life as people who are called to be part of God's mission. Drawing on his 50 years of experience as a Columban missionary, Fr Noel offers us a concise and practical guide to Pope Francis' inspiring vision for the Church.

Order Now! Copies of Fr Noel's booklets are available from the Columban Mission Office in Solihull. Price includes postage.

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IN GRATITUDE

"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people." Colossians 1:3-4

During the pandemic, Columban Missionaries prayed online with our supporters in all of our missions