

**Journey to the Margins:
The Contribution of the Missionary Society of St Columban
to the Theory and Practice of Overseas Mission within the
Australian Catholic Church 1920-2000**

Submitted by

**Rev. Charles Douglas Rue M.Th. (Jesuit School of Theology Berkeley, CA)
M.Env.Plan. (Macquarie University, NSW)**

School of Arts and Sciences (Victoria)

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

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**Australian Catholic University
Research Services
Locked Bag 4115
Fitzroy, Victoria 3065
Australia**

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This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

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Charles Douglas Rue

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Abstract

This thesis aims to show that the Columban Society made definable and significant contributions to the Australian Catholic missionary movement. The scope of the thesis is an analysis of the work of the Missionary Society of St Columban (Columban Society) in Australia from 1920-2000. Rather than the Society's foundation in Ireland or its overseas missionary work, the focus is the activity of the Columban Society in Australia. The thesis argues that the Columban Society helped advance the understanding and practice of overseas mission within the Australian Catholic Church in four major ways. Firstly, by organising support for its own missionary venture in China and elsewhere, it helped foster mission mindedness among Australian Catholics and established structures for the ongoing resourcing of missionary activity. Secondly, it set up seminaries to train missionary priests and later opened its reformed tertiary level missionary formation programs to all church personnel in Australia. Thirdly, it helped mould Catholic opinion through its commentary on such international issues as Australian relations with Asian peoples. Finally, it contributed to the development and dissemination of new Catholic theological teaching, particularly in relation to social justice and indigenous churches, religious dialogue and the connections between faith and ecology.

The Columban Society carved out a position for itself in Australia through negotiating with the local Catholic Church. Starting as a group of diocesan priests and, from 1920 onwards, tapping into the numerous Irish church personnel in Australia, the Society grew to become a missionary arm of the local church. It created a network of financial support and influence at the grass roots level in parishes and schools through a system of regular visits, collections and a monthly magazine. As the world and church changed, it added mission education programs that fed back to Australian Catholics ideas and experiences coming from the new indigenous churches.

The distinctive contribution of the Columban Society to the Australian Catholic Missionary Movement lies in its close relationship with diocesan based parish Catholics and the teaching role it developed about missionary experiences of overseas churches within the context of international affairs. The Society has a significant place

within the social history of Australia because of the direct influence it had on the opinions of the more than a quarter of the Australian population who identified as Catholics. The history of the Society is also a case study in the application of the reforms of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council of the Catholic Church 1962-1965 and the consequent redefinition of orthodox belief and practice.

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List Of Abbreviations

ACR	Australian Catholic Relief (now called Caritas Australia).
ARN	Australian Regional Newsletter
CI	<i>Columban Intercom</i> , an internal Columban Society newsletter
Columban Society	The Missionary Society of St Columban, (Constitutions and Directory , Dublin: The Missionary Society of Saint Columban, 1992). The Columban Society has also been known as the Maynooth Mission to China, The Irish Mission to China, and St Columban's Missionary Society.
CA	Central Administration of the Columban Society, resident in Ireland and consisting of the Society's Superior General and a Council of four
CAE	Columban Society Archives Essendon
CAI	Columban Society Archives Ireland
Catholic Mission	Common name used in Australia for the four Pontifical Missionary Aid Societies
CCJP	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace established by the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference
D	Director of a Region, who is a major superior in charge of an administrative area of the Society such as the Australian and New Zealand Region
J&P	Justice and Peace, the common name given in Catholic circles to the work for Social Justice and World Peace undertaken as a work of faith. Considerations of Development and the Integrity of Creation are now often included under this abbreviation
MEP	Paris Foreign Missionary Society
NMC	National Missionary Council (set up by the Conference of Australian Catholic Bishops)
Propaganda	The Vatican <i>Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples</i> , often called by part of its former Latin name of <i>Congregatio de Propaganda Fide</i>
SSOA	Seminary Statistics and Opinions Assessment
TFE	<i>The Far East</i> magazine published by the Region of Australia from 1920 onwards
WWI	First World War
WWII	Second World War

Catholic Church and Columban Society Terminology

- Columban Society** The Missionary Society of Saint Columban is an exclusively missionary Society sent by the Church “to the Nations” to proclaim and witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ.¹ The Society belongs to the canonical category of clerical Societies of Apostolic Life according to Canon 731.²
- Region/Mission Units** While the Columban Society operates as one body, it is divided into geographical areas called Regions or Mission Units for administration purposes. These are headed by a local major superior as a Regional Director or Mission Unit Coordinator.
- Prefecture Apostolic** It is an ecclesiastical administrative area that, while not yet constituted as a diocese, functions in a similar way to a diocese and has a Prefect in charge who acts in the name the Pope, usually directed by Propaganda under Canon 371. A Vicariate Apostolic is one step further along in the transition from prefecture apostolic to diocese.
- The Roman Curia** The Roman Curia is the general name given to the administrative offices within the Vatican City which serve the Pope in conducting Catholic church affairs worldwide under Canon 360.
- Particular church** A local church area served by its own bishop is usually referred to as a particular church but the term is sometimes applied to a national church under Canon 368.
- Episcopal Conference** Usually bishops within one national area form a permanent institution and meet at regular intervals to discuss common concerns and publish joint statements under Canon 447. Conferences of bishops in neighbouring areas often form a Federation of Conferences, such as for East Asia. The statements of such Conferences carry prestige.
- Religious** These Catholics lead what is called the consecrated life, usually living in common and taking public vows such as those of poverty, chastity and obedience under Canons 573 and 607.
- Diocesan priests** Often called secular priests in contrast to Religious and usually taking the promise of celibacy, diocesan priests collaborate with their territorial bishop to serve a diocese to which they are permanently attached (incardinated).

¹ Columban Society, **Constitutions and Directory**, (Dublin: The Missionary Society of Saint Columban, 1992).

² Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, **The Code of Canon Law: in English Translation**, (London: Collins Liturgical Press, 1983), Canon 731.

Reverse Mission

The Society used its position as a bridging agency between Third World Catholic churches and the Australian church to develop and popularise new theological propositions among ordinary Catholics. New ideas included those on the nature of mission, social justice and respect for cultural plurality and local churches. This activity is variously called Columban “Mission Education”, “Mission Awareness” or “Reverse Mission”.

Introduction

This thesis is a study of the Catholic **Missionary Society of St Columban** (Columban Society) in Australia from 1920-2000.¹ It argues that the Columban Society helped advance the understanding and practice of cross-cultural overseas mission within the Australian Catholic Church. Rather than its foundation in Ireland or its overseas missionary work, the focus of this research is the history of the Society in Australia. It explores the four main initiatives the Society took as part of the local missionary movement: organising support for its missionary venture, training missionaries, offering commentary on particular international issues from a missionary perspective, and helping to develop new Catholic theological expression.

Commenting on one change the Society brought about in its first four years in Australia, Archbishop Mannix said at a dinner for the outgoing local Columban superior in 1924,

The [Columban] Mission has accomplished a silent revolution among Australian Catholics. The clearest evidence of this was to be found in the attitude of the Catholic towards the Chinese in this country. Formerly the Chinese vegetable or laundry man was an object of pure contempt. Now he is looked upon with interest, sympathy and pity.²

Even though his language may sound patronising to twenty-first century ears, Mannix maintained that within four years of arriving in Australia the Columban Society had helped local Catholics go beyond attitudes prevailing at that time, a judgment that will be supported by argument in this thesis. Missionary work and the exchanges it occasions have been portrayed as a “meeting of cultures”.³ Through its missionary work carried out through the medium of Catholic faith, the Society transmitted ideas and images in both directions as it went overseas on mission and then fed back information and opinions to

¹ The Canon Law Society Trust, **The Code of Canon Law: in English Translation**, (London: Collins Liturgical Publications, 1983), Canons 731-746. Within the Roman Church legal structures, the Columban Society is a clerical Society of Apostolic Life subject to the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples within the Roman Curia. It is neither a Religious Order nor a group of diocesan priests who fall under different Congregations.

² *Aussie Yappings* (Internal Columban Australian Regional Newsletter) January 1924.

³ S. Piggin, “Introduction: The Reflex Impact of Missions on Australian Christianity”, M. Hutchinson and G. Treloar, eds., **This Gospel Shall be Preached: Essays on the Australian Contribution to World Mission**, (Macquarie, NSW: The Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1998), pp. 7-26.

its supporters at home. This thesis argues that the impact the Society made in Australia was just as significant as the impact of its work in mission countries.

Missionary work involves Christians crossing geographic, cultural and language borders to engage in evangelisation, establishing and strengthening local churches.⁴ All Christian churches and individual believers regard themselves as instruments of God's outreach in this world and so are always "on mission" wherever they live. However, in a more restricted sense, some individuals have felt called by God and are sent by their churches to engage full-time in missionary activity. Until recent decades, this type of missionary activity has involved missionaries leaving from predominantly Christian countries to work overseas, and was commonly referred to as being "on the missions" or "in the foreign missions". Members of the Columban Society have been part of this movement overseas and in this study the phrases "the missions", referred to in the plural, and "missionary activity" are used in this sense.

The Columban Missionary Society was founded in Ireland by two diocesan priests, Fathers Edward Galvin and John Blowick.⁵ Galvin was ordained a priest for Cork Diocese, Ireland, in 1909. The next year he was given on loan to the Diocese of Brooklyn USA but was searching for a more worthwhile commitment. Galvin met the Canadian Father John Fraser who was on a whirlwind tour of North America and Europe to gather priests for missionary work in China. Released from his diocese in 1912, Galvin worked as a volunteer in a Vicariate west of Shanghai run by the French Vincentian missionary congregation. Encouraged by two diocesan Irish priests who followed him to China, Galvin came to the conclusion in 1916 that a specifically Irish based venture was needed to organise a constant backup supply of priests and money for their work. The power of organisation was central to his vision. Returning to Ireland via the USA, where he discussed his hopes with senior clerics, he tapped into Irish seminary contacts at the prestigious St Patrick's College Maynooth.

⁴ D. Bosch, **Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), pp. 8-11; L. Hensen, "Defining Mission: Theological and Procedural Elements in Considering 'Australian Mission'", Hutchinson, **This Gospel**, 1998, pp. 27-45.

⁵ B. Smyth, **The Chinese Batch - The Maynooth Mission to China 1911-1920**, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994); W. Barrett, **The Red Lacquered Gate**, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967); G. Anderson,



Fathers Edward Galvin and John Blowick, Columban Society founders, in 1920 and
1956

Galvin sought out the young Maynooth professor, Blowick, who had also heard Fraser speak of missionary needs in China. Galvin and Blowick formed an advisory committee which made a submission to a meeting of the Irish Bishops who on 10 October 1916 blessed the Irish missionary project, commended it to the support of the faithful, and approved establishment of a training house for priest missionaries to China.⁶ On 29 June 1918 the organisation that was to become the Columban Society was canonically erected in the Catholic Church.⁷

The newly formed Society set out to appeal to those of Irish descent around the world, the Irish "diaspora". Galvin's aim was "TO BIND [sic] Ireland, America and Australia together in this work. Ireland has the vocations. Australia and US [USA] have the funds and some vocations too. We must not confine it within the four seas of Ireland but try to make it a work of the Irish race."⁸ In late 1917 he travelled to the USA seeking support among friends he had previously cultivated through letters from China. Australia was the next target. The process of founding the Columban Society had been regularly reported in the Melbourne Archdiocesan Catholic paper, *The Advocate*, since 1916. In November 1918 Blowick wrote to Archbishop Daniel Mannix asking for his support. It was a natural move since Mannix was his former Rector at Maynooth but also a shrewd one as he was a leader among the Irish bishops who made up most of the Catholic episcopacy in Australia. At his behest, the Australasian Bishops' Meeting sent an invitation in October 1919 for the Society to come to Australia and New Zealand.⁹ So it was that two Irish Columban priests arrived in Sydney 6 January 1920 on their way to Melbourne to establish a branch of *The Irish Mission to China*, the popular title for the Society in

⁶ Smyth, **Chinese Batch**, 1994, pp. 65-67. In 1909, the Society of the African Missions, a continental European foundation, established the first exclusively missionary seminary in Cork.

⁷ Columban Society, "Commentary on the Constitutions", (Navan Ireland: Columban Society, 1932). In 1918 the Society took the name of *The Maynooth Mission to China* becoming *The Society of St Columban for Mission Among the Chinese* three years later. In the 1992 Constitutions of the Society it is called **The Missionary Society of St Columban**. The name honoured the Irish missionary monk to Europe in the 6-7th centuries, Columbanus of Bangor.

⁸ B. Smyth, ed., **Galvin and Galvin-Related Letters 1912-1927**, (Navan, Ireland: Columban Society, 1995), no. 43, August 1916.

⁹ Minutes of the Australasian Bishops' Conference 1919, p. 16 (per Father Tom Boland). The Minutes state, "Father Blowick's appeal for permission to collect funds in Australia for the carrying on of the good work was most sympathetically received, and the Archbishop of Melbourne was encouraged to invite Father Blowick to send representatives of the mission to Australia for the purpose of collecting funds." **Australasian Catholic Record**, April, 1988.

Australia for the first few years.¹⁰ By 2000, the Society operated in fourteen administrative Regions and Mission Units around the world coordinated by a Superior General and his administration based in Ireland.¹¹ This history is about the intervening eighty years, research being taken up to the year 2000 because of significant events in the Society's Australian story during the 1990s.

Unlike Ireland and the USA, there has been no published work on the history of the Catholic missionary movement in Australia apart from a pamphlet by Cyril Hally published in 1972.¹² Various histories of Australian Catholic missionary groups have detailed much of their work among the recipients of evangelisation but the authors have not put their studies into a wider national or international context. Even James Waldersee's major work on the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Australia (now part of Catholic Mission) carried little missiological analysis and largely reflected the attitudes of longtime National Director Bishop A. Thomas, and his USA contemporary and counterpart, Bishop Fulton Sheen. "We are not missiologists, we are not anthropologists, we are not concerned with the change of social patterns, etc. etc. – we are beggars for the active missionaries of the Church."¹³ Seen as a case study of the Columban Society in Australia, one aim of this research is to explore some characteristics of the Australian Catholic missionary movement and set the Society's history in that context.

No history of the work of the Columban Society in Australia has been published apart from magazine articles or small booklets distributed for promotional purposes. Some references to the Society and individual Columban priests have, however, appeared in Catholic and secular works.¹⁴ The sole reference to the Society in Professor Patrick

¹⁰ Columban Society, **The Dawn**, (Essendon: Columban Society, 1923); P. Cleary, "Some Glimpses of Chinese History", **The Irish Ecclesiastical Record**, VIII, 1916, pp. 495-513.

¹¹ Columban Society, **Constitutions and Directory: The Missionary Society of Saint Columban**, (Dublin: Columban Society, 1992), Chapter III, "Organisation and Government of the Society".

¹² E. M. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement: an Historical Survey, 1830-1980**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990); A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999); C. Hally, **Australian Missionary Effort, Opportunity? - Danger?** (Sydney: ACTS Publication, 1973), No. 1639; C. Hally, "An Overview of Australian Catholic Missions", Hutchinson, **This Gospel**, 1998, p. 237.

¹³ J. Waldersee, **A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Australia 1837-1977**, (Kensington, NSW: Chevalier Press, 1983), p. 414.

¹⁴ L. Dixon, "The Australian Missionary Endeavour in China, 1888-1953", Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1978; E. Campion, **Australian**

O'Farrell's monumental work on the Catholic Church in Australia imputes the wrong patron to the Society, naming Columba of Iona rather than the missionary to Europe, Columbanus of Bangor in northern Ireland.¹⁵ Books on particular Columban priests from this Region have focused on their work overseas and given little space to the Society's local work.¹⁶ However, some of the blame for this gap in the historical record rests with missionaries in general and the Society itself. Irish missionaries, Hogan notes, were poor record keepers (in contrast to the French) and almost all primary materials are held in the archives of foreign dioceses or missionary agencies which historians can find difficult to access.¹⁷ These reasons for gaps in the historical record also apply broadly to the Columban Society. Columban priests did not keep diaries of their work as was required of Jesuit and USA based Maryknoll missionaries. Nor have Columban members published about the Australian work of the Society in academic journals.

The place of missionary enterprises in Australian social history has also been largely ignored. Within secular Australian academic circles, religious studies and missionary sources have only recently gained some attention.¹⁸ As late as 1988, Molony contended that "the majority of the Australian people themselves remain in undisturbed ignorance about religion despite its influence on the shaping of their society".¹⁹ As Thomas Boland has argued, Catholics, as a large sub-culture in Australian society, need to claim their rightful place in local scholarship rather than have stereotypes which abandon normal

Catholics, (Ringwood, VIC: Viking, Penguin Books, 1987), pp.131, 151 and 186-192; L. Strahan, **Australia's China - Changing Perspectives from the 1930s to the 1990s** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 79-88.

¹⁵ P. O'Farrell, **The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales University, 1985/revised 1992), p. 267.

¹⁶ P. Crosby, **Pencilling Prisoner**, (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1960); B. Stannard, **Poor Man's Priest - The Brian Gore Story**, (Sydney: Collins, 1984).

¹⁷ Hogan, **Irish Missionary Movement**, 1990, pp. 7-8.

¹⁸ P. O'Farrell, "The Cultural Ambivalence of Australian Religion", S. Goldberg and F. Smith, **Australian Cultural History**, (Canberra: History of Ideas Unit, ANU, 1982), pp. 3- 8; S. Swain, **Single Mothers and their Children: disposal, punishment and survival in Australia**, (Cambridge, UK: Press Syndicate University of Cambridge, 1995), p. xxii. Missionaries tended to be buried by modern academia in the same way as single mothers and their children were by respectable Australian society. "Unseen" groups, however, deserve a history.

¹⁹ J. Molony, **The Penguin Bicentennial History of Australia**, (Viking, Victoria, 1987), p. 402; P. Rule and K. Engebretson, **My Story, Our Story: Religion and Identity in Australia**, (Wentworth Falls, NSW: Social Science Press, 1988), p. ix and xiii. Rule and Engebretson state, "The ideas associated with traditions should also be open to the perspectives of philosophy and theology... religion remains a very important factor in Australian life".

research and critical evaluation presented as history.²⁰ Recognition of the Catholic missionary story is part of this claim.

But the churches share some of the blame for gaps and distortions. It was only in the mid-twentieth century that church historians showed a “greater scientific concern for the analysis of original documents and have the freedom to interpret these sources in a way that did not lead to a predetermined, or at least predictable, goal”.²¹ The standard of Catholic Church history writing in Australia has improved following the leadership shown in O’Farrell’s 1968-69 publications.²² However, Hilary Carey contends that even when religious history passed from memorial to scholarly practice in the 1960s, the fallacy that Australians were indifferent to religion was perpetuated while secular historians kept affirming the secularist vision of Australia.²³ She suggests that now that the full range of religious experiences in Australia is beginning to be opened to historical scrutiny it will enter the mainstream of Australian historiography, if it can escape from its denominational confines. This last comment is problematic. Taken in one sense, it applauds scientific scholarship free of bias, but taken in another sense, it could lead to making interpretations of religious history that are removed from the complex theological underpinnings of the actors involved, imposing a new distortion. A growing body of writing on the history of religion in Australia will help reevaluations.²⁴ In a climate of a slowly growing acceptance of the value and complexity of religious studies, one aim of this study is to put a historical interpretation of the main works of the Columban Society in Australia and their theological foundations on the public record. It may help widen thinking about the contribution made by missionaries to Australian religious and social history.²⁵

²⁰ T. Boland, **James Duhig**, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1986), Preface.

²¹ J. Bradley and R. Muller, **Church History - An Introduction to Research, Reference Works and Methods**, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), p. 13.

²² T. Boland, “Thirty Years On: The O’Farrell Era”, **The Australasian Catholic Record**, lxxv (April 1998), pp. 145-156.

²³ H. Carey, “Religious History”, G. Davison, J. Hirst and S. Macintyre, eds., **Oxford Companion to Australian History**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 551-553.

²⁴ H. Carey, I. Breward, A. O’Brien, S. Rutland and R. Thompson, “Australian Religion Review, 1980-2000, Part 1: Surveys, Bibliographies and Religions Other Than Christianity”, **The Journal of Religious History**, 24, 3 (October 2000), pp. 296-313.

²⁵ B. Mansfield, “Thinking about Australian Religious History”, **The Journal of Religious History**, 15, 3 (June 1989), pp. 330-344.

Since Columban Society members worked principally in East Asian missions, the Asian-Australian relationship is a central issue in this research. Academic historical studies have explored this relationship primarily from the perspectives of geo-politics, economics, sociology, art, and migration.²⁶ But this provides a limited view.²⁷ Asian religions, the openness of Asian peoples to accept foreign ideologies such as Communism or Capitalism, the moral dimension of international trade, and cross-cultural issues are some significant issues in the Asian-Australian relationship that are often overlooked in study and research.²⁸ This work will offer evidence that runs counter to a dismissive view of missionary activity as part of developing the relationship. It will argue that, in its role as a bridge between the Australian and Asian peoples, Columban Society history provides sources for a more balanced judgement on their relationships.

Australian Catholic understanding of missionary work itself has also changed. The aspirations of diverse peoples and countries regarding political, economic, social and even environmental issues are now seen as integral to Columban missionary evangelisation. There has been a growing recognition that missionary work is carried out primarily by local lay Catholic people in the mission churches, not foreign missionaries, even when missionaries carried leadership roles. Contrary to the popular image that mission work is usually carried on among primitive rural people, Columban sources have always told stories of mission work in urban centres and among cultures with long recorded histories. Nor did the Columban members see the Catholic Church as a monolith, lacking diversity. The building up of the self-sufficiency and particular cultural style of local churches was a Columban mission priority and outcome. While some messages given by Columban members to Australian Catholics reinforced mistaken ideas, overall, the Society more often brought such ideas into question. As it reported

²⁶ C. Inglis, S. Gunasekaren, G. Sullivan and Chung-Tong Wu, **Asians in Australia: The Dynamics of Migration and Settlement**, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992); A. Broinowski, **The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1992/1996 second edition); Strahan, **Australia's China** 1996; D. Walker, **Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939**, (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999).

²⁷ N. Viviani "Australia's Future in Asia: People politics and Culture", D. Walker, ed., **Australian Perceptions of Asia: Australian Cultural History**, (Kensington: UNSW), No 9, 1990, p. 102; G. Sheridan, **Asian Values, Western Dreams: understanding the New Asia**, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1999), pp. 4 and 13-15; A. Milner, "Approaching Asia, and Asian Studies, in Australia", **Asian Studies Review**, 23, 2 (June 1999), p. 196; A. Jamrozik, **Social change and cultural transformation in Australia**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 140-142.

²⁸ S. Brawley, "HIST522, Australian Images of Asia", (UNSW, 1998: PLU499 and PLU 501). The collection of readings given to students for this course omitted any missionary sources.

back to supporters about mission work that was creative and pushing the boundaries of emerging societies, it also pushed the boundaries of Australian thinking and imagination about the very nature of missionary work.

The project has internal relevance to the Columban Society. The Society's 1982 General Assembly (a six-yearly reflection and planning meeting) decided that a critical history of the Columban enterprise should be written as a necessary resource to help in revising its Constitutions. It was part of a general reflection on the Catholic Church's mission "in the world" flagged by its Second Vatican Ecumenical Council 1962-65 (Vatican II) and its call for renewal. The Assembly initiated a period of reflection to reach a common self-understanding of the Society in the light of its origins and living traditions, and the challenge of mission today.²⁹ This thesis is, therefore, an Australian contribution to that reflection.

The work will show that over eighty years, 1920-2000, the structural framework of the Columban Society in Australia has remained stable, underpinning and maintaining its organisational contribution to mission. A constant underlying factor has been the commitment of Columban members to mission in Jesus Christ both as a meta-narrative and a life lived within the structures of the Society. However, within that framework, the thesis will argue that several major work priorities overseas and in Australia have changed as part of a redefinition of mission. The Society moved away from a leadership position in churches overseas to take on a supporting role. Its mission work became more of an exchange between sister churches with the Society acting as a bridge between them. The thesis will also explore the reforms in the Columban seminary programs revised to train Columban and other missionary personnel in Australia. Finally, it will argue that the Society consciously took on a teaching role both to help form Australian Catholic opinion on important international issues and to advance theological formulations connected with evangelisation. These changes were not inevitable, nor were they always progressive. Change was neither smooth nor linear and always had to be negotiated. Why and how these changes took place is at the heart of this research.

²⁹ "Acts of the General Chapter 1982", Nos. 240 and 241.3, CAE, Chapter/Assembly File; "Dogmatic Constitution of the Church", W. Abbott, ed., **The Documents of Vatican II**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), No. 8.

A number of themes recurring in the Columban history in Australia continue to have ramifications for its future. The international experience and perspective of its members is central. This was first manifest in the interaction between a Society founded in Ireland and the social values of Australian candidates. The interaction challenged the Society to appreciate Australian ways of viewing religious pluralism, secularisation and a willingness to "give it a go", traits which local Catholics had at least partially accommodated in their living of the faith. The need to appreciate other ways of thinking and living was heightened by the ongoing reflections on world affairs presented as Columban feedback to Australian Catholics. They were challenged to recognise themselves as members of a church that appreciated diversity, plurality and social involvement at the international level as integral to living the Gospel message. Columban members' first hand experience of international affairs gave credibility to their messages. The gaining and sharing of this experience remains as a defining characteristic of members.

Another recurring theme is the human cost of missionary activity. The physical, emotional and spiritual strain of working in cross-cultural situations, and being called upon to share that experience in an organised way with Australian Catholics, was high. Columban members were called to be on the margins of church and society, living in the interstices as a way of probing and contributing to the missionary character of church. In the midst of this tension and impermanence, some chose to leave the Columban enterprise to find a life with more meaning and satisfaction elsewhere. Others remained as members of the Society only to atrophy, often retreating into past ideologies and feeling alienated by Catholic theological changes following Vatican II. Trying to minimise this cost was the reason for multiple internal updating and renewal programs organised by the Society for its own members. The issue of human cost is also related to new expectations about individual human fulfillment arising among people from the Vietnam War times. It was one reason for a decline in priestly vocations in Australia as part of a First World trend. Recognition of the various human costs involved in missionary work raises questions about the worth of missionary activity, making the future of professional missionary groups like the Columban Society problematic.

Mission historian Kevin Ward has argued that, “Christianity was and is being created and recreated on the margins, the boundary, the periphery, and in doing so challenges the boundaries of all boundaries and peripheries.”³⁰ Columban members have undertaken a journey based on the conviction of being called by God to go on mission. Some atrophied but most grew from the experience. They joined with others in the Society in naming goals to be achieved, honing individual abilities, having the opportunity to achieve those goals and reaching a level of satisfaction with their lives. In the process the Columban Society achieved much good and helped advance the thinking on missionary activity and its practice within the Australian church, pushing the boundaries in an ongoing *Journey to the Margins*.

³⁰ K. Ward and B. Stanley, **The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999**, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), p. 3.

Sources and Method

Exploring the history of the Columban Society in Australia opens an area that has not previously been researched. The few short references to the Society that appear in published works provide little interpretation of the Columban venture. For this reason, this thesis uses mostly primary sources, putting them in the context of works on mission history, mission theology and related secular works largely published in the latter half of the twentieth century. This was also a period when Catholic historiography in Australia began to use recognised academic methodology.

The primary sources used in this research are the archives of the administrations of the Superiors General in Ireland, and the archives of the Australian Regional Directors and Columban seminaries held at Essendon, a suburb of Melbourne.¹ These archives contain general Society and local Regional records of meetings and planning statements, personnel statistics, materials on promotional activity and mission education, financial statements, details of Society property transactions, and reports on seminary affairs and students. Correspondence in the archives ranges from negotiations and daily business matters, to exchanges of news, impressions and feelings. As these administrative materials are dated and signed, they offer a reliable source both for events and terminology used in particular periods. Much of the official Society documentation is phrased in measured canon law terms using a consistent linguistic style, often prepared as a response to Roman or Society directives.² Set up for internal Society use, the documents in the archives tend to give straight forward descriptive reports but contain little analysis or interpretation, except in some of the annual reports to the Superior General or when a document contains a preamble. Not meant for publication, the few personal letters between superiors preserved in the archive often carry a blunt honesty. Such frankness has made the Society cautious in opening its archives prior to this project,

¹ Some sorting, boxing and cataloging of the Columban Society archives in Essendon to make them more useable was done by Charles Rue and Maureen Wilson 1996-97, and the work has continued.

² The Canon Law Society Trust, **The Code of Canon Law: in English Translation**, (London: Collins Liturgical Publications, 1983). The Code for the Roman Church runs to 1752 canons with multiple sub-clauses that detail the functioning of the Catholic Church. Within this framework, each institutional group such as the Columban Society has its own rules which are supervised by an administrative section within the Roman Curia, the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (commonly called Propaganda) overseeing the Columban Society.

unhappy about the way in which they were misused by previous researchers.³ Likewise, researchers have misused pictures from Columban promotion materials to convey distorted images of missionary work.



Representation of a church and presbytery from the first Calendar produced by the Society in Australia in 1923 using photographs of Columban work in China

³ O'Grady to Digan 27.7.89; Connolly to Gormly 8.9.89; Connolly to O'Grady 8.9.89, CAE (Columban Regional Archives Essendon), D/CA (Director/Central Administration Ireland) files.

The Australian Regional promotion magazine, *The Far East*, published monthly since 1920, has been little used by researchers. Within its more than 25,000 pages of text and photos, it has told stories of missionaries and their work, the cultures and peoples they worked with, and the Australian Catholic communities that supported the work. Primarily a promotional tool, its accuracy, selection and interpretation of material needs to be tested against broader sources. Within these limits, however, it also offered analysis and reasoned motivation to those sharing in missionary activity as a work of Catholic faith. Notably, it indicates the concerns that the Society wished to communicate to Australian Catholics at different periods over eighty years, 1920-2000.⁴

In 1995-97 the *Profile and Personal History Survey* (PPHS), a data base of all Society members who have been attached to the Australian Region as Columban students or priests since 1920, was compiled by the coordinator of the Regional History Project from written and oral sources.⁵ A *Seminary Statistics and Opinion Assessment* (SSOA) was part of the PPHS, drawing together themes and interpretations emerging from the members themselves about Society seminaries in Australia. These sources give weight to what might otherwise be mere opinion and impression, the individual stories adding humanity and faith to Columban Society history, discouraging any writing of a rarefied "lives of the saints".⁶ While individual Columban priests have been influential in the Australian Region because of their vision, strong personalities or length of appointments in key positions, this research will argue that clusters of people gathered in particular places and at specific periods seem to have been a more powerful influence. It is evident from the SSOA that these groups were not always those in leadership.

Various overseas and Australian Columban in-house newsletters record some of the day to day events and the sometimes emotionally expressed concerns of the Society and its members. The Regional administration published a newsletter spasmodically in the 1920s, appearing almost monthly since 1958. The Society's leadership in Ireland since 1971 has most months circulated a Society-wide bulletin to members including, on

⁴ TFE December 1943 and June 1968.

⁵ CAE, History File. *The Far East* published 25th and 50th Society anniversary issues that contained some material on its Australian work but emphasised major achievements and listed dates for these.

⁶ R. Grele, ed., **Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History**, (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1985), p. 214.

occasion, supplements giving background on particular issues of Society concern.⁷ Also, each Columban Region and Mission Unit has a regular newsletter that sometimes carried news of Australian members. Written for Columban members only, they are fairly honest and not as self-editing as its promotional materials might be.

The archives also contain limited materials on relationships between the Society and dioceses, and with numerous non-Columban groups and individuals connected with missionary work. The PPHS project included searching the archives of church bodies with which the Society has had a close association but its report states that little relevant material was found. Some priests and bishops of dioceses in Australia and New Zealand were also interviewed as part of that diocesan archival search.⁸

The writing of this thesis on the Society is placed within the context of the modern twentieth century Catholic missionary movement and international struggles to de-centre western world domination that brought new thinking on the role of missionary activity.⁹ Missionary outreach operates within the secular world and engages with world events, most mission historians now considering secular historical events as part of the ongoing unfolding of God's presence in this world. The teaching of Vatican II is that the concerns of the world are central to the mission of the Church and are part of the incarnational way in which God's Reign comes about.¹⁰ The Columban story is not isolated from changes in the countries and among peoples of which it was a part. External events affected Society aims, opportunities and work priorities overseas as well as in Australia. Examples include the upsurge in Irish aspirations for independence from 1915 that helped increase Society recruitment and the worldwide economic depression (1929-1939) that lessened

⁷ B. Smyth to all Regional Directors 28.2.74, CAE D/CA; B. Smyth, CI (Columban Intercom) June 1991.

⁸ "History Project Report", 1998, CAE, History File.

⁹ G. Tromf, ed. **The Gospel is not Western**, (Maryknoll, USA; Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 3-16; J. Scherer and S. Bevens, eds., **New Directions in Mission and Evangelisation: Basic Statements 1974-1991**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), p. ix.

¹⁰ W. Abbott, ed., **The Documents of Vatican II**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966). The Council, in the light of Christ, "wishes to speak to all people in order to illuminate the mystery of humankind and to cooperate in finding the solution to the outstanding problems of our time", "Church Today", No. 10. "The pilgrim Church is missionary by its very nature", and its missionary activity must be reformed in style and content to better focus on the "joy and hope, the grief and anguish" of people in the modern world. "Missions" No. 2 and "Church Today", No. 1. Missionary work is to be carried out with a greater respect for God's presence in other cultures and peoples' religious experiences "Non-Christians", No. 2 and "Ecumenism", No. 4. J. S. Escobar, "Mission Studies, Past, Present and Future", **Missiology - An**

its financial support base. Two world wars and regional conflicts, the move from colonialism to Communism in China and elsewhere, and the Cold War disrupted Society work and modified the aims of its work to accommodate the aspirations of peoples in emerging countries. In more recent years the Society modified its work priorities in response to the rise of capitalist Security State dictatorships and their abuse of human rights, the 1968 worldwide student protests and the questioning of “progress and development” economic models. Particular issues the Society addressed as integral parts of evangelisation included those of migration and refugees, a growing awareness of the diversity of cultures and religions, and the ecological crisis.

Since the Society commitments have been primarily in Asian areas and peoples of Asian background form a significant segment of the Australian population, secular literature on Australia’s relationship to Asia is of particular importance.¹¹ This thesis questions the approach of much of this literature, arguing that the Society did not fit the stereotype of missionaries they present. Missionaries were not irrelevant where they worked, often present in large numbers over extended periods of time, nor irrelevant to Australians who demonstrated a sustained interest in the mission ventures they supported. Drawing from its foreign experience, the Society both fed back commentary to its Australian supporters to generate alternative interpretations to secular commentators, and organised campaigns on social issues that presented the aspirations of foreign peoples for a level of human happiness as a religious issue. The Society also worked in several Latin American countries from 1952 onwards, helping to create an awareness of Latin American society as well as Asian. This thesis argues that in generating opinion and advocacy on that area among Australians it was filling a gap in the popular media and literature which was generally silent or focused on sensational stories of human rights abuse. It put the issue of human rights in the context of Security State dictatorships, arguing that Western governments supported dictatorships for economic and anti-Communist reasons.

International Review, (January 1996), pp. 3-30.

¹¹ L. Strahan, **Australia’s China - Changing Perspectives from the 1930s to the 1990s**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 79-88. A. Broinowski, **The Yellow Lady: Australian impressions of Asia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1992/1996 second edition); D. Walker, **Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939**, (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999); G. Sheridan, **Asian Values, Western Dreams: Understanding the New Asia**, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1999).

Catholic historiography needs to move beyond the a-historical methods of the past. John Tosh has identified major areas of concern to modern historians, principally the reasons behind research and the purposes for which the researcher wishes to use it that informs the way sources are collected and dominant themes identified.¹² Faced with the phenomena of biased and unscholarly accounts being presented as Australian religious history, the works of Patrick O'Farrell from the late 1960s marked a transition to modern scholarship.¹³ By 1991, however, O'Farrell was concerned by a trend in Catholic circles to return to employing clerical authors and a trend to produce works he regarded as "irrelevant to the intellectual and cultural life of Australians generally".¹⁴ While this warning always has validity, O'Farrell bases his remarks on a pre-Vatican II view of a priest's role in the church and a questionable understanding of the missionary nature of the church and the theological discipline of Missiology. A current perception and understanding of these issues are basic prerequisites for writing a valid history of a modern missionary organisation.

Much of the literature on the Catholic missionary movement in Australia in the last two centuries has focused on the work of Religious Orders. As an organisation founded by diocesan priests, however, Columban Society activity was part of changing approaches to missionary activity that began in the seventeenth century and flowered three centuries later, showing marked contrasts with the histories of various Religious groups.¹⁵ This thesis argues that the Columban history in Australia marks a change in style of missionary outreach from Australia and a shift in the resource base of that activity.

¹² F. Stern, **The Varieties of History**, (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1956/1973); Tosh, **Pursuit of History**, 1991; J. Matthews, "Doing Theory or Using Theory", **Australian Historical Studies**, 106, (1996), pp. 55. Matthews is concerned about ideological bias leading to "the disdain of the empirical".

¹³ T. Boland, "Thirty Years On: The O'Farrell Era", **Australasian Catholic Record**, lxxv (April 1991), pp. 145-156.

¹⁴ P. O'Farrell, "The Writing of Australian Catholic History 1980-90", **Australasian Catholic Record**, lxxviii (1991), pp. 134-137. He presumes that a priest writing history is a dereliction of his priestly duty to the sacramental ministry. This view is contrary to the words of ordination itself and the tasks of priests and missionaries outlined by Vatican II to relate church and world. Most Australian Catholic historical works lack the missiological understanding rapidly developing after Vatican II that would help interpret church dynamics.

¹⁵ C. Duster, "The Canonical Status of Members of the Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right", Doctoral Thesis, Gregorian University, Rome, 1994; The Canon Law Society Trust, **The Code of Canon Law**, 1983, canons 573, 607 and 731. Members of Institutes of Consecrated Life most often belong to Religious Institutes, take public vows and have a stable form of living. Societies of Apostolic Life resemble institutes of consecrated life without taking vows, and clerical members can be directly attached (incardinated) to them while also being subject to the norms applying to the diocesan clergy.

In exploring how the Australian missionary movement widened its support base by appealing to Catholics at the diocesan parish level, the work of James Waldersee on the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Australia, part of the missionary support structure called Catholic Mission, is particularly valuable. Following a 1919 directive from church officials in Rome, every diocese was to establish a branch of Catholic Mission. It later established bases in parish communities and the Columban Society had to continually negotiate its position within the local church in relation to it, even though the Society network predated Catholic Mission activity that imitated the Columban approach to building support in Australia. The Society, however, was able to maintain its position not only because it was the first to organise but because it carried characteristics distinct from Catholic Mission. In addition to raising support, the Columban Society established training programs for missionary personnel and developed an organised teaching role drawing on theological insights from mission situations. This thesis adds to the exploration of diocesan support for the modern missionary movement in Australia as presented in Waldersee's work.

The Columban founders were diocesan priests and the Society maintained a close connection with its diocesan roots in a venture that helped develop the missionary dimension of the Catholic priesthood. However, the Society structure meant that its work was not restricted to a single diocese, developing to take on its own character, and this was illustrated by the new style of seminary training it created. The history of traditional pre-1970 Catholic seminary training in Australia is comparatively well covered through works such that of Kevin Walsh on St Patrick's College, Manly.¹⁶ Within the neo-Thomistic theology and discipline required by Roman law and adapted within the Irish church and its flow through to Australia, a diocesan ethos in the training initially given to Columban students gave it a high degree of commonality with Australian diocesan seminaries. This study suggests that herein lay a problem. The focus on diocesan-style priestly training proved inadequate for many Columban members who found they were ill-prepared to engage with the cultures of the people in mission areas and to their personal detriment suffered various forms of "culture shock". David Strong's work on

¹⁶ K. Walsh, *Yesterday's Seminary*, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1998), pp. 16-17, 66 and 87-89; K. Livingston, *The Emergence of an Australian Catholic Priesthood 1883-1915*, (Manly, NSW: Catholic Theological Faculty of Sydney, 1977); Dries, *USA Missionary Mission Movement*, 1998, pp. 259-270.

the Jesuit Society in Australia detailed problems manifest within its traditional Irish style training emerging in the late 1960s. The Columban seminary faced similar issues of authority, spirituality and the intellectual challenges of the modern world.¹⁷ There is, however, little post-1970 literature on seminary training or the formation of missionaries. This study will explore the changed seminary system which the Society developed from the early 1970s to address problems both of competence and the trauma which Columban members faced when working in other cultures. The new seminary system incorporated the new theological discipline called Missiology and new educational methodologies that addressed both study content and personal growth issues.¹⁸

Literature on Missiology is central in interpreting Columban objectives and activity in its Australian story. Developed largely in the twentieth century among all major Christian groups, Missiology combines several theological streams, principally ecclesiology, and borrows from the secular science of cultural anthropology.¹⁹ Its concerns are broad and include a rethinking of colonial encounters involving missionaries, the development of indigenous theologies and Christian involvement in inter-religious dialogue.²⁰ The work of Louis Luzbetek on missionaries as cultural exchange agents explores the phenomena in a general way but this study adds a critique that is particular to the Australian Columban history.²¹

¹⁷ D. Strong, **Jesuits in Australia: an Ethnographic History of the Society of Jesus in Australia**, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1995).

¹⁸ A. English, "Formation at the Pacific Mission Institute - Into the Heart of Darkness", Thesis as partial requirements for MA, University of New England, NSW, 1991.

¹⁹ C. Smith, "The Legacy of William Carey", **The International Bulletin of Missionary Research**, 16, 1 (January 1992), p. 3; P. Hiebert, **Anthropological Reflections on Missiological issues** (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994); C. Kraft, **Anthropology and Christian Witness**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996). Biblically orientated churches also began viewing mission with anthropological eyes, emphasising statistics.

