NEWS AND VIEWS

SUMMER 2011

Traffic and chaos

291 words

Fr Joe Ruys reflects on his time with the people of Peru.

Recently, I was driving along a local street with Australian friends who sighed, "if only we had brought along our cameras. The people at home would never believe the traffic and the chaos.

It is the desperateness that first strikes the visitor. People driving broken down cars, people pushing carts, bikes or anything with wheels so that they can move loads.

Certainly there is madness about the way of life here in Lima, but I think it could be better described as desperateness and chaos caused by poverty and necessity.

An example of desperateness is a mother who has three children, her husband has left her and her child gets sick. She takes a day off work and takes the child to the doctor who tells her that she needs to go to the hospital. At the hospital she is told that the child needs to be observed but medication must be purchased prior to admittance.

Another example of frustration was our attempt to upgrade one of our humble Chapels. For over a year I have been trying to engage the local community in a discussion to determine what they would like to see happen. The community are desperately poor and lack confidence in expressing their ideas, especially with a priest.

After our 'final' meeting, I contacted the builders that all was set to begin. One person, then another awkwardly suggested that the building really wasn't what they wanted as it was not going to help them achieve their dream of building a permanent Chapel.

During the week I tried to put aside my disappointment and frustration. I have to recognize the people's great hope and optimism that one day they will achieve what I see as virtually an impossible dream.

Fr Joe Ruys is an Associate priest with the Columbans in Peru.

Farewell Fr Noel Connolly

Fr Noel Connolly will finish his term as Regional Director for Australia and New Zealand on the November 23, the Feast of St Columban.

He was elected as Director for his strong belief in Mission, his capable management skills and his vision to see clearly that with fewer Columbans, the need to work hand in hand with a well trained lay staff who understand and support Columban Mission.

His thoughts and insights in the *Director's Column* in *The Far East*, show the breadth and depth of his understanding of Mission in the contemporary world. We hope he will continue to write for Columban publications.

Fr Noel deserves to feel proud of what has been achieved.

We wish him well in the future as he continues to make his contribution to Columban Mission.

Fr Gary Walker

135 words

ST COLUMBANS MISSION SOCIETY

234 words

Palliative care in Pakistan

Fr Robert McCulloch with Patras Inayat.

In preparation for palliative care to begin in Pakistan, we have sent one of the male nurses from St Elizabeth Hospital to do the year-long Certificate in Palliative Care Nursing at Calvary-Bethlehem Hospital, Caulfield. He will return to Pakistan in November.

Meantime another nurse has just completed his specialized Certificate in Pediatric Nursing in Hyderabad and has commenced a month-long course in Pediatric Oncological Nursing at the Children Cancer Hospital in Karachi.

The home-based palliative care that is starting at St Elizabeth Hospital is a first in Pakistan so we don't have specific local expertise to fall back on. However, a group of four senior Catholic nurses with academic positions in universities and schools of nursing in Karachi have come together as the Nursing Advisory Service for planning and implementing the palliative care at St Elizabeth. One has had experience in oncological nursing, and all bring a focused professional perspective to the new venture.

We have already begun sourcing the necessary equipment and raising funds for some of the equipment which is expensive, made more so by the refusal of the Pakistan government to grant any sort of sales tax concession to St Elizabeth.

We plan to begin with ten terminally-ill patients being visited at home in the morning and evening. We look forward to being "in action" in the first months of 2012.

Fr Robert McCulloch SSC has been a missionary in Pakistan since 1978.

Change at the helm

140 words

Regional Director Fr Gary Walker

Vice Director Fr Ray Scanlon

CEO/Regional Bursar Mr Michael Mooney

Columban Mission Institute Fr Patrick McInerney (Director)

Columban Mission Institute Anne Lanyon (Vice Director)

On November 23, the Feast of St Columban, Fr Gary Walker will take up the role as Regional Director for Australia/New Zealand. Fr Gary was ordained in 1972 and spent many years in Fiji and Jamaica, followed by a six year appointment to Ireland as a member of the Columban General Council. He has been Editor of *The Far East* magazine for the last nine years and will be missed for his commitment and expertise in the role. We wish him well in his new role.

