

Dear members of Columban Family Oceania, and in particular Oceania Fiji, 2021.

The 23rd November is St Columban's Day – Feast day of our Patron Saint. I wish you all, priests, students, lay missionaries, co-workers and our many Columban Companions throughout Fiji, Tonga, and Kiribati (both at home and abroad) a Happy Feast Day. May the life and zeal of St Columban continue to be our inspiration even in these difficult times – Columban didn't have it easy in his day – most of you have struggled to do mission effectively over the past year and a half due to the restrictions imposed by Covid 19.

The 23rd November is also the 2nd Anniversary of the New Region of Oceania and despite the challenging year – meetings and business have gone on in the Region – via Zoom. Fr Trevor Trotter, our Regional Director has done a great job not only keeping us all together – but forging our three countries, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji into the New Region of Oceania. The idea and the need for such a union is becoming clearer as time progresses and the realization of how fragile we have become because of diminishing numbers. Our Co-Workers across the Region are becoming more familiar with one another and their work, they are an asset and inspiration to us. The assistance and help of CCIM members (Columban Companions in Mission) will also become more necessary for our future work.

One of the most notable events taking place during the last few months is the Review and the Evaluation of the Structures of the Region of Oceania – striving to make them more workable and making them more relevant to the entire membership of the Region. Mr Peter Cranko is the Consultant facilitating this process. It is well on the way and all three counties of Oceania have been involved in this process. Suggestions and findings will be presented to the Regional Council of Oceania on the 30th November 2021.

Our Facebook Page and Website www.columban.org.fj have kept Columban mission priorities in the forefront. Please visit our website for the latest IRD, Justice and Peace events and Evangelisation training and outreach and other aspects of Columban missionary work. At COP 26 in Scotland at the beginning of Nov, World Leaders grappled as how to keep global warming to a minimum of 1.5 degrees. We had our own interesting COP 26 side events here in Fiji to coincide with events in Scotland and with young protesters throughout the world – this makes for interesting reading on the website.

This year's celebrations of our Feast Day in Fiji will be simple affairs – **Here in the central House** – Fr Teakare will lead Mass at 4.00pm for the staff and the students, followed by the usual social and dinner. **In Holy Family Parish Labasa** there will be a celebration in St Columban's Sector, starting with Mass at 6.00pm followed by a social evening. **In St Pius X Parish Raiwaga** – the feast day will be marked with morning Mass at 8.30am and a lunch for the parish staff at midday. **And in Ba Parish** – there is always a **celebration in Votua Village** where the Church of St Columban is located. On Sunday last the Feast of Christ the King was a **special day for the parishioners of Ba Parish** - they gathered to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of renaming of their parish from St Peter Chanel to that of **Christ the King**, along with the Sacrament of Confirmation of 34 candidates from 5 villages and 4 town areas.

Finally, at this time of the year **let us not forget the anniversaries** to the priesthood of our recently ordained priests – Fr Pat Visanti, 23rd Nov. 2017 – missioned in Pakistan, Fr Martin Koroiciri 22nd Nov. 2018, missioned in Chile, Fr Teakare 30th Nov. 2019 spending the Christmas in his native Rabi, waiting for the borders to open to go on mission; Fr Aminiasi Ravuwai 22nd Dec 2020, also waiting to return to Mission. **Congratulations also to Fr J.J. Ryan celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of ordination (60 years of priesthood) this December and Fr Donal McIlraith who celebrates his Golden Jubilee (50) years.**

Happy St Columbans Day to the entire Columban Family in Fiji and throughout the world.
Sincerely John McEvoy.

"We do not seek a God dwelling far off but a God who abides in us". (St Columban - Sermon 1)

"We are guests in this world, not just travellers but pilgrims" (Sermon 1)

Whether we are Franks, Irish or Britons or whatever race, we are members of one Body. (To Bishops)

"Let us eat with the poor, drink with the poor, share with the poor" (Sermon 7)

(Let us be for Christ not ourselves.)