²⁰ Society of the Divine Word, **Towards an Asian Theology of Mission** (Philippines: Divine Word Publications, 1995); A Nolan and M Armour, "Armed Struggle as a Last Resort: The Roman Catholic Position", C. Villa-Vincencio, ed., **Theology and Violence: The South African Debate**, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), pp. 209-214; D Peterson and J Allman, "Introduction: New Directions in the History of Missions in Africa", **The Journal of Religious History**, 23, 1 (February 1999), p. 5.

²¹ L. Luzbetek, **The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1963 revised 1988); G. Gossen, **Religion in Australian Culture: An Anthropological View**, (Strathfield, Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 1997).

In offering a critical missionary interpretation of Columban work, this thesis differs from the approach taken in the published histories of most Religious groups, and from Waldersee's work and works on Australian seminaries. It also differs from the survey made of the activity of Catholic groups involved in the missionary movement in Australia at the end of the twentieth century to assess their spirit, work priorities and vision for the future.²² The survey's questions focused on cultural aspects, religious dialogue and lay involvement in mission, but the work carried little historical perspective.

No Australian works have been produced of the depth of those of Edmund Hogan on the modern Catholic missionary movement in Ireland or Angelyn Dries on the USA. These two authors explore the Catholic and national backgrounds to the rise of the Catholic missionary movement in English speaking countries in the nineteenth century and changes during the twentieth century.²³ Hogan explored the roots of the missionary mentality among Irish people, a mentality that led to the entry of the Columban Society into Australia. Dries explores an English speaking country similar to Australia, only recently established on democratic principles and populated by mainly immigrant European peoples. She identifies three specific contributions the USA movement made to the theory and practice of mission: a "can do" approach to mobilising resources, its function in feeding back Third World theologies to First World churches, and the lead it took in responding to post WWII papal calls for priests to be sent as ministers in Latin America. This study will argue that the Columban Society made similar contributions to the Australian missionary movement, and in particular contributed to a better understanding of Asian peoples by Australians.

Hogan and Dries make frequent references to the Columban Society with both their works identify ways in which it differed from other missionary groups in Ireland and the USA. Charles Duster explored the historical development of the Society and argues that, while keeping a diocesan ethos, it cultivated a different character. In part this was

²² D'Orsa, **Catholic Missionary Movement Australia**, (Sydney: Columban Mission Institute, 2000).

²³ E. M. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement: An Historical Survey, 1830-1980**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990); A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999); The UK based Mill Hill and Canada based Scarborough missionary societies were also English speaking, diocesan in flavour and national. W. Colema, "Maryknoll", Editorial Staff of the Catholic University of America, **New Catholic Encyclopedia**, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), Volume 9, pp. 396-399.

because it moved beyond its national Irish canonical ties to be subject only to Propaganda in Rome, cultivating an international membership and perspective.²⁴ Creating this international aspect has given the Society a degree of independence from local church authorities at home and abroad, enabling it more easily to carry through its own missionary agenda. Australian members shared in a Society not bound to one national culture so their commitment to such ideals as spreading democracy, that Dries notes of the USA missionary movement, was less evident in the history of Columban work.²⁵

Publications on the Society, usually commissioned by the Society itself or written by Columban members, have made some progress in placing the Society within the context of the modern missionary movement. The foundational period has been best captured by William Barrett's 1967 book and the works of Columban member Bernard Smyth, both drawing much of their material from the correspondence of the Society founders and the letters of early members.²⁶ However, the non-critical tone in a series of histories commissioned by the Society, primarily on Columban activity and leaders in mission areas, betrayed their promotional aims.²⁷ Since the 1980s, several Columban members have written histories about Regions where the Society works as part of its History Project but they have tended to take a chronological and descriptive approach.²⁸ While they are of limited use in interpreting events relevant to the Society in Australia, they do contain detail and convey the optimism surrounding the Columban venture seen as a part of God's will and work. This research focuses on Australia and differs from these works in both its subject matter and in seeking a critical interpretation of Columban history.

²⁴ Duster, "Canonical position of Columban Society", 1994. As a Pontifical society of apostolic life, in 1932 the Society moved under direct responsibility to Propaganda and not attached by law to an Irish bishop.

²⁵ Dries, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, pp. 2, 80 and 249.

²⁶ W. Barrett, **The Red Lacquered Gate**, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967); B. Smyth, **The Chinese Batch - The Maynooth Mission to China 1911-1920**, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994).

²⁷ V. Unsworth, "Book Review: Maybe a Second Spring by Edward Fischer", **Missiology**, XII, 4 (October 1984), pp. 493-494. Unsworth notes the non-academic style of the work, the lack of documentation or a missiological critique, and judges such a book anachronistic in a time of deeper scholarship.

²⁸ J. Kelly, **The Splendid Cause 1933-1983**, (Seoul: Columban Fathers, 1983); M. Noone, **The Columbans in the Philippines 1929-1950**, (Manila: Columban Society, 1998); J. McCaslin, **The Columbans in the Philippines: Zambales 1951-1990**, (Manila: Missionary Society of St. Columban, 1998). Noone's work does offer some critical commentary but only covers the period up until 1950.

Published material on the history of the Society in Australia hardly goes beyond a promotional booklet published in 1923 that gave some information on the Society's local work.²⁹ Edmund Campion's 1987 work *Australian Catholics* refers briefly to some of the Australian work of the Society and its spirit.³⁰ A number of books written by and about Columban priests from this Region usually focused on their missionary experiences, often in times of civil unrest or war. They celebrate the fortitude and humour needed in the preaching of the Gospel but reveal little of the mind of the individual Columban personnel involved and few carried a reflection on the context or implications for missionary objectives. For the purposes of this research, such works provide background but they rarely set the Columban Society within its wider historical context or the modern Catholic missionary period.³¹

Literature on Protestant foreign missionary work from Australia is more extensive than that on Catholic ventures. However, like the Catholic literature, these histories tend to be compilations focused on their overseas work and the personnel involved and carry limited missiological interpretation.³² Postgraduate theses have proved more useful, especially in analysing missionary motivation and Australian church community involvement.³³ Several similarities between the Columban Society and most Protestant churches emerge. Each involved ordinary church members in missionary work, often built on initiatives of churches from outside Australia, and was motivated by a spirituality that led them to establish new church communities as sources of salvation in Christ.³⁴ There are also significant differences. Protestant churches, especially evangelical ones, have been less likely to make a distinction between local and foreign missionary work,

²⁹ Columban Society, *The Dawn* (Mentone, VIC: Columban Society, 1923); CAE Promotion Files. Over 30,000 copies were sold.

³⁰ E. Campion, *Australian Catholics: The Contribution of Catholics to the Development of Australian Society*, (Ringwood, VIC: Viking, Penguin Books, 1987), pp.131, 151 and 186-192.

³¹ B. Wurth, *Justice in the Philippines: Father Brian Gore, the Church, the State and the Military*, (Sydney: ABC Enterprises, 1985). Wurth is one of few writers who presented background in his work.

³² A. H. Wood, *Overseas Missions of the Australian Methodist Church*, (Melbourne: Aldersgate Press, 1976); H. Mackenzie, *Mackenzie: Man of Mission*, (South Melbourne: Hyland House Publishing, 1994). The collected essays of Hutchinson and others, *This Gospel*, 1998, shows the beginnings of a new approach.

³³ L. Dixon, "The Australian Missionary Endeavour in China, 1888-1953", Thesis submitted for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1978; P. E. Brothie, "The Importance of the Contribution of Australians to the Penetration of China by the China Inland Mission in the Period 1888-1953, with Particular Reference to the work of Australian Women Missionaries", Thesis submitted for Ph.D., Geelong, Australia: Deakin University, 1999.

³⁴ I. Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches*, (St Leonard's, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1993),

tended towards a individualistic spirituality and the creation of totally independent churches, putting great emphasis on the Bible and revivalism.³⁵ Australian Protestant missionary ventures have been closely connected with UK based churches and evangelical pronouncements, whereas Catholic groups in Australia more often had Irish connections and looked to Papal writings for policy and inspiration.³⁶ There was also a more pronounced “civilising” agenda to most Protestant missionary aims through educational and medical works, although there were exceptions to this, the China Inland Mission being the most notable.³⁷ While this civilising agenda was present in many Catholic missionary groups, it took less emphasis in Columban work. Some similarities between Columban and various Protestant overt methods of evangelisation will emerge in the course of this thesis, differences often revolving around the inclusion of a social justice agenda or cultural accommodation within the work of evangelisation.

Any attempt to write the history of a religious organisation raises questions about the validity of religious experience. Battles between liberal and literal Biblical interpretations in the nineteenth century led to religion losing its place at the core of tertiary education in England.³⁸ Religion was reduced to an object of analysis and open to rational interpretation and debate.³⁹ Social scientists study religion as a phenomena separate from any existing divinity, many among them going further to regard it as a “de-alienating factor” functioning in human life.⁴⁰ Weber focused his study on what he regarded as two important functions of religion in society, the relationship between religious ideals and

pp. 64-67; Wood, **Methodist Missions**, 1976, pp. vii-xv.

³⁵ S. Piggitt, **Evangelical Christianity in Australia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. vii, x and 222-224. “Evangelicalism is concerned to foster an intimate, even intense, personal relationship with Jesus Christ”. L. Howsam, **Cheap Bibles: Nineteenth Century Publishing and the British and Foreign Bible Society**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. xv.

³⁶ W. Hogg, “Edinburgh 1910-Perspective 1980”, **Occasional Bulletin**, 4, 4 (October 1980), pp. 146-153. K. Ward and B. Stanley, **The Church Mission Society and World Christianity**, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), pp. 1 and 344.

³⁷ Peter van der Veer “Religion”, A. Barnard and J. Spencer, **Encyclopedia of Anthropology**, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 482-486. In the nineteenth century, there was a “parallel between the rhetoric of church upliftment and improvement of the working class and the urban poor in England and its civilising mission in the areas of colonisation”.

³⁸ P. Munz, “From Max Weber to Joachim of Floris: The Philosophy of Religious History”, **Journal of Religious History**, 11, 2 (1980), p. 167; E. Judge, “The Beginning of Religious History”, **The Journal of Religious History**, 15, 4 (December 1989), p. 394.

³⁹ C. Bell, “Modernism and Post-modernism in the Study of Religion”, **Religious Studies Review**, 22, 3 (July 1996) p. 179.

⁴⁰ P. Berger, **The Sacred Canopy**, (New York: Anchor, 1969), Introduction and Ch. 4; D. Stiver, **The Philosophy of Religious Language: Sign, Symbol and Story**, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 180-192.

social commitments, and religion as a source of the dynamics of social change in an evolutionary process.⁴¹ This approach was modified as writers questioned Weber's theoretical assumptions, some questioning all meta-narratives under a post-modernist deconstructionist historical analysis.⁴²

The ambivalent relationship between reason and religious belief is not, however, a new issue. Catholic teaching has never relied on rational proofs for the existence of God although it regards belief in God as a rational act for which logical arguments can be given. Rational argumentation for God's existence has been normal intellectual fare for most Columban priests beginning from their school days in a neo-Thomistic theological Catholic era.⁴³ The difficulty in using language to express divine realities is similar to that arising for natural scientists trying to speak objectively about the realities they are dealing with, both examples being relevant to discussion on the nature of knowledge.⁴⁴ Eight centuries ago, St Thomas Aquinas introduced a philosophical solution to the use of religious language called the "analogy of being", where expression is one step removed from the reality itself, emphasising the symbolic nature of religious language.⁴⁵ Those who take religious language literally, rationalists or Christian fundamentalists, exclude themselves from the debate since religion functions largely at symbolic levels.⁴⁶ For this study, accepting the phenomena of Catholic religious practice displayed by actors within the Columban story is enough for research purposes. Columban members have experienced their religion as an expression of a real relationship between God and this world, regarded religion as relevant to the integrity of their personal lives and human society, and considered missionary work to spread the practice of religion as a service

⁴¹ M. Weber, **The Sociology of Religion**, translated by E Fischoff, introduction by T Parsons, (London: Methuen Company, 1966), p. xx, xxx and lxvii.

⁴² P. van de Veer, "Religion", Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 482-486.

⁴³ A. Tanquerey, **Series on Theology**, (New York: Desclee & Co, 1930); M. Sheahan, **Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine**, (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1922/1955)

⁴⁴ J. Kirk and K. Vanhoozer, eds., **To stake a Claim: Mission and the Western Crisis of Knowledge**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), pp. xiii-xvii and 163-165.

⁴⁵ G. Ardley, **Aquinas and Kant**, (London: Longmans, Green, 1950), pp. 114, 157, and 180-184; A. Kenny, **Aquinas on Mind**, (London: Routledge, 1993), 18, 98, 108, and 115; A. Nuyen, "Realism, Anti-Realism and Emmanuel Levinas", **The Journal Of Religion**, 81, 3 (July 2001), pp. 394-409; A. McGrath, **Science and Religion: An introduction**, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

⁴⁶ M. Levine, "Intellectualist and Symbolist Accounts of Religious Belief and Practice", **Australian Religion Studies Review**, 10, 2 (1997), pp. 51-63. Pope John Paul II, **Veritatis Splendor: Truth**, (Rome: Vatican, August 1993), nos. 32-33. He wrote on the modern crisis of truth to encourage a continuing search to reconcile the contending positions.

both to God and humanity. Accepting or not accepting these experiences as parts of a relationship with a divine reality is ultimately a matter of belief.

This research accepts phenomenological and functionalist theories as useful tools of analysis to explore the relationship between religion, values and social change. Since all significant religious or social changes are value-laden and cultural values are at their core, religion functions to preserve the past and deter social change, but it also can give rise to questions that challenge and change social forms.⁴⁷ Both trends are at work in the Columban history. This research rejects the argument that Christian mission activity is cultural imperialism and should not take place at all, even if carried out with sensitivity. It regard such a position both as a belief statement and contrary to the historical phenomena of humans sharing their value systems with others. The alleged demise of the supernatural in the contemporary world, proclaimed under dramatic formulations such as “God is dead”, is asserted rather than proved.

Postmodern analysis is both helpful and problematic to this study. Definitions suggest it variously rejects meta-narratives while reinstating a respect for the unknown and “otherness”.⁴⁸ Sue Patterson argues against a “strong” post-modernist position that would make each religious group so disconnected from each other and from a Christian meta-narrative that it would descend into sectarianism. Arguing that Christianity requires “a master-story, a central meta-narrative” she endorses a “weak” postmodernism that views it as a corrective to the modernist agenda.⁴⁹ Postmodernism challenges the rationalist agenda of the enlightenment to be more holistic and humble in accepting what is beyond the bounds of its methods.⁵⁰ Postmodernism can be seen as “not rejecting power but the

⁴⁷ T. Parsons, **Max Weber: The Sociology of Religion**, (London: Methuen, 1966), p. xxx. Parsons writes, “Weber’s primary interest is in religion as a source of the dynamics of social change”. K. Aman, ed., **Border Regions of Faith: an anthology of Religion and Social Change**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), pp. xii and 519-20.

⁴⁸ P. Berger, **Rumours of Angels**, (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1971), p.13; C. Bell, “Modernism and Postmodernism in the Study of Religion”, **Religious Studies Review**, 22, 3, (July 1996), p. 186; P. Heelas, ed., **Religion, Modernity and Postmodernity**, (London: Blackwell, 1998).

⁴⁹ S. Patterson, **Realist Christian Theology in a post-modern World**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 7-10.

⁵⁰ L. C. Birch, **On Purpose**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales, 1990), p. xvi; B. Southgate, **History, What and Why? Ancient, Modern and Post-modern Perspectives**, (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 3. Birch states that “the postmodern worldview is post mechanistic and ecological in its view of nature, post reductionist in its view of science, post anthropocentric in its view of ethics and economics, post discipline in relation to knowledge and post patriarchal and post sexist in relation to society.

abuse of power, not rejecting the sciences but their ideological pretensions ... transcending the alternatives of objectivism and relativism, offering a more chastened perspective and approach to truth.”⁵¹ The pluralism and attention given to the particular by postmodernism does not necessarily lead to relativism, subjectivism and a paralysis when faced with the absence of grand agendas. Professor Metz writes,

We live in a time of fundamental pluralism – of cultures, of religions, of worldviews... The perception and safeguarding of difference and otherness is demanded and sought after – grounded in the sensitivity to the dangers lurking in universal concepts... [so] is there still a universally binding and thus plausible criterion for understanding? ... How are the universalism of human rights and the notion of inalienable and intrinsic cultural differences of humankind tied to one another? Must the two constantly relativise each other?⁵²

Postmodernist theory provides a tool with which to deconstruct Columban sources that may have been given a superficial interpretation by secular commentators or by the Society in its promotional materials in Australia. This is especially important in investigating how the Society itself presented its missionary activity overseas as taking an option to work with marginalised peoples in their stance against structured oppression, and to promote an understanding of difference as a good thing. Postmodernist thinking is not apolitical. It allows space for religious interpretations of movements for freedom against established institutions.⁵³ This can allow space to envision a connection between the world of the Spirit and the secular world as the one arena of God’s activity. In Catholic theology this involvement of the church in the world is referred to as the “incarnational” aspect of the Jesus story that shows the immanence of God in the world, and the Columban Society saw itself as part of that process.

Postmodern analysis assists this research to reflect on the Columban Society’s active involvement in the dynamics of church and social affairs, offering a safeguard against interpretations that either accept existing social and church structures with uncritical faith

Postmodernism is not a call back to pre-modernism but a creative synthesis of the best of modern, premodern and new concepts on the forefront of holistic thinking.”

⁵¹ D. Stiver, **The Philosophy of Religious Language; Sign, Symbol and Story**, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p.186.

⁵² J. Metz, “In the Pluralism of Religious and Cultural Worlds: Notes Towards a Theological and Political Program”, **Cross Currents**, (Summer, 1999), p.228.

⁵³ G. Gutting, ed., **The Cambridge Companion to Foucault**, (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press), pp. 1-3. Poster, **Foucault and Marxism**, 1984, p. 77. D. Batstone, E. Mendieta, L Lorentzen and D. Hopkins, eds., **Liberation Theologies, Postmodernity and the Americas**, (New York: Routledge).

or jump onto some bandwagon.⁵⁴ While postmodernism may not hold that some essential structure underpins history, it does not believe, as the phenomenologists do, that reality is totally relativist and merely constructed by human interpretations, nor does it agree with rationalist theories that can lead some supporters to retreat into a-political academia or ideological straight-jackets.⁵⁵ Post-modernist theories help explain how the Columban Society and its members, within God's plan and economy of grace as gift, maintained a continuity of identity and a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves, while at the same time being creatively immersed in the struggles of particular peoples. The place of action by individuals and communities within particular traditions is becoming more recognised as a pathway to learning in both mission and secular studies.⁵⁶ Columban involvement in a variety of local situations helps to explain a lack of consistency in materials that the Society fed back to its Australian supporters, a mixed bag of Catholic faith visions and social concerns from particular places.

Postmodern theory helps a historian identify points of discontinuity in a story, but it is not anarchic in questioning the attention given to public players and institutions because of the power they exercised.⁵⁷ It encourages the historian to tell a fuller story. The researcher can better listen to the stories of all local Society members and not just superiors, identify ideological power clusters within Columban circles, and recognise mission initiatives taken by those individuals who broke away from offering stock institutional answers handed down from the past. It encourages research into interpretations beyond those found in the written sources, questioning structured accounts that smooth over discontinuity and struggles to achieve Columban objectives. Oral sources in particular add to the interpretation of the Columban story, filling in details and helping to convey the atmosphere surrounding public events and places.⁵⁸ However, this

⁵⁴ Aman, **Border Regions of Faith**, 1987, pp. xii and 519-20; B. Stanley, ed., **Christian Missions and the Enlightenment**, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2001), pp. 1-21. Reflecting mainly from an evangelical Protestant perspective, Stanley sees a collapse of enlightenment rationalism that is leading to a more nuanced historical interpretation of missionary activity in the colonial period and appreciation of the complex attitudes of the actors involved.

⁵⁵ A. McHoul and W. Grace, **A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1993), p. 2.

⁵⁶ J. Kirk and K. Vanhoozer, eds., **To Stake a Claim: Mission and the Western Crisis of Knowledge**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), p. xvi.

⁵⁷ M. Poster, **Foucault, Marxism and History**, (Oxford: Polity Press, 1984), p. 74.

⁵⁸ N. Thomas, "History and Anthropology", Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 272; J. Tosh, **The Pursuit of History**, (Harlow, UK: Longman Group, 1984, 1991), p. 125.

research confirms that care must be taken in using oral sources since in-house Columban “stories” are continually revising the Society’s past and could become the officially accepted memory unless they are balanced by documentary evidence.⁵⁹

A particular question is whether or not a writer who is an “insider” member of the group under study will lose perspective and objectivity.⁶⁰ This researcher doubts that the historical study of religious experience can be totally divorced from interpretations of the community from which it arises, even if there is a danger of bias. Attempting to dispassionately observe the category of religion from the outside may be a hangover of enlightenment hegemony.⁶¹ An insider to a group can better understand its internal culture and be more aware of what is of significance than an outsider. Two recent historical works on the Jesuits in Australia illustrate the difference. David Strong, writing a decade after Ursulla Bygott, states that she wrote as an “outsider unable to distinguish the important and significant from trivia.”⁶² Like the Jesuits, the Columban Society has a public face shown in its works in Australia, but it has an internal world of ideas and practices, a “culture”, affecting its public face. This history will address the interchange between the two to offer a fuller picture than the outsider might give while remaining objective, using modern methods in historical research as a safeguard against bias. An indication that insider-writers trained in historical research can do this is a study sponsored by the Australian Catholic bishops which contains a history of the participation of women in the local church with critical as well as affirming material about their roles.⁶³ As a way of helping to maintain its objectivity, this research will test

⁵⁹ R. Samuel and P. Thompson, eds., **The Myths We Live By**, (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 1-22. At the 1970 Columban General Assembly, a reconstructed version of the supposed harmonious relations between the early members of the Society by one member was rejected by older members. Other modified Columban memories include those of the “heroic times” during floods and wars, “the good old seminary days”, and the “great days of success” when the baptismal and dollar “numbers” rolled. Such memories emerge in individual biographies and non-professional Society histories and could become the official Society memory.

⁶⁰ J. Bradley and R. Muller, **Church History - An Introduction to Research, Reference Works and Methods**, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), p. 49. “If the events are too recent, although the documents may be easy to come by because either written evidence or oral reports are still accessible, never the less, the level of personal involvement in the events may be so great that it is difficult to step back towards objective interpretation”.

⁶¹ Bell, “Modernism and Postmodernism”, 1996, p. 186.

⁶² U. Bygott, **With Pen and Tongue: The Jesuits in Australia 1986-1939**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980); Strong, **Jesuit Culture**, 1996, p. 15.

⁶³ Australian Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church, Research Management Group, **Woman and Man: One in Jesus Christ: Report into the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia**, (Pymble, NSW: Harper and Collins, 1999), pp. 19-42.

the contention that the Columban Society helped advance the understanding and practice of overseas mission in Australia.

A final group of theories relevant to this research concern the social sciences, each branch of which has its own emphasis.⁶⁴ While the tools of each science will be applied throughout this research in an inter-disciplinary way to tease out a fuller Columban story, history remains as its focus. Stimulated by the academic neglect of Catholic Religious women in the USA, Patricia Wittberg has argued that Catholic “virtuoso” (specialist) groups operate like social movements.⁶⁵ The Columban story illustrates many of the patterns Wittberg describes in her analysis of the process of motivating, resourcing, maintaining and reinventing virtuoso groups.⁶⁶ Australian historians have also drawn on social movement theory.⁶⁷ Others, however, have argued that social movements, even when religious people and concepts are involved, are not the same as religious movements since they deal in the esoteric and have little significance for the rest of society.⁶⁸ But this research will show otherwise, the Columban Society itself being one example.

Since missionaries act as cultural change agents who deal with social values, the tools of cultural anthropology will be used to interpret the Columban Society’s cross-cultural presentation to its Australian supporters and to help explain the changing missionary

⁶⁴ R. Hay, “Social History”, Davison and others, **Oxford Australian History**, 1998, pp. 590-591. Social history covers “a broad spectrum of approaches, from a history defined by its social matter, the society, or the special group which it studied, to one determined by its theoretical orientation, often derived from neighbouring disciplines, including social psychology, anthropology, or some variety of Marxism.” S. Franklin, “Cultural Studies”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, p. 135; A. Bernard and J. Spencer, “Culture” in Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, p. 142; and J. Garrier, “Sociology”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp.524-527.

⁶⁵ P. Wittberg, **The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective**, (Albany, USA: University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 1-9 and 291-293. Catholic Religious women in the USA numbered 220,000 in the 1960s. Kwok Pui-lan, **Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927**, (Boston, MA: American Academy of Religion, 1992).

⁶⁶ Wittberg, **The Rise and Decline**, 1994, Ch. 2; G. Arbuckle, “Refounding Congregations from Within: Anthropological Reflections”, **Review for Religious**, (1986), pp. 538-553.

⁶⁷ H. Carey, “Holy Sheilas: Women, Church and Political Action in Twentieth Century Australia”, M. Press and Brown, eds. **Faith and Cultures**, (Sydney: Catholic Institute, 1988), p. 143; S. Kennedy, **Faith and Feminism: Catholic Women’s Struggles for Self-Expression**, (Manly, NSW: Studies in the Christian Movement, 1985), p. xv; M. Mason, **Religion in Australian Life: a Bibliography of Social Research**, (Adelaide, SA: National Catholic Research Council and the Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1982); H. Carey “Companions in the Wilderness? Missionary Wives in Colonial Australia, 1788-1900” **Journal of Religious History** 19, 2 (December 1995), p. 228.

⁶⁸ B. Wilson and J. Cresswell, eds., **New Religious Movements: Challenge and Response**, (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 15 and 26.

training developed by the Society.⁶⁹ The relationship between cultural anthropologists and missionaries has been an uneasy one.⁷⁰ Some anthropologists have claimed that a “Christianise and civilise” formula was paramount. This proposition was widely disputed by Christian missionaries themselves from the nineteenth century, arguing that they often did the opposite by attributing value to different cultures.⁷¹ Some missionaries contend that anthropologists carried a romanticised view of foreign lands, and social scientists themselves warn against the use of the social sciences that promote ultra-relativism or odd Eurocentric interpretations of cultures.⁷² This research confirms the position that missions “were much more than simply a religious movement. They had a central role in the meeting of cultures.”⁷³ It was feedback from their field exposure that helped missionary personnel question the imposition of predetermined church ways brought from home, leading them to take the aspirations of the local people seriously enough for Christianity to often provide the tools for resistance to western oppression.⁷⁴

In spite of the dangers and antagonism involved, study of the dynamics of cultural change has consciously been an official part of the Catholic church since Vatican II and accepted by the Columban Society since its 1970 General Chapter of renewal. Cultural

⁶⁹ T. Yates, **Mission in the Twentieth Century**, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁷⁰ A. Quack, “The ambivalent Relationship between Mission and Anthropology: Criticisms and Suggestions”, **Verbum-SVD** 27, 3 (1986), pp. 221-234; L. Luzbetak and D. Whiteman, “Selected Annotated Bibliography on Missiology: Missiological Anthropology”, **Missiology**, xxi, 2 (April 1993), pp. 241-245; J. Webster and T. Headland, “Selected Annotated Bibliography: Conflicts between Missionaries and Anthropologists and a Review of Missionaries reported involvement in Human Rights”, **Missiology**, xxiv, 2 (April 1996), pp. 271-280.

⁷¹ Stanley, **Christian Missions and the Enlightenment**, 2001, p. 19; J. Harris, **One Blood: Two Hundred Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity**, (Sutherland, NSW: Albatross Books, 1996), p. 77; S. Sohmer, “Christianity Without Civilization: Anglican Sources for an Alternative Nineteenth-Century Mission Methodology”, **Journal of Religious History** 18, 2 (December 1994), pp. 174-197; J. Dennis, **Christian Missions and Social Progress: a Sociological Study of Foreign Missions**, (Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1899).

⁷² S. Nugent “Post-modernism”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp.442-444; J. Spenser, “Modernism, Modernity and Modernisation”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 376-379.

⁷³ M. Smalley and S. Peterson, “Resources in Yale Divinity School Library”, **International Bulletin of Missionary Research**, 9, 3 (July 1985), pp. 104-106; E. Tang and J. Wiest, eds., **The Catholic Church in Modern China - Perspectives**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993); H. Carey, “Introduction: Colonialist Representations of Indigenous Religions”, **The Journal of Religious History**, 22, 2 (June 1998), p. 130.

⁷⁴ L. Sanneh, **Translating the Message**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 1-9; L. Sanneh, **Encountering the West: Christianity and the Global Cultural Process- the African dimension**, (London: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 19. Bible literacy contributed to mother tongue literacy in non-literate societies and to the final ascendancy of the local idiom over assertions of foreign ascendancy; D. Peterson and J. Allman, “Introduction: New Directions in the History of Missions in Africa”, **Journal of Religious History**, 23, 1 (February 1999), pp.1-8; M. Huber, “Missionaries”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 373-375

theories help explain how a group takes to itself aspects from outside its own culture (acculturation), and these theories have been applied by Catholic missiologists to help explain the exchange when Christian faith interacts with a culture (inculturation).⁷⁵ The Western cultural baggage of missionaries could be an obstacle to developing a communion of culturally unique indigenous churches, a question relevant in this research.⁷⁶ However, the Catholic Church worldwide is not a uniform monolith but rather a multi-cultural organisation where local particular individual churches are linked in communion, an image promoted by the Columban Society in Australia with increasing insistence during its history.⁷⁷

The general hypothesis of this thesis, that the Columban Society took a leading role in advancing the thinking and practice of Christian mission within the Australian Catholic Church from 1920-2000, will be explored in four parts. Each problematises one aspect of overseas missionary work during the twentieth century: the Columban organisation of resources for missionary activity, the training of missionary personnel, the missionary perspective on some international issues significant to Australians, and the Columban teaching role in conveying new theological expressions.

Part One will argue that the Columban Society contributed a higher degree of missionary organisation than had existed previously as it engaged with the Catholic community in parishes and schools at a national level. The first chapter situates the Society as an actor within the modern Catholic missionary movement. The 1920 Columban foundation in Australia carried a diocesan-based character and missionary aims distinct from those of other Catholic missionary organisations. Part of this chapter investigates the lost opportunity to establish an Australian missionary sisterhood, a story that also

⁷⁵ Luzbetak, **The Church and Cultures** 1963; A. Shorter, **Towards a Theology of Inculturation**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988); G. Gossen, **Religion in Australian Culture: An Anthropological View**, (Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 1997), pp. 13-18. Dries, **USA Catholic Missionary Movement**, 1998, p. 81. The Catholic Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) have been active in this area since the nineteenth century and publish **Anthrops** and **Verbum-SVD**.

⁷⁶ V. Donovan, **Christianity Rediscovered**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983, 3rd printing; Chicago; Fides/Claretian, 1978).

⁷⁷ W. Jenkinson and H. O'Sullivan, eds., **Trends in Mission, Towards the Third Millennium: Essays in Celebration of Twenty Five Years of SEDOS**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); J Phillips and R Coote, eds., **Towards the Twenty-first Century in Christian Mission**, (Grand Rapids, USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1993); S. Neill "Mission in the 1980s", **Occasional Bulletin**, 3, 1 (January 1979), p. 27-28; R. Bassham, "Mission Theology: 1948-1975", **Occasional Bulletin**, 4, 2 (April 1980), pp. 52-58.

demonstrates how the Society set limits to what it wanted to organise. Chapter two shows how within four years of its arrival in Australia the Society had organised Australia-wide and in a comprehensive way setting a pattern for its own future. The Society presented itself as an exclusively missionary group with comprehensive programs, offering ordinary Catholics motivation to support the venture and specific tasks to carry out in finance and prayer, providing new avenues for them to become missionaries. Chapter three will show that the Society provided models of organisation that other Catholic missionary groups were later to follow. In spite of periods of atrophy, it updated itself adding new works as needs arose to better fulfil its teaching role on mission. It opened the missionary calling to lay people and diocesan priest volunteers. The organisational pattern created by the Society was the strong base from which flowed its other contributions to missionary thinking and practice among Australian Catholics.

Part Two looks at the seminary training and formation the Society organised for its own and other missionary personnel. Chapter four shows that from 1920 onwards the Society offered training to its own candidates in the style of diocesan priests while inculcating a Society spirit developed in Ireland. Chapter five argues that although the diocesan style training proved limited for Columban purposes because it was lacking in missionary training, it continued in spite of individual efforts to introduce changes that were resisted by the local leadership. Chapter six shows how the lived missionary experience highlighted the limitations in the seminary training as members suffered from less than adequate competence and culture shock. Chapter seven demonstrates that from the early 1970s the Society developed a new style of training for missionaries in Australia called formation. It integrated intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth, and was open to Catholics of all ranks and members of other churches. It argues that the new formation helped make missionaries more effective and cultivated the holistic health of missionaries themselves.

Part Three maintains that the Columban Society helped to forge Catholic opinion on some international issues relevant to Australians by offering information and analysis in its role as an educational agent in the local church. Chapter eight argues that the Columban mission magazine in particular was a credible and influential source of commentary. While the feedback of information and opinion was subject to the

limitations of any magazine, nevertheless, by drawing primarily on the direct missionary experience of Columban members working overseas, it carried an independent voice. Columban stories sometimes reinforced accepted positions but more often led the way in opening up some international issues of relevance to Australians, particularising them with personal reports. The Society consistently maintained that preaching Catholic belief to people of nations emerging within the modern world was the greatest gift that could be offered to them so that their nations might be built on justice. Chapter nine will examine three case studies to exemplify these propositions. The Society helped humanise the image of Chinese and other Asian peoples who were striving to build their nations, offered evolving critiques of Communism, and exposed the workings of Security State military dictatorships and their capitalist agenda, often hiding under anti-Communist and Catholic clothing.

Part Four argues that the Society had a teaching role among Australian Catholics that pushed the edges of accepted Catholic theology, drawing mainly from theologies developed in the mission churches. Church analysts suggest that the experiences of missionaries from around the world helped the Catholic Church face the modern world and contributed towards developments in Catholic teaching and practice as articulated by Vatican II.⁷⁸ Chapter ten situates the role the Society played in expanding and popularising traditional Catholic teaching on “social responsibility” and “the common good” within the statements of Popes, Conferences of Bishops and other official church bodies around the world. From 1970 onwards the Society consciously expanded its teaching role by creating campaigns and mission education programs. This expanded role exposed ideological divisions within the local Society membership, the leadership responding with organised courses of renewal. Chapter eleven shows how, under the influence of the Society’s 1976 General Chapter, the Region increased its commitment to its teaching role with personnel, money and programs. These covered a broad range of issues to do with culturally unique indigenous churches, religious dialogue and ecological issues as parts of Mission Theology. It argues that the Society continued to play an influential role as a teaching body, negotiating its way through both internal and

⁷⁸ M. Browne, **The African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives** (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), Introduction. Brown was Director of the African Faith and Justice Network.

external opposition to its role, while keeping its programs current and professional. A final chapter will draw conclusions coming from this thesis.

This introduction to the sources, theories and method of this thesis has outlined the type of arguments to be used in testing the hypothesis that the Columban Society helped expand the theory and practice of overseas mission among Australian Catholics. It is one way of tracing the historical path that the Columban Society has taken in Australia, 1920-2000.

PART ONE

ORGANISATION

Chapter 1: A new Venture: The Modern Catholic Missionary Movement, Columban Society Background and Foundation in Australia

Chapter 2: Belonging within Australia: Creating a Pattern in Organising Resources to Support the Columban Mission Enterprise

Chapter 3: Institutionalisation: Developments in the “House Culture” of Columban Members and Patterns of Organisation to Support the Columban Venture

Chapter 1: A New Venture: The Modern Catholic Missionary Movement, Columban Society Background and Foundation in Australia

This chapter will explore the establishment period of the Columban Society in Australia 1920-24, placing it within the context of both the modern Catholic Missionary Movement which began in the seventeenth century, and the work of other Catholic missionary groups from Australia. The character of the Columban Society was clerical and rooted in a diocesan base. When setting out to make a Columban foundation in Australia, the Society promoted this diocesan character and presented its missionary aims in China as distinct from those of other Catholic missionary organisations. To carve out a place for itself in the Australian church, it used its Irish Catholic Church connections to create a nation-wide insertion into Catholic dioceses. It was only a short step from there to belonging within the local church and have it claim the Society “as its own”.

The Modern Catholic Missionary Movement

From its inception, Christianity has had a missionary emphasis. Instructed to “Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation”, its apostles went first to the Jewish communities around the Mediterranean and then to the non-Jewish pagans.¹ Developments in the understanding and practice of mission within the Catholic Church have been taking place as its fields for evangelisation expanded and changed in each era. Missiologist David Bosch identified five historical paradigms of Christian missionary activity over two millennia - apostolic, hellenistic, medieval, Protestant, enlightenment - and a sixth “ecumenical paradigm” of cooperation now beginning to flower.² The Columban Society began at the end of the enlightenment period and now, at least partially, works within the ecumenical paradigm. This paradigm itself has moved beyond mere missionary cooperation between Christian denominations, a movement evident in the Protestant churches for almost two centuries. In what is sometimes called the wider ecumenism, the new paradigm that embraces dialogue among religions is now evident in Catholic missionary activity.³ But the modern Catholic and Protestant missionary

¹ Mk. 16:16 and Gal. 2:9.

² D. Bosch, **Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), pp. 181-182.

³ W. Abbot, ed., **The Documents of Vatican II**, (Baltimore: The American Press, 1966). The Decrees of Vatican on Ecumenism, Missions, Non-Christians and Religious Freedom are immediately relevant.

movements that arose in the western Christian churches have both entered old age. A future movement may be characterised by a second evangelisation of the Western World carried out through cross cultural Christian sharing, much of it initiated by Third World churches travelling back over bridges built by Western missionaries.⁴

The general missionary calling to individual Christians is heightened and particularised by the work of specific structured groups dedicated to mission.⁵ From a Catholic and clerical viewpoint, canonist Charles Duster makes similar historical divisions to Bosch but emphasises five different official groups of church clerics involved in missionary activity - the Apostles, the Monks, the travelling Mendicant Preachers, members of Religious Orders under royal patronage, and lastly, Missionary Societies of secular priests.⁶ The Missionary Society of St Columban fits within the final category.

New organisational structures underlying the modern period of Catholic missionary activity were initiated by Roman church authorities from the top, and not as a bubbling up from below as the monastic and other movements had been. From the 16th century, the shortcomings of the patronage system of mission in the newly expanded known world became evident, as was the greed of the European nations and the resultant death and cruelties inflicted on indigenous peoples which brought into question the integrity of Gospel preaching. Charles Duster lists the issues Roman authorities wished to address in reorganising missionary activity.⁷ It planned to lessen the rivalry between the Religious Orders and the divisions between them and secular priests, both of which were seen as a scandal. To ensure that mission work have some independence from colonial commercial and political interests it planned to establish missionary institutes with "ex professo" lifetime missionaries and appoint Vicars Apostolic as titular Bishops in mission lands who were not subject to the colonialist kings. Lastly it wanted to build up the indigenous clergy in the new churches and promote cultural adaptation such as vernacular in the liturgy. In accordance with its tradition of strict governance by law, the Roman church

⁴ A. Walls, **The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), pp. 255-261.

⁵ Pope John Paul II, **Redemptoris Missio: On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate**, (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1991), nums. 65-66.

⁶ C. Duster, "The Canonical Status of Members of the Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right", Doctoral Thesis, Gregorian University, Rome, 1994.

⁷ G. Gutierrez, **Las Casas**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993).

sought structured legal solutions.⁸ Pope Gregory XV's establishment of an administrative body called the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda) in 1622 to promote new understanding and methods of evangelisation marked the beginning of the modern Catholic missionary movement.⁹ In 1627 Propaganda established the Pontifical Collegium Urbanianum in Rome with its exclusive task to train missionary priests. In addition, to replace a system of royal patronage Propaganda encouraged diocesan bishops and their parish people to become directly involved in resourcing overseas mission activity with money and personnel. The Paris Foreign Missionary Society (Missions Etrangères de Paris, or MEP), which took on a national French church identity, was the first group of diocesan priests to be organised under the new structures. It became the prototype of fourteen such groups started in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including the Columban Society which in Australia sometimes regarded itself, not in law but in practice, as the national Catholic overseas missionary arm of the diocesan clergy and parish people.

By the late eighteenth century the modern Catholic missionary movement had lost much of its energy and focus. In Europe national boundaries were being re-drawn and in eastern Asia many countries shut out European missionaries along with rapacious traders and all forms of western learning. While the French Revolution closed one era of the French Catholic involvement as a major source of overseas missionaries, the foundation in 1822 of a new organisation with more grass roots support marked the beginning of a new era. Founded by a young French woman the Association for the Propagation of the Faith grew to have four branches – a Society to foster lay prayer and financial support as a form of piety among the faithful called *The Society for the Propagation of the Faith*, the *Pio Uno* to educate the clergy about mission work, the *Association of the Holy Childhood* to foster mission support coming from Catholic children, and the *Apostolic Fund* to train mission personnel.¹⁰ These four works were later put under the direct control of Propaganda and were declared to be Pontifical works, that is, directly

⁸ Under Roman Catholic Canon Law, a missionary organisation, like the individual priest, cannot be a wanderer with no accountability or without structural ties of being in communion with the wider church, one reason being to ensure a degree of orthodoxy and faithfulness to Christ's message.