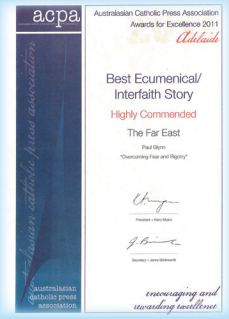
Fr Ray Scanlon has been appointed as Vice Director. Mr Michael Mooney is the Regional Bursar for the Australia/New Zealand region as well as the new CEO at the Columban Mission Centre in Essendon. Fr Patrick McInerney is the new Director and Mrs Anne Lanyon is the Vice Director of Columban Mission Institute, Sydney.

Awards for The Far East

At the Australasian Catholic Press Association (ACPA) annual conference in September, *The Far East* was *High Commended* in the following categories:

Best Column
Fr Noel Connolly
"A God who allows earthquakes" - January/February 2011

Best Ecumenical/ Interfaith Story
Fr Paul Glynn
"Overcoming fear and bigotry" - June 2010



75 words

Columban Partnership Programme

The Partnership Programme is a way of engaging people in social justice issues.

It enables visits to Columban-based missions in the Philippines and Fiji and encourages the development of long-term community-to-community partnerships.

We would like to thank those Parishes and Schools involved in the Partnership Programme for their continued support and generosity during 2011.

A special thank you to Sr Claire Griffin who worked tirelessly as the Co-ordinator of the Programme for 3 years.

www.columban.org.au

217 words

Bus will make a difference

Manuel Duato, a Columban founded school for children with disabilities, has among its 200 students, 27 students with wheelchairs.

Fr Chris Baker (left) and Fr Ed O'Connell with the students.

Their parents struggle daily to get their children to classes. Drivers are reluctant to have the extra work of lifting a disabled person and the wheelchair into and out of a taxi, let alone a crowded bus. Lima's public transport does not cater for people in wheelchairs.

I was deputed to look around for a bus properly adapted for wheelchairs. Our local bishop, kindly offered to help us bring in a duty free bus from overseas.

After three years of enquiries to Japan and the United States we bought a chassis from Lima for $43,000. We had it delivered to a coach builder only a short distance from *Manuel Duato*.

The engineer is drawing up details of how to provide the best seating for the people and storage of wheelchairs. A lift for wheelchair and occupant is definitely part of the design.

Thanks to the long delay in finding a bus and the generosity of Columban benefactors, we had been able to put aside enough money to buy the chassis. It will cost another $46,000 to complete the fit-out.

When the remaining funds are raised, our wheelchair dependent people will be able to travel with ease and safety.

Fr Chris Baker SSC first went to Peru in 1977.

Columban News

Fr Brian Gore

Fr Brian Gore was back in Australia for various engagements during July. As always Brian was enthusiastic and optimistic about his work in the Philippines.

Fr Colin McLean

Fr Colin McLean had a busy time back in Australia earlier this year catching up with family and Columban benefactors who have generously supported his work in Salvador, Brazil. He now regards Brazil as his home where he has lived for the past 26 years.

Fr Kevin Mullins

Fr Kevin Mullins was home on leave in July. The staff were once again reminded of how lucky they were after hearing about the crime and violence in Ciudad Juarez, between Mexico and the USA where Kevin has worked for the 10 years.

Fr Daniel (Dan) O'Connor

Fr Dan is on sabbatical leave in Ireland at St Columban's Dalgan Park. In December he will celebrate his 25 years of missionary priestly service with other members of the Columban Society. Dan also plans to run the Dublin Marathon in late October to raise funds for the mission in Badin, Pakistan where he has worked for many years.

Fr Peter Toohey

Fr Peter Toohey was recently in Essendon to attend a Columban Education Week. During the week Fr Peter took the time to speak to the staff at Columban Mission Centre about his current role in Prison Ministry in Perth where he has worked for 13 years.

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2012 Columban Calendar Order Form

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MNV Summer 2011

ST COLUMBANS MISSION SOCIETY

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St Columban became 'A Wanderer for Christ'. One of his greatest sayings summarises his life and his work, *'Let us be of Christ not of ourselves'.*