⁹ The Latin name was the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide and in English is now called the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

¹⁰ J. Waldersee, **A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Australia 1837-1977**, (Kensington, NSW: Chevalier Press, 1983), pp. i-v. The four mission aid societies are a

connected with the Pope. In 1817 Propaganda had been reorganised but it reiterated the original goal of fostering diocesan resourced missionary activity. An added stimulus to Catholic efforts was sectarian rivalry between Catholics and Protestants, reinforced by the nationalistic ambitions of the European colonial powers where one religious expression or other dominated. The Protestant missionary movement had begun in the late eighteenth century, encouraged by the evangelical revival and values of the Enlightenment prevalent at the time. Dominated by English speaking members from Europe and the USA the Protestant movement was well formed by 1830.¹¹

The revitalised modern Catholic missionary movement that spread to the English speaking world in the nineteenth century, while largely a product of the Irish church, drew on characteristics derived from both its French and Roman connections.¹² Catholic emancipation in 1829 brought an upsurge in Irish mission activity assisted by its connections with French Catholic seminaries, Religious institutes and mission support associations. The Association's French language magazine, *Annales*, translated into English in Ireland from 1838, promoted missionary support. The role of Irish church personnel in ministering to the many nineteenth century Irish immigrants around the world also promoted a missionary consciousness in the Irish church. The Irish church had the organisational capacity to support mission ventures after the reforms introduced by Cardinal Cullen between 1850-70 along disciplined Roman lines that were further strengthened by the First Ecumenical Vatican Council in 1870.¹³ The comparative prosperity of the English speaking world shared by many of its inhabitants of Irish descent increased its capacity to support missionaries. This was the setting for the founding of the Columban Society as an Irish resourced and English speaking missionary Society of diocesan priests in 1918.

separate organisation, not to be confused with the Congregation because of the phrase "Propagation of the Faith". In Australia the totality of the four agencies is now called Catholic Mission.

¹¹ Walls, **Missionary Movement**, 1996, pp. 243-247 and 252-253.

¹² E. M. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement: An Historical Survey, 1830-1980**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990), pp. 13-61. A high standard of education in Ireland increased the Irish capacity to respond. Catholic Irish mission efforts to "pagan lands" flourished with many organised groups established 1916-1937, led by the Columban Society. C. Cooke, "Catholic Mission, the Modern Period", M. Glazier and M. Hellwig, eds. **The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia**, (Newtown, NSW: E. J. Dwyer, 1994), pp. 576-578; **Patrician Congress: Missionary Ireland**, (Dublin: Dublin Archdiocese, 1961); P. Flanagan, ed., **A New Missionary Era: Knock Congress 1979**, (Dublin: Irish Missionary Union, 1979). D. Dorr, **Mission in Today's World**, (Maryknoll, USA: Orbis Books, 2000).

¹³ D. Bowen, **Paul Cardinal Cullen and the Shaping of Modern Irish Catholicism**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1983).

The Roman flavour of the Columban Society was reinforced by Pope Benedict XV's 1919 encyclical that set the new focus of the modern Catholic missionary movement. Many European missionaries were called home during WWI and after the war ended, a disrupted Europe was less able to support missionary efforts. The Pope deplored the effects of European nationalism and encouraged the increasing numbers of missionaries from the English speaking Catholic world.¹⁴ Much of this world, including Australia, had strong Irish roots because of the dissemination of Irish clergy and bishops, and the Pope's writing emphasised the development of the indigenous diocesan clergy in mission churches, a work well underway in the church in Australia. Australian Catholics were primed to welcome the Irish based Columban venture.

The Catholic Missionary Movement in Australia

A missionary mind had developed among Catholics in Australia as part of the process of colonial settlement.¹⁵ Catholics among the first 1788 settlers, both convicts and soldiers, at first organised themselves and later were organised under the influence of English but principally Irish priests and bishops.¹⁶ The pastoral initiatives of the nineteenth century had a pioneering and missionary character to them, a style that continued into the next century under the impact of migration. The spiritual worldview carried by Australian Catholics created an openness to missionary ventures. Would-be Columban priests and supporters carried a basic belief expressed in the *Catholic Penny Catechism* that all people were called "to know and love God here on earth and be happy with Him forever".¹⁷ This was God's will and plan so Catholic mission ventures could

¹⁴ R. Tiedemann, "China and its Neighbours", A. Hastings, ed., **A World History of Christianity**, (London: Cassell, 1999), p. 396.

¹⁵ P. O'Farrell, **The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales University, 1985/revised 1992); H. Carey, **Believing in Australia: A Cultural History of Religion**, (St. Leonard's, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1996), pp. 245-261; A. Cooper, "A Selected Bibliography", **The Australasian Catholic Record**, 1998 pp. 164-179. Cooper gives an extensive bibliography on Australian religious history, not just Catholic, as a supplement to the one contained in the work of M. Mason, **Religion in Australian Society**, (Belford Park, SA: Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1982).

¹⁶ J. Molony, **The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1969).

¹⁷ E. Campion, **Australian Catholics: The Contributions of Catholics to the Development of Australian Society**, (Ringwood, VIC: Viking, Penguin Books, 1987), p. 146. This answer comes early in what is often called the "Penny" or "Green" catechism because of its low price or the colour of the cover, the traditional Catechism of Christian Doctrine. Campion names it as "the single most influential document in Australian Catholic history". The catechism goes on to detail how Catholics are to live morally and use a

systematically build upon this existing Australian Catholic thinking. Advocates of missionary activity could also draw upon the social justice tradition of Australian Catholicism from its beginnings in the nineteenth century that in the twentieth century came to assert the place of Catholic faith in international justice issues.¹⁸ Even when Catholic teachings and practice began to change from after the renewal initiated by the Vatican II running 1962-65, belief in God's universal love remained although weekly church attendance became problematic.¹⁹

From the nineteenth century onwards, some missionary outreach from Australia by members of Religious Orders had taken place. These ventures mostly had a narrow support base derived from individual Religious institutions and parishes, and were usually connected with the work of their European mother-houses.²⁰ Efforts were at first directed towards Australian Aborigines and native peoples of the south-western Pacific islands, and Australia was used by some European missionaries in a "breaker-bulk" role, distributing supplies sent from Europe.²¹ Parts of the Australian Catholic church at that time were still at the receiving end of missionary personnel and finance, the local church remaining administratively subject to Propaganda until 1976, and some poorer Australian dioceses still receive funds from Catholic Mission for internal missionary work.

Major support for overseas missionary activity at the diocesan level was slow to be organised. After the 1919 papal mission encyclical, Propaganda appointed priest representatives in most Australian dioceses for the four Pontifical aid works which came to be known locally as Catholic Mission. It was not until the appointment of Monsignor Laurence Martin as National Director in 1931 that its work gathered momentum, gaining

sacramental form of prayer to sustain them. K. Massam, **Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia 1922-1962**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 1996), p.3.

¹⁸ M. C. Hogan, **Australian Catholics: The Social Justice Tradition**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Collins Harper, 1993), pp. v-ix.

¹⁹ M. Mason, **Catholic Life Survey**, (Canberra: Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 1960), and lxxxvi, (January 1999), **Australasian Catholic Record**, pp. 15-23.

²⁰ C. O'Brien, **A Greater than Solomon Here: A story of Catholic Church in Solomon Islands 1567-1967**, (Solomon Islands: Dominican Order, 1995), pp. 246-252. The Dominican Order worked in the Solomon Islands but a list of missionaries from 1898-1995 shows that there were few Australians. A. Doyle, **The Story of the Marist Brothers in Australia 1872-1972** (Drummoyne: Marist Brothers of the Schools, 1972), pp. 147-168. Brothers used their Australian base to make foundations in New Zealand and New Caledonia, and in Samoa in 1870, a year before they came to Australia, and some joined a team in China in 1891.

wider support after the Newcastle Missionary Eucharistic Congress of 1938.²² Beginning in 1920 the Columban work in Australia predated that of Catholic Mission, and its aims were broader. In addition to promoting prayer, financial support, and educating Catholics about mission issues, the Columban Society actually trained and sent missionaries overseas.

After 1945 when a greater degree of self reliance in ministry had emerged within the Australian church, many Religious institutes of men and women that had not previously been involved in missionary work started overseas ventures, most often in Papua New Guinea (PNG).²³ Educational and service works took the attention of most, a legacy of Australian Catholic priorities, and some institutes made foundations in the mission areas.²⁴ The entry point for a number of groups was involvement in Japanese post-war reconstruction ventures.²⁵ Others later moved further afield within Asia, South America, Africa and the Middle East, and widened their range of work stimulated by the call for wider missionary vision given by Vatican II or a renewal of spirit, such as the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary and Marist Missionary Sisters. But the primary work focus of few of these groups was overseas missionary activity, even among mission minded groups such as the Jesuit Society, the Vincentian Mission Congregation and the Augustinian

²¹ J. Waldersee, **Neither Eagles nor Saints: MSC Missions in Oceania 1881-1975**, (Sydney: Chevalier Press, 1995), p. xiv. Other groups using Australia as a base included the Marist Society working in the South Pacific and the Divine Word Missionaries in PNG.

²² M. E. Dasey, **The Story of the Regional Missionary and Eucharistic Congress, Newcastle, NSW Australia**, (Newcastle: Specialty Publications, 1938).

²³ C. Hally, **Australian Missionary Effort, Opportunity? - Danger?** (Sydney: ACTS Publication, 1973), No. 1639; C. Hally, "An overview of Australian Catholic Missions", Hutchinson, **This Gospel**, 1998, p. 237; D. Langmore, **Missionary Lives: Papua 1874-1914**, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989). Hally states that two thirds of the 62 Religious institutes, and all Catholic lay organisations, began their missionary involvement from Australia only after 1960. Many went to PNG where Australia had United Nations' obligations. In 1972, more than 50% of Australian Catholic missionaries were in PNG but many efforts was short-lived ceasing after PNG independence in 1975. In 1972, less than 20% of Australian Catholic missionaries worked in Asia. Of these, 190 out of 309 were priests, nearly half of them being Columban priests. This was in contrast to the non-clerical predominance in other mission areas.

²⁴ M. Allen, **The Laborer's Friends: a History of the Sister's of Mercy in Victoria and Tasmania**, (North Melbourne: Hargreen Publishing, 1989); D. Wordley, **No One Dies Alone**, (Kogarah, NSW: The Little Company of Mary, 1976); M. R. MacGinley, **A Dynamic of Hope**, (Sydney: Crossing Press, 1996); A. Power, **Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart - A New Zealand Story**, (Auckland: Sisters of St Joseph, 1983); R. James, **Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, (Mosman Park, WA: Presentation Sisters, 1996), pp. 571-578.

²⁵ J. Hosie, **Marist Journey in Japan 1949-1999**, (Hunters Hill, NSW, 1999), p. 41. The Good Samaritan Sisters, the Marist Fathers, the Sacred Heart missionary family, and volunteer diocesan priests were part of an Australian movement of missionaries into Japan after WWII.

Order.²⁶ Foreign mission commitments were often short lived and earn only brief references in their published histories. By way of contrast, as an exclusively missionary group all Columban Society members were destined to work overseas and most did.

The differences between the missionary work of most of these groups and the Columban Society are significant. From 1920 when locally born clergy comprised only a small percentage of the church personnel, the Society offered them the opportunity to work as missionary priests in an organisation carrying a diocesan spirit. Not until after WWII did some dioceses and Religious institutes set up programs for volunteer secular priests. Running schools and clinics, a major function within other groups, played a secondary part in Columban work. The Columban focus on eastern Asia gave members a different cultural experience from most other missionaries. Most Australian Catholic foreign missionaries were women while the Columban personnel were male, and in the Asian area men outnumbered women as Catholic missionaries. Most ventures involved lay auxiliary workers and in 1961 the Paulian Association Lay Missionary Secretariat (PALMS) sending body was set up to extend their involvement.²⁷ While Society members cooperated in their formation and facilitation of the increasing number of teachers and school students on exposure tours, few lay missionaries ever worked with the Society.

These differences highlight the unique position of the Columban Society to make a particular contribution to mission theory and practice in Australia. Its exclusively missionary work aims, diocesan clerical character and Asian focus give the Columban Society a distinctive place within the history of the modern Catholic missionary movement and its Australian chapter.

²⁶ D. Strong, **Jesuits in Australia**, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1995), p. 118. Jesuit personnel from Australia went to India in 1951 after a century in Australia, but “the type sent were generally young, strong, healthy, extroverted men, with more than a few from non-Jesuits schools and some country boys.” D. Bourke, **The History of the Vincentian Fathers in Australasia**, (Internal publication, 1980); S. Arneil, **Out Where the Dead Men Lie, the Augustinians in Australia, 1838-1992**, (Brookvale, NSW: Augustinian Historical Commission, 1992).

²⁷ A. Ihlein and B. Morris, **Paulian Association, First 25 Years 1956-81: Anniversary Booklet**, (Sydney: Polding House, 1981).

The Vision of the Columban Founders and the Society's Pattern of Operation

The founders of the Columban Society, Fathers Edward Galvin and John Blowick, and their confreres were people with a vision, inspiring leaders and capable organisers. Having actively searched for a cause and learnt from other missionary institutes, they created a vision of missionary activity in China to be carried out as a work of the Irish people.²⁸ A constant theme in Galvin's letters was the urgent need to build up the Catholic Church in China in order to combat both internal paganism and ignorance and external exploitation by foreign nations. He believed, like other Catholics of his time, that only the Catholic Church was "big enough" for the task of reweaving the moral fibre of China.²⁹ As prophetic leaders, the Society founders communicated this new vision to their fellow Irish at home and around the world, including Australia. They presented the task of building up the church and its indigenous clergy in China as a call of God given explicitly to diocesan priests, the "will of God" for them.³⁰ This was the basis for the Society's founding spirit, and the rather free lancing, saintly but aggressive Irish missionary monk to Europe in the sixth-seventh centuries, Saint Columban, was chosen as their patron.³¹

As well as being people of vision, the Society founders demonstrated that they were leaders, intelligent negotiators and entrepreneurs who wanted to institutionalise their work. They were skilled managers of information about Catholic Church processes and knew how to court prominent church people. Galvin had been impressed with the "can-do" approach of the USA Catholic Church. During his time as a volunteer with the French Vincentian Mission Congregation in China he saw the work which had been accomplished when personnel were plentiful, but also recognised that the work was

²⁸ B. Smyth, **The Chinese Batch - The Maynooth Mission to China 1911-1920**, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994); W. Barrett, **The Red Lacquered Gate**, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967)..

²⁹ **TFE**, 12, 1922, p. 1; 9, 1922, p. 1; 5, 1923, p. 1; 6, 1925, p. 4; 6, 1929, p. 1; 11, 1929, p. 4; 4, 1931, p. 1. The theme of Catholic sophistication was often repeated in the Society's monthly Australian magazine.

³⁰ S. Eisenstadt ed., **Max Weber On Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers**, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 254; P. Wittberg, **The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective** (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 48 and 189; R. Tiedemann, "China and its neighbours", A. Hastings, ed., **A World History of Christianity**, (London: Cassell, 1999), p. 396-97.

³¹ T. Cahill, **How the Irish Saved Civilisation: The Untold story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to The Rise of Medieval Europe**, (New York: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 189-190. The life of the Irish monks in this period was based on scriptural based scholarship and the ascetical practices of the

“growing tired” as mission resource bases in Europe eroded after the outbreak of WWI. The scale and organisation of Protestant work being carried out in China had also impressed Galvin and helped stimulate him to promote more urgent Catholic efforts. With Blowick and friends, he cultivated powerful Irish church figures, especially those associated with the prestigious St Patrick’s College (Maynooth College) which educated diocesan priests, currying influence and thus gained the official backing of the Irish bishops to establish a missionary Society.³² His goal was to have the new Society officially attached to the wider church through Propaganda in Rome, and directly through it to negotiate for an Irish mission territory in China to the liking of the founders.³³ Another strategy was to target competent diocesan priests to join the enterprise and allocate them immediate tasks in publishing, seminary teaching, administration and leading new foundations.

In the original approval from the Irish bishops, the founders had purposely asked for and received permission to appeal for finance in the parishes and to establish a missionary seminary. They wanted to resource the Society directly from ordinary Catholics, and immediately after approval they organised parish appeals Ireland-wide.³⁴ A permanent network of parish promoters backed up by a monthly mission magazine was soon set in place. Properties were bought to accommodate both Society administration and a seminary filled mainly with students and staff who had transferred from Irish diocesan seminaries.³⁵ Some men joined the Society as lay Brothers and within four years an independent group of Sisters with the Columban spirit was established.³⁶ Thus it was that

Coptic Desert Fathers. They belonged to independent monasteries and felt free to contest with diocesan and state leaders on religious issues.

³² Smyth, **Chinese Batch**, 1994, pp. 65-67. Galvin and Blowick formed an advisory committee to draw up a submission to the Irish Bishops' Meeting. On 10 October 1916, called *The Memorial*.

³³ B. Smyth, ed. **Galvin and Galvin-Related Letters 1912-1927**, (Navan, Ireland: Columban Society, 1995); Barrett, **Red Lacquered Gate**, 1967, pp. 132-133. On 9 December 1919 Hanyang City and the country to the northwest was one of three areas carved out of the Italian Franciscan Vicariate of East Hupeh. Galvin wanted an area in which responsibility fell exclusively onto the Irish Church and the Irish “diaspora” through the Columban Society. He did not want the Society taking an assisting role in the territory assigned to some other missionary group or having the Chinese bishops possibly give them a remote work area.

³⁴ Smyth, **China Batch**, 1994. Maynooth College professors and priests from different Religious Orders helped promote the Society by preaching at the parish Sunday masses all over Ireland. “The Committee” members immediately had 35,000 pamphlets printed and distributed advertising the new mission enterprise. A Mission League was formed so that people would make regular donations. A monthly magazine, *The Far East* was published in Ireland from January 1918 onwards.

³⁵ Barrett, **Red Lacquered Gate**, 1967, pp. 125-135. A Columban seminary was opened in Ireland in 1918.

³⁶ The Brothers were Irish lay helpers, never numbering more than a dozen, and the Society accepted no more after the first decade.

the Columban founders created a vision of missionary work in China and, as entrepreneurs and inspiring leaders, built an organisation to make it a reality.

An “Australasian” Columban Foundation

Declaring the Missionary Society of St Columban venture a “work of the Irish race”, Society leaders from 1916 onwards made contact with church leaders and Catholics of Irish descent around the world to widen the Society’s resource base, turning to the USA, the UK, Argentina, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia.³⁷ The Society was established firstly in Ireland and then the USA, and the same pattern of organisation was largely replicated when it started operations in Australia. Society founders enlisted prominent Australian church people to the Columban cause, conveyed its objectives to Australian Catholics nationwide and followed its proven strategies to organise a response.

From 1916 onwards, the process of founding the Society had been regularly reported in Irish Catholic journals and Australian Catholic papers, at first promoted as “The Maynooth Mission to China”.³⁸ Blowick took the initiative and wrote to Archbishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne November 1918 asking for his support for the Society to make appeals for finance in Australia.³⁹ As Mannix had been Rector of Maynooth College in Ireland before coming to Melbourne in 1912 as coadjutor bishop he knew the founders of the Society and many early members personally. He was also renowned as a feisty church leader and champion of Irish causes in Australia. At his behest, the Australasian Bishops Meeting October 1919 authorised Mannix to send an invitation to Blowick for the Society to come to Australia and New Zealand to collect funds.⁴⁰ There was no mention of a Columban foundation at this stage.

³⁷ Smyth, **Galvin Letters**, 1995, nos. 41 and 43. As a work of the “Irish race” worldwide, in late 1917 Galvin went to the USA seeking support as he was familiar with that country and judged it to be a substantial source of finance. After just four years of activity, the first group of Columban priests, with Galvin as their superior, set out for China in March 1920, and Blowick headed the operation at home as the Society’s first Superior General.

³⁸ Melbourne Archdiocesan Archives, Advocate file. *The Advocate*, the Melbourne Archdiocesan Catholic paper reported on the 1916 foundation of the new mission venture. It carried seven articles on the Society in 1917, six in 1918, and from 1919 onwards, multiple references.

³⁹ The letter from Blowick to Mannix cannot be found but the response letter from Mannix has survived.

⁴⁰ Minutes of the Australasian Bishops’ Conference 1919, p. 16 (per Father Tom Boland). The Minutes state, “Father Blowick’s appeal for permission to collect funds in Australia for the carrying on of the good work was most sympathetically received, and the Archbishop of Melbourne was encouraged to invite

Irish Columban priests, Doctor Edward Maguire and James Galvin were sent to begin the Society's work in Australia. Graduates of Maynooth they were confident men and capable, carrying the certainty of their Irish Catholic faith. Sometimes brash and authoritarian, they reflected at least some aspects of the spirit of *St Patrick's Breastplate*.

I arise to-day
through God's strength to pilot me...
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me...

They were convinced of the worth and appeal of the China mission enterprise they came to promote and were confident that the Columban venture in Australia would succeed. It only had to be organised. "Doc" Maguire was the superior, a person of standing in the Irish Church who had been professor of theology at All Hallows College, Dublin, from 1915-19. He had been asked to join the Society with the specific purpose of leading the Australia venture, a process which led to a foundation within four years.⁴¹ Like Edward Galvin, Maguire was an entrepreneur, imaginative in his promotional initiatives, a skilled diplomat in church circles and not afraid to ask for money.⁴² When Galvin wrote from China in 1922 to encourage Australian promotion efforts he stated that the Society needed to "provide in China all that the priests need in the Mentone [Columban] house - vestments, knives and forks, underwear and the like". The next year he wrote about the need for ongoing finance for the mission. "When the money stops here, the mission stops also".⁴³

Father Blowick to send representatives of the mission to Australia for the purpose of collecting funds." **Australasian Catholic Record**, (April 1988); J. Blowick Travel Diary, **CI** October, 1988.

⁴¹ **TFE** 3, 1924, p. 6; 8, 1957, p. 1. Maguire was elected to the Superior General's Council in 1924 and edited the Irish edition of *The Far East* 1924-1936. He later taught in the Columban Dalgan seminary in Ireland and worked in the USA where he died in 1957. A fellow priest wrote of him, "this rapid thinker and sweeping organiser, this laughing cavalier who could reduce a situation to an epigram or a joke, this theologian turned child entertainer, owed this varied richness to the fact that he was a great priest... [never] did Dr. Maguire ever go ankle-deep into anything except the high interests of God and His Church."

⁴² *Aussie Yappings*, January 1924. It reported that Mannix said of Maguire, "... he was slim both in physique and in character when he arrived in the country, and that he had preserved both characteristics - especially the latter - during his four year's stay by many able strokes of diplomacy. (Murmurs of approval, and 'Hear, hear')"; J. Mullen, **CI** June, 1995. After Maguire's return to Ireland in 1924 a colleague wrote: "He did not seem to think that the priests in Ireland were high-powered enough in regard to promotion work."

⁴³ Galvin to Maguire, 6, April, 1923, **CAE** China File.

In what became the norm for their promotion travels, Maguire arranged in advance to meet and stay with leading clergy.⁴⁴ Arriving in Sydney on 6 January 1920, he and his fellow worker James Galvin (no relation of Edward) were taken to St Mary's Cathedral presbytery. Galvin assisted Maguire for two years in Australia.⁴⁵ Archbishop Kelly gave them a warm welcome and they found that some Irish priests on the staff had been students at All Hallows College when Maguire lectured there. They felt at home among their own, however, in his journal Galvin notes they had to buy new suits more appropriate to the climate. Travelling by train to Melbourne, they were met at the station by a limousine arranged by the Archbishop and taken to his residence, "Raheen". Soon after, Mannix invited Maguire to address the clergy of the Archdiocese at their annual retreat on the history, aims and needs of the newly founded Society. Mannix said, "Australian Catholics carry heavy burdens of their own. But I know them well enough to assure you, that they will give generous response to the appeals of the Irish Mission to China." Immediately after the talk prominent members of the clergy gave substantial donations amounting to £200.⁴⁶

Mannix had a personal interest in the success of the Society since its founders were Maynooth graduates and under his lead, Maynooth priests in Victoria rallied quickly to support the Columban enterprise.⁴⁷ The more commonly used Australian title for the Society at that time, "The Irish Mission to China", had appeal as it named the Society's Irish origins and its goal of work in China. It was still used in 1928 by Mannix when he opened the general Columban appeal in the Melbourne archdiocese, even through by that time the local Society letterhead read, "St. Columban's Mission Society".

The "Irishness" of the Society was a significant factor in its immediate success, welcomed in many quarters as it helped reinforce the Irish quality in the Australian

⁴⁴ James Galvin, "Reflections" (date unknown), CAE, Foundation File. Galvin wrote an account of his trip to Australia by ship and his two years in the "Land of the Holy Spirit", as he liked to refer to Australia.

⁴⁵ P. Crowley, **Those Who have Journeyed with Us**, (Dublin: Columban Society, 1999), p. 27. James Galvin spent two years in China until ill health forced him to retire to the USA. He was one of the earliest of many Columban mission casualties to various forms of sickness.

⁴⁶ Dean Hegarty of Kyneton, Father Quilter of St Francis' Church Melbourne, and Dean Carey of West Melbourne.

⁴⁷ TFE 12, 1922, p. 10. This photo shows Maynooth graduates gathered in force for the opening of the first Society house at Mentone.

church.⁴⁸ Much of this Irishness focused on Mannix who had said, "the more deeply they breathed the Irish atmosphere the stronger and more vigorous will be the Australian faith."⁴⁹ It was the period of Irish race consciousness in Australia. Jesuit Father Lockington, who befriended the Society and spoke at the opening of its first Columban house in Australia, had spoken at the Irish Race Convention held in Melbourne November 1919.⁵⁰ Mannix planned to visit Ireland in 1920, and consciously or not, he aligned himself with the Irish bishops and their approval of the Columban Society by promoting it in Australia. On that trip Mannix met the Irish revolutionary leader De Valera at the Columban House in Omaha, USA, further associating the Society with the Irish spirit as activist, and in some aspects revolutionary and anti-British.⁵¹ At the opening of the first local Society house in 1922 Maguire reinforced this view:

The Irish Mission to China ... began as a national movement on the part of the Irish people at home. Two years later it became a race movement ... the racial character of the movement has become more emphasised by the opening of this House. Australia has made our mission her own.⁵²

While Columban promotion in Australia at first presented the Society enterprise as part of building the prestige of "Erin abroad" and manifesting the glories of the "Irish race", Maguire developed a "both and" approach so as not to alienate Australian born clergy and Religious.⁵³ Edward Galvin's experience in the USA convinced him that the Maynooth name had limited significance when dealing with local diocesan clergy, a message no doubt passed on to Maguire when heading for Australia. Although the names

⁴⁸ B. Maher, **Planting the Celtic Cross: Foundations of the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn**, (Aranda, ACT: Brian Maher, private publication late 1990s). Maher refers often to the Catholic ethos of the diocese that had a strong Irish flavour springing from its clergy, detailing the Irish colleges they trained in and uses the poetry of Columban Patrick O'Connor to capture their spirit.

⁴⁹ P. O'Farrell **The Catholic Church and Community in Australia** (NSW: NSW University Press, 3rd edition 1986/1992), p. 361.

⁵⁰ T. Boland, **James Duhig**, (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1986), pp. 151-152; U. Bygott, **With Pen and Tongue: The Jesuits in Australia 1986-1939**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980), pp. 214 and 307. Lockington was a pro-Irish New Zealander and promoter of the lay apostolate.

⁵¹ B. Santamaria, **Mannix** (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1984), p. 108; D. Keogh, "Mannix, De Valera and Irish Nationalism", **Australasian Catholic Record**, lxxv (April 1988), p.164; P. Cornish **The Irish Catholic Experience: a historical survey** (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian, 1985), pp. viii and 123; R. Ely, "Church and State", G. Davison, J. Hirst and S Macintyre, **The Oxford Companion to Australian History**, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 124-126. Among Australian bishops, Mannix in particular was outspoken about British imperial issues. From its beginning, the Irish church has always had a lively interest in political issues and this flowed over to the colonies. D. Keogh, **The Vatican, The Bishops and Irish Politics 1919-1939** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 1. Even the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ireland in 1978 was seen as "a vivid illustration of the traditional relationship between Irish Catholicism and nationalism."

⁵² **TFE** 1, 1922, pp. 10-12.

⁵³ Phrases about the "Irish race" appear often in **TFE** 1920-23.

Maynooth and Irish Mission helped Maguire gain access to people of position in the Australian church, he was not unaware of their limitations. He may have judged that Mannix was to a degree out of step with a growing number of the clergy who identified themselves firstly as Australians, and Mannix himself had taken steps to show that local Catholics were also loyal Australians.⁵⁴ Maguire seems to have read the situation and cast the Columban promotion net wide so as to also appeal to those Catholics who identified themselves firstly as Australians rather than of the “Irish race”.

Opposition to accepting Australians as Columban members

Opposition to the Society’s work in Australia soon surfaced among some clergy within the local church revolving around two issues, acceptance of Australians as members of the Society and the collection of mission funds. James Galvin wrote, "Whilst we 'prospected' for funds, prayers and continued support, we often referred to the need of vocations and volunteers for the Pagan Missions."⁵⁵ In March 1920, three diocesan priests volunteered and two, Romuald Hayes and Luke Mullany from Melbourne, received their bishop's permission to join.⁵⁶ Since the transition from diocesan volunteer priest to Society member was an easy process in the early years of the Society, Maguire immediately sent them to do appeals in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Galvin continues in his journal, “Whilst the most welcome addition to our team brought favourable comments from many quarters, there were critical reactions here and there.”⁵⁷ Sydney Archdiocesan priest Father J. M. Cusack was the most outspoken. Writing to the Sydney Catholic newspaper, *Freeman’s Journal* in 1920 he asked “What About

⁵⁴ P. O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1986), pp. 289-291; S. Macintyre, *The Oxford History of Australia. Volume 4, 1910-1942*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986, 1993 paperback), p. 187. Mannix had Victoria Cross winners in the St Patrick’s Day Parade in 1919.

⁵⁵ “Vocation” is a traditional Catholic term used for those called by God to serve in a particular state of life such as marriage, priesthood or religious life. It is most commonly used for the vocation to the priesthood or Religious life.

⁵⁶ Hayes, “Reflections”; *TFE* 10, 1920, p. 6. Hayes and Mullany were highly regarded young priests, and Hayes had studied at Propaganda College in Rome. They were fellow curates in Northcote, Melbourne, in 1920 but, unbeknown to each other, they were both negotiating to join the Columban Society. Their letters of application were written on the same day, 9 March 1920. Hayes and Mullany were the first Australians to take the oath as members of the Society.

⁵⁷ Galvin, “Reflections”.

Australia First?”⁵⁸ While wishing the enterprise well and commending its fund raising appeals, Cusack argued that the pagan forces of materialism and socialism needed to be opposed in Australia, and that local clergy to do this job were scarce. The Society, he said, was an Irish venture and Australian Catholics had St Columba's College in Springwood built by Cardinal Moran ready for foreign mission work when the time was right, adding that there were 50,000 Chinese in Australia to convert for those who wanted the work. When a group from St Patrick's College, Manly, wrote to defend the Columban position, Cusack wrote again on “Australia First”.⁵⁹ Maguire chose to stay out of the debate noting that the “Australianites among the priests are numerically few but very bitter”.⁶⁰

Cusack's opposition to the Society was part of an anti-Irish and pro-Australian movement among the Australian clergy in that period who saw the dominance by Irish clergy and bishops in Australian dioceses as a form of Irish church imperialism. The Manly Union formed by some of the Australian born priests who had trained at Manly argued for the proper recognition of Australian born clergy.⁶¹ Those clergy who favoured the Irish position looked to Melbourne for their leadership. Maguire faced the critics and “made lasting friends by insisting that if he was an Australian priest, he too would protest against the raid on the native clergy, but come to think of it under the aspect of Faith - the Divine Master praised the widow's mite!”⁶² His recollections of the affair may have smoothed over the criticisms but no further direct mention is made of the “Australian vocations” issue in Columban sources. Cusack's objections may have had the opposite effect to what he desired, both galvanising the local “Irish church” to support the Society, and creating publicity for an emerging missionary arm of the Australian born diocesan

⁵⁸ Cusack stated that China, with over 50,000 churches, was served by 1,700 priests, including 550 locals. This was in contrast to Australia which was served by only 1,400 priests of whom a mere 270 were locals. B. Smyth, **Columban Scene** (Navan: Columban, 1991) p. 3; Boland, **Duhig**, 1986, pp. 211-12. In 1919, Rome encouraged the opening of local seminaries and appointment of local bishops but some of the Irish bishops in Australia did not like Roman induced indigenisation in Australia.

⁵⁹ “Duc in altum” in the Latin Vulgate translation of the Christian Scriptures is the first half of the command of Jesus to his fisherman disciples in Luke 5:4, “Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch..” Pope John Paul II used this theme in his Millenium Letter, 2000, on evangelisation.

⁶⁰ Maguire to Blowick, 15.6.1020, CAE, D/CA files.

⁶¹ K. Livingston, “Manly Union”, **Australasian Catholic Record**, xlviii, 3 (July 1971), pp. 237-249; Boland, **Duhig**, 1986 pp. 286-289. O'Farrell, **Australian Catholic Community**, 1985/1992, pp. 358-67. In a 1914 speech T. Maguire at St Patrick's College, Manly, Jubilee celebrations said, “Say not that the Irish priests have served Australia in the past, and can serve her in the future... The mission of the Church in Australia is no longer to save the Irish exile, but to convert the Australian race.” But, seventy percent of the Catholic clergy were Irish at that time.

clergy. When the news that several Australian born clergy had become members of the Society was reported in the Catholic press, it boosted its local credentials.

After Hayes and Mullany, the next two Australian born priests to join the Society were William McGoldrick from Brisbane Archdiocese and Michael Fitzgerald (Gerry) O'Collins from the Diocese of Sandhurst (Bendigo). Other volunteers in that period did not receive their respective bishop's permission.⁶³ McGoldrick was rather a "catch" for the new Society having studied abroad and been Archbishop Duhig's secretary for eight years.⁶⁴ O'Collins had studied at Propaganda College in Rome where many future bishops in mission countries also studied.⁶⁵ There was "style" in the way these four young Australian priests popularised the Columban mission. They featured in the local press to the chagrin of some Irish members, and letters that later came from China were extravagant in their praise.⁶⁶ Reports on these new priests in the Catholic press helped promote the image of the Society as a group relevant in a changing world and for its China focus (photograph next page).⁶⁷

In the first few years, young Australian men, mainly diocesan seminarians, attracted by the Columban vision and wanting to join the Society were sent directly to the

⁶² Galvin, "Reflections".

⁶³ CAE, Foundation Files. Volunteers include Fathers Timothy McCarthy, William O'Collins and Frederick McKenna from Melbourne Archdiocese, Eugene Galligan from Sandhurst, Patrick Crowley and Peter James Murphy (possibly also O'Donnell) from Sydney Archdiocese, Gerald Fitzgerald and Denis Murphy from Hobart Archdiocese. Several of these volunteers were Irish priests who had been ordained for Australian dioceses. When McCarthy applied, the Archbishop said he thought that Melbourne had been "quite generous enough".

⁶⁴ TFE 8, 1961, p.11; *The Catholic Weekly* 18 September 1969; *The Leader* 11 January 1976 p.2. Coming from Toowoomba, after studies at Manly and in Innsbruck, Austria, he was ordained for the Archdiocese of Brisbane in 1911. After a short time on promotion in Australia, McGoldrick was the first Australian Columban to work in China. Apart from five years 1924-29 in the USA as part of efforts to remedy the Society's financial difficulties, he was in China until forced by the Communist government to leave in 1951 when he returned to Australia.

⁶⁵ M. O'Collin's file, CAE. O'Collins worked in Hanyang China 1925-1948 until he was appointed to promotion in Australia. Travelling to many dioceses he was distinguished by his goatee beard. The students at St. Edward's school Canowindra were reminded of his visit there for many years by the Chinese he wrote on the wall of their hall - the character of a tree repeated twice which, he said, meant a forest (a personal memory of this author).

⁶⁶ Hayes visited China in 1920 and the other three worked there. *Aussie Yappings* October 1923: "He [McGoldrick] is never happy except when he is starring in the newspapers." W. Barrett, **Lacquered Gate**, 1967, pp.166 and 236. Some Society members were referred to as "Slick Hounds" displaying some social class rivalry, even envy among the membership.

⁶⁷ *The Advocate* carried multiple reports on the Society and the results of Columban diocesan appeals in 1920. The Brisbane Catholic *Herald* and the *Argus* carried reports of the Columban appeals of 1920, their purpose and success. The Adelaide *Southern Cross* 26 June 1925 told about the Society's display and

Society's seminary in Ireland. Recruiting Columban seminarians and priests became part of the Society's organised promotion work of priests "on the road" around Australia, and the Columban magazine carried advertisements for vocations. These appealed to the idealism of youth and emphasised the original vision given by the founders about the needs of vast numbers of people in China who had not been baptised and Catholics without regular access to the other sacraments.⁶⁸ The Society was the first group in Australia to create the opportunity and structures for young men to become priests in an overseas missionary enterprise that was diocesan in character.



Fathers James Galvin, Dr Edward Maguire, (unknown figure), Luke Mullany, and Romuald Hayes at Mentone in 1922.

activity at the Vatican Missionary Exhibition in Rome and commended the use of the movie *Rambles in China* to tell the Columban mission story.

⁶⁸ **TFE** 9, 1925, p. 26. Using the imagery of the day, some bluntly asked young men to join with the priests of Christ the King to counter the priests of paganism represented by a photo of a Buddhist monk, even though the magazine had presented the ordination of monks in a positive way in **TFE** 8, 1923, p. 13. Vocations work increased under John Blowick's influence, propagated through a 1927 booklet called "An Open Letter to the Boys of Australia" published by the Region, **CAE**, Vocations File.

Proposal to form an Australian Missionary Sisterhood

In what may have been a surprise and an unplanned consequence of Columban promotion, young Australian and New Zealand women spontaneously volunteered to join a missionary Sisterhood with the Columban Society and already professed Religious Sisters wanted to become volunteers in China.⁶⁹ By Easter 1924, one hundred and four women, many of them with professional qualifications in teaching and nursing, had volunteered.⁷⁰ The Society was faced with a decision of whether or not to bring them under the Columban organisational umbrella, expanding its original focus on diocesan priests as missionaries. The women volunteers were no doubt motivated by reports from 1920 onwards in the Columban magazine on issues such as the plight of Chinese women whose bound feet meant they needed to be ministered to at home, and the need for educational and medical facilities.⁷¹ Such articles pointed to the need for the ministry of Religious Sisters in China, the then acceptable way for Catholic women to work professionally and full time in their church.

It took several years of argument and experiments before a clear response to the women volunteers emerged. Initially the local Columban priests seem to have readily accepted that because there was a need for missionary Sisters in China, setting up an Australian group was a natural progression of the local Columban venture. Responding to the request to join an Australian missionary Sisterhood connected with the Society was a factor in its decision to establish a permanent foundation in Australia. The need to provide space for a Sisters' novitiate was a major consideration when properties were purchased at Mentone in 1921 and at Essendon in 1923, and reports in the local Columban magazine trumpeted this policy as a further reason for financially supporting the Society. Another indication of local support for the move was a proposal to form a congregation of Australian Missionary Sisters. Mannix suggested the Josephite Sisters of Mother Mary McKillop be approached to provide training and informal talks began.⁷² There was also a proposal to form a local branch of the Columban Sisters that were being founded in Ireland at the time.

⁶⁹ TFE 9, 1921 p.3-4.

⁷⁰ Maguire to Blowick, 28.2.1921, CAE, D/SG file; *Aussie Yappings*, April, 1924.

⁷¹ TFE 12, 1920, p.6.

⁷² Maguire to Blowick 28.2.1921 and Maguire to Hayes 30.7.1924, CAE, D/CA files.

However, these proposals were discouraged both by the Columban Superior General from Ireland, and by the Society superior and members in China. While Blowick believed that the "lack of Sisters is a very serious set back to our work" in China, he offered no support to the Australian initiatives. From 1917 onwards he had worked with Lady Frances Molony to found the **Missionary Sisters of Saint Columban** but judged the fledgling group was not capable of establishing an Australian branch at the same time, distance, finance and personnel to train them being contributing factors.⁷³ Blowick's sense of urgency about sending Religious Sisters to China was not shared by Edward Galvin. As the Columban Superior in China who saw the services offered by priests as his priority. Galvin had witnessed what he judged were difficulties associated with the many women lay volunteers working in Protestant ventures, often the equivalent of Catholic Sisters.⁷⁴ Knowing Galvin's attitude, McGoldrick's advice from China to Hayes in Australia in 1924 was to "go slow" on sending Sisters.⁷⁵ Finance in China was also a factor. Given the differences in mission priorities as seen by Blowick and Galvin and the limited finance available for the Columban China mission at the time, Galvin preferred to spend money on parishes and priests. The first Sisters to work with the Society in China were the Loretto Sisters from Kentucky USA. They were self-financed, a deciding factor for Galvin in inviting as his first group of foreign Sisters.⁷⁶

While the debates over Society policy continued, an interim and compromise solution was found in late 1921 when the Region decided to send a small number of local young women to Ireland for Blowick's foundation. Sister Francis Xavier Mapleback was a member of the first intake of postulants in February 1922, and the following year she was joined by Irene [Rene] Griffin (Sister Agnes), Inez Pryer (Sister Carmel) and Vera Nicholson.⁷⁷ Applications were still arriving in 1924 and Hayes reported that the local bishops were constantly asking about the Missionary Sisters project, to local Columban

⁷³ **Columban Mission**, (TFE, USA edition) June-July 1984.

⁷⁴ Galvin to Mullany, 24.2.34, CAE, China File. Blowick to Maguire, 19.5.1924, CAE, D/CA file. Blowick wrote that "Father Galvin will have nothing to do with a hospital", a common undertaking of Sisters.

⁷⁵ McGoldrick to Hayes, CAE, Columban Sisters File.

⁷⁶ A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), pp. 119-121. Galvin visited the Sisters' mother-house in 1922 to encourage them and they marked the first noticeable increase in mission sending from USA congregations of men and women who previously had not worked in missions abroad.

⁷⁷ Blowick to Maguire, 13.5, 1921, CAE, D/CA. E. Fisher, **Maybe a Second Spring**, (New York: Crossroad, 1983), pp. 20 and 29. Vera later joined the Melbourne branch of the Brigidine Sisters (Sister Dolores). Irene had previously worked in the Columban office and was among the first group of Columban Sisters sent to China in 1926.

embarrassment. Since neither proposals eventuated, either for a local Missionary Sisterhood or a local branch of the Columban Sisters, the local Region was instructed by the Superior General not to include the idea of a Missionary Sisters novitiate in its advertising.⁷⁸

Although few of the Columban Sisters were Australians and their Congregation formed an independent church body, their professional cooperation with Society priests in mission work was later important for hospitals, schools, special ministries and the training of lay leaders. Accounts of their work featured often in the Society Australian magazine with many of the articles written by the Sisters.⁷⁹ The advance in the professionalism and self-chosen priorities of the Columban Sisters was exemplified by two incidents in the Society's Australian history. While in 1933 the Sisters agreed to look after the domestic arrangements of a proposed Columban seminary, they declined to do so in 1957 when it was becoming an actuality.⁸⁰

What could have developed into an innovative organisational contribution of the Society to mission activity in Australia never took shape. Interest in an Australian Missionary Sisterhood or branch of the Columban Sisters arose under Columban inspiration but faded quickly from 1924 onwards when the Society provided limited immediate outlet corresponding to the interest shown by young women. The affair was perhaps the first major example of the limits that the Society decided to set to its organisational outreach in Australia. The Society continued a policy to limit the works it took on in Australia, taking no parishes so keeping its exclusively missionary nature, cooperating with many church agencies but setting its own focus and keeping its independent structures.

Local Opposition to the Society Collecting Money in Australia

The second objection to the Australian work of the Society was exemplified by an incident in 1920. After a talk in Sydney by Maguire to promote the Columban Mission

⁷⁸ Hayes to Blowick, 19.5.1924, CAE, D/CA file.

⁷⁹ TFE 10, 1926, p. 12; 3, 1927, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Mother Theophane to Hayes 20.1.1931, and Mother General to Chapman 1957, CAE, Columban Sisters file.

League of supporters following the pattern set in Ireland, a dissenting letter arrived from Father Courtais as the Procurator of the Marist Society.

Now, for the purpose of helping China, we have an organisation already existing and well alive, the Propagation of the Faith [Catholic Mission]. It is catholic in the best sense of the word. It is established all over the world, and its funds are distributed all over the world... I was disappointed to find that these points were not touched upon in your talk this morning.⁸¹

He may have had a personal motive for his concern since the Marist Society had received significant financial support from Catholic Mission for its work in the Pacific.⁸² The archives carry no more correspondence on this particular objection; however, the difficulties posed were ongoing. Writing to the Superior General in 1921, Maguire quoted the Papal Apostolic Delegate in Australia as saying that he wanted to promote the Catholic Mission organisation: "... these Chinese Missionaries from Ireland came over here to collect funds to go to convert China, and now they have started a paper here and we'll never get rid of them ..." and as a consequence "the Aboriginals should be left almost wholly without Missionaries and Mission funds, while people were spilling out cash into our pocket for China."⁸³ Maguire concluded the letter relating that when he met Mannix to discuss the objections there was little sympathy as "he proceeded to put to me a series of Australianite objections."

In what were no doubt diplomatic moves, the Society magazine contained reports on the establishment of Catholic Mission in Australia.⁸⁴ In 1922 later Maguire noted that Catholic appeals had been started to support mission work in Papua New Guinea since Australia had extended its territorial responsibilities there after the defeat of Germany in WWI, and reported that the Apostolic Delegate thought that the Columban Society was "doing too well". However, finishing on a note of triumph, Maguire judged by late 1922 that, "The fight is over and we've won. Opposition may bother us a little bit here and there, but the main position is secure."⁸⁵ Columban Society links with the bishops had been well forged, its promotional network well organised, and its mission materials

⁸¹ Courtais to Maguire 28.7.1920, CAE, Directors files.

⁸² J. Waldersee **A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Australia 1837-1977**, (Kensington, NSW: Chevalier Press, 1983), p. 433.

⁸³ Maguire to John Blowick 2.7.1921, CAE, D/CA files.

⁸⁴ **TFE** 5, 1922, p.5; 7, 1925, p.14-15. The magazine carried a history of Catholic Mission and published a long letter from the then Melbourne archdiocesan Dean A. Martin with the names of all diocesan Directors.

⁸⁵ Maguire to Blowick 5.10.22, CAE, D/CA files.

professionally developed as the basis for that sense of security. Feeling secure, in 1923 Maguire continued to negotiate the Columban position so that in 1923, at the request of the Apostolic Delegate, he spent some months promoting the educational arm for the clergy of Catholic Mission, *Pia Unio*, in Sydney while doing his Society work.⁸⁶

Conclusion

The modern missionary movement took hold and became visible across the Australian Catholic Church largely as a result of the Columban Society's entry into Australia in 1920. Its entry had been well planned and executed by capable leaders who moved beyond their initial Irish connections to have the local church claim them as their own. This goal was achieved within four years, clear evidence of the ability of leadership teams with vision and entrepreneurial skills to rapidly establish new mission ventures. While drawing on diocesan resources to the advantage of its own venture in China, the Society was the first to create an entry point and place for diocesan priests and Catholics Australia wide to enter into the missionary movement. It provided an alternative mission path to that of the Religious Orders and established a new diocesan characteristic for the local missionary movement. Two stories convey some of the high spirits of Columban members by 1925, a Jubilee Year of Mission celebrated in the Catholic Church worldwide.⁸⁷ One man saw St Columba's seminary building at Springwood and said, we "only have to add one letter to the name Columba to take it over for St Columban."⁸⁸ Another told of how Carmelite Sisters were enlisted to knit woollen-socks for the missionaries. Each pair had a note attached with the verse from Isaiah, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the word."⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Maguire to Blowick 3.4.1923 and 7.5.1923, CAE, D/CA files.

⁸⁷ J. Considine, **The Vatican Mission Exposition: A Window to the World**, (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1925).

⁸⁸ *Aussie Yappings*, October 1924.

⁸⁹ *Aussie Yappings*, December 1925.

CHAPTER 2: Belonging within Australia: Creating a Pattern in Organising Resources to Support the Columban Mission Enterprise

The Society purposely set out to create a pattern of organisation in Australia to ensure that the initial support shown for its mission enterprise could be structurally maintained. To this end it established a permanent Columban House in Melbourne, Australia's second largest city, devised a nation-wide system of ongoing contact with parishes and schools, started a mission magazine, and through its promotional material made the Columban name a Catholic household word. The Society chose to take this high profile approach while at the same time creating a warm rapport with its supporters through personal contact by letter and priests "on the road".

An Australian Society House

The transition from the permission of the Australasian bishops for the Society to collect funds given in October 1919 to establishing a local foundation took place over four years, although Maguire's subsequent actions suggest it may have been in his mind when he first arrived in Australia. Blowick and Maguire initially indicated to Mannix that the Society's intention in Australia was not to set up a local foundation and the bishops in 1919 only agreed to the collection of mission funds. No documentation exists about the changed objectives in Australia; however, the acceptance of local members, buying Society houses, and providing accommodation for a seminary and a missionary Sisters' novitiate were at the core of discussion and decisions taken. Before he arrived in Australia, Maguire would have been aware of Society experience in the USA where a foundation had to be made and local candidates accepted if the Society was to continue to collect funds.¹ It also had to compete at the diocesan level with Maryknoll, the National Foreign Missionary Society established with the approval of the USA Catholic bishops. The absence of an equivalent national missionary group in Australia made the acceptance of local Columban vocations and the making of a foundation easier. To some Columban members the Society was to be the quasi-official missionary arm of the Australian church.

The Australian Society leaders felt that they needed a Columban house to serve as a promotion-operations headquarters, a permanent residence for its priests, an office and a mission-training house. The negotiation of episcopal permission to buy a house was a major step towards making a permanent foundation in Australia. The idea did not gain immediate acceptance from Mannix who had to be persuaded before the Society could purchase a property in Melbourne. At the time, Mannix felt he had been “put off” by Edward Galvin when returning from Europe in 1921. He arrived in Shanghai but was not brought to the Columban mission up-river in Hanyang by Galvin.² Although Galvin had belatedly sent his excuses, he may not have wanted to have the Society seen as close to such a politically controversial figure. Rather than smarting from this possible rebuff, the Archbishop eventually gave his approval for a Society house in the suburb of Mentone which he personally blessed December 1921.³

The matter of an Australian foundation was settled by late 1923 when a unanimous recommendation was taken by the local Columban Superior’s Council to sell the Mentone property because it was far from the city printing houses and too small for Society needs.⁴ The Council recommended the purchase of a larger property at Essendon which was capable of catering for expanding Columban needs in administration, a base for priests “on the road”, priests recuperating after illnesses, visitor accommodation, and a Sisters' novitiate. Society priests moved to Essendon in late 1923. The decision for the Society to make a permanent foundation in Australia evolved over time with at least Mannix’s acquiescence, and became public in 1924 when Australia became an

¹ Wanting to avoid conflict in the eastern states, the Society set up in Omaha Nebraska where the bishop and most clergy were Irish.

² Maguire to Blowick 2.7.1921, CAE, D/CA files; Galvin to Maguire 18.7.1921, CAE, D/China files; TFE 11, 1921, p. 7; 1, 1922, p.11. Galvin seemed to have distanced himself from Irish political matters from the beginning, in 1916 giving priority to setting up a mission society, although his early letters from China showed he was well acquainted with developments, Smyth, **Galvin Letters**, no. 6, April 1913. The discussion of Irish politics was forbidden at the Irish Columban seminary established in 1918.

³ Blowick to Maguire 23.6.1921, CAE, D/CA files; *Aussie Yappings* January 1924.

⁴ The Australasian Superior’s Council at Mentone on 15 August, 1923, CAE, Director’s file. “That in view of the fact that the initial appeal in Australasia on behalf of the Mission is now practically finished, and that members of the Society must therefore find some other work sufficiently important to justify them in the eyes of the Australasian clergy and people in remaining here ... we recommend the Superior to authorise the immediate purchase in the neighbourhood of Melbourne of a property that will be larger than the present Mentone property and suitable for a centre wherein (1) to train young boys and girls for admission to Cahiracon and St Brigid’s Novitiate respectively ... (2) to establish publishing offices for the “Far East”, Pia Unio etc. and a residence sufficiently commodious to accommodate members of the Australasian branch of the Society as well as confreres who may come from time to time for rest and treatment from China.”

administrative and canonically recognised Region of the Columban Society with its own Director.

Organising Promotion in Dioceses, Parishes and Schools

In spite of Catholic theories about diocesan support forged in seventeenth century Rome, in practice, when the Columban founders began their mission enterprise this approach was still an innovation among ordinary Catholics. The founders would have known of the Irish venture called the Maynooth Mission to India starting 1840 which failed for lack of wide popular support among the Catholic laity and would not have wanted to repeat its mistake. The founders were also aware that the Catholic Mission aid works were established at the official church level in Ireland and Australia and promoted by the mission encyclical of Pope Benedict in 1919, but the works were not organised at the parish level in Australia.

Maguire set out to organise this widespread parish based mission support, not for Catholic Mission but for the Columban enterprise. He and James Galvin firstly tapped into the Irish personnel in the local church, Sisters and Brothers as well as clergy, calling on them to support the modern missionary movement among English speaking Catholics spearheaded by the Irish. Both the motivation for foreign missionary activity and the regular pulse of parish life developed among Catholics in Ireland had made them capable of responding to organised mission efforts, and this preparation flowed over to Australian Catholics through their predominantly Irish personnel.⁵ Australian bishops were nearly all Irish-born in 1920 and the first direct support for the Columban Society from Australia had come from the Irishman Bishop Shiel of Rockhampton in 1918.⁶ The number of Australian Catholics of Irish birth or descent was high. They were well distributed throughout society, and many had grown to be relatively prosperous and

⁵ K. Condon, **The Missionary College of All Hallows 1842-1891**, (Dublin: All Hallows, 1986), p. 129. All Hallows College sent 74 of its 279 graduates 1866-1872 to Australia and New Zealand, a practice it continued.

⁶ Shiel to Blowick 15.8.1918, CAE. "China is undoubtedly disposed to receive the faith I saw from my own experience during a visit there a few years ago ... Providence has turned to the faithful Irish race and directed its vision to this vast field ripe for the spiritual harvest." Shiel had visited China to see his blood sister who had been there for fifteen years as a Religious Sister. Another episcopal supporter was Irishman Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Maitland. He ordered and paid for copies of the mission magazine in Ireland. They were sent to each school in his diocese, supplying all the school addresses in his letter. September 1919, CAE, Foundation File.

capable of giving material support to a mission venture.⁷ An indication of this interest was a letter to Propaganda in 1919 containing a bank draft for £100 “for the Catholic missions in China.”⁸ Under strong Irish influence and being relatively prosperous, Australian Catholics in the parishes were primed to support mission ventures.

Maguire and Galvin were at first accommodated in the Cathedral Presbytery Melbourne and given use of offices in the Cathedral Hall.⁹ They organised appeals from there using not only their Irish contacts but also cultivating Australian born clergy and Religious. Bishops and pastors throughout Australia offered parishes in which Society priests could promote the Columban venture. With their permission appeals were soon organised in Ballarat, Brisbane, Sydney and Lismore dioceses thus giving a wide spread along the eastern coast of Australia. Mannix took Maguire with him on a trip to Queensland in March 1920 and introduced him to Archbishop Duhig and other church dignitaries. The regard Maguire held for Mannix but also his hopes for the Columban enterprise can be gauged by part of a letter he sent to Ireland:

He is the Democrat King of this country. Last week he was invited to Warwick (Queensland) to lay the foundation stone of a new church. With characteristic thoughtfulness he suggested that I should accompany him in order to meet Archbishop Duhig, Bishop O'Connor and a number of other prominent men who were to be present on the occasion ... I failed to estimate the number of people who assembled to hear him that day in Warwick; but the “gate-money”, I know, totalled £8,000 ... This is probably the longest letter I've ever written, Paddy; but I wanted to give you some idea of what Australia thinks of the man who has become the patron of our Mission here.¹⁰

The promotion method used was to have Columban priests go to two adjacent parishes, speak at all the Sunday Masses, then swap pulpits to speak at the Sunday evening

⁷ M. Campbell, “Exploring Comparative Histories: The Irish in Australia and the United States”, R. Pelan, N. Quirke and M. Finnane, eds., **Irish-Australian Studies: Papers delivered at The Seventh Irish-Australian Conference July 1993**, (Darlinghurst, NSW: Crossing Press, 1994), pp. 342, 345 and 347. While often portrayed as suffering immigrants, the broad picture is of “relatively easy, if not unhindered, adjustment among the immigrant Irish, and the achievement of modest levels of prosperity”. E. Richards, “Irish in Australia”, G. Davison, J. Hirst and S. Macintyre, eds., **The Oxford Companion to Australian History**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 350-351. There were 50,000 Irish among the convicts. The maximum of Irish-born in the Australian population peaked in 1891 with 228,000. People of mixed ethnic background often claim Irish ancestry rather than others.

⁸ Daniel Hogan (barrister) to Cardinal van Rossum, Propaganda Fide, 28 October, 1919, Rome, Propaganda archives, no. 399, 3644. The bequest came from the estate of an Irishman Father Simon Doyle of St Kilian's, Bendigo, Australia. (As of July 1999 when this researcher visited the archives of Propaganda in Rome, data was accessible only up until 1920 since materials after that date have not been catalogued).

⁹ *Aussie Yappings*, January 1924. In 1920, the Society letterhead read, **Irish Mission to China**, and gave St Patrick's Cathedral as the address.

Benediction devotions. During the week they would stay at a local presbytery, speaking in Catholic schools and to parish groups. Personal contact was central to their method and Maguire boasted that he had the keys of at least five Melbourne presbyteries in his pocket. House visitation of Catholics and personal requests for money was the accepted way of collecting money in the first few years, mail appeals being a later innovation as it took time for Society supporters to build up the habit of doing business by mail.¹¹ Maguire wrote of one country experience as a warm and happy event:

Last week for example, I stayed at the house of an old bush man Pat O'Shannessy who had come to this country from Cork more than fifty year ago ... He is now quite comfortable and has raised a fine family. His son took me around through the bush indicating the names and relative wealth of all the surrounding people. When we came home at night I discovered an old violin in the corner of the sitting room. Rigging it up I played a few Irish airs, reels, jigs and hornpipes. Old Pat simply lost his head when he heard the old melodies ... Needless to say we had a record collection in the district.¹²

The “can do” approach and the use of modern methods of promotion had been learnt by Edward Galvin in the USA, under Protestant as well as Catholic influence.¹³ The methods suited Australian ways. Society priests on promotion initially travelled around dioceses by train or hired cars when needed. After a few years they bought cars so as to do more effective work, especially in the country areas, but had to pay them off personally as was the custom among the diocesan clergy.¹⁴ From 1922, lantern shows of slides from China were part of the Columban promotion technique.¹⁵ By 1925 Columban promotional movies were being shown, some of which had been prepared for the Mission Exhibition in Rome that year.¹⁶ The Society had the films professionally produced in Ireland before setting up its own movie team under Columban Richard Ranaghan.¹⁷ Keeping up with technological advances, from the 1950s the Society expanded its use of films to promote mission understanding and support, and video

¹⁰ Maguire to Cleary 8.3.1920, CAE, D/CA files.

¹¹ CAE, Promotion files.

¹² Maguire to O'Leary 25.5.1921, CAE, D/China files.

¹³ A. Dries, “The Foreign Mission Impulse of the American Church, 1893-1929”, **Occasional Bulletin**, April 1991, pp. 61-65.

¹⁴ *Aussie Yappings* November 1928. Like diocesan priests, Columban priest did not take a vow of poverty and often had to make their own financial arrangements for running a car.

¹⁵ TFE 2, 1922, p. 14; 4, 1922, p. 18

¹⁶ TFE 7, 1925, p. 5-12.

¹⁷ TFE 4, 1925, p. 3. Crooner Bing Crosby sang on a 1934 edition of the film *The Cross and the Dragon*.

productions were used from the 1970s onwards in Australian appeals to create maximum impact in motivational and mission education programs.¹⁸

In less than four years, Society appeals were made in every Australian diocese, except two small ones, and the appeals were repeated in some parishes. Melbourne Archdiocese allowed Columban appeals for funds in the parishes from 1920-25 and again in 1928 as part of a general Australia-wide collection.¹⁹ In what became the regular pattern of appeals after that time, each diocese welcomed the Society every decade or so in rotation. Columban appeals in New Zealand were part of the Society's enterprise in Australasia as authorised by the bishops' meeting in 1919 and were carried out from 1921 onwards.

Irish Columban priests Thomas Ryan, Patrick MacLean and James Hayes joined the promotion team on the road during Maguire's time as local superior. Ryan arrived in 1920 to help for a year before heading to China.²⁰ McLean spent five years in the Region from 1922 and was dubbed "a listener in woods and gazer at stars" by his peers because of his reflective ways.²¹ Hayes was in Australia from 1922-1924.²² Then Patrick J Laffan and James Fisher, "two raw boned, wild eyed youths fresh from Dalgan", joined the team.²³ This system of rotation for Columban personnel roaming "on the road" conducting parish-appeals and subscription drives and giving talks, grew to be regarded as the norm for staffing the Australian venture. They moved in the spirit of a motto of the Irish missionary monks adopted by the Society to be "wanderers for Christ". However in what was also to become a pattern, members in administration, the seminary and magazine production usually held their positions for longer periods, often rotating within them. By 1925 the Region's personnel numbered seven Columban priests, two Australians and five Irishmen.²⁴

¹⁸ TFE 11, 1960, p. 5. Lucille Ball gave some footage of the Korean War to augment a movie on the history of the church in Korea. Korean Catholics were the extras in the scenes of martyrdom, so realistic that an adviser said that some members of the audience would faint. Gregory Peck did the narration for the film. CAE, Mission Education files.

¹⁹ Maguire to Blowick, 27.5.1922, CAE, D/CA files; *Aussie Yappings* July 1923.

²⁰ TFE 12, 1921, p. 19, and 5, 1937, p. 12. Ryan had resigned from his parish in Holden, Kansas, USA, and joined the Society.

²¹ TFE 6, 1922, p.12; *Aussie Yappings* July 1924. Regarded as a "character", McLean was much appreciated by the parishioners he visited.

²² TFE 9, 1923, p. 5. Hayes moved on to become Spiritual Director in the Columban seminary, Bristol, USA.

²³ *Aussie Yappings* January 1925.

²⁴ *Aussie Yappings*, December, 1925.

James Galvin wrote, "The response from most clergy, not just the Irish, was astoundingly good."²⁵ When Blowick as Superior General of the Society visited Australia September-October 1920, he saw the beginnings of Columban successes. He was welcomed by the Archbishops of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne which "had been a true friend from the beginning" and reported that "the response from the Catholic faithful was generous and that of the pastors were equally generous".²⁶ Between January 1920 and December 1924 the Region had raised £123,451 in total, and of this, £18,000 had been sent directly to China.²⁷ Other money was used to cover recurring costs, buy two properties for Society use, build up a reserve fund, and pay transport and fees for training Australian students in the Columban seminary in Ireland. Once the local Society infrastructure was established, a higher percentage of money was allocated to China and new missions in the Philippines, Korea and Burma. Comparative financial figures for the Society in Ireland and the USA showed that the Irish region spent more money than it raised and that in absolute terms, the USA was becoming the main financial base of the Society.²⁸ Blowick took Rom Hayes with him to learn the procedures used in the Society's USA office. The business like organisation of the Society and its modern management in starting and sustaining support proved effective among Australian Catholics, and this pattern of close relationships between the Society and Catholic dioceses has remained strong over eighty years. Cultivating the Irish factor, often by favouring them with ministerial help in their parishes, remained significant until after WWII but declined as the number of Australian born and priests from other ethnic backgrounds increased in the parishes.²⁹ The cross-cultural experience of Columban members, however, stood them in good stead in relating with the new diocesan ethnic mix.

²⁵ Galvin, "Reflections", CAE, Foundation file.

²⁶ John Blowick, "Travel Diary" (copy), CAE, Foundation Files. Blowick stayed at "Dara" with Archbishop Duhig then travelled to Sydney and preached at the Jesuit parish of Lavender Bay as part of the Sydney appeals. In Melbourne he saw the first run of the Regional magazine launched in October 1920 and was impressed by the way in which the Society was facilitated by the administrator of St Patrick's Cathedral. Blowick recalled how Rom Hayes told him of the generosity of a woman saying, "she had little ready money but thrust a beautiful gold brooch set with gems into his hand", and of a man who said, "I want to give you as much as I can. Here is a hundred pound war bond". Blowick returned to Sydney and had "the privilege of enjoying the hospitality of St Patrick's College, Manly". Travelling to the USA via New Zealand he met Archbishop Redwood and Bishop Cleary. Maguire to Blowick 9.10.1922 and 18.10.1923, CAE, D/CA files. Individuals, such as Mr. Doyle of Sydney and Mrs. Kennett of Melbourne, were named as generous donors.

²⁷ Maguire to Hayes, Pentecost 1924, CAE, D/CA files. Dwyer to Hayes 8.1.1932, CAE, D/CA files.

²⁸ Between 1924-1931, the Australian Region sent nearly £37,000 to support the Chinese mission, CAE, Regional Reports.

The Regional Promotional Materials - Magazine, Calendar and Collection Box

The Far East magazine, the *Columban Calendar*, and to a lesser extent the small coin-collection *Mite Box*, the Columban mission products which most identified the Society to Australian Catholics, were at the centre of its local support network. These materials, promoted during parish appeals, carried a double message that the Society spread information about the mission needs of China and elsewhere, and that it collected money, vocations and prayers to support its mission activity. Although similar materials had been used by Catholic missionary groups in the USA, including the Columban organisation there, the Society was the first to distribute such a package of mission promotion materials at the parish level in Australia.³⁰

Immediately after arrival, Maguire set about publishing an Australian edition of *The Far East* magazine. The first issue came out in October 1920. Its opening editorial was a strong assertion of the urgency of mission to China, the place of the Columban Society in that work, and the obligation of Australian Catholics to respond. To encourage their ongoing support it stated:

A publication devoted to the conversion of China does not need to apologise for appearing just now in any Christian country ... Four hundred million of her children - half the pagan population of the world - call to the Catholics of other countries to send them missionaries. ... Nine years ago the old Imperial government of China was overthrown, and a Republic established which guarantees to all its subjects perfect freedom of worship ... thousands of China's ablest sons are now graduating in American and European universities ... As the people become educated they will see the folly of their idols, and would gladly embrace Christianity if only there were missionaries to preach to them. Paganism is going, and a fierce struggle for supremacy in the hearts and intellects of the Chinese is now in progress between the forces of Catholicism on one side, and those of Protestantism and irreligion on the other ... The command to teach all nations and preach the Gospel to every creature imposes a solemn duty on each one of us ... No heart is really Catholic that is not big enough to throb for the whole world. Our foreign missions have, therefore, a right to expect from every Christian country sustained support in the shape of prayers and monetary donations.³¹

²⁹ O'Collins quoted in Chapman to Connolly 3.4.1958, CAE, D/CA files. When arranging for Columban promotion in parishes, "Sometimes it pays better dividends to have an Irishman to go to an Irish P.P [parish priest]."

³⁰ A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), pp. 75 and 87-89.

³¹ TFE, 10, 1920, p.1.

Over the decades the magazine has remained focused on mission needs and reporting on the direct experiences of missionaries. While the format is fairly constant the content keeps changing in line with the evolution in Columban mission priorities and circumstances.³² “Action” was the major image portrayed by the magazine and reflecting the pragmatic “coal-face” and assertive “masculine” approach to the work of evangelisation undertaken by the Society, focused on expanding church communities.³³ This was in keeping with the pragmatic style of the Australian Catholic Church.

Historian Father Edmund Campion had argued that the practice of encouraging Columban priests to supply articles drawn from their experiences meant that the Society “developed a school of writers who became the most skilled writing group in Australia”.³⁴ The articles usually carried a positive note. While tragedy took its place in the magazine the emphasis was often on what action was underway to overcome the tragedy. Articles were liberally illustrated with photographs and nearly every page has had at least one picture, these photos telling their own story of mission activity and peoples in mission lands.³⁵ The front cover always carried a full-page photo from a mission area, plus the name *The Far East* in bold print.

As the Society wanted to cultivate missionary support in the Catholic school system to reinforce its appeal to adult parishioners, a major section of the Columban magazine was directed towards children. Catholic schools were numerous, catering to 217,581 pupils by 1950, and most were directly under the control of diocesan clergy.³⁶ Maguire wrote the bulk of the script for the children's characters in the magazine from 1920 and fancied himself as a popularist writer, using humour to attract the young readers. When Hugh

³² The usual format included articles on mission objectives, the spiritual motivation for mission, stories on evangelisation and humanitarian works, the cultural and political background of mission countries, support coming from Australian church members, the movements of Columban personnel and major Australian church events.

³³ T. Kelly, “Praxis and Pragmatism in Australian Theology”, *The Australasian Catholic Record*, lxxi (July) 1994, pp. 261-274; K. Massam, *Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia*, (Sydney: University of NSW, 1996), p. 7.

³⁴ E. Campion, ed., *Catholic Voices: Best Australian Catholic Writing*, (Richmond, VIC.; Aurora Books, 1996), p. 174.

³⁵ In the first 12 months of the magazine, 237 photographs were printed. These included 9 of Australian diocesan clerics, 8 of Columban members in Australia, 27 of Columban priests in China, 19 of Columban buildings, 60 of Chinese individual people and groups, 66 of Chinese scenes and customs, 33 of Australian children supporters, and 15 of other Catholic missionary people.

Donnelly became magazine editor in 1923, the children's pages largely fell to Agatha le Breton a freelance journalist from Sydney who wrote under the pen name Miriam Agatha.³⁷ Philomena Fitzgerald took on the task in the 1930s and worked at Essendon for nearly fifty years.³⁸ All writers of the children's pages used a variety of pseudonyms. *Mickie Daly's Diary* was noted for its "funnie langwich", the mis-spellings acting like a cross-word puzzle.

It is very rong to begrudge our naybur the good things he has. We are suposed to be glad at the good of another. If any boy is clever or rich or good-looking or popular we must not be jelis and enveeus.³⁹

Maureen's Letters were characterised by her travel stories and short replies to children's letters - funny but carrying good advice, and never letting the missions drop from the children's view. The "character" pieces were supplemented at times by colouring and crossword competitions to stimulate the children's interest. Pictures from the orient and words from Asian languages were used to reinforce the mission message. Children, and later adults, were also encouraged to collect used stamps for sale to support the missions.⁴⁰ The impact of the magazine on the interest of children can be gauged by the number of letters and photos they sent to the editors each month, many of which were published. Because of the large volume of mail exchanged with children, funny but serious stories appeared in the magazine about supposed exchanges between the editor and the Post Master General about postal rates.⁴¹ *The Far East* was one of a range of missionary magazines used as reading practice for children in schools both contributing

³⁶ Ronald Fogarty, **Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1959), pp. 304, 305 and 332. In 1920 there were 863 primary and secondary schools attached to 531 Catholic parishes, growing to 1199 attached to 943 parishes by 1950.

³⁷ E. Campion, **Australian Catholics: The Contribution of Catholics to The Development of Australian Society**, (Ringwood, VIC: Viking, 1987), p.132; E. Campion, **Great Australian Catholics**, (Richmond, VIC.: Aurora Books, 1997), p.74-76. Columban editors cooperated with Missionaries of the Sacred staff and both employed the writer Agatha le Breton.

³⁸ **ARN** (Australian Regional Newsletter), July 1984. "Phil" was noted for her sense of humour and had "nick names" for all the office staff, including the priests. She was fast in her quips in reply to children's letters. "Maureen, I cannot understand Mickie Daly wanting to be a priest, and then hating the Daceys" wrote Vilma. "Original sin - double strength" came the reply. Phil died in 1984. In her Easter column a few years previously she wrote, "Heaven will be God loving us and us loving God ... in Heaven we meet all the souls we helped ... Whoopee!"

³⁹ **TFE** 10, 1937, p. 31.

⁴⁰ **TFE** 5, 1925, p. 19; 8, 1967, p. 5.

⁴¹ **TFE** 7, 1922, p.19. "Oh Mr. P.M.G.!" I sobbed, "you do not - you cannot - understand. What makes the extra weight of my Little Missionaries' letters is only kisses. Surely you would not - you could not - have the heart to fine me for accepting the kisses of my Little Missionaries."

towards the students' knowledge of other lands and humanising the image of the foreign peoples among Australian people.⁴²

From 1920 to the year 2000, 10-12 issues of *The Far East* were published annually, varying from 18-40 approximately A4 size pages totaling more than 25,000 pages of text and photos. Magazine circulation climbed to 15,000 per issue within a year of publication, rose to 25,000 in two years and reached 35,000 by 1928.⁴³ Production peaked at over 75,000 copies per issue in the early 1960s and stood at 30,000 in 2000 (a small percentage of which went to New Zealand). Located in family homes, schools and church houses, its readership was even larger. Complimentary copies were sent to clergy, the houses of Sisters and Brothers, Catholic media groups, and some Catholic educational institutes throughout Australia to keep the Columban name before them and create the widest impact possible, mission articles taken up in parish sermons and class room stories.

The Columban magazine in Australia was in direct competition with other mission magazines, especially the one produced 1931-74 by Catholic Mission which also targeted Catholics at the parish level. Following the pattern of English editions of *Annales* published from 1838 in Ireland and *Les Missions Catholiques* published 1868-1950, Catholic Mission in Australia introduced its local magazine. Published infrequently from 1931, it became a monthly in 1935 known as *Catholic Missions*.⁴⁴ Publication ceased in 1974, ostensibly for economic reasons, while *The Far East* continued.

Quality, local focus and economics were major factors in the histories of mission magazines. The Columban material remained interesting for readers as it was original and written for Australian Catholics while also maintaining a high journalistic standard with a consistent focus on mission work. Besides, the Columban magazine was judged to be important for Columban promotion being the Society's main ongoing contact with the general Catholic population, even if it did not always meet its costs from subscriptions

⁴² Campion, *Australian Catholics*, 1987, p.151. *The Catholic Standard* 23 February 1924 stated that **The Far East**, "as well as being a chronicle of the missions in the Orient, was used for reading practice in the schools".

⁴³ *Aussie Yappings*, July 1923 and November 1928; CAE, The Far East File. The mission magazine cost £3,000 a year to produce in 1928 and it sold for sixpence an issue, or five shillings a year.

alone. Compared with *The Far East*, magazines of other missionary groups often presented a generalised Christian message, focused more on the work of a particular Religious institute and had limited life spans.⁴⁵ Other Australian Catholic groups sending missionaries overseas, mostly begun post WWII, produced small newsletters for their supporters.⁴⁶ Only *The Far East* has continued to tell the foreign Catholic mission story to a wide audience.

The quality of *The Far East* has varied over the years. Some limitations were external, imposed by the availability of quality paper and quality photo processing. Some limitations were internal as editors and local superiors showed their preferences in style and content.⁴⁷ The magazine has benefited from several readership surveys that helped with its presentation and content selection as part of the Society's aim to run an efficient mission support organisation. The surveys drew a profile of readers in the 1980s as people of above the average in terms of education, a discerning readership.⁴⁸

The second major Columban promotional vehicle was a calendar sold primarily as a money raiser. The first, in 1923, was a simple one with black and white photos; however, it was decided that a market existed for a quality product. The *Columban Art Calendar* was launched for the year 1924 and has been published yearly since then.⁴⁹ It normally had a large-format copy of a painting covering the front cover and twelve smaller paintings on separate pages, one for each month. Circulation topped 25,000 within two years and sales peaked at over 200,000 copies in the 1960s when there was great demand and little competition. A small percentage went to New Zealand. Among Catholics the

⁴⁴ Waldersee, *A Grain of Mustard Seed*, 1983, pp. 442-447. The circulation of the magazine *Catholic Missions* peaked at 200,000 copies in the late 1960s.

⁴⁵ *The Annals* was published by the Sacred Heart Missionaries. P. Stenhouse, "The annals of The Annals, 1889-1984", *Australasian Catholic Record*, Vol.61, 3 (July 1984), pp. 271-281; Personal communication with Rev. Anton Bulla, SVD, Epping, April 2000; Rev. Paul Fyfe S.J., personal communication 14.12.2000.

⁴⁶ Groups included Sisters, Brothers, Diocesan Priests and Lay Missionaries.

⁴⁷ Some TFE editors preferred literary stories, columns on Catholic doctrine and themes such as the evil effects of Communism along with the normal cross section of mission articles. The articles were not always current. Before one editor left on a year-long holiday he came into the office with the major contents of the next twelve issues stacked and prepared for the layout person.

⁴⁸ The latest magazine surveys were done in Australia in 1993 by Father Paul Duffy SJ and in New Zealand in 1996 by Ms. Terese Barton and Father Michael Mason CSSR, CAE, The Far East file.

⁴⁹ As well as reminder of the Columban name, the calendar was attractive hung in people's homes, schools and offices, and from 1926 printed in four colours. It was practical with dates in large numbering and ample space provided for people to record notes and appointments. It detailed the church's liturgical calendar, including saints' days.

calendar is the best known product that carries the Columban name, and provides a regular point of contact with the parishes through the people selling it on behalf of the Society.

European art has been the mainstay of the calendar rather than art from "mission lands" although one edition used Aboriginal style Christian paintings. This demonstrated a pragmatic approach about producing what best sells: however, as a way of organising contact with an ethnically diverse Catholic community and raise money, some other types of calendars have been tried over the decades. A simple black and white *Chinese Catholic Art Calendar* was published for one year only in 1946. An advertisement stated that the text was in Chinese and English with both Gregorian (Western) and Chinese chronology. "It is hoped that the calendar will be of interest and be of use to non-Catholic Chinese as well as their Catholic brethren".⁵⁰ An Italian edition of the Art Calendar was produced from 1985-1998 for a niche market. An additional calendar with an inspirational tone featuring *Modern Heroes* as examples of people who lived their lives in goodness was prepared from 1998-2000. It was pitched to youth and people involved in social justice groups. Unlike the magazine, the calendar has been used as a fundraising rather than an educational tool.

A small cardboard collection box which accepted people's "pennies for the missions" was a third major material used in Columban promotional work, a Columban initiative and a first in fundraising methods when it was introduced into Australian schools and homes in 1920. The Gospel story of the widow's mite was the source of the name *Mite Box*. It was designed to be put in a prominent place in the home, where everyone was encouraged to deposit their small change with the money accumulated to be sent to the Essendon office. The idea was later copied in Australia by Catholic Mission and Catholic charitable agencies. A recollection from the 1960s conveys the spirit elicited by such boxes. "We begged and crawled under furniture and pilfered the family's loose change. The mission box, we swore, would be a heavy one when it was taken back to school for counting".⁵¹ Maureen's letter encouraging "Little Missionaries" to promote the mite boxes set them a goal for their collections saying,

⁵⁰ TFE 2, 1946, p. 9. The venture may have been a part of a response to the Melbourne Arch-diocesan request for the Society to start a ministry to the Chinese people in the Archdiocese at that time.

⁵¹ A Henderson, *Mary Mackillop's Sisters: A Life Unveiled* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 9.

A burse is the name given to a sum of money set aside to educate boys for the priesthood for ever. The sum is just 144,000 pennies [£600] ... Get going, therefore, and put a penny now and then into your Little Missionary's mite box. If there is no mite box in your school let me know and I will send some on. We must have the burse completed as soon as we can. In sixty years, when you are old men and women, the pennies you give now to this burse will have sent ten priests to China [priestly training taking six years at that time].⁵²

As a way to foster promotional success, mission groups were always tempted to play-up the “exotic” aspects of China and other missionary countries. In 1925, Maguire and Rom Hayes contemplated producing a metal version of its cardboard Mite Box as a permanent fixture in every school. “It must of course be a mechanical device - some comical figure (blackfellow, clown or such like) who will take off his hat as the penny goes in, or bow his thanks, or something of that nature.”⁵³ The plan did not go ahead and the Society in Australia has kept to a simple cardboard box for its Mite Box collection. The Columban Society decided not to adopt dubious motivations based on guilt or incipient racism for fund raising and never did.

Columban Parish Promoters Network and Central Office

Setting up a system of Columban helpers in the parishes was integral to the Society’s support organisation and success.⁵⁴ The helpers were generally called “Promoters”. During the first few decades of the Society in Australia some volunteers visited around their parish community to form a *Mission League* and sign up regular supporters, also distributing magazines and collection boxes. These supporters were also encouraged to start a seminary burse which proved popular with Catholics who thought of the young men whose seminary training they had supported as “their priests”. Promoters sent supporters names and the proceeds of their collections to a central Columban office in Melbourne. Calendar sales rocketed in the late 1920s when St Vincent de Paul groups in the parishes began selling them at the church door and they have remained the Society’s

⁵² TFE 10, 1920, p. 15.

⁵³ Hayes to Maguire 28.6.1930, CAE, D/CA files

⁵⁴ Dries, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, p. 1. The Columban network in Australia was similar to that developed by many USA missionary societies. “The US Catholic overseas missionary movement involved missionaries themselves, but also a network of individuals and groups of laity, clergy, religious, bishops, interacting clusters of strategists, fund-raisers, promoters, theoreticians, organisers and pray-ers”.

major distributors.⁵⁵ Some of the promoters were known as persistent people and Religious Sisters were especially innovative in their ways of promoting the magazine.⁵⁶ Besides using the magazine for reading practice, another method used by the Sisters who made up the majority of teachers in Catholic schools was to arrange costume parades where the children dressed in various Chinese outfits and many such photos were reproduced in the magazine to encourage their activities.⁵⁷ It was a policy for the Columban magazine to freely report important affairs in the local church and the missionary work of various Religious congregations. It was a way of recognising the Society's dependence on them and their work.⁵⁸ The network of promoters, lay peoples along with Religious Sisters and Brothers, formed the backbone of a distribution system for Columban promotional materials established throughout parishes and schools from 1920 onwards. This remained so for many decades until social patterns and technology changed making direct mailing the preferred way.

A central office in Melbourne, which grew to be called *The Far East Office*, was the hub of the Columban promotion, information and distribution networks handling a large correspondence with supporters. The office always took advantage of the latest technology to do this. Letters appealed directly to individual Catholics at each level of church so that correspondents often wrote of family concerns and asked for advice which was given by return mail in personalised letters. There were six lay office staff in 1925, increasing to eight by 1928, normally with a priest office manager.⁵⁹ Lay office workers

⁵⁵ The sellers received a percentage of the sale money that went towards their local charitable work. Without this effective distribution network, the number of calendar sales and profit would have been small.

⁵⁶ Letters to the Director from 1942-57 from Good Samaritan Sister Modwena of Glebe and her niece Pat Ryan of Rose Bay in Sydney list as many as forty magazine subscribers per letter, plus details of calendar sales and contributions to seminary burses. Letters from Sister Modwena's Superior show that she was worried about the debts that her charge might incur. But the books balanced and Sister Modwena's work continued. CAE, Promotion file.

⁵⁷ Catholic Education Office of Victoria, **Catholic Education in Victoria: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**, (East Melbourne: CEO, 1995), p. 26. By 1950, the proportion of Sisters teaching in the schools was high, representing 11,000 out of 13,000 teachers, the total growing from 7000 in the period 1920-50. A cute photo of the Murphy twins from Armidale, Joe and Tom, in Chinese costume appeared in **TFE** May 1925 issue and was reproduced in icing on a cake when they celebrated their seventy fifth birthday in 1996, a photo of the event gained a prize in a Sydney newspaper.

⁵⁸ **TFE** 1, 1921, p.1; 3, 1927, p. 1; 4, 1938, p. 15; 2, 1945, p. 4; 10, 1946, p. 17; 7, 1952, p. 8. Reports were given on the Sacred Heart Sisters in Shanghai, the hospitality of the de la Salle Brothers, the Benedictines on the Tibet border, the Society of the Divine Word new seminary in Australia, the Franciscans going to PNG, the Good Samaritan Sisters in Japan and many more. Pictures and prayers in the magazine promoted such things as the cause for canonisation of Mother Mary McKillop.

⁵⁹ *Aussie Yappings* November 1928. Luke Mullany was the first office manager and Alfred McCormack followed him from 1927 until his early death at Essendon in 1933, followed by Roger Doherty, CAE, Office File. Ilene Burns and Alice Holzer (later a Josephite Sister), and her sister Vera were early staff

saw themselves as part of the mission team, a view that helped to create a dedicated spirit among the staff. The atmosphere was remembered as a happy one where priests and staff shared jokes and gave presents.⁶⁰ A professional survey on the efficiency and style of the office operation undertaken when a new office block at Essendon was proposed in 1965 recommended no changes in the management philosophy used from the beginning, suggesting only a few procedural innovations.⁶¹ The office was computerised in 1980 but the style of personalised replies to supporters was purposely retained.⁶²



Members of the Staff of the Essendon Office in 1925: (back row) Father Hugh Donnelly Editor of *The Far East*, Vera Holzer, Audrey Baldwin, Florie, Alice Holzer, Dave Scott, (seated) Alice Dixon and Mrs. Rouse

members, along with John Dunn and then Dave Scott worked in accounting. In 1933 the staff included Ethel Hassard, Margaret Kelly, Noelle Quinlan, Mabel Rouse, Alma Stokes, Audrey Baldwin, Agnes O'Callaghan, Violet Comas.

⁶⁰ Mrs Bouchier, nee Vera Holzer, personal interview 1996, CAE, History File. She worked at Mentone and Essendon from 1921-1932.

⁶¹ "PA Management Consultants", CAE, Office File.

In a development associated with the personalised office correspondence, prayer cards were sent out in letters to reinforce the message that people's prayers were the "power house" of mission activity, affirming that mission was God's work and not some mere human enterprise.⁶³

Each of these developments continued the practice established in the foundational period of the Society of using the tools of modern business management. Edward Galvin seemed to take organisational ability as a prerequisite for missionaries, especially leaders, and frequently noted with annoyance in letters about one Columban member or another that the "fellow has no business sense".⁶⁴ He was influenced by the missionary movement in the USA that was using sound business practices to assure a secure financial footing for mission activity.⁶⁵ While the Society founders were men of faith and vision, their letters show that they were demanding in the number of projects they wanted financed. As a result money has been an ever-present matter in the Society affairs – how to raise it, transfer it, allocate it and spend it in an orderly way.⁶⁶ An annuity system was under way by 1924 in Australia to gain capital for the mission but was discontinued six years later after the Great Depression struck.⁶⁷ Many of the letters from Columban missionaries in China handled by the Essendon office dealt with money along with the mundane needs of clothing and food supplies.⁶⁸ A system of Regional Bursars was set up within the Society in 1924. They were Columban priests but they usually undertook partial training in accountancy and were assisted by professional accountants. Bursars for

⁶² "1979 Annual Regional Report", 28.4.1980, CAE, Office File. The installation of computers was done under Ray Scanlon. It was installed by Arthur Anderson and Co at a cost of \$170,000. The bulky main-frame computer was jokingly personalised with the name Cuthbert.

⁶³ Supporters wrote of how they often recited prayers such as *The Rose* and *The Kitchen Prayer*. The first compared the beauty of the red rose with the Blood of Christ flowing on the Cross in love for us all. The second was an offering up to God of household chores done in a spirit of love. Over decades the cards also helped broaden supporters' appreciation of the Columban mission message as new prayer cards developed included those for *Peace* and the *Gift of Nature*. The archives of the Melbourne Archdiocese have many letters seeking arch-diocesan permission to print the prayer cards.

⁶⁴ Smyth, *Galvin Letters*, nos. 43, 70, 108.

⁶⁵ Dries, *USA Catholic Mission Movement*, 1998, p.82.

⁶⁶ Commenting on financial matters, Charles O'Mahony tells how he was studying accountancy before entering the seminary but stopped after deciding to become a Columban. He thought accountancy skills would not be of much benefit to a missionary priest. He wished he had asked someone for advice as he later discovered that money matters are very much tied up with missionary work.

⁶⁷ TFE 1, 1929, p. 1. Hayes to Dwyer 10.9.30 and 19.2.32; Mullany to Dwyer 15.12.33; Dwyer to Mullany 21.2.34.

⁶⁸ An invoice 12 October 1925 lists 222 pairs of socks among the items sent. One letter from Nolan and Broderick, Dairy Produce Merchants, Commission Agents and Exporters of Melbourne on 14 October 1926 says that they are pleased to advise that ten cases of tinned butter had been consigned to Hankow China. A later letter from Father John O'Leary asks for 300 pounds of jam to be sent "to get them through the winter".

Chapter 3: Institutionalisation: Developments in the “House Culture” of Columban Members and Patterns of Organisation to Support the Columban Venture

The Columban members who established the Society in Australia worked as close knit teams, well led, focused and enthusiastic. Over the ensuing decades, the numbers of the Australian Regional works multiplied as did the members involved. Members attempted to maintain the basic pattern of work set in the first four years, adding to it as circumstances changed. As the Region became increasingly complex it became apparent that some members were more competent than others in advancing the Columban enterprise. The nature of missionary work itself and the expectations of Catholics changed, much of it crystallised by the pronouncements of Vatican II in the early 1960s. In this changing context, keeping a strong organisational base was a prerequisite for any further contribution the Society made to the theory and practice of mission among Australian Catholics.

The Columban “Culture” as lived by members in the Essendon House

The development of what might be called a “house culture” among the Columban priests in Essendon from 1923 onwards was important in setting the tone and expectations in the Region among Columban members. This culture had two thrusts, one outward and reinforcing the strong ties that had been forged with the diocesan clergy and their parishioners. The other was inward and directed towards establishing a pattern of behaviour regarded as acceptable among members living in Columban houses in a “family spirit”. Once this rhythm of life was established as a prototype at Essendon, it flowed on to other Regional Society houses and seminaries.

Columban members cultivated the hospitality which had become a hallmark of the Society as part of an international Catholic missionary web.¹ When Society members travelled they made a point of arranging to visit prominent church people and other missionary groups along the way, and set up a pattern of returning the hospitality. The travel diaries of James Galvin on his trips to Australia and China are largely lists of the

¹ M. O’Farrell, *CI* April 1994. A booklet by German Father Brors SJ, printed by the SVD Mission Press USA in 1914, detailed the vast web of missionaries around the world, with 34,000 priests, Sisters and Brothers, *CAE*, *Vocations File*.

missionary ventures of other groups he visited on route.² On entering China, Society members relied on the help of multiple existing Catholic groups and later repaid their kindness by facilitating those who followed.³

The Essendon house replicated this pattern of hospitality in Australia and diocesan priests were always given a ready welcome. Most young Irish priests arriving to work in Australian dioceses passed through Melbourne and were invited to stay at Essendon while they were in port. James Galvin, and later James McGlynn, had ready access to Mannix so a visit to the Archbishop was a feature of “the grand tour of Melbourne” for Columban guests.⁴ Irish Sisters on their way to work in Australian dioceses were also welcomed.⁵ The custom developed of having the ordination class from the Provincial Seminary at Werribee visit Essendon every year for dinner, a talk and Benediction. This custom spread to Sydney when a house was established there with the ordination class from St Patrick’s College, Manly, visiting the Columban house at Wahroonga. When a Columban Procure house was opened in Rome in 1932 to facilitate Society affairs with Propaganda, it offered accommodation to some Australian diocesan priests doing postgraduate studies in the city or travelling on holidays who had limited institutional church contacts outside Australia. The hospitality offered was good for Columban public relations but also was a way of thanking diocesan priests for their support over many years.

In an era of large public demonstrations of faith, the Essendon house smoothed the way for foreign church dignitaries and invited local parishes to use the extensive house

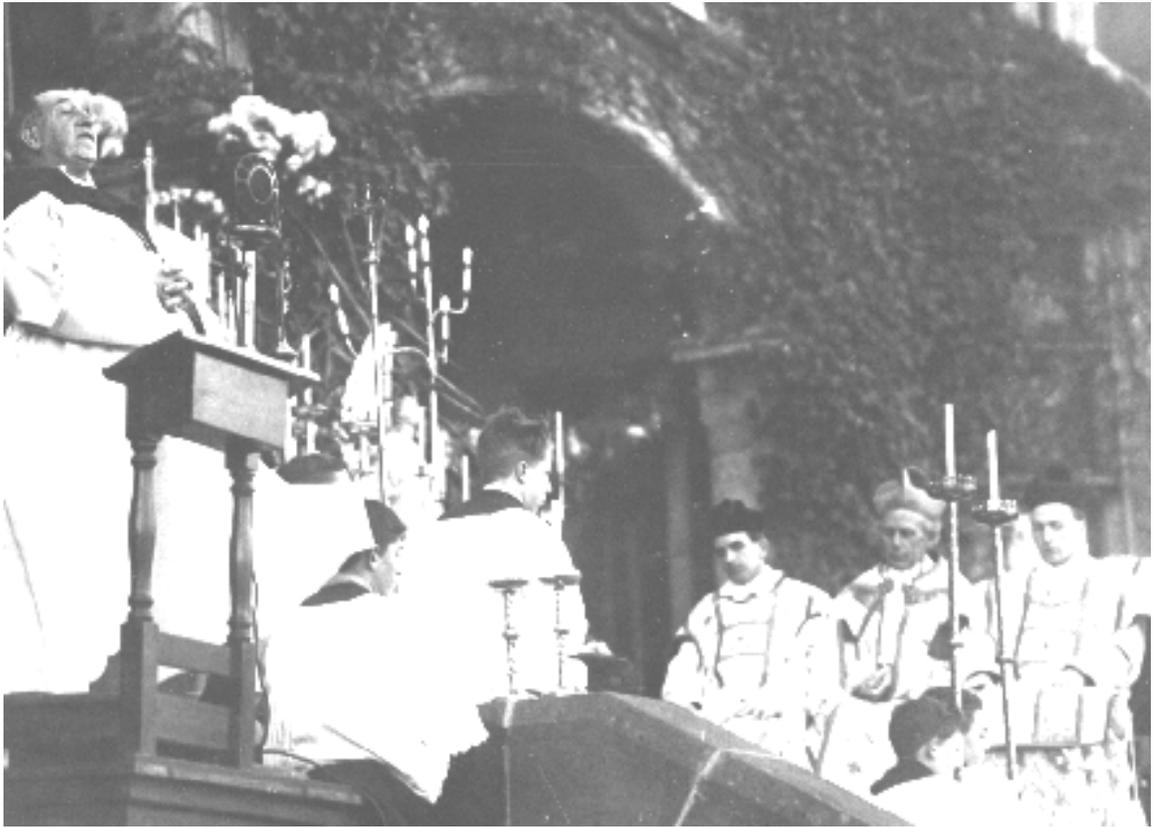
² Galvin was welcomed by Archbishop Doherty of Manila, former President of the Irish College in Salamanca, Spain, and shown around the city. In Hong Kong they stayed with the Paris Foreign Missionaries (MEP) and marvelled at their printing presses, visited the Maryknoll missionaries house and had a tour arranged for them to see Canton. They were even more impressed with the array of Jesuit works in Shanghai.

³ *Sign*, November 1981, a Passionist Congregation magazine. The importance of cooperation between missionary groups is exemplified by the following incident. Edward Galvin received a "monitum" [warning] from Propaganda to stop interfering with the business of the Holy See. When the North American Province of the Passionists was offered a place to work in Tibet in the 1920s, Galvin was consulted as a man experienced in China and with Roman authorities. He advised them to seek an area in China proper and hence received the monitum. Travelling to their newly negotiated area in North Hunan, Passionist members stopped by at Hanyang to thank Galvin. He carried his rebuke from Rome as a battle scar of friendship.

⁴ *Aussie Yappings* December 1922.

⁵ *Aussie Yappings* October 1924. Fifty postulants from Ireland travelling by boat to join the Mercy Sisters in Brisbane were invited out to Essendon.

grounds for Eucharistic processions and Benediction, Mannix presiding over 1,500 local Catholics in one ceremony (photograph below).⁶



Eucharistic Celebration in the grounds of the Columban House at Essendon presided over by Archbishop Mannix 1928

The Essendon house encouraged diocesan travellers to enter its doors and savor the international flavour of Catholic Church life. National and international Eucharistic Congresses were regular events in the Catholic Church of that period with Columban members active in them from 1928 onwards.⁷ In 1930 the Essendon office arranged a visit to the Columban Dalgan seminary for Australian and New Zealand bishops attending the Eucharistic Congress in Ireland and they did so “to a man”.⁸ Bishop Galvin visited the Melbourne Congress in 1934 at the invitation of Archbishop Mannix, but disappointed his fellows by failing to make an effort to “further the standing of the

⁶ *TFE* 7, 1932, p.18.

⁷ *Aussie Yappings* November 1928; *TFE* 2, 1935, p. 3. “Gerry” O’Collins was home from China during the Eucharistic Congress in Sydney 1928 and acted as a guide for visiting clerics.

⁸ Maguire to Hayes 12.10.1930, *CAE*, D/CA files.

Columban Society” among the visiting dignitaries.⁹ Activities surrounding Eucharistic Congresses provided Columban members with opportunities to enhance their local profile as mission educators. Michael Cuddigan wrote a chapter for the official booklet of the Melbourne Congress about Columban Catholic Action work among university students in the Philippines.¹⁰ Dr. Michael Dwyer as Superior General visited Australia 1936-37 on route to the Manila Eucharistic Congress, and bishops visited during the February 1938 *Newcastle Eucharistic and Mission Congress* which was significant for the high profile it gave to missionary activity by Australian groups.¹¹ The pattern continued after WWII so that during the centennial celebrations for St Patrick’s Cathedral in Melbourne in 1948, Bishop Walsh, the founder of the USA Maryknoll Missionaries, and President De Valera of Ireland visited Essendon.¹²

The Columban house system in Melbourne also helped Society priests build stronger bonds with the archdiocesan clergy by helping with parish pastoral ministry in addition to their assigned Society duties. Most priests enjoyed the outlet offered by the priestly work, but when one complained to the Superior General about “wandering aimlessly” as he referred to his itinerant parish ministry he was told that it was good priestly work and created opportunities for the Society.¹³ Priests at Essendon also provided Mass and Benediction in convents, Brothers' houses and schools and a few later became chaplains to groups such as the Chinese community and teachers groups connected with the Movement. Helping in the diocesan pastoral ministry from 1924-1940s led priests to help in developing new parishes on the north side of Melbourne at Strathmore, Broadmeadows and Pascoe Vale. Columban members followed a similar pattern of parish work and chaplaincy when the Society set up houses at Lower Hutt in New Zealand in 1944, Wahroonga in Sydney in 1947, Mount Lawley, Perth in 1962, and Toowong, Brisbane in 1966.¹⁴

Practices chosen to maintain the cohesion and morale of Society members became central to the developing of a particular kind of internal Columban “house culture” at

⁹ W. Barrett, **The Red Lacquered Gate**, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 302.

¹⁰ **TFE** 7, 1987, p.16.

¹¹ M. Dasey, **The Story of the Regional Missionary and Eucharistic Congress Newcastle 16-20 February 1938**, (Newcastle: Specialty Publications, 1938).

¹² McGlynn to Dennehy 10.5.1948, **CAE**, D/CA files.

¹³ Connolly to Kehoe 21.8.1952, **CAE**, D/CA files.

Essendon as part of institutionalising the Society in Australia. While the practice of rotating men assigned to Columban promotion “on the road” continued, some members in administration, magazine work or running the Columban seminary training stayed for long periods. Their length of stay and the routine nature of their work influenced the patterns developed, some with qualities proper to a Religious Order.

Several incidents of physical exhaustion experienced by Maguire, James Galvin and others led the Superior General to prescribe regular rest. In 1924 the next Superior General expanded rest to include regular spiritual revitalisation and decreed that in every house of the Society there was to be a recollection day and talk on the first Friday of each month. The carefree days of the priests using nicknames passed and the behaviour of priests in the house came to be marked by what they considered was the quality of “gentlemanliness” setting a good example to the seminarians who resided in the house 1926-54. For a few years in the late 1930s, Essendon house became a gathering point for some influential young church people of Melbourne several of whom later became bishops. James O’Connell hosted gatherings for some of the intellectuals to discuss philosophy and listen to readings and music while others took part in cricket matches with senior clergy.¹⁵

The dominant culture of the Essendon house became that of a quasi-Religious community routine with strict hours kept in an ever expanding *Far East Office*, and a regular seminary-style timetable developed around house meals and prayer.¹⁶ On the positive side, these developments ensured cohesion among house members and efficient work outcomes. On the negative side, the practices were out of keeping with the lifestyle of Columban members travelling on diocesan promotion or working in unpredictable mission situations overseas. The Essendon “house culture” helped to atrophy the attitudes of some who held power in the Australian Region as leaders or their advisors. As similar developments took place in Ireland and USA Columban houses, it became a factor

¹⁴ Appendix 5

¹⁵ Comments volunteered by Charles O’Mahony 1999 and Gordon Jackson January 2000. Guests included Dr Percy Jones and Anthony Cleary, Frank Thomas and Bernard Stewart.

¹⁶ Dennehy to McGlynn 21.10.1950, CAE, D/CA files. By 1950, the daily prayers proscribed for Society house members included “Rosary, Litany of Our Lady with appended prayers in Latin as given in the Community Prayer Book, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.” Office staff in 1955 numbered twelve: Moya Williams, Trudy Doyle, Violet Comas, Joan Ormisher, Agnes Murtagh, Phil Fitzgerald, Agnes O’Callaghan, Margaret Kelly, Beverley Keogh, Betty Eames, Margaret Curtin and Molly Maguire.

contributing to tensions and even division within the Society that were later to emerge. The division was exemplified by an incident when one young priest questioned the strict regime at Essendon and was delighted to receive the threat, "One more comment like that and you'll find yourself back on the missions". The tensions exacerbated problems with morale so that some of the quasi-religious practices adopted proved to be counter-productive.

News-sharing between Regions played a major role in helping to maintain the morale of the men on the "home front" in their support work for the "mission front" in China and elsewhere. From 1922 an internal Society news bulletin called *Aussie Yappings* was published, the first issue outlining its aims in a light hearted fashion.¹⁷

Aussie Yappings

Official Confidential Organ of the Society in Australasia.

For Whom Written: For the boys everywhere, but especially for the boys in the trenches in China.

Policy: To bring the tail of the organisation a little nearer to the head (China).

Class: No class.

Continuing in this style it conveyed some detail and reflections on the work of members in the Region specifically aimed to strengthen links with members working overseas. The style of the early editions caused scandal and fear among some members who thought it was a little too honest and open about the priests and events that might harm the Society's reputation.¹⁸ A description of the regional Columban staff in 1925 as "two natives and five whites - in other words, Irishmen born" may just have been the playful words of enthusiastic young men flush with success. Or it may have been a first indication of strains between Irish and Australian ways. The last issue came out in 1928 and a Regional newsletter did not reappear until 1958 from which time it was published about every month.

Regular correspondence between Essendon and other Columban Regions was mostly on business matters but also carried snippets of news and reflections on the Columban work, interesting not only for its content but for the spirit of camaraderie displayed as the

¹⁷ *Aussie Yappings* only ran to eleven issues of from four to six pages of tightly packed printed information.

¹⁸ *Aussie Yappings*, December 1922; Maguire to Donnelly 27.2.1925, CAE, D/CA files. Comments on the men such as, "having more moisture [drink] than was good for him", and on a meeting between James

priests related as members of a cohesive international organisation. Some scandal was passed on such as rumblings in 1920 that the “Cork men” had been kept home in the soft jobs while other Society members were sent off to China. Other exchanges were of a practical nature, such as the standard of photos in *The Far East*, or the availability of personnel - "whoever happens to be around shoves out the magazine” was the word in 1924 from Maguire in Ireland. The 1925 plan of the USA bishops to reduce the number of Catholic magazines was discussed. Opinions on happenings in China were exchanged, for example, that foreign powers in China had no right to bombard the Chinese just to protect foreigners and missionaries. There were pieces of trivia, for example, that the crest for Bishop Galvin's consecration was made by jeweler Tiffany's of New York in 1927.¹⁹ The exchange of information and even trivia helped cement the members of the Society together as an international organisation of Regional units.

Additions to the Organisational Pattern set in the Foundational Period

Each new decade in Australian history has raised fresh issues for the Society and witnessed new responses from members in the Region, testing, affirming and prompting developments in the organisational pattern set during the local foundational period. An examination of these developments illustrates the interplay within a Society that was tempted to “rest on its laurels” and atrophy, and one that grew as the mission world changed. Local administration became more complex, affected by factors such as deteriorating communications as China became politically unstable, the number of sick members who returned to home Regions, and the 1929 economic chaos. Both the external effectiveness of the Society in promoting the mission enterprise in Australia and the internal morale of the local membership, depended on maintaining relevant organisational structures.

To better manage the Society worldwide and build up local responsibility, in 1924 the Superior General set up a system of Regions under Directors. After four years establishing the Society in Australia, Maguire moved to Ireland as part of the Superior General's Council. Romuald Hayes was appointed first Director of the new Australian

Hayes and Archbishop Mannix, "you'd think 'is Grace and 'imself 'ad played together in the gutters of Charleville forty years ago." The bulletin made a liberal use of nick-names.

¹⁹ CAE, Foundation Period file.

Region, the first Australian to hold a senior position in the Society. From 1924-1931 Hayes oversaw the first stage of consolidating Regional promotion works on the pattern created by Maguire and the opening of a Columban seminary in 1926. When the 1929 Great Depression began, contributions from supporters dropped, income from investments dried up and it became difficult to transfer money overseas under strict government regulations so that local finances had to be restructured.

This was complicated by a leadership change forced on the Region when in January 1932 Hayes was appointed Bishop of Rockhampton.²⁰ As one of the first Australian born bishops, his elevation helped to boost the morale of the local membership and promote the public church profile of the Society but it was an uncertain time. Another Australian, Luke Mullany, took over as Director during Australia's years of suffering 1932-1944.²¹ A kindly man but not a strong leader Mullany was somewhat uncomfortable with the position. He had spent only a few years in China and seems to have been more influenced by Bishop Cleary than Bishop Galvin, appreciating a more gentle and less goal-orientated spirit. However, he guided the Region through the Depression and WWII period. He maintained the large readership of *The Far East* by such measures as cutting its price and by 1938 the Region had returned to a sound financial footing, and the number of seminarians had increased.

In 1939 WWII directly disrupted mission activity. Mullany had to look to the repatriation of Columban members, some of whom were imprisoned by the Japanese and often sick, and constructively using them in the Region as well as catering for priests unable to travel to mission areas because of war. Many were put into pastoral placements and while this led to closer ties with diocesan priests, it helped create the image of Columban members as pastoral rather than missionary priests, making their overseas placements seem less consequential. The pastoral and survival concerns associated with the increased Columban numbers in the local Region had a distorting effect that inhibited Society debate on new missionary thinking and the development of creative new responses.

²⁰ TFE 3, 1932, p. 3, and 1, 1946, p. 5; Rockhampton Catholic Diocesan Archives, Hayes File.

²¹ S. Macintyre, **A Concise History of Australia**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 155. CAE History File. Mullany was The Far East Office Manager from 1920-26, first at Mentone and then Essendon, after which he was appointed to China 1926-1931.

Columban Relationship with Catholic Missions

The Society's relationship with Catholic Mission in Australia has been of ongoing concern from the time of Maguire and followed a path of negotiated and guarded cooperation under successive Directors.²² Central to the relationship were the two contested issues of collecting finance for overseas Catholic missionary activity, and the tone of mission education offered as information and motivation to Australian Catholics. After Maguire's time, the new Columban Superior General wrote to Rom Hayes in 1924 as the new Director in Australia telling him to discourage moves towards unifying mission funding through Catholic Mission because the Society's share of the total would be minimal.²³ The matter went into abeyance and did not resurface in any significant way until the late 1930s when Catholic Mission was organised nationally.

Questions arising from these initial tussles between the Society and Catholic Mission probe the heart of this research. Exploring the identifiable contributions which the Columban Society made to the theory and practice of mission in Australia shows that much of its organisational work predated and provided models for the local work of Catholic Mission, and the Society was wider in its aims and the services it offered. While it may at first appear that the Society was reluctant to yield the privileged position it had established at the parish level in Australia, it offered several reasons for doing so. When the Columban Society obtained its mission territory in China it had benefited from Pope Benedict's 1919 Papal encyclical on the missions which had condemned those missionary groups who were protecting their own interests rather than showing a wider

²² Waldersee, *A Grain of Mustard Seed*, 1983, pp. i-iii. "It must never be forgotten that essentially the Society represented - and still represents - a devotion and not simply a collection". The best known section directed at parish Catholics was usually called the "Society for the Propagation of the Faith". It is not a unit under the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and negotiates with individual bishops to do its work. In 1931 Mgr Adrian Martin became the first National Director and National Directors to follow were Mgr James Hannan (later missionary to the Solomon Islands), Mgr A. R. E. Thomas (later Bishop of Bathurst), Mgr Doug Stewart, Mgr Grove Johnson, Fathers Brian Cosgrove, Brian Brock and Terrance Bell. Mgr Leo Grant, later to become a volunteer priest with the Society in Peru, assisted Thomas for three years.

²³ Dwyer to Hayes 18.6.1924, CAE, D/CA files. The "system of appealing for funds for particular [missionary] societies is regarded with a certain amount of disfavour by Propaganda which would prefer that all missionary bodies like ours would be directed towards raising funds for a common fund to be administered on a pro rata basis by Propaganda ... The total sum allocated to us out of Propagation of the Faith funds for the current financial year is only £260. As the Pia Unio in any country might be used by Propaganda to 'unify' drives for missionary purposes in that country, I wish you to proceed with the utmost caution before inaugurating any campaign under the auspices of the Pia Unio in Australia."

concern for Catholic missionary work.²⁴ It believed, however, that appeals for support for particular mission work were more effective among Catholics than a generalised support program, a position later argued by Australian Jesuits.²⁵ The Society also wanted to build up its financial backing for the training of future missionaries, a service that Catholic Mission by policy did not and does not provide. Propaganda recognised the need for groups of professionally trained missionaries who could offer analysis, reflection and teaching as part of the emerging missiological branch of theology, but it was up to the groups themselves to provide both for their own financial security and this professional service.

Catholic Mission put increasing emphasis on distributing collection boxes throughout Catholic schools; however, the motivation offered to supporters was suspect. Columban Cyril Hally maintaining that incipient racism was always a danger in mission work and support systems. When the collection box concept was taken up by Catholic Mission, a cast iron collection “box” in the shape of a young black person of seemingly African origin was produced. It had a swinging arm to deliver a penny into the mouth. In a related system, one could “buy” a pagan baby for thirty pence (25 cents), a penny a day for a month, regarded as the cost of the initial treatment of a child in a Catholic clinic, or at least its baptism if in danger of death.²⁶ In response to Catholic Mission initiatives, the Society withdrew its boxes from most schools as a form of goodwill but also as a diplomatic move due to the rising status and activity of Catholic Mission.

After WWII Mgr. A. Thomas became National Director and led a period of rapid expansion, militant in wanting to unify all missionary fundraising under Catholic Mission. The Society had to defend its position as it had in the early 1920s. It argued for the continuation of its independent appeals judging that the Society’s relationship with most local bishops was strong enough for the Society to go on securing diocesan appeals

²⁴ J. Pollard, **The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999), pp. 201-204.

²⁵ J. Waldersee, **A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Australia 1837-1977**, (Kensington, NSW: Chevalier Press, 1983), p. 415-419. Father Dynon SJ argued for the work of individual institutes and “private missions” against centralised mission aid and the “impersonal giving” promoted by the then Catholic Mission Director Mgr. A. Thomas.

²⁶ Catholic Missions, 9, 1939, p. 24.

for its own purposes.²⁷ Columban letters suggested both that Thomas had over emphasised his position to the detriment of the bishops, and that the Columban Society was as much a Pontifical organisation as was Catholic Mission since both fell equally under the jurisdiction of the same Roman Congregation. In 1957, the Rector of the Columban seminary in Sydney Francis Herlihy was appointed a member of the National Council of Catholic Mission to put the view of missionary societies.²⁸ At one meeting he noted that Catholic Mission provided only about 15% of the expenses incurred by the Society in its foreign mission work, and that it made no contribution towards Columban training of mission personnel.²⁹ The strained feelings at that time can be gauged by the unsympathetic stance towards Catholic Mission taken by “Gerry” O’Collins, a known and respected Columban figure in many dioceses. It was one reason for his not being appointed to Columban promotion in the USA where the relationship between missionary societies and Catholic Mission was regarded as in a worse state than in Australia.³⁰

More important than differences over money was a divergence in the mission messages presented worldwide by Catholic Mission and some professional missionary societies. The tension that existed between Catholic Mission and the Maryknoll Society of missionaries in the USA over the motivation presented to Catholics in fund-raising ventures was paralleled in Australia between Catholic Mission and the approaches of the Columban Society.³¹ In the USA after WWII, church leaders, such as Cardinal Spellman or Archbishop Fulton Sheen, Director of USA Catholic Mission, were less inclined to speak on the connection between social justice issues and Catholic faith than were missionary groups, such as the Maryknoll and Columban Societies.³² Similar

²⁷ Connolly to Chapman 13.7.1956 and 14.7.1956, CAE, D/CA files. Waldersee, **A Grain of Mustard Seed**, 1983, pp. 413-416.

²⁸ Chapman to Kielt 1.10.1964, CAE, D/CA files. Herlihy and Regional Director met with Thomas to present the Columban position. Chapman later wrote that “Bishop Algy Thomas (A.R.) is a good friend of mine.”

²⁹ Connolly to Chapman 1.3.1960 and Chapman to Connolly 28.3.1960, CAE, D/CA files. He had a copy of a letter that the Columban Superior General had written to Cardinal Agagianian at Propaganda.

³⁰ Connolly to Chapman 1.4.1960, CAE, D/CA files.

³¹ Dries, **USA Catholic Missionary Movement**, 1998, pp. 94, 160 and 236-7.

³² A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1998, pp. 73, 152, 159 and 247. In 1925 the American Board of Catholic Missions was set up to regulate appeals in parishes and funding for mission groups from a common pool.

tension arose in Australia in the 1960s so that Thomas, for example, found the rise of development issues and the Australian Catholic Relief agency difficult to cope with.³³

New Missionary Thinking and Vatican II

The period 1945-1970 was a controversial one for Columban members. In the period of national prosperity that followed WWII the Region grew in terms of building, student numbers, promotion and income. Some look back to it with pride as the time of growth in terms of a flowering of the Society planted in Australia by Maguire. Others look to it as a period of atrophy in terms of developing mission theology and practice to face changing world circumstances and social attitudes, and ultimately unfaithful to the legacy of Maguire as an innovator. The three Regional Directors who led in this period were rather like-minded, expansionists in the traditional model of church, and gathered Columban members of like mind around them in the various Regional leadership roles.

Facilitating diocesan priests to go overseas as active missionaries in association with the Society, however, was a significant and innovative structural addition to Regional organisation. The infrastructure the Society had built up at home and abroad was given a further use. The *Program for Columban Associate Priests* began in 1961 to assist diocesan volunteers to work in collaboration with Society members in Latin America for a fixed period of four to eight years. The first Australian went in 1964 and nearly thirty diocesan priests have followed since, two of whom later joined the Society.³⁴ Each associate not only made a contribution overseas but also had a significant impact on Catholics at home, intensifying their mission commitment through close personal contact and stories about the venture. Organising the Program for Associate Priests created a new bond between the Society and diocesan clergy based on missionary ideals.

Challenged by the thinking behind Vatican II in the early 1960s, serious divisions among the Columban membership emerged about mission priorities and feelings of a lack of

³³ Walderssee, *A Grain of Mustard Seed*, 1983, p. 417.

³⁴ Kiert to Chapman 9.9.63, CAE, D/CA files; TFE 11, 1968, p. 2, and ARN September 1983. The Columban program developed in the context of Papal appeals for priests to minister to priestless communities there and spontaneous inquiries from Australian diocesan priests including requests for many who were unable to go such as Fathers Barry King, Rom Murphy and James Staunton. Connolly to

participation in a Society that had grown relatively large with over twelve hundred members. These issues surfaced at the 1970 General Society Chapter, setting in train organisational and structural changes throughout the Society. Several rounds of programs were organised over the following decades to renew the spirit and update the knowledge of members. Other programs aimed to equip members working in new externally orientated education programs for Australian Catholics as the Society purposely expanded its teaching role about missionary activity. Members were appointed as coordinators to specific areas of concern such as Society renewal, social justice, culture, religious dialogue, and environmental issues. In a planned response to the decline in the educational influence of the Columban magazine among Australian Catholics and in schools, the Society created a series of mission education programs directed at Catholics parishes, church groups and school- teachers. Organising these programs elevated the Society role as a teacher about mission affairs and was a major organisational development in the Region. In doing so it also established multiple areas and levels of internal Society responsibility that broke the pattern set in the foundational period when all power and initiatives rested with the Regional Directors. From the late 1970s, for example, a team was formed at Essendon exclusively to work on mission education and committees made up of members from across the Region focused on mission education tasks.

In a concomitant move, Columban seminary training was restructured from 1970 onward and a tertiary level mission-studies program was added in part as a response to the newly formed Catholic Bishops' National Missionary Council. This reorganisation was not merely an update in seminary training but a qualitative change. The seminary became an institute to train missionary personnel coming from outside the Society through residential programs and the Sydney College of Divinity, adding yet another Columban organisational change.

The new mission studies program provided the infrastructure for the development of the *Columban Lay Missionary Program* following a decision of the 1976 Columban General Chapter to directly involve qualified lay people to participate in the Society's

Chapman 14.2.61, 8.11.61 and 27.11.61; Chapman to Connolly 15.2.63, CAE, D/CA files. Chapman visited Columban areas in South America in 1961 and sent a report to the Superior General.

missionary work. Since 1920 the Society recognised in practice the value of full time and paid professional lay people as catechists in China and elsewhere as integral to Columban work.³⁵ A few individual Australian lay people had also gone as missionaries with the Society in their professional capacities.³⁶ The aim of the new program was different in that the participants were part of an exchange between churches of lay missionaries not belonging to another organisation nor going as professionals.³⁷ The first Australians to go under the program went to Chile in 1985 but numbers have been few, and the Region never invited lay teams from overseas to work in Australia as envisioned under the program so that the lay missionary initiative had little structural impact locally.³⁸

The Society's relationship with Catholic Mission continued to be negotiated post-Vatican II and, while reservations remained, a significant level of cooperation developed at both the national and diocesan levels in the 1970s. Columban priests helped with Catholic Mission promotion appeals and to train promoters. Tension over collecting money declined as Catholic Mission ceased its moves to centralise mission funding and the Society continued to gain permission to appeal in dioceses on the rotation system it had established. Mission education, however, continued as a cause of tension between the two bodies each of which has run its own promotional programs in Australia often carrying different emphases about the priorities and methods of missionary activity. Reservations were expressed by the Columban Mission Education Team in Melbourne from the late 1970s and by subsequent Directors over the inappropriate use of photo materials "to create feelings of guilt" among Catholics as motivation for giving their missionary support.³⁹ Some level of cooperation in helping to develop joint mission education programs, such as the *Mission and Justice Program* for schools, took place but through the medium of other church bodies such as the National Missionary Council and Australian Catholic Relief. Catholic Mission was more likely to help with finance and the Society with educational content.

³⁵ TFE 7, 1940, p. 2, and 10, 1985, p. 6.

³⁶ TFE 2, 1958, p. 6, and 8, 1975, p. 1. Since the 1950s including teacher Miss Tess Wicks who went to Fiji. Veterinarians Josephine and Kevin Bell went to Korea.

³⁷ "The Columban Lay Mission Program" 28.10.92, CAE, Lay Missionary files.

³⁸ TFE 9, 1997, p. 20. Julie Williams and Catherine Melville in 1985, and Gregory San Miguel the following year, all went to Chile. Ms Anne Young went to Chile in 1996 under an individual arrangement with the Society.

³⁹ CAE, Mission Education Files.

In the year 2000 the organisational base of the Society in Australia remained sound. The decline in Catholic Church attendance brought about a fall in income leaving the Society increasingly dependent on bequests from Society supporters faithful over many decades. The resource base of personnel has declined far more dramatically. However as indigenous churches become self-sufficient the need in some former missionary areas has lessened just as dramatically. As a result, the number of Columban mission ventures has decreased with the focus shifting to short-term assistance for indigenous churches and emphasis on pioneering particular works such as that with migrant workers.⁴⁰ The future of overseas missionary work has grown uncertain as has the place of the Columban Society within it.

Conclusion

The first part of this thesis has argued that providing a pattern of organisation was the first major contribution that the Columban Society made to the theory and practice of mission among Australian Catholics. Like missionary ventures elsewhere the Catholic missionary movement in Australia from the nineteenth century onwards built on a limited home support base. The national diocesan network approach pioneered by the Columban Society in Australia raised the profile of mission work and mission consciousness among Catholics, moving missionary activity into a post-colonial era and giving it a new character. The diocesan network it created predated the work of Catholic Mission and became the local model for its later expansion. Although not an official national missionary society, it was the first to recruit and train missionary priests with a diocesan spirit, and from 1972 onward to offer missionary training to other groups by establishing a Mission Institute, giving the missionary movement a more professional character. The organisational pattern set by Maguire in the foundational period served as a firm base for the Columban Society which continued through to the year 2000 when Columban priests remain welcome in all dioceses to solicit mission support. It was flexible enough to allow change as needed. This organised Columban approach was a prerequisite for the effectiveness of the Society as it developed its other contributions to the Australian Catholic missionary movement.

⁴⁰ J. D'Orsa, "The Catholic Missionary Movement in Australia: Past, Present and Future", (Sydney: Columban Mission Institute, 2000).

PART TWO

SEMINARIES AND MISSIONARY FORMATION

Chapter 4: Priests for the Missions: Seminary Training in the Diocesan Style as Adapted by the Columban Society in the “Dalgan Spirit”

Chapter 5: A Clerical Mould: Development of Columban Seminary Training in Australia 1926-1969

Chapter 6: The Personal Cost: Inadequacies in the Columban Seminary Training Revealed in the Lives of Society Members Working Overseas.

Chapter 7: Modern Missionaries: Developing New Columban Seminary Programs and Mission Institutes from 1970 Onwards

Chapter 4: Seminary Training in the Diocesan Style as Adapted by the Columban Society in the “Dalgan Spirit”

Recruiting candidates to the Columban venture had a slow start in Australia, mainly because the Society had only been established in 1918 and was largely drawing its personnel from diocesan priests and seminarians. An initial burst of candidates from Australian diocesan seminaries quickly slowed, the situation initially complicated by the unclear position of the Society about establishing a permanent Australian foundation. Having taken the decision to recruit candidates, it took time to organise promotion at the high school level. The process of establishing a local Columban seminary was further delayed because Society personnel to run it were in short supply. As a result the first two candidates were only accepted in 1926.

This chapter will argue that the seminary training initially offered by the Society proved to have a limited sense of the requirements needed to train missionaries or sensitivity to issues of adaptation. While the Catholic Church had some tradition of training missionary personnel, it received little attention in Columban circles where a diocesan model of training was adopted, slightly adapted and then imposed on the Australian Region.

Missionary Training in the Diocesan Seminary Style

The training of Catholic Church personnel to engage in overseas missionary work has developed in fits and starts during the last five centuries of the modern missionary movement. Most missionaries in the sixteenth century belonged to Religious Orders and relied on the training particular to their group so that, outside of the Jesuits, few received any specific missionary preparation.¹ With the backing of Propaganda in the seventeenth century, several institutes were established to train missionaries not only as priests but also to help them follow a path of innovation in developing indigenous churches that would be served by local personnel and carry local culture expression of

¹ The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) founded the Roman College in Rome in 1551 that later became the Gregorian University.

faith.² After a lull in Catholic missionary work in the 18th century, activity increased markedly from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries but its effectiveness was based more on enthusiasm than any specific missionary skills.³ The innovative mission spirit encouraged in the seventeenth century disappeared as missionaries tended to impose a western style church, a stance reinforced by condemnations of Modernism in 1907 by Pope Pius X.⁴ The condemnations cast any church innovation as suspect. In that climate, mission education in the sending churches concentrated on motivating believers to resource missionary societies.⁵ As regards missionary formation, only after the WWI did churches begin to recognise the need for the better training of their missionary personnel, but there was little change until after WWII.⁶ The missionary training given by the Columban Society in Australia followed a similar historical pattern.

The Columban Society was initially founded as a movement of Irish Catholic diocesan priests and its training methods carried a diocesan spirit. This spirit was distinct from that of the Religious Orders that emphasise the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, although the Columban training did adopt some spiritual practices of the Jesuit Society. Columban training for Australian students from 1920-1970 largely followed a formula introduced by the Council of Trent 1534-49 for the training of all men destined for the priesthood, diocesan and Religious. The training was formulated to counter the Reformation and correct the ignorance of Catholic secular clergy. It was later reinforced by the decrees of Vatican I in 1870 and the 1917 Code of Canon Law that legislated for the “spiritual, moral and intellectual formation of the clergy”, detailing the courses and length of seminary studies.⁷ Within these parameters, Irish

² C. Duster, “The Canonical Status of Members of Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right”, (Rome: Columban Society, 1994), pp. 17-42. An example of the process of founding culturally indigenous churches was the work of Saints Cyril and Methodius among the Slav peoples.

³ D. Dorr, **Mission in Today's World**, (Maryknoll, USA: Orbis Books, 2000), pp. 9 and 186-192.

⁴ K. Livingston, **The Emergence of an Australian Catholic Priesthood 1883-1915**, (Manly, NSW: Catholic Theological Faculty of Sydney, 1977), p. 237. The decrees *Lamentabili* and *Pascendi* gave definition to a Catholic condemnation of Modernism, impeding modern studies in Scripture and theology until at least 1943 when a new encyclical on Scriptural studies by Pope Pius XII was published.

⁵ B. Thompson, “Education for Mission”, I. Cully and K. Cully, eds, **Harper's Encyclopedia of Religious Education**, (New York: Harper and Row, 1990), pp. 420-424.

⁶ P. Potter, ed., “Mission Education: pre-service training, in-service training and first furlough”, **International Review of Missions**, LVI, 224, October 1967; J. Woodberry, C. van Engen and E. Elliston, eds., **Missiological Education for the twenty-first Century**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996).

⁷ J. O'Donahoe, “Seminary”, **New Catholic Encyclopedia Volume XII**, (Sydney: McGraw Hill, 1967), pp. 72-75. The relevant 1917 Canons in the Roman Code were 1352-71 and 1375-77.

seminaries founded in the first part of the nineteenth century had created their own character, in style rather than content, because of their connections with French and English educational institutions. Leading examples were the prestigious St Patrick's College, Maynooth, and All Hallows College, Dublin.⁸

The Irish Spirit and Form of Columban Seminaries

The Irish founded Columban Society adopted this Irish diocesan style of training, adding little of a missionary nature except to proclaim the intention of its members to work overseas as missionaries and to work together in a family spirit of charity. The missionary spirit of the Columban seminary was attitudinal rather than skills based. The Society drew its student and staff members together in its own seminary at Dalgan and the Columban members began to develop a "Columban culture" speaking of themselves as the "cui nomen" (the named).⁹ In his ethnographic history of the Jesuits in Australia David Strong writes that they too had developed a "tribal" cultural character that carried an Irish component.¹⁰ Drawing on common Irish roots, Columban training developed a similar sense of a distinctive group identity.

The Columban culture was often summed up as the "Dalgan Spirit", the name taken from the location of the first Columban seminary. While initially it was positive, later negative interpretations were to affect Columban seminaries in Australia.¹¹ The two prime virtues in the Dalgan Spirit were a family atmosphere of charity, and self-imposed obedience. For co-founder Edward Galvin, the aim of the Society was simple

⁸ E. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement: An Historical Survey, 1830-1980**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian, 1990); A. Walls, Book Review of E. Hogan's "The Irish Missionary Movement", **International Review of Mission** LXXXII, 327, (October 1991), p. 419. In summary this review states that 1916-1937 saw a flowering of the Catholic mission movement, idealistic and led by English speaking secular clergy. The Irish style emphasised the Eucharist, devotions and authority. K. Condon, "All Hallows College, Dublin", C. Kiernan, ed., **Australia and the Irish 1788-1988**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillian, 1986), pp. 227-240. Most Irish diocesan priests coming to Australia were trained at All Hallows College with the French spirit of Saint Sulpice from 1842 and the Vincentians from 1892.

⁹ In the Book of Genesis 25:13, the "named" are Abraham's sons and heirs, and in the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible are "the cui nomen". Columban members trained up until Vatican II commonly referred to themselves in this way.

¹⁰ D. Strong, **Jesuits in Australia: An Ethnographic History of the Society of Jesus in Australia**, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1995), p. 69.

¹¹ J. McCaslin, **The Spirituality of Our Founders**, (Dalgan: Columban Society, 1986), p. 28-34; P. O'Connor, **Songs of Youth**, (Essendon: Columban Society, 1928); J. Ryberg, **The Columban Fathers - A Study of the Charism**, (Omaha, USA: Columban Society, 1975); B. Smyth, **The Chinese Batch: The Maynooth Mission to China 1911-1920**, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994).

and pragmatic, to send priests to China as “It is God's will.”¹² For the other co-founder John Blowick, the Columban aims were of life rooted in a theological awareness of a shared human destiny, “salvation of all as co-heirs in Christ”.¹³ The emphasis by the founders on the benevolent “providence of God” produced among Columban members a particular type of self-motivated obedience to God’s unfolding plans. This obedience had two dimensions, a vertical connection with God by one’s calling, and a horizontal belonging bounded by the Society’s missionary structure.¹⁴ Within these broad parameters, Blowick took most of the responsibility for organising the seminary at Dalgan following the prescribed content of seminary studies while proposing a form of training different in spirit from that of Maynooth. In sum, the Dalgan Spirit was to be based on charity, brotherhood, generosity, prayer, and personal responsibility exercised as an honour system, self-enforced and not supervised by deans of discipline.¹⁵

However, during the years up to 1924 while Blowick was busy as the first Superior General of the Society, the influence of seminary staff such as Timothy Harris, who from 1919 was to hold senior Columban seminary positions in Ireland for fifty years, reversed many of Blowick’s innovations. Sociologist Patricia Wittberg has argued that horizontal obedience was effective and even indispensable in maintaining the unity and direction of specialist groups such as the Columban Society, but divorced from its vertical plane it became destructive.¹⁶ The self-motivated two-dimensional style of obedience envisioned by Galvin and Blowick was partially negated by Harris and others who placed a growing emphasis on discipline and supervision. As student numbers increased, the honour system declined and was replaced by a boarding school mentality with supervising deans.¹⁷ Harris supporters began to spread the twisted teaching that a member could never be wrong in following a superior's decision, even if the decision were wrong.¹⁸

¹² B. Smyth, **Chinese Batch**, pp. 20 and 44.

¹³ P. McSweeney, **By What Spirit**, quoted by Ryberg, **Columban Charism**, 1975, p. 51.

¹⁴ According to the Columban Constitutions, a member was bound by oath to go wherever a superior sent him without delay to play his part in the Columban mission enterprise.

¹⁵ McCaslin, **Spirituality**, 1986, p. 50. Blowick was influenced by the educational ideas of Padraig Pearce.

¹⁶ P. Wittberg, **The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective**, (New York: The State University of New York, 1994), pp. 105 and 127.

¹⁷ C. Hally, “Columban Initial Formation Chronology and Commentary”, 1987, CAE, Seminary File. Comment volunteered by Padhraic O’Loughlin, Rector of Columban Roman College, 10 July 1999.

¹⁸ CAE, interviews, History File.

In a concomitant development in 1920 "an out-break of asceticism was noted in Dalgan".¹⁹ Suffering became an end in itself for some staff and their student followers shifting their life's focus from actual missionary activity to the practice of "the spiritual life" abstracted from context and purpose. Derived from "red martyrdom" where blood was spilt, a notion of willingly embracing suffering in "white martyrdom" grew up in the seminary.²⁰ The early Irish monks were pressed into service, including a selective interpretation of the life of the Society's patron Saint Columban that emphasised the pain of "self-exile" from the Emerald Isle to do God's will.²¹ To better pursue the ascetical life a number of Columban priests, including members from the Australian Region, transferred to Cistercian monasteries, for a time at least.²² Galvin, however, maintained, that a missionary priest was not to be "gloomy solemn puritanical straight-faced ... with a lime-juice label on his face", and in a lengthy letter to Harris in 1921 from China tried unsuccessfully to stem negative developments in the Dalgan Spirit.

I am not a spiritual man myself and know little of spirituality, but I know what every man knows that all the spiritual exercises are of use only in so far as they tend to make us in every day life better men ... I am at times shocked beyond the power of expression when I see men go deliberately into the church to make their holy hour, and they make meditations in the morning, and they say long prayers at all times, and then they come out and put their fellow priest on the table and carve him up and down. If you want to find out how much good their prayers do them, just touch their pride ... Candidly I would rather take an immoral man before an uncharitable one. You must tell the fellows too that they ought to have the grit to stand up to this fellow with the knife for he has his hand on the throat of the Society ... Please don't show this to anyone.²³

The spiritual developments at Dalgan confirm Wittberg's contention that they were common in institutions which concentrated on pragmatic projects and looked little to doctrine.²⁴ The motivation as interpreted by Harris and others was expressed in poetic

¹⁹ McCarthy to Hayes, 1920, CAE, USA/Aus file.

²⁰ McCaslin, **Spirituality**, 1986, p. 19; A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1998, pp. 79, 147 and 255-256. Some early Columban members romanticised about joining the church ranks of missionary martyrs quoting the early church axiom that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians".

²¹ **TFE** 6, 1956, pp. 6-8; G. Walker, ed., **Sancti Columbani Opera**, (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1957).

²² O'Dwyer to Hayes 21.10.24 CAE, D/CA files. Australian Peter Gabriel joined the Cistercians briefly in 1924 and Gerald Hawkins became an Abbot in the USA. Other locally connected members James Dwyer, Bernard Hawke and Leo Donnelly later tried the same path.

²³ B. Smyth, ed., **Galvin and Related Letters: 1912-1927**, (Dalgan: Columban Society, 1996), no. 32, October 1915, and no 130, April 1921. This letter is now on public record.

²⁴ Wittberg, **Rise and Decline**, pp. 147 and 160-161.

images of spiritual warfare articulating the spiritual underpinnings of missionary work that called for dedication to a cause and sacrifice to carry it through. Images of warfare have a developed basis in Scripture and spiritual writings but were given a crusading tone in Columban circles.²⁵ The Columban Rallying Hymn “Oh, Who has a Blade for a Splendid Cause” imaged the spiritualised version of the Dalgan Spirit as a Crusade.²⁶ Columban missiologist Cyril Hally later said of the Rallying Hymn and poems by Patrick O’Connor,

... it is a classic example of the Irish clerical ‘culture of words’. It was not a literature of idealism - no missiology at all - or theology, let alone social criticism - one of the most epic battles over the appropriate social system for modern China was being fought under our eyes. Underlying such poetry was a belief that the proper function of literature was to inspire, to call out the heroic and good rather than reflect concretely the real. The spirit of Dalgan reflected that feeling or sentiment.²⁷

Aspects of the Dalgan Spirit cast a shadow over the Australian Region even before a local seminary was established. In 1924 the Superior General decreed that in every house of the Society there was to be a prayer recollection day on the first Friday of each month. Maguire recalled “Stiff’s [Luke Mullany] apprehension that we are ‘sinking to the level of a bloomin’ religious order’.”²⁸ Opinion was divided on the advisability of using prayer to cement cohesion. Romuald Hayes suggested that there be some kind of second “Novitiate” for spiritual strengthening before heading out to China, noting his pleasure at the news that the Roscrea Cistercian monks of Ireland might make a foundation in the Hanyang Vicariate in China.²⁹ The Columban venture with a simple doctrinal basis directed to strengthening the church in China as envisaged by Galvin and its establishment in Australia by Maguire was being undermined by dubious spiritual developments.

²⁵ Warfare terminology used in **TFE** magazine in the 1920s imaged Columban mission work as the "soldiers of Christ" marching out in the name of "Christ the Eucharistic King" and armed with the "sword of truth". They had to be "reinforced" by the "home front" with "fresh soldiers" and a "supply line" where men, women and children too were expected to willingly undergo the "sacrifices" necessary. When the Society was founded in 1918 the Irish were struggling for independence and when it was set up in Australia WWI had just finished. Even if people were tired of war its language was familiar to them and they understood sacrifice for a greater good responding to a spiritualised version of that language.

²⁶ **CI** November 1987. In 1926 O’Connor’s Hymn was set to music George O’Neill SJ.

²⁷ Hally, “Chronology”, 1987.

²⁸ Maguire to Hayes 30.7.24, **CAE**, D/CA files.

²⁹ Hayes to O’Dwyer 17.8.24, **CAE**, D/CA files.

The Dalgan Spirit in Australia

The Dalgan Spirit developed in Australia under James McGlynn who held senior seminary and leadership roles in the Region from 1926-71. McGlynn was a tough man and a culture of harshness was inculcated in the seminary through a regime of compulsory sports and manual works, further aggravated by cramped housing conditions. The old story about novices being told to sow cabbage plants upside down just because the superior said so was told year after year seemingly in jest, but former students believe that it was told to them in more than half seriousness. Many of McGlynn's students report that trivia was the important thing at the Essendon seminary where externals and discipline issues overshadowed all else, rules without meaning producing an atmosphere variously resulting in submission, secrecy, derision and rebellion.³⁰ The Regional Director expressed concern about McGlynn making summary dismissals over rule keeping.³¹ The Christian Brothers grew tired of encouraging top students in their schools to enter the Columban seminary only to have most rejected. Only six out of twenty one students from the intakes 1926-1930 were ordained, a very low percentage compared to later years. In 1927 and 1930 the entire intake was dismissed. They possibly were not submissive or "cute" [cunning] enough to survive. McGlynn's Columban peers believed that he lacked both balance and knowledge.³² His letters betray prejudiced and authoritarian thinking, and as Rector of the seminary Tim Sullivan complained to the Superior General detailing his interfering ways after he became Regional Director.³³ Although the next Director, Francis Chapman, tried to divert blame from McGlynn saying the lack of staff trained in Canon Law created seminary problems, he failed to convince the Superior General.³⁴ In a speech at the celebration of the golden jubilee of his ordination, a former student

³⁰ SSOA, CAE, History files.

³¹ Hayes to Dwyer 4.7.30, CAE, D/CA files. An incident early in his career involved Rom Hayes as Regional Director who brought a student back from the local railway station where he was waiting with his packed bags after McGlynn had summarily dismissed him.

³² Mullany to Dwyer 1.1.44, CAE, D/CA files. McGlynn was appointed Regional Director in 1944 even though the previous Director wrote, "[he] is not well balanced in many things and has strong prejudices in others and his general knowledge is somewhat scrappy ... suggest F. Herlihy."

³³ McGlynn and Kennedy letters, CAE, D/Wahroonga files; O'Sullivan to Connolly 18.9.52, Columban Archives Ireland, Superior General's Australian Region File.

³⁴ Chapman to Connolly 18.7.55, Connolly to Chapman 28.7.55, CAE, D/CA files. Chapman held Roman Canon lawyers in high regard throughout his dealings with the seminary, but the Superior General Connolly listed the many Canon Law graduates in the Society who had been of little help to the Columban enterprise.

of McGlynn struggled to forgive him.³⁵ McGlynn was acclaimed for his persuasive Columban promotion and organisational skills among the clergy, Sisters and laity throughout Australia and New Zealand but he seemed out of place in seminary training and Society leadership.

Why did McGlynn retain his position in seminary training for such a long period in spite of his reported limitations? Part of the answer was the shortage of Columban personnel in Australia and the dynamic work capabilities of McGlynn. Another part of an answer was the type of spirituality he epitomised, focused on externals and exercises, the then accepted way carried to Australia from Dalgan. Yet another part of the answer was an aversion within clerical circles to confront an ordained priest and hold them accountable. Once ordained a priest was regarded as being prepared for any church role, and there was a reluctance to remove him from an assigned role lest it reflect badly on the high status of the priesthood. This attitude was to complicate ongoing reform of the Columban seminaries even after McGlynn's time, although, members with innovative ideas were more likely to be held accountable.

The interaction between the Dalgan Spirit and what might be termed the Australian Catholic spirit was significant because of the cross-cultural issues it raised for local candidates. A devotional life backed up by precisely formulated knowledge in the Roman style were aspects of Irish Catholicism well learnt by Australian Catholics.³⁶ They experienced reverence and mystery as they prayed to Christ enthroned in the Tabernacle as the focus of every church, conscious of being part of a world-wide church of believers of many races and destined to join the saints in happiness with God. This faith was publicly proclaimed and dramatically exemplified in celebrations such as Eucharistic Congresses. Other aspects of Irish Catholicism did not sit well with Catholics, and for local students, the "Irishness" displayed by most of the Columban seminary staff in Australia until the 1950s was a cross. Little recognition was given to the unique qualities of the Australian and New Zealand churches from

³⁵ Jubilee celebration at Essendon House, February 1990, recollection of the author.

³⁶ E. Campion, **Australian Catholics**, (Ringwood, VIC: Viking, Penguin Books, 1987), pp. 91-156. Catholic school students often studied the Green Catechism, Bible History, the Ten Commandments and moral teaching, and Archbishop Michael Sheehan's **Apologetics and Christian Doctrine** (1922); P. O'Farrell, "Bible Reading and Related Mental Furniture", **Australian Cultural History: Books, Readers, Reading**, (Geelong: Deakin University, 1992), 11, pp. 19-20.

which they came.³⁷ Local Catholicism carried a uniqueness developed from generations of its followers living in a secularised and pluralistic society, distinctive enough to be recognised as having helped mould the Australian character.³⁸



Columban seminarians from Australia and New Zealand at the Sassafras Spiritual Year House near Melbourne heading for a day-long bush-walk in 1964

Rationalism, Secularism and Socialism had captured much of Australian social leadership but from 1901 onwards Catholicism was renegotiating its place in Australian society as confident leaders emerged from its ranks.³⁹ Australia was one of the first societies in the world where Catholic Christendom, Protestant Christianity and

³⁷ P. O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, (Kensington, NSW: UNSW University Press 1985/92); J. Molony, *The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1969); E. Campion, *Rockchoppers*, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin 1982); E. Simmons, *A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand*, (Auckland: Catholic Press, 1978); H. Jackson, *Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand 1980-1930*, (Auckland: Allen and Unwin NZ, 1987).

³⁸ B. Mansfield, "Thinking about Australian Religious History", *The Journal of Religious History*, 15, 3, (June 1989), pp. 330-344; F. Engel, *Christians in Australia – Volume 2*, (Melbourne: The Joint Board of Christian Education, 1993); G. Bolton, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 5, The Middle Way 1942-1995*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1990, 2nd edition 1996), pp. 111-138. Bolton has several references to how Catholicism helped mould Australian identity in a chapter called "Being Australian".

³⁹ J. MacCaffrey, "The Catholic Church at the Opening of the XXth Century", *1909 Catholic Congress*, (Sydney: Catholic Archdiocese), p. 426-431.

the Enlightenment brought three different visions of God and humanity into conversation, and negotiated a vision of a shared life as fellow citizens.⁴⁰ Despite the battler myth it would be incorrect to characterise all Catholics as poor or lacking social standing.⁴¹ Most Australian-born Catholics were more confident than the Irish-born about their social position and tended not to fear Protestantism.⁴² Inter-marriage between Catholic and Protestant was common yet most children were brought up as Catholics and outside of ghettos, ordinary Catholics appreciated the positive aspects of liberalism, especially personal freedom, so that they remained loyal but critical Catholics. Many, including Australian Columban members, had Protestant parents and grandparents with qualities “different from those of the Irish side of the family”, and often attended secular state schools.⁴³

In some of their thinking, the Irish clerical leaders in Australia, diocesan and Columban, lagged behind ordinary local Catholics and debates on secularism and pluralism often came down to a question of the assimilation. While most bishops grew to accept shades of assimilation, some Catholics who looked to Mannix as their leader opposed it at either the religious or social levels.⁴⁴ Columban students came from all

⁴⁰ D. Horne, **The Lucky Country**, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1964, fifth edition 1998); D. Millikin, Boyer Lecture 1976, (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), p. 47; L. Murray, “An Australian History of the Practical Man”, D. Walker, ed., **Australian Cultural History: The Cult of Practicality**, (Geelong: Deakin University, number 8, 1989), p. 5-6; F. Smith and S. Goldberg, eds., **Australian Cultural History: Culture and the Tall Poppy in Australia**, (Geelong: Deakin University, Number 3, 1984), p. 4; P. O’Farrell, “The Cultural Ambivalence of Australian Religion”, S. Goldberg and F. Smith, eds., **Australian Cultural History: Culture and the State in Australia**, (Canberra: Australian National University, 1982), pp. 5 and 7; R. Ireland, **The Challenge of Secularisation**, (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1988), p. 32; D. McCaughey, **Piecing together a shared vision** (Crows Nest, NSW: Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 1988), p. 3; Thornhill, **Making Australia**, 1992, p. 180; V. Brady, **Caught in the Draught: Essays in Contemporary Australian Society and Culture**, (Pymble, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1994); A. Jordens, **Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity**, (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1995).

⁴¹ J. Grant, **Providence**, (Bathurst: Charles Sturt University - Mitchell, 1994).

⁴² R. Sweetman, **Bishop in the Dock**, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1997), p. 173. Hunter to Kieft 17.1.69 and O’Mahony to Steinhilber 23.3.73, CAE D/CA files. Rome and Catholic law was wary of Protestantism. As late as 1973 permission had to be sought for children of parents of mixed religion to enter the seminary. While many examples of overt opposition to Catholics and sectarianism had appeared in Australia after European settlement, Catholic bias contributed to the strife, much of it centered on the Irish in Melbourne.

⁴³ H. Jackson, **Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand 1860-1930**, (Auckland: Allen and Unwin NZ Ltd., 1987), pp. 82-83); Thornhill, **Making Australia**, 1992, p. 21.

⁴⁴ J. Redmond, “Ireland’s Hundred Year’s Battle for Faith and Fatherland – 1809-1909”, **Proceedings of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress**, (Sydney: St Mary’s Cathedral, 1909), p. 433. Irish hatred of England was exemplified in Redmond’s speech with this condemnation, “The Union was conceived in jealousy, brought forth in corruption, and baptised in blood. It is maintained by force, which has no sanction but fear.” He was the first episcopal supporter of the Columban Society in Australasia. O’Farrell, **Catholic Community**, 1985, p. 231; C. Jory, **The Campion Society and Catholic Social Militancy in Australia**

areas of Australia and New Zealand yet the location of the Columban base in Melbourne, with Mannix as its local patron, reinforced the Irishness of its seminary training. More than an expectation from Mannix, promoting the Irishness of the seminary may have been more an agenda of the seminary staff hoping to please Mannix by replicating Irish ways. Differences between the Australian and New Zealand cultures and their different brands of Catholicism did not rate a mention in Columban seminary considerations.⁴⁵

The Irish Columban priests staffing Essendon had little knowledge of secularism, pluralism or multi-ethnic Catholicism, and the little they did know was coloured by Irish familiarity with the USA. Some carried overt resentment from centuries of British oppression and students bristled under their sectarian rhetoric, common support for the IRA, and the outright ridicule of Britain and its locally derived institutions.⁴⁶ One Columban priest on promotion work in Tasmania viewed the colonial ruins and called them monuments to Irish political prisoners, adding that he saw "no reason to alter his violent views on the benefits conferred on humanity by John Bull [England]".⁴⁷ There is the story that when Essendon students went on a picnic dressed in black suits and hats as was the Irish seminary custom, a man who happened upon the group asked if it was an "undertakers' picnic". One of the few Australian priests to be in charge of students before the 1950s inquired of his superiors if the hat-rule could be changed saying it was hardly appropriate for young men in Australia. He was retired from his position at the end of the year on the grounds that he seemed to "feel uncomfortable in it".⁴⁸

Conclusion

The narrow interpretation of the Dalgan Spirit emphasising obedience to rules and formalistic spiritual exercises that was introduced by the cluster of Irish seminary staff

1929-1939, (Sydney: Harpham, 1986); M. Hogan, **The Sectarian Strand**, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1987).

⁴⁵ Irish members of the Society in the year 2000 often still lump together Columban confreres coming from Australia or New Zealand.

⁴⁶ For Irish members, such as Jim O'Connell, who became friends with local priests and politicians, Irish cultural interests were often at that heart of relationships, CAE, History File.

⁴⁷ *Aussie Yappings*, July 1924.

⁴⁸ Interview with Phil Crosbie, 2000.

in Australia weakened its positive elements and added to the difficulties facing Columban students preparing to become missionaries under an Irish diocesan model. What could have been an experience of cultural exchange became one of cultural division, the first difficulties with culture for most Australian Columban members taking place within the walls of its own seminaries. Clashes between Irish and Australian ways were inevitable, even if the problem was not uniquely Columban within the church, but the failure to acknowledge and address it added to the inappropriateness of the diocesan type of training given in the local Society seminary.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Walsh, **Manly**, 1998, pp. 77 and 121; Strong, **Jesuit Culture**, 1996, p. 74.

Chapter 5: A Clerical Mould: Development of Columban Seminary Training in Australia 1926-1969

The opportunity the Society offered for young men to become priests in an overseas missionary enterprise that was diocesan in character had not existed in Australia before 1920. Initially students studied in the Columban seminaries in Ireland.¹ The opportunities were further facilitated in 1926 when the Australian Region began a partial seminary course at Essendon, most students completing their studies in Ireland, and in 1952 when a full complement of programs was offered locally.² These programs were restructured from 1970 onwards to address problems in the training. Notwithstanding the work of Society leaders to finance seminary building and run programs, this chapter will argue that the style and content of Australian Columban training in the period 1926-1969 was not always successful in producing effective and humanly fulfilled missionaries. It will examine both the strengths and inadequacies of diocesan-style based Columban programs in this period and the attempts to address their inadequacies, attempts largely thwarted by Regional Directors and their Councils. Their resistance to change rested in many ways on a distorted form of the original Dalgan Spirit carried from Ireland. By the late 1960s the crusading imagery that had prompted a tear from members in the early days of the Society elicited many a smile, but there were to be decades of pain and calls for change before that could happen.

The day to day life of Columban students in Australia was similar to the pattern followed by local students for the diocesan priesthood.³ Kevin Walsh's study of the preeminent Catholic seminary in Australia, St Patrick's College, Manly, tells of how that seminary struggled to train effective priests and of problems that arose in relation

¹ *Aussie Yappings*, July 1923 and April 1924. Of the eight students who went to Ireland before 1927, some had completed several years in Australian diocesan seminaries. Five students who became Columban priests were Timothy Sullivan, Gerald Hawkins, James Griffin, Joseph Portley and Peter Gabriel. Three others left training: John Smith (NSW), Maurice Armstrong (New Zealand), and Reginald Devlin (Queensland). Only two of the five ordained remained as Columban members.

² From 1927-1943, 23 students did their Theology in Ireland and 3 more 1950-55 and were ordained, 6 leaving during that time. There was a gap because of WWII travel restrictions so that during the 1940s local students did their theology at the Columban seminary in the USA or at the Victorian Provincial diocesan seminary at Werribee. All 7 students in the USA were ordained, 13 of 19 ordained from Werribee.

³ M. McEntee, "Formation for Priestly Ministry", Neil Brown, ed., **Faith and Culture: Challenges to Ministry**, (Sydney: Catholic Institute of Sydney, 1989), pp. 204-218; V. Noone, "Post-War Catholic Intellectual Life: A View from a Seminary", **Footprints**, 16, 1, (June 1999), pp. 2-28; Magazine

to seminary academics, spirituality, discipline, students' maturity and life expectations.⁴ While diocesan style seminaries was effective up to a point for training Catholic priests for pastoral work, even as modified by the Columban Society, they ultimately proved inadequate in preparing missionaries to work overseas. What is more, the discipline and spirituality often cultivated attitudes that exacerbated the problems of missionaries.

By the 1960s radical new attitudes emerged in Australian society in regard to educational theory and the expectation among people for human fulfillment. These added to concerns arising from within the Society about missionary effectiveness and the health of members arising from their traditional training. Columban missionary students and priests were influenced by these attitudinal changes and began to look for a formation to help bring these objectives into Columban training.⁵ Students began to claim that they were the "subject" in control of their own history and not mere objects in the designs of others, and consequently demanded input into their education.⁶ In addition, church reforms introduced by Vatican II and changing attitudes in the missionary world were both helping to change the work of the Society. It began to move away from the work of helping to strengthen mission diocesan churches towards helping them to enter into the mission work of the church worldwide as mature local churches.⁷ This trend called for skills in Columban priests that had not been required in the earlier mission period. In major ways, the bar for seminary reform had been raised.

Recruitment

The criteria initially used for accepting candidates into the Society were simple, the missionary and priestly calling of candidates being central. The character of the Society as "exclusively missionary" where all members were destined to go overseas

Committee, **Corpus Christi College: The Clayton Years 1973-1999**, (Clayton, VIC: Corpus Christi College, 2000).

⁴ K. Walsh, **Yesterday's Seminary**, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1998), pp. 16-17, 66 and 87-89.

⁵ P. Freire, **Pedagogy of the Oppressed**, (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972).

⁶ L. Rulla, F. Imoda and J. Ridick, **Psychological Structure and Vocation**, (Dublin: Villa Books, 1978).

⁷ Walbert Buhlmann, **The Coming of the Third Church**, (Slough, UK: St Paul Publications, 1976); R. Tiedemann, "China and its Neighbours", A. Hastings, ed., **A World History of Christianity**, (London: Cassell, 1999), pp. 397 and 411-412.

was the major motivating factor attracting a variety of student personalities. A *Seminary Statistics and Opinions Assessment* (SSOA) was drawn from a survey conducted in 1995-96 of Columban Society personnel who had been attached to the Australian Region.⁸ Limited data in the SSOA on the images of work Columban candidates saw themselves doing as missionaries suggests that students included adventurous, idealistic, priestly and visionary personalities. However, nearly all who addressed the question of vocation emphasised the primacy of “going overseas”. They had experienced a call from God to be both a priest and a missionary, and viewed the Columban Society as the practical and assured way of carrying this through.⁹ The academic literature on the missionary recognises mixed motives such as escape from life and seeking after personal opportunity, but casts the primary motivation as wanting to share values expressed as Good News in Christ.¹⁰ The SSOA suggests that the Columban candidates’ approach was uncomplicated. A few specifically wrote of wanting to help the poor.¹¹ A few, however, spoke of emulating or countering Protestant missionary groups and secular aid groups, sentiments which also appeared in the Columban magazine.¹² There were no comments that compared with those made by members of the English Mill Hill Society about a civilising agenda or the

⁸ **Appendix 4:** *A Seminary Statistics and Opinions Assessment* (SSOA), CAE, History file. The survey was not done as part of this thesis and was confidential, consequently, only a summary of its conclusions drawn up at the time has been used.

⁹ J. Blowick, **Priestly Vocation**, (Dublin: Gill and Son, 1932); Ryberg, *Charism*, p. 19. Ryberg wrote that in reality, many members spent their whole life in support work in the home countries yet were regarded as “doing Columban work.” The specialty or “charism” of the Society was of “an organised group of apostles who as priests performed whatever service that was necessary to foster the Society’s aims”, including Columban work in the home Regions.

¹⁰ T. Jones, “The Missionary Vocation” **International Review of Missions** XL, 160 (October 1951), pp. 401-410; J. Wiest, “The Maryknoll China History Project: Methodology and Preliminary Findings”, **Missiology**, XI, 3 (July 1983), pp. 346-350 and 353-358. The missionary vocation was regarded as a desire to “go all the way” in God’s service, but included practical motives such as a guarantee of mission work. K. Piskaty, “Motives for Christian Missionary Activity”, **Verbum** 35, 2 (1994), pp. 117-131. Purely theological lists of reasons motivating mission, such as Piskaty’s, proved narrow in scope.

¹¹ J. E. Walsh, **The Church’s World Wide Mission**, (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1948), p. 18. Walsh wrote of the missionary as called to help those at the bottom of society whose “lives are aimless, undignified and uncertain ... who did the ordinary work of the world and suffered the extraordinary miseries of the world.”

¹² **TFE** 3, 1928, pp. 2-4. J. Yule, **About Face in China: Eight Australians’ Experience of the Chinese Revolution 1945-1951**, (Melbourne: The Joint Board of Christian Education, 1995), xviii. A group of Protestant women give this reflection: “Why did we go overseas? Our motives were many and varied: partly a commitment to the world church and a desire to share our faith; partly an awareness of world issues and the need for reconciliation between countries and individuals; partly a perception that missionary work should not be left as the exclusive preserve of the evangelical fundamentalists.”

democratising agenda of some USA missionaries.¹³ Candidates commonly said that the magazine or parish pastors had given the immediate stimulus to their applications, alerting them to need for missionary priests and presenting them with a choice about leading a worthwhile life.

To help promote missionary vocations, between 1924-28 the Australian Region followed the Irish Region's example and published several issues of *The Young Apostle* as an annual for teenagers.¹⁴ Every story was geared towards making "a choice" about a missionary vocation.

Many of you have been brought to the age when you must decide the greatest question of your life - the choice of a career in the world. 'What shall I be?' Dear boys and girls ... you stand where the trails divide, and survey the future. Eternities are in the balance. On your choice will depend the question of whether your life is to be a fair, noble thing - an achievement of something worthwhile - or, perhaps, a mere aimless drift that leads nowhere ... Perhaps Our Divine Lord has already spoken to your heart the invitation 'Come, follow me'.

In addition to the desire to be a missionary and a priest, practical Columban entrance requirements for candidates in Australia included a good public Christian life, average academic capability, some knowledge of Latin, good health and supporting documentation from the applicant's doctor and parish priest. Since the missionary life was regarded as physically rigorous health was a major consideration and some applications were rejected on those grounds.¹⁵ As with other diocesan and Religious groups, the family background of prospective students was regarded as an important indicator of a candidate's suitability.¹⁶ The Society never ran minor seminaries where

¹³ L. Nemer, "Missionary Motivation among English Roman Catholics in the late Nineteenth Century", *Verbum*, 19, 1 (1978), pp. 57-75; A. Dries, *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999), pp. 254-258.

¹⁴ The first edition of the Annual in 1924 sold 5,400 copies at one shilling and sixpence (15 cents) per copy. Its editorial stated: "The Young Apostle is being published in the interests of the Little Missionaries of Australia and New Zealand. Your prayers and sacrifices have been unfailing ... You have been, in a true sense, missionaries." Fables, stories of missionary needs, prayers and teenagers' essays invited young people to make a choice about the direction of their lives.

¹⁵ O'Dwyer to Hayes 6.9.28 and 5.2.30, Dwyer to Mullany 3.5.35, CAE, D/CA files. Many went on to live long lives as priests in local dioceses. Rejected as a priest candidate in the mid-1930s, Father John Wallis, founder of the Missionary Sisters of Service in Tasmania, only died in 2001.

¹⁶ D. Strong, *Jesuits in Australia: An Ethnographic History of the Society of Jesus in Australia*, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1995), p. 79; K. Walsh, *Yesterday's Seminary*, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1998), pp. 104-105. Students at Manly usually came from middle class families and normally paid fees. K. Livingston, *The Emergence of an Australian Catholic Priesthood 1883-1915*, (Manly, NSW: Catholic Theological Faculty of Sydney, 1977), p. 224.

students could begin from about twelve years of age, as was the case with some Religious Orders and diocesan seminaries, so Columban candidates were presumed to have reached a reasonable level of maturity.¹⁷ Students coming from stable and middle class family backgrounds were thought likely to have acquired a fair degree of social skills and informal learning that would serve them well as priests. At the academic level Columban candidates were normally required to have completed their university entrance examination even if they had spent some years following a career. About a fifth of those eventually ordained were men who had worked for a few years before entering, while the rest came directly from completing high school.

Since the seminary was a time for testing the suitability of students to be Columban members, it was normal that a percentage would not survive. Some were dismissed by superiors while others left of their own accord, going their own ways or transferring to other Catholic groups as the Columban calling did not suit them.¹⁸

TABLE 1: Entrants to Regional Columban seminaries going on to ordination

Year	Entrants	Ordained	Aust/New Zealand
1926-1930	21*	6	(4/2)
1931-1940	62	28	(18/10)
1941-1950	52	21	(11/10)
1951-1960	67	38	(24/14)
1961-1970	146	45	(37/8)
1971-1980	64	21	(13/8)
1981-1990	36	5	(5/0)
1991-1996	4	0	(0/0)
Totals	452	164	(112/52)

* Eight students went directly to Columban seminaries in Ireland before 1926.

In total, the number of students from the Region who did at least a year in a Columban seminary 1920-1996 overseas or in Australia was 460 of whom 169 were ordained or 37%.¹⁹ The highest intake took place in the 1960s when 146 students were accepted of whom 45 were ordained or 31%.

¹⁷ Margaret Press, *St Francis Xavier Seminary: The First Fifty Years 1842-1992*, (Adelaide: St Francis Xavier Seminary, 1992), p. 15.

¹⁸ **Appendix 2:** Transfers to other Church Institutions.

¹⁹ CAE, Personnel File. The number of students entering 1920-1950 and subsequently ordained numbered 60 of 143 or 42%, 1951-1970 was 83 of 213 or 39% and 1971-1996 was 26 of 104 or 25%.

The co-relation between social movements and religious callings is significant. The number of Columban vocations was most prolific when there was a growth paradigm operating in the general community. Co-founder Galvin believed that the 1916 uprising in Ireland helped the Society there because it fired the idealism of the young. Feelings of being caught up in the 1950s post-war boom coincided with the increase in Columban vocations in Australia. When a distrust of grand agendas began to emerge in society in the next decade, the number of candidates declined by one third.²⁰

Columban Seminary Programs in Australia 1926-69

According to Catholic Canon Law, the normal period of training for a priest was two years of studies called Philosophy and four years called Theology, the student being ordained a priest during the last year. From 1924 the Society decided to preface these programs with a Year of Probation, making a total of seven years of training.²¹

Various seminary schemes and starting dates were considered before the Region began its programs in 1926 “with no great splash”.²² Two students began the Year of Probation, later more commonly called the “Spiritual Year” when the period of probation was extended to two years. The Spiritual Year was the first experience of Columban life for candidates entering up until the late 1970s. It was designed to test a candidate’s vocation, assess his ability to study and relate to others, introduce him to spiritual practices and the Society Constitutions, and set him on a disciplined path to becoming a Columban missionary priest.²³ Learning methods of prayer backed up by some theory on developing a spiritual life was the main focus, with a “Thirty Day Retreat”

²⁰ M. Schell, “Vocations Report February 1975”, “1976 National Survey of Religious personnel in Australia”, Major Religious Superiors Meeting March 1977, and, “20 July 1977 Columban Report”, CAE, Vocations file. J. O’Hehir, CI November 1977; G. Walker, CI May 1981.

²¹ The 1924 Society Congress (early name for a Society General Chapter and Society General Assembly) decided to introduce a year of Probation (Spiritual Year) for young men wanting to join the Society as students (extended to two years in 1963), CAE, Chapter file.

²² Maguire to Hayes 30.7.24; O’Dwyer to Hayes 30.7.24 and Hayes to Maguire 10.3.25. Maguire to Hayes 30.7.24; O’Dwyer to Hayes 30.7.24; O’Dwyer to Hayes 15.6.25; Blowick to Hayes 14.11.25, CAE, D/CA files. William McGoldrick was scheduled to return from China to conduct the Probation Year. John Blowick sent detailed instructions on how to conduct the period of Probation. O’Dwyer to Hayes 17.5.27; O’Dwyer to Hayes 14.6.27; Hayes to O’Dwyer 20.7.27. CAE D/CA file.

²³ Spiritual Year Directors at Essendon were Patrick McAuley 1927-30, James McGlynn 1931-36, John McPoland 1937-42, Philip Crosbie 1943, John McPoland 1944-46, James Kennedy 1953-55. Spiritual Year Directors in New Zealand were James McGlynn 1944 and Francis Herlihy 1945-49. Director at Wahroonga was James Kennedy 1947-52. Directors at Sassafra were James Kennedy 1956-58, Peter Kavanagh 1959-61 and Vincent Batchelor 1962-66. Directors at Turramurra were Vincent Batchelor 1967 and Christopher Baker 1968.

to do the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits, at the year's core.²⁴ Superiors had chosen this self-sustaining individualistic style of Jesuit prayer-life as particularly suited for the often lonely work of missionaries as it did not depend on communal support. Many who went through this training judged that the spiritual perspective offered did not fit their religious attitudes and some claimed that it was an insult to their family and parish religious backgrounds.²⁵ The style of study prevailing until the late 1960s suppressed any spirit of inquiry in a system of rote learning. Latin and English were the only non-religious subjects studied during that year. Issues of human development were passed over. Columban students were addressed as "gentlemen" and expected to act as such, preparing to enter the clerical state. Former students wonder if this emphasis arose from priests adopting the prudish ways of Victorian England, a judgement also made by non-Columban commentators.²⁶

An even more restrictive regime developed when a more isolated style of training for the Spiritual Year was established in the Australian Region by setting it in separate locations from 1943 until 1966.²⁷ The greater physical isolation was intended to reinforce the psychological isolation that was seen as necessary for priestly training, drawing the student away from worldly distractions to become alone with God and share that aloneness as a bond with other members according to Society rules. At a practical level, the 1931 Society Chapter had recommended that probationers be separated from the negative influence of senior students. It did not say what this influence might be but former students surmised that seniors encouraged junior students not to take the seminary rules too seriously and to think for themselves. Under the spiritual view presented as the "Dalgan Spirit" and reinforced by isolation, a significant number of students grew to mistrust their own judgement, constantly

²⁴ Strong, **Jesuit Culture**, 1996, p. 213-231. The "Thirty Days" was a spiritual retreat in which participants discerned and chose their life pathway with an advisor. The Spiritual Exercises were not done in the original form as created by St Ignatius but as a group preached exercise. When the Spiritual Year was reformed from 1969 onwards, the original style of the Exercises was revived.

²⁵ SSOA, 1996. Some students resented being asked to make a choice to turn away from the evils of their past lives as not reflecting their experience or where they had come from in parishes.

²⁶ J. Thornhill, **Making Australia**, (Sydney: Millennium Books, 1992), pp. 186-7; Strong, **Jesuit Culture**, 1996, p. 225. Strong writes that Australian spirituality often termed "Irish Jansenism" might more accurately have been described as Roman and Gallican combined with Anglo-Saxon Puritanism.

²⁷ Up until 1996, the Spiritual Year was variously run at Essendon, Lower Hutt in New Zealand, Wahroonga near Sydney, and Sassafras outside of Melbourne. The number of Spiritual Year students who began in these locations: Essendon 111 students, New Zealand 6; Wahroonga 37; Sassafras 146, North Turrumurra 152.

looked to superiors to give directions. Some developed the spiritual disease of “scrupulosity” where self-doubt dominated their lives.²⁸ A few left as a result of mental breakdowns.

The two-year Philosophy studies course that began in Essendon in March 1928 ran in conjunction with the Spiritual Year and largely followed the same timetable, discipline, spiritual practices and system of rote learning. Until 1952, few teachers in local Columban seminaries had post-graduate degrees.²⁹ Lacking training in research they merely replicated what they had learnt as seminarians.³⁰ The Philosophy taught was neo-Thomistic and broadly Aristotelian based. On the positive side it emphasised the logical processes of thinking and a system for organising ideas in a connected way, negatively, there was little other philosophy introduced and usually only in order that it might be rejected. Neo-Thomism was a deductive system working from principles in direct contrast to the inductive empirical method of the natural sciences, thus distancing students from many of their educated counterparts in society.³¹ Language studies and literature took a secondary but important place during the Philosophy years and many students became book lovers. Latin was the primary language studied, with other languages taught to selected students according to Society interests at a particular time - Greek, French, Chinese in the early years and later Spanish – but the methods were haphazard.

Individual Hopes and Initiatives thwarted during the Years 1952-1970

A major opportunity to develop better training for Columban students arose for the local Region in 1952 when the Superior General decided to immediately set up in Australia a Columban Theology program added to the Spiritual and Philosophy programs to form a complete local Columban seminary system. There were hopes that

²⁸ CAE, Interviews, History File.

²⁹ Chapman to Connolly 18.7.55, CAE, D/CA files. Other Essendon philosophy staff included Patrick Devlin and Thomas Foy. Sullivan tried to bring a more critical approach into philosophy studies after he was re-appointed to Essendon in 1949 but his approach was dated by then.

³⁰ *Aussie Yappings*, November 1928; Blowick to Hayes 23.9.30 CAE, C/CA files. Tim Sullivan arrived in 1928 and James O'Connell in 1930, after studies at Louvain, to teach philosophy.

³¹ G. Ardley, *Aquinas and Kant*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1950); “Thomas Aquinas”, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, (Sydney: McGraw Hill, 1967) 14, pp. 102-115; A. Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind*, (London: Routledge, 1993).

a new seminary “spirit” would emerge at the Wahroonga property in Sydney.³² But in spite of the initiatives of individual staff members and the Columban Superior General himself in the period 1952-1970 to change both the study program and the system of discipline, the Regional Directors and their councils frustrated reforms. They exercised their power to interfere directly in the running of the seminaries and tried to have staff in their own mould appointed. Chapman, in particular, took advantage of uncertainty in the Society Constitutions about who was responsible for seminaries within a Region - Seminary Rector or the Regional Director - to exercise his authority. Behind such actions lay an ideological view that opposed new thinking on missionary theory and practice and promoted a narrow theological interpretation of the priestly role of the Columban missionary. The move to a large purpose-built seminary at North Turramurra near Sydney exacerbated such problems and eventually brought them to a head. During the period 1952-70 new social attitudes and new church missionary aims were vying with the old for acceptance. Although the debate was often hidden, this contest was reflected in seminary tussles over mission studies, discipline, and academic standards, as well as in issues of spiritual growth and human development.

All members of staff appointed to the new seminary by the Superior General originated from the local Region.³³ This was despite the Regional Director’s Council being very “anxious to have an Irish representative on the College staff at Wahroonga” to help keep in touch with the Irish Columban seminary and liaise with Irish parish priests in Sydney. The new Rector, Francis Herlihy, was a Doctor of Canon Law and set about leading a correctly instituted seminary. The vice-Rector Charlie O’Mahony, who had studied Theology in Rome, remembers the teaching method at Wahroonga as “straight forward enough”, aiming to convey a small amount of defined knowledge as the core framework for students to build on. Taught until around 1970, a package of neo-Thomistic theology was considered to contain all the central Christian truths

³² TFE 11, 1952, p. 12; K. Walsh, *Manly*, 1998, p. 242. In 1950, Pope Pius XII had called on seminary rectors to help cultivate in seminarians a “sense of responsibility, a power of judgement and a spirit of initiative.” No evidence was found as to whether or not Columban Rectors were aware of the directive.

³³ McGlynn to Connolly 1.12.52, CAE, D/CA files. Francis Herlihy was transferred from Essendon, Charles O’Mahony was recalled from Fiji and Cyril Hally from Japan. The seminary began September 1952 with Herlihy as Rector, O’Mahony as Vice-Rector, Hally as Dean from 1953. From Essendon came Martin Strong to be Spiritual Director, William McGoldrick to teach Scripture, and James Kennedy to be Bursar. CAE, Seminary file, Vincent Bachelor arrived soon to replace McGoldrick until 1955 when Christopher Baker returned from Rome with degrees in Theology and Scripture.

required to equip any priest with a body of certainty adequate for the rest of his life.³⁴ The four-year Theology course included the study of Systematic, Dogmatic, Moral, Sacramental and Ascetical Theologies, Scripture and Canon Law, plus lesser subjects deemed necessary for a priest's ministry such as Rubrics and Church History, but no Missiology.³⁵ O'Mahony noted that "even the bright students did not complain and some were very bright and they later went on to do well in post-graduate studies".³⁶ There were few library facilities but they satisfied the traditional "banking" method of teaching where learning was deposited in the student. Creativity and imagination were not cultivated in a system which gave no encouragement of investigative thinking and marked by a positive suspicion of relativism. Indicative of these restrictive views was the study of church Canon Law that had little to say on church mission outreach but much on safeguarding a Roman tradition.³⁷ While the staff recorded some interest in acquiring books on the modern liturgical movement, Australia-Asian affairs and Scripture, money was not allocated by the Region and little happened until the mid-1960s.³⁸

The teaching methods in the seminary also caused problems. The use of Latin, the official language of the Roman Church, held back serious academic pursuits since each major subject had a prescribed Latin textbook, even if English was usually the medium for lectures.³⁹ Many seminary staff members were regarded by students as incompetent or so guarded that the subject matter they taught seemed banal, and more than a few of the staff appeared to be immature people.⁴⁰ There is a myth in Columban circles, maybe a form of denial, that Wahroonga and North Turramurra were better

³⁴ This attitude differed little from those in the USA Fundamentalist movement that arose in the 1920s among some Protestants as a reaction against new scriptural scholarship.

³⁵ **Appendix 3: Seminary Class Schedule and Timetables.** J. Mueller, "Theology", M. Glazier and M. Hellwig, **Modern Catholic Encyclopedia**, (Newtown, NSW: E. J. Dwyer, 1994), p. 865. Verbose texts were available in English such as the work of George Smith, ed., **The Teaching of the Catholic Church**, (London: Burns & Oates, 1948/1952), which ran to 1,332 pages.

³⁶ O'Mahony, interview, 1996, CAE, History files.

³⁷ Stanislaus Woywod, **A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law**, (New York: Joseph F Wagner, 1925, revised 1957 by Callistus Smith). This book runs to 1,700 pages of text and footnotes commenting on the 2411 canons of the 1917 Code.

³⁸ Disciplinary Council Minutes 8.3.57, CAE, Seminary File; Chapman to Connolly 23.4.59, CAE, D/CA files.

³⁹ Columban Society, "1947 Columban Society General Chapter"; E. Genicot, **Institutiones Theologiae Moralis**, (Rome: Desclee de Brouwer, 1964 edition); A. Tanquerey, **Dogmatic Theology**, (New York: Desclee and Co, 1930); V. Noone, "Post-War Catholic Intellectual Life: A View from a Seminary", **Footprints**, 16, 1, June 1999, pp. 2-28.

⁴⁰ SSOA, 1996.

than other Australian seminaries of the time, but it is not borne out by their comparison with the diocesan seminary at Werribee in the 1940s or the Sacred Heart Missionaries seminary. In both places the content of courses was regarded as more challenging and professors used proper teaching skills.⁴¹ Philosophy staff member Jim O'Connell was concerned that Columban students at Werribee were losing touch with the missionary spirit but priests express delight with their years there, and most were ordained and remained as Columban members.⁴² Only for the self-motivated student did studies assume importance and some students slipped through the system with the minimum of academic achievement.⁴³ The students' motives of adventure or faith were insufficient because mission preparation needed to be accompanied by learning. Otherwise, as Columban priests they were destined to have difficulty in studying foreign languages, appreciating other cultures or passing reflections on their work to their home churches.

The issue of missionary studies was central to moves to reform the Columban seminary as it went to the heart of both its content and the educational philosophy. Although the Columban magazine had reported on Missiology Conferences in Europe from 1923 onwards, the appropriate direction for the education of missionaries was more contested.⁴⁴ Society General Chapters had encouraged mission studies in the seminaries in 1931, 1947 and 1952 but nothing changed.⁴⁵ There was an occasional book about the missions read during the silence at midday meals or a talk by a priest "home from the missions" but only "sound men", Columban jargon for "one who can be trusted by superiors", were invited to speak. Students were not to be upset by new ideas or questions. One of the eight newly ordained Columban priests, who on arriving in Shanghai in 1948 were told that they were reappointed and would go to

⁴¹ Cyril Hally's comment 1999. Rev. Paul Collins MSC consulted 1999.

⁴² O'Connell to Dwyer 29.9.44, CAE, Seminary File. While at Werribee, Columban students came under the influence of respected Rectors such as Charlie Mayne SJ. They promoted new educational methods emerging in the church associated with the Catholic lay apostolate. Bygott, *Jesuits*, 1980, pp. 197 and 305.

⁴³ Chris Baker introduced some modern scriptural scholarship to Old Testament studies from 1956 but not to New Testament. For a short period, Frank Purcell started some new trends in Dogma from 1960. The pass mark in exams was just 33%.

⁴⁴ TFE 9, 1923, p. 1; 7, 1924, p. 5; 7, 1925, p. 5; 8, 1925, p. 8; 4, 1929, p. 1; 5, 1929, pp. 5-7; 12, 1930, p. 15; and 2, 1974, p. 6.

⁴⁵ CAE, Chapters file. The 1931 Society's General Chapter recommended students study culture and civilisations; the 1947 General Chapter called for a study the social doctrine of church; and the 1952 General Chapter recommended Missiology perspectives in seminary courses, Education and Training no. 8.

Japan, recalled that they were not worried since "we were no less ignorant of it than we were of China".⁴⁶

From 1953 onwards under the cover of Church History and Sacred Chant, Cyril Hally was the first staff member to unofficially introduce his students to new ways of thinking that might be relevant to missionaries in dialogue with modern world movements. He discussed the Cardijn movement and its innovative style of organisation, action and use of theology that was to prove most relevant to Columban work, predating the reforms of Vatican II. It clashed, however, with the other externally oriented section of the Lay Apostolate emerging in the 1930s, Catholic Action, which emphasised control of its work by church authorities. This clash was reflected in debates over directions in the Columban seminary training.

Catholic Action was developed under Pope Pius XI and aimed to engage lay people in helping to change society for the "common good" based on Catholic social principles and under the direction of the local bishops.⁴⁷ From 1931 onwards Mannix promoted it and B. A. Santamaria was a disciple, but Mannix also promoted the Cardijn movement that became widespread in Australia.⁴⁸ The Cardijn movement began after WWI with Father Joseph Cardijn's foundation in Belgium of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) to face issues of justice and de-christianisation of the working classes, later developing adult and educational branches.⁴⁹ Its approach was summarised as "See-Judge-Act", beginning with reality before moving to reflection in the light of faith in order to decide what could be changed by people in a process from below. The two movements also differed in their underlying spiritualities. Catholic Action used faith as a support system, often in a devotional way, while the Cardijn method regarded Catholic faith as integral to the process of judging how to participate in God's creative

⁴⁶ CAE, History File, Jim Norris written reflections.

⁴⁷ J. Newman, **What is Catholic Action - An Introduction to the Lay Apostolate**, (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1958). The Lay Apostolate could take various forms: being defensive, such as Frank Sheed's Catholic Evidence Guild begun in 1924; promoting internal church spiritual matters, such as the Legion of Mary; or externally orientated to bring Catholic influence into world values and affairs. T. Boland, **James Duhig**, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1986), pp. 212-213. Pope Pius XI's encyclical "Il Firmo Proposito: Apostolate of the Laity" encouraged lay Catholic Action.

⁴⁸ By 1970 several senior officials of the YCW headquarters in Belgium were Australians.

⁴⁹ Woodrow, **YCW Handbook**, (Sydney: YCW, undated), pp. 113, 177-183.

action in the world.⁵⁰ The two movements represented opposing ways to view and engage the world, one aimed to reinstate Christendom while the other wanted to help create just and pluralistic societies.

Throughout the 1950s the Superior General Tim Connolly encouraged new studies in the seminary appropriate to modern missionaries but was frustrated by the ideologically based decisions of the Regional Director Francis Chapman and his Council. Connolly sent him information on new church methods such as the Cardijn movement, secular movements including the work of UN Agencies in mission areas, and a report specifically on Missiology studies offering at the Gregorian University in Rome recommending studies in them.⁵¹ Chapman, however, supported the traditional seminary and its emphasis on priestly ministry and judged it prudent to go no further with the Lay Apostolate movement than to endorse church focused pastoral groups such as the Legion of Mary.⁵² Chapman wanted students to become part of the Catholic priesthood, trained in a simple seminary without “frills”, wrapping his argument in spiritual terms. “[It is] the priests who have to sanctify the lay apostles ... [students are to] practice those things of the primer text-book ... and those won’t come without a pretty spartan adherence to the daily spiritual exercises.”⁵³ With Chapman and his Council actively arguing against reform, Connolly’s suggestions to include mission studies did not appear to have reached the seminary at Wahroonga.

The failure to move beyond a functional definition of the priesthood to teach, rule and sanctify stopped the development of mission studies in the seminary.⁵⁴ Chapman was

⁵⁰ Catholic Action method tended to become the favoured path of church elites and action groups such as Opus Dei, often secretive and manipulative. The Cardijn method became the favoured way of those at the lower levels of the church, open to change and often with less attachment to the officially organised church.

⁵¹ Connolly to Chapman 13.12.55; “1956 Report on Antigonish Course, Nova Scotia”, and “1956 Report on Credit Union Course Wisconsin”; Connolly to Chapman 27.4.55 & 12.10.55; Connolly “Memorandum to Directors and Superiors” 1.2.56; Connolly “Circular Letter” to priests 15.2.56. Connolly sent a priest to New York to study the UN set-up. James Michaels to Rev. P. McPartland in Nebraska 2.11.55; Connolly to Chapman 16.11.55, and Connolly to Directors 21.4.55, CAE, D/CA files. A. Camps, **Studies in Asian Mission History** (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 29.

⁵² Chapman to Connolly 11.4.57, CAE, D/CA files. Chapman arranged the tour of a Legion envoy throughout Australia in 1957: “... the Legion would also steer me clear of another organisation here [the Movement] that I have much sympathy with but is too controversial to permit us a close associate with it ... it is clear that the bishops are at variance in their views on its merits, at least in recent years”.

⁵³ Chapman to Connolly 22.9.59, CAE, D/CA files. He quoted from the Exhortation of anti-Modernist Pope Pius X to support his opinion.

⁵⁴ Chapman to O’Mahony 30.5.1960, CAE, D/Seminary File. Apart from not wanting to cross Santamaria, he saw Columban members primarily as priestly ministers rather than mission initiators believing “Our

constantly on the watch for signs of “restless” questioning of this view among the seminary staff and was adept in countering their influence. Of Hally he wrote, “My fear is that students will develop something of his restless and rather aggressive manner.”⁵⁵ He believed Hally’s attendance at the Asian Catholic University Student’s Conference in Madras, India, in 1954 had an “upsetting effect” on him and advised against his visiting the 1959 Conference in Manila.⁵⁶ The Superior General did not agree with this criticism but still withheld permission because of “the interpretation placed upon this action by very important ecclesiastical authorities in Australia [Mannix]”.⁵⁷ Chapman was sympathetic to Santamaria whose attempt to create influence among the Catholic student movement in Asia had been undone at the Madras Conference largely through information passed on by Hally and Father Roger Pryke to Cardinal Gracias and Asian-based university chaplains.⁵⁸ Of calls for priests to engage with Latin American society in 1960, Chapman said they “find no sympathetic chord in me”.⁵⁹ He defended the priority of filling parishes and the wearing of clerical garb as taught and perpetuated in the seminary. Whatever hopes had existed for introducing mission studies ended in 1962 when Chapman ruled that “the students’ course is already perhaps too extensive”.⁶⁰ In the late 1960s when courses were added to the seminary curriculum, they were of a priestly and pastoral nature rather than missionary. Having been given a simple priestly training, Columban members were expected to work overseas under their superiors as a friendly bunch of parish-based workhorses. As Regional Director, Chapman proved an effective organiser and builder but showed little understanding of either the nature of a seminary or missionary demands in a changing world, and he maneuvered successfully to oppose reforms.

bread and butter obligations - supplies, hospitality and general social obligations to the diocesan clergy - must take preference.”

⁵⁵ “1958 Annual Report on Personnel”, CAE, D/CA files.

⁵⁶ Chapman to Connolly 17.9.59, CAE, D/CA files.

⁵⁷ Connolly to Hally 26.9.59, CAE, D/CA files.

⁵⁸ B. Duncan, **Crusade or Conspiracy: Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2001), p. 264.

⁵⁹ Chapman to Connolly 29.1.60 CAE, D/CA files. He referred to an article by M. McGrath, “Report from Chile”, Irish edition of *The Far East*, 1, 1960, p. 2.

⁶⁰ “1958 Rector’s Report”; Chapman to Baker 8.9.64, CAE, Seminary and D/CA files.

Building Turrumurra Columban Seminary, Hayes Park College

An immediate and significant issue for the Columban seminaries in the mid-1950s was the limited accommodation available for students, but erecting a purpose-built institution took attention away from the other seminary concerns. The Philosophy students together with their staff moved to Wahroonga from Essendon in 1954 increasing the pressure.⁶¹ One student converted a tool shed and another part of a laundry into a personal room and neighbouring houses were purchased to increase accommodation but the staff appealed for a new purpose-built seminary "with elbow-room for all".⁶² Society leaders judged that the scattered houses at Wahroonga could not properly serve the increased demand and Chapman organised to erect a new building on a large site.⁶³ The new seminary at North Turrumurra, usually referred to simply as "Turrumurra" was blessed on 28 June 1959 with most of the bishops of Australia attending.⁶⁴ Known officially as *Hayes Park* in memory of Bishop Romuald Hayes, the new seminary exemplified a period of growth for the Australian nation and the Society locally. Columban student numbers grew from twenty in 1952 to sixty nine in 1969, the highest number ever reached in Australia.

The move to the institutional Turrumurra building reinforced traditional ideas about diocesan style seminary training and created further scope for the continuing debate about authority over the seminary between the Regional Director and Seminary Rector. Their separate but complementary roles and jurisdiction had a history of confusion and contention in the Society in Ireland and at Essendon, partly because the roles were ill defined and partly because of the physical proximity of the people involved.⁶⁵ The Society Constitutions assigned the running of seminaries to Rectors

⁶¹ Staff members were James O'Connell, Timothy Sullivan and John McPoland.

⁶² Dennehy to McGlynn 18.3.50 & McGlynn to Dennehy 29.3.50, CAE, D/CA files. After WWII large old houses with staffing problems were going cheap and new building was difficult because of delayed demand and large-scale migration. *Austrasia* 1964 (Turrumurra student magazine), CAE, Seminary File. In 1953 a house called "Number 78" across the road had been bought and the following year "Number 65" next door.

⁶³ McGlynn to MacAlindon 6.2.53, McGlynn to Connolly 16.3.53, and MacAlindon to McGlynn 17.12.53, CAE, D/CA files. With the blessing of Mannix, the Region decided in 1953 to build a seminary in Sydney rather than Melbourne. The Society had bought a site in Melbourne in the late 1920s but this was sold to the Archdiocese for its new seminary after the Columban decision to locate in Sydney.

⁶⁴ Kell and Rigby gained the contract for £306,888 19.2.58, CAE, D/CA files; TFE 9, 1959, p. 1.

⁶⁵ McGlynn to Connolly 4.1.54, CAE, D/CA files. As Regional Director McGlynn, interpreted his supervisory role to interfere directly. In the early years of the Society in Ireland the Superior General and

and their councils but gave Regional Directors a supervisory role, a role that could be widely defined to sanction interference.⁶⁶



Cardinal Norman Gilroy, Very Rev. Francis Chapman and the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Carboni listen to Dr. Leonard of Manly College address the Opening of the North Turrumurra Seminary 1959

Seminary discipline, an ongoing issue of contention from McGlynn's time, had slipped into the background under mainly non-Irish staff at Wahroonga. Discipline, however, became the focus of Chapman's plan to claw back seminary changes in 1960 and provided the grounds to dismiss those professors and students who objected. The basis for enforcing seminary discipline was a "Normae for Students" which codified all scheduled activities and rules.⁶⁷ In the light of good reports on discipline from the seminary staff and Rector in that year, the Superior General was surprised that Chapman did not want O'Mahony reappointed as Rector for a normal second three year term. Chapman replied.

Regional headquarters were housed within seminaries, lessening legitimate seminary independence. At Essendon a similar situation existed 1926-1955.

⁶⁶ "Normae Secundum Constitutiones" (1932), Art. 69, Chapter III, CAE, Seminary File.

⁶⁷ The Rector's Reports 1952-1960 consistently praised the spirit of cooperation, sense of responsibility and initiative of the students, noting discipline as uniformly good with no abuse of the confidence vested in them.

Our difficulty up to now has been that the Rector was not responsive to suggestions from Essendon ... There are several probable reasons for the easy interpretation of Normae regarding silence etc.: 1/ A reaction to old student days in Essendon, 2/ to develop initiative, 3/ to relieve strain, 4/ to compensate for small numbers and for sports facilities, 5/ perhaps an unconscious assertion to the modern approach of self-education ... Father Walsh reported that both Fathers Hally and O'Mahony felt that they were receiving too much direction from Essendon.⁶⁸

On the recommendation of Chapman, the Superior General replaced O'Mahony along with staff members Hally and Purcell and a more loyal and compliant staff regime emerged under the new Rector, Christopher Baker.⁶⁹ Baker's seminary report for 1961 lumps together the up-until-then separate sections on "general spirit" and "discipline". He notes that a delegation of senior students to the Rector questioning the discipline "went away more earnest and humble in preparing for their own call to [clerical] Orders. In view of all this, we consider that a hard but effective blow has been struck."⁷⁰

In 1961 Chapman convinced the Superior General that discipline was still a problem in the seminary that more intervention might solve and sent Peter Kavanagh to Turramurra to assess its enforcement.⁷¹ His report urged Chapman to act decisively to strictly interpret the existing Normae for Students calling for "a complete break with the liberalism of the Wahroonga Spirit" since the Church and Columban Society were "monarchical in principle and not democratic".⁷² He recommended "clipping" [withholding] men from Ecclesiastical Orders as a sanction to enforce traditional priestly training practices. A copy of this report was sent to Baker marked "for his eyes only - not his Council", continuing a culture of secrecy existing under McGlynn and hindering any moves towards commonly supported resolutions. Chapman later wrote, "in the matter of giving out information, I am ultra conservative".⁷³ While the Superior General regarded some of Kavanagh's report as eccentric, he nevertheless

⁶⁸ Connolly to Chapman 30.12.60, Chapman to Connolly 12.10.61, CAE, D/CA files. In 1958 O'Mahony was appointed Rector and Hugh Donnelly became Vice-Rector.

⁶⁹ Columban Society, "Constitutions of the Society of St Columban", 1963 edition, nos. 10-11, CAE, Constitution File.

⁷⁰ Rector's Report 1961, CAE, Seminary Files.

⁷¹ Connolly to Chapman 6.10.61, Connolly to Chapman 10.11.61 and 30.11.61, CAE, D/CA files.

⁷² Kavanagh to Chapman, Report 1962, CAE, D files.

⁷³ Chapman to Baker 1.6.64, CAE, D files.

appointed him Dean at Turramurra on 22 December 1961.⁷⁴ The design of the seminary building had separate staff and student spaces but Kavanagh lived in the student wing to more closely observe the students' rule-keeping.⁷⁵ Nor were seminary staff exempt from regulations of attire and punctuality. Kavanagh declared in his report that the "proper understanding and observance of discipline was to begin with the professors".

Chapman, in an apparent reversal of his ideas on interfering, wrote in 1966 to the new local Director, "In general, it appears to be best to let the staff alone as far as possible and have them rather than the Director's Council run the seminary".⁷⁶ Yet in the same letter he goes on to make suggestions on seminary food and brighter students, concluding with the observation that he would like to see Peter Ryan appointed to the staff. From 1967-72 Ryan carried the dean's role in a similar style to Kavanagh. Although within a year of his appointment a "hitherto unsuspected angle" came to light noting "friction arising between him and the students", he was left in his position.⁷⁷ In 1966, Chapman was appointed as a member of the four man Superior General's advisory Council in Ireland to replace a priest who had died, reinforcing a Society leadership skeptical of change under the then Superior General James Kielt. Francis Hunter was appointed the Regional Director 1965-1970. He had been recalled from Japan a few years earlier by Chapman and groomed for the position. Under his leadership the Region embarked on a large building expansion program but continued to view the church and its mission as separate from the world.

A major area where Columban students continued to be ill-prepared for modern missionary life was that of spirituality. In spite of the claim that the spiritual growth of the seminarians was regarded as crucial, until the 1970s the system of Spiritual Direction was formalistic, consisting largely of individual monthly visits to the Director and attendance at his weekly talk, plus regular preached retreats. The criteria for the appointment of a priest as the seminary's official Spiritual Director was vague and the chain of priests appointed over the years at times reduced the important

⁷⁴ Connolly to Chapman 23.1.62, CAE, D/CA files.

⁷⁵ **Appendix 3:** Seminary Class Schedules and Timetables 1963 and 1968.

⁷⁶ Chapman to Hunter 28.8.66, CAE, D/CA files.

⁷⁷ Hunter to Chapman 26.10.67, CAE, D/CA files. "1967 Seminary Report", CAE, Seminary files.

position to ridicule. The men were more likely than not to be out of touch with contemporary society, scrupulous, poor communicators, sick, verging on the eccentric, yet some were reappointed to similar positions after breakdowns.⁷⁸

Spiritual matters in the seminary suffered not only from the appointment of poor staff but also from a practice of denial when problems emerged and a poor theological base for the spirituality taught. Mental health worries had emerged among members of the Australian Region soon after its local foundation but Hayes denied their seriousness, denial becoming a common Society response to other problems over the decades.⁷⁹ Some seminary professors unable to incorporate new philosophical and theological concepts during the 1950-1960s became unbalanced, but they were moved away quietly and the matter never referred to again.⁸⁰ For students who had breakdowns connected with the spiritual disease of scrupulosity, part of the blame rested on the seminary split between theology studies and spiritual exercises which existed in spite of the academic study of Ascetical Theology that was supposed to bridge the two. Few new spiritual books entered the library to help give meaning to regular liturgical rituals and prescribed spiritual exercises.⁸¹

Human development issues were related to those of spiritual growth but here too Columban students were given a restrictive base for the human dimension of their lives as missionaries. Outside of the expectation that students should be gentlemen, until the 1970s student life was a lively masculine affair, friendly but with little place for emotion. The underlying assumption that students would find companionship within the priestly “club” was built upon a denial of affective needs. The happiest times for many students centred on daily group sports and on the long bush-walks most students took on their free days, the less active students tended to become book

⁷⁸ Chapman to Connolly 24.12.60; 10.1.61, CAE, D/CA files. The parish priest of Pymble telephoned and later wrote about his concern.

⁷⁹ Maguire to Leary 15.5.21; McLean to Maguire 10.4.21; Maguire to Blowick 22.2.22; Hayes to Dwyer 31.7.28, CAE, D/CA files. Maguire and Galvin both complained about their health and O’Shea had a breakdown. Tom Ryan became disorientated by the pace of moving around, McLean developed tuberculosis, and Mullany almost died. E. Kubler-Ross, **On Death and Dying**, (New York: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 34-43. Denial has been recognised as a stage of response to a problem.

⁸⁰ CAE, History files.

⁸¹ The spiritual works of the Irish Abbot Marmion were popular. Only with difficulty did students have the work of Eugene Cuskelly, **The Kindness of God**, (Cork, Ireland: Mercier Press, 1967) approved as a new spirituality study text.

lovers. The weekly Sunday night Literary and Debating Society (L&D) gatherings, a legacy of the Maynooth seminary system, provided a rare space for students to exercise a degree of creativity. Some recognition was given to the arts with a few students taking music lessons from visiting teachers.⁸² When student numbers were high, musicals and plays were performed and there were also sporadic in-house publishing and film-making.⁸³ Within these structured communal male activities students were expected to mature and cultivate the habit of clerical companionship. This camaraderie meant that many former students fondly remember the friendships of their seminary years.⁸⁴ Responsibilities and academic demands were minimal, leaving young men free to enjoy each other's company, although, older students who had worked for several years before entering the seminary often found the carefree atmosphere frivolous.

The struggle to form a new ideological position on priests and their mission role was to occupy Society deliberations for the rest of the century.⁸⁵ Students before the late 1960s remember most staff as kindly men who had cultivated the Columban spirit of family acceptance, doing their best to teach. They recall feeling free to visit them and discuss particular issues. Some regarded a course in English Writing by Michael Cryan, a follower of James Fowler, as one of the more useful studies for their missionary work as it helped them to later articulate for Columban supporters at home the radical changes going on in the churches overseas.⁸⁶ At another level, planning what to take, packing travel trunks and the farewell of young priests going overseas when the student body and priests lined the College driveway, were rituals of achievement and transition that heightened the awareness that students were destined

⁸² From the early 1960s people such as Mr. "Bertie" Birmingham and Mr. Maggs taught speech, Miss Dagma Roberts taught music and a parade of intermittent Spanish teachers passed through Turramurra.

⁸³ Students published a *Mission Year Book* in 1958, *Austrasia* during the mid 1960s, *From the Homefront* in 1971, a few esoteric sheets called *Columban Underground* in the early 1970s as in-house productions. *TFE* 8, 1971, p. 9. The students produced a movie on the missionary vocation called *The Restless Believer*.

⁸⁴ *TFE* 8, 1929, p. 10; 6, 1941, p. 9.

⁸⁵ Therese Woolfe, "Witness and Teacher – The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1968-1987: A Study of the Ideology of a Catholic Church Agency", PhD Thesis, Department of Government, Sydney University, 1988, p. 19. Columban priests were active in the Commission's ideological debates.

⁸⁶ J. McMorris, *The Warden of English: The Life of H. W. Fowler*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001).

to be missionaries.⁸⁷ Students from this period were reduced to learning their missionary skills when they began work overseas, or not at all.⁸⁸

Higher Expectations of Seminary Training

During the 1960s the expectations of seminary training rose from both inside and outside the church. Wittberg has argued that the need to reconcile personal growth of members with the objectives of the particular group brought about a change in the definition of what it meant to be a member of a specialist church group.⁸⁹ Within the Columban consciousness the existing values, human and religious, began to be reworked and expanded. As a consequence of changes in the aim and nature of Columban missionary work, Columban seminary training also had to change.

Within the Catholic Church, Vatican II, finishing in 1965, was pivotal declaring that as the “church is ever under reform” it had to address itself to the “joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties” of the age.⁹⁰ Its documents not only encouraged students to engage the modern world but gave them the often scripturally-based terminology with which to discuss it in sixteen tightly argued and referenced decrees, which ran to eight hundred pages in most English translations, augmenting existing prescribed seminary texts. A scattering of new theological books and journals on Vatican II themes were acquired for the seminary library and some of the professors hinting at the limitations of Latin texts, introduced other authors and began to relax the teaching requirements.⁹¹ With the arrival of Scripture professor Leo McMorrow and English professor Charles Flaherty, tentative steps towards higher standards of scholarship began, especially the learning of tertiary level research methods, to prepare students to dialogue with the modern world.⁹²

⁸⁷ Dries, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, p. 79. Kielt to Chapman 31.7.64, CAE, D/CA files.

⁸⁸ This is a common remark in the personal reflections of the **SSOA**.

⁸⁹ Wittberg, **Rise and Decline**, 1994, pp. 190, 243, 251, 256 and 263.

⁹⁰ “Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World”, W. Abbott, ed., **The Documents of Vatican II**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), no. 1. A. Hastings, ed., **Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After**, (London: SPCK, 1991).

⁹¹ Professor of Dogma, Tom Hanahoe purposely let himself be distracted onto other subjects such as history, and often only did part of a tract from the text books before passing onto the next so indicating what value he put on them. Likewise, English Professor Hugh Donnelly spent much of his time on interesting asides.

⁹² Denis O'Mara teaching Philosophy and Peter Wilkinson teaching Social Principles also arrived in 1967.

Students were also influenced by two of the major secular social movements of our time. In South America, Paulo Freire was articulating a new style of active learning in which the student was a “subject” rather than an object in the learning process. His theories resonated with Columban missionaries who had worked in Latin America.⁹³ From 1966 Turramurra students had contact with the newer educational ideas articulated by such theorists as Babin, Jean Piaget and James Fowler through regular Catholic catechetical pastoral work in schools that focused on faith growth issues.⁹⁴ This new educational thrust, which was in line with the efforts of Hally and Connolly in the 1950s to connect faith and life through the Cardijn model, resonated with students.

The second movement flowering in the 1960s was the “human potential movement” which focused attention on sexuality.⁹⁵ While women as mothers had received great respect within Society circles, the general attitude conveyed by superiors was “beware of women”, it being considered dangerous for a seminarian to be alone with a woman.⁹⁶ Emotion and affection were seen as foreign to priests and sex remained largely unexplored, a “no talk” area for students. Even the names of priests who left to marry disappeared from conversation. The image of a Moral Theology professor with chalk in one hand to draw the sketchy outline of the human sexual organs and an eraser in the other hand to quickly rub them out is remembered with mirth by many of his students. The human potential movement also brought a growing demand in secular society for public recognition of homosexuality as an orientation for many and a legitimate lifestyle for some. This issue arose in Columban seminaries decades before it entered public debates among Catholics as a few self admitted gay students arrived at Turramurra.⁹⁷ While a student’s sexual orientation was not a barrier to entering the Society, the practice of celibacy was required of all members and

⁹³ Freire, **Pedagogy of the Oppressed**, 1972; B. Smyth, **The Columbans in Chile**, (Chile: Columban Society, 1988), pp. 42 and 53-54. The Basic Christian Community ideal and practice was growing among people in the slums. C. Hally, “Paulo Freire: Personal Impressions”, E. Campion, ed., **Catholic Voices: Best Australian Catholic Writing**, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1996), pp. 37-42.

⁹⁴ Karl Nipkow, Friedrich Schweitzer and James Fowler eds., **Stages of Faith and Religious Development: Implications for Church, Education and Society**, (London: Centre for Research in Faith and Moral Development and SCM Press, 1991), p. vi.

⁹⁵ J. Saliba, **Christian Responses to the New Age Movement: A Critical Assessment**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999), pp. 1 and 141-142.

⁹⁶ Hayes was most particular that there be not the slightest hint of scandal. CAE, Hayes File. The rule was against “solus cum sola”. One spiritual advisor spoke against ever sitting alone with “Brigit” on the churchyard fence after Mass swapping holy cards.

accepting it was thought to remove sexual matters from public discussion. By the end of the 1960s, however, students were articulating the need for a spirituality that combined human development and spiritual growth, especially one that helped them integrate their sexuality, usually heterosexual, into their role as celibate priests.⁹⁸ While students may have acknowledged the courage of Columban members who left to marry, and recognized the good intentions of those who grew eccentric in their repression and pursuit of holiness, they increasingly rejected these options and sought alternative solutions.

Even seminarians destined to work as diocesan priests in their own culture recognized that seminaries had to change and some Australian diocesan students in Rome transformed this recognition into demands, but there was no open confrontation between the staff and the student body at Turrumurra.⁹⁹ While Columban superiors rightly judged that their students would not rebel, the new Rector from 1966 John McGrath seemed to be out of touch with the real feelings of many about change when he wrote that there is “no evidence of the ‘winds of change’ sweeping the students off balance”.¹⁰⁰ Popular but cautious, the changes he introduced were minor: catechetical work in high schools for the seminarians as a pastoral practicum and a few minor changes in discipline from 1967 onward.¹⁰¹

A shock wave swept through the Society in 1968 compelling its leaders to confront the need for change when in Ireland a public confrontation took place between Columban students and staff. It led conservative members to have the ailing Society co-founder John Blowick speak to students about the evils of disobedience to superiors.¹⁰² The

⁹⁷ In 1968 there were sixty eight students at Turrumurra and two or three told their class friends they were gay but not all students were aware of this.

⁹⁸ Donald Cozzens, **The Changing Face of the Priesthood: A Reflection on the Priest's Crisis of Soul**, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), p. 42-43. Cozzens wrote on post Vatican II seminarians in the USA including detailed work on issues of celibacy, intimacy and sexual orientation.

⁹⁹ Australian diocesan seminarians in Rome led a protest by students at Propaganda College demanding more appropriate training. Strong, **Jesuit Culture**, 1996, flagged changes in Jesuit training in the late 1960s as did Walsh, **Manly**, 1998, pp. 277-9. A former student at Manly, Thomas Keneally, publicly parodied St Patrick's College Manly and its staff in his novel “The Place at Whitton”.

¹⁰⁰ “Seminary Report 1966”, CAE, Seminary files.

¹⁰¹ “Decree on Priestly Formation”, Abbott, **Vatican II**, no. 11, p. 448. Students had the words of Vatican II to support them ... “the rules of discipline should be applied ... so that they [seminarians] can gradually learn to govern themselves, to make wise use of their freedom, to act on their own initiative and energetically”.

¹⁰² Blowick to Dalgan Seminarians in Chapman to Hunter 9.5.68, CAE, D/CA file.

entire ordination class in Ireland was "clipped" (delayed) with the result that there were no Columban ordinations during the 50th anniversary year. At Turrumurra, however, students kept their own counsel and their ordination was not delayed.¹⁰³ Taking their studies seriously Columban students in Australia began to identify issues they believed needed to be addressed. Some liberalisation of discipline took place under the vice-Rector Baker during McGrath's sabbatical leave in 1969 but the Rector's Report stated, "Our students would like to see the College rules termed 'guidelines' which they generally regard as fairly flexible and open to personal variations".¹⁰⁴ While most students did not agree with the traditional seminary training, it could be argued that they helped towards a smooth transition to a new missionary training by cooperation and working through existing channels. With 895 priests and 305 students worldwide the Society was at its peak but the Turrumurra ordination class of 1968 was the last of its kind. No future intake would be prepared to stay silent about the need for change. Even so, the decisions of superiors were the crucial ones.

Seminary staff in Ireland, the USA and Australia, aware of the imminent breakdown in the traditional Columban system, successfully lobbied for an official Society Educational Conference. Seminary representatives met at Bristol, USA, July 1969 and sent their recommendations to the Superior General. But he decided that major issues be left to the deliberation of the Society's General Chapter which had already been brought forward to 1970 because of the general need to address the Society's direction post-Vatican II.¹⁰⁵ The First Australian Regional Convention was held October 6-17th 1969 to prepare for the Chapter and for the first time in the Region representative members and a student delegate, Noel Connolly, joined superiors to formally discuss Columban affairs. However, the Region was heavy with members who had opted to leave work in the mission areas for health and other reasons but were rarely supportive of Society change. Whether they had assumed important mission support roles in the home Region or taken priestly assignments until they retired, all members retained

¹⁰³ There has to be a serious violation of faith or morals before an ordained person can be dismissed under the laws of the Catholic Church.

¹⁰⁴ "Rector's Report 1969", CAE, Seminary files. The "1967 Seminary Report" had examples of minor changes concerning timetables, student attire and liturgical practices.

their right to vote.¹⁰⁶ Not surprisingly, therefore, the recommendations of the Bristol meeting were not enthusiastically received although the Convention did clarify one of the seminary's problems noting that the Constitutions gave immediate administrative power to Rectors while recognising only the supervisory role of the Regional Director.¹⁰⁷

But the thinking of some of the Columban staff was slow to change. In 1970 McGrath expressed his concern "about the attitude of some students to authority ... [and] the spirit of piety in the seminary is not what it used to be."¹⁰⁸ A reply from the Society's new Central Administration stated that the evangelical norms as regards obedience and patterns of prayer life are changing, and this was most obvious among men in the mission countries. The Rector, it seemed, did not believe the Region's vocational advertising.

Young people, the world over are in revolt - they want to set the world on fire - to tear down the establishment - to build a better world. CHRIST TOO came to cast fire upon the earth - to tear up - to knock down - to build anew. TODAY PRIESTS in Christ's name carry on the same revolution.¹⁰⁹

The fact that many students from this period believe that their families, home church communities and fellow students did more than their seminary training to foster their growth as human beings and to cultivate the skills they need as missionaries is indicative of the limitations of Columban seminary training.¹¹⁰ While the seminary trained students to be priests, the creativity and the management and relationship skills that some young Columban priests later displayed reflected their family background rather than seminary training, including their ability to independently judge it. Home contact had been retained during their seminary years as students had two holiday periods in winter and summer, a time regarded as a period of relief back in the "real

¹⁰⁵ J. McGlade, "Commission on Student Formation", Pre-Chapter Secretariat 24.4.70, CAE, Chapter File. John McGrath attended Bristol as Rector of Turramurra as well as William Moran, Christopher Baker and Dennis Curran from the staff, CAE, Seminary File.

¹⁰⁶ "Personnel Directories", CAE, Personnel File. Since the 1940s, more than a third of members in the Australian Region has regularly been engaged in work outside of Columban administration, promotion, the seminary and works directly related to furthering the enterprise. "Non-Columban work" occupied 16 out of 34 members in 1950, 15 out of 46 in 1960, and 21 out of 54 in 1969. Seminary staff and retirement accounted for most of the rising absolute numbers in the Region.

¹⁰⁷ Hunter to Kiehl 27.10.69, CAE, D/CA files.

¹⁰⁸ O'Mahony to McGrath 14.11.70; Purcell to McGrath 23.3.71, CAE, Seminary files.

¹⁰⁹ TFE 5, 1970, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ This opinion had substantial support in the SSOA both by frequency and the strength of the statements.

world". After WWII students had permission to work during holidays, and most did, gathering pocket money as well as experience. Apart from family and home community, friendships formed among the students gathered in relative isolation, particularly those from the same entrance year, helped forge lasting commitment to "looking after each other". Students visited the homes of fellow students during holidays and got to know each other's family background, reinforcing mutual bonds. When confreres later went overseas they learnt on the job and from each other, defending each other even when mistakes were made.

Conclusion

With the benefit of hindsight it would be easy to paint a bleak picture of Columban seminary training in Australia 1926-1970. However, the seminary supplied a steady stream of young Columban priests for missionary work providing training in accord with detailed church law requirements. Society seminaries were the first in Australia to provide an avenue for a missionary priest with a diocesan character. Building upon the ideals of the missionary vocation and the value of membership in the Society developed in the seminary, many went on to become innovative and effective missionaries. Combined with the informal learning coming from homes, families and communities, the camaraderie built up among students kept them loyal to each other as they lived out their missionary vocation.

However, until the late 1960s, the Spiritual, Philosophy and Theology years that made up Columban seminary training in Australia provided a narrow gateway to those wishing to enter the Society's missionary enterprise. Even though it fulfilled Canon Law requirements, it was defective at the academic, missionary, spiritual and human levels. Those who passed through it successfully ignored these deficiencies concentrating instead on the mission journey that lay ahead. Those who kept faithfully to the disciplined practices they had been taught rarely seemed to "move from practicing scales to playing music" as one SSOA respondent put it. The ignorance of some Columban leaders about new seminary and missionary training was culpable, even according to the standards of the time. The deliberate unwillingness of leadership in the Australian Region to adapt local training to Australian and missionary needs

1926-1969 has been judged by many Columban members as reprehensible and an ideological defense of the Columban missionary as purely an expatriate priest. Frustrated efforts at change exemplified the difficulty that one group of professional Catholic Church personnel had in the process of growing out of traditional ideologies and into the spirit of Vatican II.

Chapter 6: The Personal Cost: Inadequacies in the Columban Seminary Training Revealed in the Lives of Society Members Working Overseas.

This chapter argues that inadequacies in the diocesan style of seminary as implemented in the Australian Columban training showed up in the lives of Society members working overseas. The cumulative physical, mental and spiritual anguish, and resultant doubt that led to internal divisions within the Society experienced by Columban priests working overseas developed for some into what cultural anthropologists call “culture shock”. The condition arising when a person feels overwhelmed by an unknown cultural situation was explored as a form of sickness from the early twentieth century in the light of developments in psychology and cultural anthropology. The missiologist Louis Luzbetak described it as “a reaction that is blind and unreasoned, a reaction that is a subconscious flight or escape from a culturally disagreeable environment.”¹ Missionaries with this malady might be proud of the fact that they had refused to learn how to use chop-sticks and, if they were Australian, might keep a jar of Vegemite on their dining table at all times.

The problems associated with living and working in another culture were not unique to missionaries. Development aid workers and soldiers in peace-keeping missions have had to learn both to be skilled operators and care for their total health in situations of cross-cultural pressure.² While the dangers of culture shock were common to people of many professions, however attitudes cultivated in the Columban seminary preparation up until the 1970s exacerbated the problem resulting in a high personal cost for many members. In addition, as mission aims and methods in creating self confident and socially relevant indigenous churches changed from the 1950s, the expectations put on missionaries increased but students had not learnt how to respond to these changing expectations. Missiologist Donal Dorr wrote that changed demands left many missionaries either “floundering like stranded whales” on shores they had charged upon too rapidly, or like “ageing commandos living on the glories of the past”.³ Overseas Columban experience confirmed that new seminary training was needed not

¹ L. Luzbetak, **The Church and Cultures: An Applied Anthropology for the Religious Worker**, (Techny, ILL: Divine Word Publications, 1963, revised, 1988), p. 97.

² AusAid [AIDAB] and Department of Foreign Affairs, Commonwealth Government, Canberra. Incidents of brutality, sexual exploitation and culturally insensitive entertainment have often been reported in the Australian press about peace-keeping troops in East Timor and Bougainville.

only to catch up with past demands of cross missionary activity but to deal positively with new demands and changing expectations about individual fulfillment.

Physical Suffering and Mental Anguish

In his dramatic style, Bishop Muldoon said to the six young deacons assisting him in the consecration ceremony of the Turrumurra seminary chapel in 1963, "One of you will be a martyr". He based his comment on figures showing that between 1920-60 the average age of death for Columban priests was in the mid-forties, from physical hardship rather than actual martyrdom. The Society had sent its members to China in good health but the realities of new climatic conditions for people raised in temperate climates and often experiencing less than adequate amenities, took their toll. The geographical position of the Hanyang mission in the disease-prone river lowlands of China was unhealthy, and extreme conditions were later experienced as the Society took on missions in the Philippines, Korea, Burma, Fiji and Latin America. The new locations created their own problems for the Society, often not providing easier living conditions or more readily available medical facilities which was one of the Society's criteria used when accepting these new commitments.

By the Society Constitutions members were expected to take reasonable precautions to safeguard their health and seek help when sick. But because of attitudes inculcated in the seminary, a common response adopted in the first few decades by some Columban leaders and members was that of denial and the spiritualisation of suffering as "white martyrdom".⁴ In a piety of suffering, believers join their sufferings to those of Jesus on the Cross as an act of reparation to God for the sins of humanity. Australian Columban Sister Agnes wrote from hospital in Shanghai that maybe "patient endurance of sickness is the way China will be converted?"⁵ Edward Galvin as superior in China compounded the problem by leading a harsh regime, admitting that his priests were overworked but encouraging them not to object.⁶ Australian Columban McGoldrick

³ D. Dorr, **Mission in Today's World**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), p. 214.

⁴ **TFE**, 11, 1924, p. 7.

⁵ Sister Agnes to Hayes, 1928, **CAE**, D File.

⁶ **TFE** 10, 1922, p. 9; M. O'Neill, **CI** January and March 1994; D. Fitzgerald, **CI** November 1997. Columban historian Michael O'Neill contrasts the greater demands Galvin made on his priests compared with Columban Bishop Cleary in another diocese in China (which also had a better climate). After Dan

supported Galvin's opposition to a proposal to grant members home-leave every seven years as preventive medicine: "Some of our men are like a lot of schoolboys, always looking for holidays, and I think it makes us look ridiculous ... After all, hadn't Father Tim Harris, directing us during our Spiritual Year, enjoined on us that we were 'to take things hard?'"⁷ The Superior General sympathised with these harsh ways writing "... we really have become a bit of a joke out here [China 1928] with the number of men we always have in hospital. They don't go there till they are real cases, but we have three or four beds to ourselves all the time."⁸ Society financial difficulties influenced the Superior General's stance so that in 1925 he had written that the Society cannot have priests travel home for the reason of ill health as "there was no money, and what is more, in the past missionaries coped".⁹ Illness also took a toll on the healthy as they spent time looking after sick companions.

All Columban members suffered some degree of trauma as they experienced banditry, armed civil strife, revolutions and war at close quarters, the death of companions from sickness or violence while others were interned or expelled.¹⁰ A Columban priest wrote when two confreres were prisoners of the Sixth Chinese army, "I was moved to pray for the grace of martyrdom".¹¹ In some way the seminary had prepared future missionaries for suffering and the prospect of death by stories about missionary martyrs. When Timothy Leonard was killed by bandits in 1929 his death notice in the Regional magazine conveyed the Columban ethos. "A Missionary Society cannot mourn for its members who die on the field, 'killed in action'... and make up what is

Fitzgerald told Galvin of his workload the bishop said: "Dan, what good will thinking do. Like a good man, put St Columban in front of you and St Patrick behind you, put your head down and plod away."

⁷ McGoldrick to Hayes, September 1925, CAE, China file. TFE, 2, 1944, p. 6. The need for austerity (also wartime and post-depression shortages) was exemplified by this Chinese poem put in the Regional magazine, "Use it up, Wear it out, Make it do, Or do without."

⁸ O'Dwyer to Hayes 19.11.28, CAE, D/CA files.

⁹ Superior General, "General Directive", November 1925; and MacAlindon to McGlynn 20.5.53, CAE, D/CA files. In 1924 Lawrence Forrestal was the first of many Columban priests sent to Australia to recuperate from lung problems. In 1938 Peter Gabriel was the first Columban from Australia dying of lung and other complications after seven years in China.

¹⁰ M. F. O'Collins, "Reminiscences", CAE, O'Collins File. Hanyang was a strategic industrial port city in central China. Outside, bandits roamed the country extracting "protection" money. Of 1927 O'Collins wrote, "a year was of alarms, shots in the night, sleeping with one eye open ready to run at a moment's notice."

¹¹ W. Barrett, *The Red Lacquered Gate*, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 252; T. Leahy, *Beyond Tomorrow*, (Navan, Ireland: Dalgan Park, 1968); TFE 7, 1922, p.5-6.

wanting in the sufferings of Christ".¹² Some whose enthusiasm had been blunted by overseas experiences decided not to return to mission areas, moving permanently to Columban "home" Region jobs or a home diocese. Even in the question of joining a diocese, however, a Columban view of suffering led some members to vacillate, reluctant to leave the Society thinking it might be personal weakness or disloyalty.¹³

Bit by bit, preventative and curative measures were introduced into the Society but they were hard won in a Society whose seminary training had spiritualised suffering and encouraged denial. After deliberations at the 1947 General Chapter, the Society gradually set up central houses in most of the countries where it took up work, and regular periods of home leave were allowed.¹⁴ Sport, part of the Columban culture as encouraged in the seminary, functioned as a preventative medicine but opportunities and familiar sports were not always available in mission areas, and the Australian seminary had not made students familiar with soccer, an almost universal game. Hurling balls were regularly sent to the young Irish priests studying language in Hanyang. Bush walking, tennis and, in later decades, golf were sometimes available before "cardio-vascular" for joggers became a common phrase among wealthy people in mission areas. Particularities reigned, so a New Zealand member built a tennis court in the grounds of his Japanese parish to be followed by an Irish pastor who turned it into a potato patch.

Mental Anguish

Throughout the Society's history Columban members were deeply affected by the plight of the people amongst whom they worked. They witnessed the effects of natural

¹² Leonard to Hayes 25.7.29, CAE, China File. His brother Doctor William Leonard at Manly Seminary wrote, "The fall of a brother on the frontiers of the Church militant has been a big grace for me."

¹³ CAE, D/CA File. D. Gerald Tiernan was one example with superiors commenting, "It seems he will never leave the Society". He did leave to become a most effective and respected pastor in the Rockhampton diocese.

¹⁴ Columban Society, "1947 General Chapter", Policy no. 12. Even the French missionaries who had taught austere ways to Galvin eventually adopted the practice. McGlynn to MacAlindon 10.3.53 and Chapman to Connolly 22.1.54 CAE, D/CA files. After WWII the Society sent some sick members for medical treatment to Australia. Michael McConnell and Patrick Sheehy among others were Columban patients at the TB hospital in Killara run by the Marist Missionary Sisters (SMSM) and Australian government grants were available to victims. E. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement: A Historical Survey 1930-1980**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990), pp. 159-172. L. Strahan, **Australia's China - Changing perspectives from the 1930s to the 1990s** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 92-93.

disasters and social problems, often felt helpless to change things and sometimes reacted in negative ways. Recurring floods, famines and disease, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes and ecological collapse, limited education facilities and medical care, rapid urbanisation and migration, corruption and injustice, attitudes about pushing aside the weak, handicapped and addicted were common sources of suffering for the people in China and other mission areas.¹⁵ Columban priests came from the European tradition of controlled environments whereas many people in mission lands carried cultural images of nature as fickle and were seen to act cruelly towards both people with addictions and handicaps, and towards animals.¹⁶

The seminary had not prepared Columban students to face social problems in a proactive methodical way and to remain personally balanced while doing so. As missionaries they reacted in a range of ways from seeming despair to anger, from passivity to violence, from frenetic activity to flight.¹⁷ Some experienced “poverty fatigue” and were tempted to become fatalistic. Others fell into escapism as they tried to resolve their difficulties with alcohol, or ignored the people's suffering with spiritual cliches such as “it is God's will”. Strange ways seemed repugnant to many and even “the smell” of China was a powerful memory expressed by one missionary assigned to teach in the Columban seminary.¹⁸

The Columban experience of being the foreigner or the outsider living in mission areas, suffering curiosity, outright ridicule and sometimes betrayal was a shock that many handled badly. Non-Catholic locals sometimes saw the priests as they pictured the colonial, the one clad in the white suit and pith helmet living in splendid compounds while somehow exploiting the local people and land. A priest might be called “Joe” as locals would an American soldier and hassled for a handout. In the first

¹⁵ In 1915 Galvin witnessed floods with 100,000 families destitute and he sent 250 letters in a month to friends to beg relief money. Medicines were sent from Australia in the 1920s for clinics - quinine, sulphur, emetine and liver extract. In the floods of 1931 millions died and refugees were housed in the grounds of the Columban headquarters and schools, CAE, China File. Columban members responded to havoc wrought by the eruption of Mt Pinatubo in the Philippines, CI, September 1991.

¹⁶ CAE, History File. A Columban who worked in South Korea wrote that even the benign teachings of Buddhism towards all living things could seem irrelevant: "His family just stood there and laughed as the youngster tried to push the rock down the pup's throat".

¹⁷ McCaslin, *Spirituality*, 1986, p. 133. McGoldrick wrote from China in the 1920s that while Columban missionaries could point to the need to address the causes of the people's suffering, doing so was beyond them.

decade in China the Papal Apostolic Delegate received false accusations from Hanyang Catholics about Columban priests visiting houses of “ill-repute”.¹⁹ That the charges proved to be trumped up raised questions about the trustworthiness of at least part of the flock who tried to use its church association to gain a local political advantage. Feelings of being the outsider were accentuated by being cut off from family and friends at home, particularly being absent when deaths took place in their family, yet not free to travel home.²⁰

When war was declared in Europe in September 1939 its effects flowed on to European colonies, and the situation became more complicated when war was declared in the Pacific in December 1941. The Society enterprise overseas was immediately disrupted with some members interned or killed. The assignment of new priests was delayed, consigning them to an uncertain future and forcing many of them to “look for a job” in a diocese at home or in the armed forces.²¹ Society aims and seminary training had led members to expect that their work overseas would replicate that in the stable diocesan parish structures they had known from their home churches but this was no longer the case.

After the Communist takeover in 1949, restrictions on missionaries tightened all over China. Bishop Galvin and others were called before people’s courts on trumped up charges, constantly pressed to confess and were humiliated. When it happened, O’Reilly noted that “Our accusers, almost without exception, had been helped in some notable way by the Church.”²² As a seventy year old man Galvin was expelled across

¹⁸ Leo Donnelly, comment, June, 2000.

¹⁹ CAE, China file.

²⁰ Chapman to Connolly 29.12.61, CAE, D/CA files. Chapman refused to allow Harold Watters to go from Australia to his dying mother in Ireland in 1961. Campion to All Directors 9.5.72, CAE, D/CA files. A Society policy on Compassionate Leave was formalised in 1972 so men went home taking a portion of holiday due.

²¹ James Kennedy, Francis Hunter, William Holmes became chaplains in WWII. Members from the Region ordained in the USA and some from the Werribee days spent several years in “home jobs”, and members on their way to China including John Vaughan and James Norris, and Bernard Hawke and Leo Baker going to Korea were transferred to Japan.

²² L. O’Reilly, **The Laughter and the Weeping**, (Dublin: Columba Press, 1991), p. 143; B. Smyth, ed., **...But Not Conquered**, (Dublin: Browne and Nolan Limited, 1958).

the Hong Kong border in September 1952 as a criminal, followed closely by Bishop Cleary (photograph below).²³



Bishop Patrick Cleary expelled from China across the Hong Kong boarder in 1952

It was a low level of persecution and few missionaries became martyrs as some had hoped, but they were humiliated and traumatised by their experiences. The Korean War 1950-53 saw six Columban deaths and the capture of others, Australian Philip Crosbie being one of those taken north. After his release three years later he said, “mentally I am a bankrupt”.²⁴

²³ O'Reilly, **The Laughter and the Weeping**, 1991, pp. 20-27. By 13 May 1954, the last Columban was expelled from China under the new Communist power whereas there had been 150 Society members in 1949. The Chinese Communist system of "Confessions" demanded that prisoners "cleanse their minds of imperialistic poisons", and write down their crimes in the minutest detail. When eventually a prisoner was taken at gunpoint to a makeshift court for trial, some further fault would be found and the process would begin all over again as the prisoner was "not being completely honest".

²⁴ **TFE** 8, 1953, p. 2; P. Crosbie, **Pencilling Prisoner**, (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1960). MacAlindon to McGlynn 17.12.53, **CAE**, D/CA files. Crosbie's book was edited by Denis Lyons.

Feelings of loss were repeated in subsequent decades. In 1966 the Socialist Burmese government withdrew resident visas from foreign missionaries who had not been in the country when Independence was declared in 1947. It confiscated the Catholic schools and hospitals which many missionaries had worked to build. In later years Columban priests working to promote social justice were accused by local Catholics of involving them in situations of tension and then using their foreign connections to walk away from the danger.²⁵ The cumulative effects of many incidents created a sense of anguish that went beyond mere disruption of normal missionary activity, and individual responses were compounded by Society responses that also reflected attitudes inculcated in the seminary. Traumatized members were commonly treated with spiritual axioms about the goodness of suffering, as Galvin had done, and then shuffled off to new appointments. Some were assigned to work within the Columban seminary system, further compounding the situation of students having traumatized men as their mentors.

Missionary Skills

The feeling of being the outsider was compounded by the lack of foreign language skills. The issue of supplying suitable study facilities and allowing sufficient time for young priests newly arrived in the missions to learn the local language was the subject of many policy debates and disputes between superiors, bishops and members. Many of them saw language proficiency as of secondary importance to quickly “getting into the field” to administer the sacraments. The Society made stop-start efforts into the late 1960s when introduction of the vernacular into the Roman liturgy helped force the issue of providing more professional facilities.²⁶ The difficulties of doing seminary studies in Latin combined with sporadic efforts to teach specific languages had turned some members against language studies. Men deficient in this area felt strain and frustration as they did not have the machinery to work in or appreciate another culture, let alone live joyfully within it.

²⁵ Arms to Howard 2.4.82, CAE, D/CA files.

²⁶ J. Wanaurny, *Central Administration Bulletin (CAB)* no. 5. The Society set up some language schools. Regional members Brian Gore worked at this in the Philippines and David Arms in Fiji and

When confronted with mission situations, many Society members grew restless with the traditional seminary definition of their priestly and missionary roles, experimenting with new ways of evangelisation that took social and cultural issues more seriously. They had progressed from an emphasis on relief efforts in the 1920s to development projects in the 1950s, some later sympathising with armed revolutionary struggles. Despite the recommendation of the Superior General prior to the 1950s, the Australian Columban seminaries had taught students few skills in analysing and responding to social and cultural situations. The skills priests did have were learnt in their home church communities or gleaned from personal experience and confreres, especially from people and leaders in the churches they served overseas.²⁷ Young priests in the missions were expected to keep their ears and eyes open but their mouths shut as they learnt from senior Columban priests. But those still living exclusively out of their seminary training were quickly judged by young priests as having little to teach in spite of decades of experience.

A parallel and second major issue in mission work was the continued promotion of a culturally European style church. The Apostolic Delegate in China had promoted the use of local architecture in church building in the 1920s but the creation of culturally relevant faith expression began to more consciously challenge Columban members in other parts of Asia, Fiji and South America from the 1950s. Although cultural issues did not capture the same attention as social issues did in the Society, they also demanded better seminary preparation to equip members to develop and foster proactive Columban mission policies.

The Relativising Effects of Missionary Experience and Columban Divisions

Particularly important was that missionary experience had a relativising effect on Columban members as professional practitioners of religion. They began to realise that the Christian message was not widely valued in many lands, often with deep local traditions. While some welcomed the pluralism, it led others to crusade against

Pakistan. Members benefited from the language schools of the Franciscans and several Protestant groups in Asia, and Maryknoll in South America.

²⁷ This was particularly so in Latin America but also in the South Korea and the Philippines where the church was facing up to dictatorships backed by Security State capitalism.

anything that appeared to question the absoluteness of their “Catholic truth”. The seminary had taught them certainty through a systematic theology that was timeless and capable of answering all questions, but such Christian doctrines and moral codes were relativised as members witnessed new ways of relating within families, between the sexes and in society. At the church level, Columban priests had to cope with the fact that Christian “faith and order” was Western in form and not as a-cultural as they had supposed. At a deeper level, most missionaries came to realise that people in mission countries had had spiritual experiences of God before Christian missionaries arrived. This relativised the exclusivity of their message and called for religious pluralism. Even at the level of social justice work, church teaching was relativised, often judged to be Western in its values and an ineffective instrument to bring about the rapid changes needed in a modernising world. Communist governments and guerillas also claimed the right to stand for the poor not only in China but also in Korea, the Philippines, Burma, and Latin America.²⁸

Some Columban priests lost their trust in the goodness of others and the world and sought to find something or someone to blame for the frustrations of missionary work, be it evil individuals, societies or economic systems.²⁹ Not able to deal with the challenges of pluralism and relativism, at least partially because of rigid seminary ways of thinking, some even turned on their fellow missionaries condemning their lack of enthusiasm for the old ways and blaming their lack of prayer and penance as the cause.

Divisions among Columban members emerged over two issues in particular, how to integrate Gospel preaching with socio-economic work as a new articulation of evangelisation, and helping to create culturally relevant local churches. Both issues lessened the emphasis on a missionary priest’s sacramental role, the main emphasis in Columban student training, but the problem was deeper. A seminary training emphasizing obedience to a Superior had not prepared members for the possibility that

²⁸ Hally, “Chronology”, p. 7. CAE, Seminary File.

²⁹ From the late 1920s, the Regional magazine editorials variously named the cause of problems to the “evils of human nature”, “bad civic leaders”, “the flooding of China’s rivers”, “bandits”, “materialism” and “Communism”. From the 1960s onwards, evils named included the “lack of justice”, “military dictatorships”, “structural hunger and poverty”, and “the power of multi-nationals”. One or other issue became a fixation for some Columban individuals and groups.

divisions could arise over Columban policy issues, leaving them untrained in debating differences and negotiating resolutions. Many members in the mission area had grown to reject a definition of obedience equating obedience to a superior as obedience to God and wanted rational reasons for obeying as part of a new definition. The divisions were serious enough for the Superior General not to send younger priests to South America around 1970 because of the perceived dangers to their remaining as priests.³⁰ Although substantial numbers of missionaries in South America did leave the priesthood the fact that it was not only the recently ordained, indicates that deeper problems existed.³¹ In the Asian missions, Columban members who put time and effort into learning to appreciate the local culture were often regarded by confreres as neglecting the sacramental work they should be doing as priests as “a matter of conscience”. Seminary training that denied the possibility that such differences could emerge left members without the skills necessary to deal with such divisive disputes.

Conclusion

By the 1960s, several major problems in relation to both missionary effectiveness and personal well-being had been officially articulated.³² These were problems that anthropologists identify as forms of culture shock: trauma suffered in harsh physical conditions and warfare; cultural relativisation of spiritual and moral positions; unhealthy ways of dealing with mission demands; and the need to respond positively to the suffering people in lands with limited resources. Such problems showed the need for professional missionary training if Columban members were to be effective and avoid becoming victims of their vocation. Columban members overseas added their voice to a call for better seminary training to prepare students to help face the problems identified in the field and to correct attitudes taught in the Seminary that had compounded the problems.

³⁰ “Peru 1976, Regional Director’s Report to the Chapter”, CAE, Chapter files. The Report contains a lengthy section on divisions among Columban members and in the local church,

³¹ B. Cleary, “ANZ Regional Report to Chapter 1976”, CAE, Chapter files.

³² Chile Group, “Schema of Reform for Seminary Training”, *Viewpoint* June and August 1969.

Chapter 7: Modern Missionaries: Developing New Columban Seminary Programs and Mission Institutes from 1970 Onwards

In 1970 the Columban Society set out to develop a new style of seminary-based training programs at Turrumurra. This chapter will argue that these new programs showed Society willingness to address past problems by helping missionaries to be effective and happy people rather than victims of their vocation. The programs, which for the first time were open to non-Columban participants, became part of an ecumenical consortium that broadened their impact beyond Catholic circles, making a major contribution to the theory and practice of mission among Australian Catholics.

These changes were not inevitable. They had to be fought for and in the process significant ideological divisions would emerge. A new Regional leadership, open to the voices of experienced Columban priests and students alike, took the decision to change and gathered staff to implement the decision. Since there was no blueprint, a systematic process of experimentation and review was to follow. This initiative went well beyond a reaction to the already identified deficiencies in the existing seminary training. Rather it should be understood as a proactive creative process involving successive clusters of seminary staff members who were encouraged by the missionary spirit of Vatican II. Commenting on the “uncritical growth” in Australian seminaries in the two decades before Vatican II, Kevin Livingston claimed that a lack of research hampered reform.¹ This thesis has explored that period from a Columban perspective to show that reform was deliberately retarded. However, this chapter will argue that Columban seminary reforms from 1970 onwards were planned and based on research undertaken through a process of ongoing trial and review.

Vision

The major change in Columban seminary life can be characterised as the replacement of a program designed to train Catholic priests who chose to work in mission countries with one that aimed to form Columban missionaries who combined their missionary calling with their priestly status. “Formation of participants” rather than “training of

¹ K. Livingston, *The Emergence of an Australian Catholic Priesthood 1883-1915*, (Manly, NSW: Catholic Theological Faculty of Sydney, 1977), p. 255.

students” became the operative phrase as responsibilities of staff and students were renegotiated and shared. As a result, Turrumurra moved from being a training centre in the diocesan seminary model to become a formation centre for missionary personnel, inviting participants from outside of the Columban membership to participate in its programs. A new identity was moulded that allowed students to retain a sense of continuity with the past Society enterprise while preparing them to create a relevant future for Columban missions. Although other Catholic missionary groups faced a similar task, their seminary initiatives were taken outside of Australia.²

New Columban seminary programs in Australia were forged within what Cyril Hally articulated in 1975 as a new communal Columban identity based on a shared search in faith to put new shape on mission.³ This research confirmed the usefulness of Wittberg’s sociological concept of “frame realignment” to help interpret the Society’s changing identity as the context for seminary developments.⁴ A new ideological base was accepted at the 1976 Society General Chapter to give the Society a new identity based on a set of interlinked propositions about missionary work, both setting it apart from other church groups and promoting its internal unity.⁵ The Society retained its broad aim of overseas missionary work but changed its objectives and the thinking behind the work. The historical Columban link with the “pilgrimage” image of mission as used by the Society founders to be “wanderers for Christ” (*peregrinari pro Christo*) was kept but transformed. Members were now called to consciously cross boundaries of culture and religious experience as “agents of cross-cultural mission” in addition to geographical boundaries that separated faith and non-faith.⁶

² J. Hannigan, “Social Movement Theory and the Sociology of Religion: Towards a New Synthesis”, *Social Analysis*, 52, 4 (1991), pp. 311-331; “Formation in the Asia-Pacific area”, *Verbum SVD*, 38, (1997). Some Australian Protestant churches, especially evangelical groups, had run short training courses from the late nineteenth century for missionaries. Brotchie, “CIM”, pp. 96-97. The CIM ran short courses in the Chinese language and geography, and management skills. The tradition of short courses continued but tended to focus on pragmatic strategies for effective cross-cultural communications showing less concern for student transformation than was built into Columban programs post 1970. W. Taylor, ed., *Internationalising Missionary Training 1990: A Global Perspective*, (Flemington, NSW: Bookhouse, 1991), p. 47; Michael Griffiths *Tinker, Tailor, Missionary?*, (England: Inter Varsity Press, 1992).

³ C. Hally, “The Continuing Quest for Identity” 24 June 1975, CAE, Seminary File.

⁴ P. Wittberg, *The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective*, (Albany, USA: University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 13-31, 190, 243, 251 and 256.

⁵ M. Bloch, “Ideology”, pp. 293-294, and R. Byron, “Identity”, A. Barnard and J. Spencer, *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, (London: Routledge, 1996) p. 292.

⁶ D. Wodarz, Post Chapter Paper, 1978, CAE, Seminary File; H. McMahon, *CI* December 1984 and March 1986; “Inculturation Supplement”, *CI* September 1985; S. Dwan, *CI* April 1988; *TFE* 10, 1997, p. 1; Larry Nemer’s address at the Catholic Mission Conference in Sydney 1997.

Not all Columban members shared the new vision and there were divisions both at home and abroad. Some mission area voices were strong and particular in their opinions on some aspects of seminary reform, but often divided over the missionary's role in connecting social and cultural issues with evangelisation, the appropriate balance between sacramental and evangelical activities.⁷ Before 1970, few of the Australian seminary staff had spent much time in mission situations, nor had they been given opportunity to visit mission areas in a learning capacity to appreciate the new mission demands and ascertain the seminary training needed to prepare them.⁸ A substantial block of retired and members on the fringe of the Region's missionary focused work voted for representatives to Regional Councils and Society meetings who were against changes in Columban aims and seminary practice. Some claimed authority for their stance in being the Society's senior and even "first class missionaries" as veterans of China. Not all did so and one of them, Roger Doherty, liked to rib his contemporaries by referring to "we old China hands" and reduced pretentious claims to a joke by saying he had spent two years in China, "Arrived in December. Left in January."

The stage was set for contention when the incoming Regional Director Charlie O'Mahony, a pivotal figure in reforming the Turrumurra seminary, listened to the calls for change and resisted opposing voices. Following the first ever opinion-poll of Columban members early in 1970, O'Mahony, who had been sacked as seminary Rector ten years earlier, was appointed by the Superior General as the Australian Regional Director.⁹ It was a transition period for the Society when the original charism (specialty) of the Columban founders was being institutionalised, a normal process following their ageing and deaths, but carrying the danger of freezing the charism in past forms. O'Mahony avoided this danger, backing new trends at Turrumurra and

⁷ Chile Group, "Schema of Reform for Seminary Training", *Viewpoint* June and August 1969.

⁸ "1967 Rector's Report" and O'Mahony to Kielt 17.4.70, CAE, Seminary and D/CA files. When staff did begin going overseas in 1969 it was primarily as experts to conduct up-dating programs rather than as learners.

⁹ O'Mahony served in practically every capacity in the Region and jokingly says he could well be called "Mr Columban". He was followed as Director by Bernard Cleary (1976-1982), Reginald Howard (1982-1986), Michael Gormly (1986-1990), William Moran (1990-1994), Brian Gore (1994-2000) and Trevor Trotter (2000<). During conversation, Howard judged himself and most Directors in this period to be administrators rather than innovators. This judgement seems harsh since Regional seminary reform and reverse mission educational activities keep moving ahead in most of the period 1970-2000. Most Directors at least let changes happen even if they did not initiate them.

securing the appointment of younger staff with recent post-graduate degrees and missionary experience who were capable of exploring mission in the modern age and working with the students to adapt programs to their varied needs.¹⁰ He wrote to the Rector in 1971,

The seminary as an institution is dead. Notwithstanding Vatican rules and regulations, in several countries it has practically disappeared. Sooner or later it will happen in Australia. Hence we have to stop thinking in terms of a seminary and rather in terms of an institute, and the sooner the staff at Turramurra realise this the better. Most of us are looking to the future with the concepts of the past and this kills creativity.¹¹

O'Mahony encouraged staff to seek professional help to improve their teaching skills, and, importantly, made the seminary's Scholastic Council its policy making body removing direct interference from the Regional Director and his Council.¹²

Creating a New Missionary Formation

The seminary staff at Turramurra methodically set about planning, experimenting and evaluating in an ongoing process to establish seminary programs to answer needs identified by the Columban membership. The aim was to develop a new academic, spiritual and human formation package. The 1976 General Chapter articulated a similar aim for all Columban members stating that ongoing formation should

help each, 1) Deepen his faith in God; 2) Live his commitment to Christ, Church and Society; 3) Grow in his celibate love for all, especially the poor and oppressed; 4) Witness by his life the Gospel values he proclaims; 5) Acquire professional knowledge and skill necessary for the missionary apostolate; 6) Develop his ability to listen and learn from people with whom he works.¹³

¹⁰ Staff members with recent mission experience in Latin America, the Philippines and South Korea with degrees in Moral Theology, Theology, Scripture, Philosophy and Cultural Anthropology were appointed to Turramurra from the 1970s. New staff members pre-1970 were William Moran, Donald Hornsey, and Dennis Curran. Early 1970s arrivals were Barry Cairns, John Murphy, Bernard Cleary, Edward Naughton, Norbert Feld, Fergus Duffy and Kelvin Barrett. New staff in the late 1970s included Paul Kenny, Brendan Lovett, Noel Connolly, Trevor Trotter and Con Power.

¹¹ O'Mahony to McGrath 3.71, CAE, Seminary File.

¹² O'Mahony to Kiert 23.2.70, CAE, D/CA files.

¹³ "1976 General Chapter", Section 6.1, CAE, Chapter File. Formation for all Columban members aimed to help each. A. English, "Formation at the Pacific Mission Institute", M.Ed thesis presented to the University of New England, July 1991, p. 9. English wrote that Columban formation was "an integrated, systematic learning process balanced according to individual need in eight areas: cross cultural adjustment, spiritual

There was no set blueprint, but the issues that needed to be addressed had been identified by individual seminary staff, Columban members overseas and seminary students since the 1950s. Specific items included better student entrance procedures, mission studies combined with newer theological studies, new evaluation criteria during training, more appropriate spiritual formation, and the integration of insights coming from psychology and human growth studies. Staff immediately set about developing better teaching methods, library facilities, missiological programs, and cooperation with other academic institutions, evaluating each of these innovations as new seminary programs were created, modified and expanded to meet new demands.

Two issues needed immediate attention, namely, seminary entrance requirements and the system of evaluating student performance. Although the primary attraction of the Columban Society as an exclusively missionary group was retained with all members destined to go abroad to work, new criteria designed to help a candidate clarify his motives and test his maturity and suitability to join the Society were added to the entrance assessment. Outside professional psychologists were officially employed from 1971 to administer tests that were used in conjunction with traditional means, including the spiritual discernment of “vocation” as a call by God.¹⁴ In order to establish consistent criteria and a decision-making process that went beyond the impressions gleaned by individual priests, a booklet was prepared for the use of those in the process - seminary staff, priests in the Vocations recruiting apostolate, and Superiors and their Councils.¹⁵

Since the traditional markers of evaluation, namely a) structured prayer-life, b) disciplined adherence to rules, and c) passing examinations, also needed to be changed, new criteria by which to judge a student’s progress in the seminary were created. The system of spiritual direction for students had changed formally in 1970 so that a panel of trained spiritual directors was offered for the individual student’s

development, creative development, social development, intellectual development, motivational focus, physical nurture, and emotional development.”

¹⁴ “Psychological Assessment of Students”, Bristol Education Conference, 1969; W. Moran, “A Review of Psychological Assessment”, November 1973, CAE, Seminary file. The mental and emotional stability of the student was tested, also his vocational aptitude and religious motivation. Tools used included autobiography, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, person drawing and thematic appreciation test, plus observations on the candidate’s attitude, behaviour, extra information volunteered, dress, grooming and background.

choice, the Rector's only role being to ensure that each student consult one of the panel on a regular basis. Student prayer styles also began to change with less emphasis on organised devotional practices and gradual encouragement for more creative liturgies to cater for students' affective prayer life, a need indicated as several students became regulars at Charismatic meetings.¹⁶ Under a new Rector, William Moran, a revamped Normae of discipline was implemented in 1973 that gave students freedom and responsibility to arrange their individual timetable. At the academic level, senior theology students were expected to do self-assessments of their studies as part of the Scholastic Council's decision-making process. The uncertainty aroused by this period of rapid change is hinted at in the reports of College Rectors 1970-80s which constantly return to the question of evaluating the formation of students.

Crises we had during the year, but they were all in the category of "developmental". The College is alive, attempting to knit together the Columban spirit as handed on to us and the legitimate aspirations of this age.¹⁷

Programs within the reformed Turramurra Seminary

Because it was the first experience for students entering the Columban Society, the Spiritual Year was the first sector of formation to be changed.¹⁸ From 1967-1979 in many aspects it became opposite in character to what had been created under the Australian version of the Dalgan Spirit. Unlike Sassafras, chosen more than ten years earlier for its isolation, Turramurra provided a more mature atmosphere for students.¹⁹ From 1969, Denis Curran began a more radical reform of the program and later Directors continued to innovate.²⁰ Vatican II had recommended that the study of Theology, Scripture and Liturgy should start in a seminarian's first year and that spiritual and academic formation should be integrated, leading eventually to a

¹⁵ "Vocation Adviser's Handbook for Seminary Applicants, 1977", CAE Vocations file.

¹⁶ L. Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (New York: Crossroad-Seabury Press, 1974). O'Mahony to Steinhilber 6.3.74, CAE, D/CA files.

¹⁷ "Rector's report 1976", CAE, Seminary file.

¹⁸ Separate programs had always existed for priests joining the Society - Kevin Flynn (1955), Peter O'Sullivan (1956), Peter Doyle (1984) Brian McMahon (1985), and in 1991 an international group, James Prendiville, Thomas Hanley and Arsenio Redulla from Chile were priests who did Spiritual Year programs in Australia.

¹⁹ Staff Conference, 1966, CAE, Seminary file; Regional Director's Report 1967, CAE, D/CA files.

²⁰ Spiritual Year Directors post-1969 were Denis Curran 1969-74, Paul Kenny 1975-79, John Hegerty 1980-1984 and Christopher Farrelly 1986-1992. Curran introduced missiology studies, group work and student psychological assessments as significant changes to the Spiritual Year. Some inter-Regional Spiritual Years were held: Turramurra 1994 and Chicago 1996.

reduction in the traditional distinction between the Philosophy and Theology programs.²¹ The original Jesuit style of individual discernment during the Thirty Day Retreat was revived. Another radical change came in 1980 when the Spiritual Year was relocated in time to near the half way point of the then nine year seminary course, the time at which superiors judged students would be more capable of making an adult decision about their future.²² Instead of being an initial entrance experience, the Spiritual Year was now seen as a year of personal decision.

From 1970 onwards, Missionary studies were introduced at all seminary levels at Turrumurra but with the hope that they be made available to non-Columban students. Two years earlier the Regional leadership had feared a “fragmentation of the missionary effort” in the Australian Catholic church and wondered “whether we, as a missionary organisation, should not take some moderate initiative directed towards a closer collaboration with the hierarchy.”²³ The following year the possibility of starting a mission studies institute was raised by Moran at the Society Education Conference. A major opportunity arose in 1971 when the Australian Bishops, prompted by Vatican II, set up a Committee for Missions and established the National Missionary Council (NMC) to research and promote the Australian church as a missionary sending church.²⁴ The Committee sponsored a dialogue about co-operation between the various mission-sending bodies including diocesan priests, female and male Religious and the laity. Rather than interpreting this as a challenge to Columban hopes to hold a National Mission week as a preamble to establishing a Mission Institute, Cyril Hally saw this as an opportunity for the Society.²⁵ The need was real since there were no renewal, updating or re-entry courses offering in Australia for nearly 1,700 Catholic missionaries, and less than half the missionary congregations

²¹ C. Hally, “Chronology”, 1987, p. 8; Kiert to Hunter 10.8.66, CAE, D/CA files.

²² Houses were rented for part of the Spiritual Year from 1986 at Newtown in the social fringe of Australian Society, and from 1989 at Villawood, a multi-cultural suburban setting among poor families.

²³ “ANZ Regional Report”, 1967 and 1968, CAE, D/CA Files. “While the Hierarchy in general appreciate the Society as a purely missionary organisation, it cannot be said that they look on it as a national body equipped to express national missionary aspirations.” While the Society recognised it was not the only missionary sending body and that dioceses too were beginning to make bi-lateral arrangements with dioceses overseas, the Regional leadership felt it should take an initiative with the Australian church.

²⁴ O’Mahony Report 2.6.71, CAE, D/CA files.

²⁵ Hally to O’Mahony 7.5.71, CAE, D file: “If we could get one of our men appointed Secretary, it could give us an opportunity to influence the whole future approach of Australia to missions. It is the sort of job I would like myself.” Hally had previously worked in the Catholic Research Centre Belgium, Pro Mundi Vita, and was appointed the Australian National Missionary Council’s (NMC) full time executive secretary.

sent any of their members to courses overseas.²⁶ With the backing of the NMC, the Columban Society organised and ran the first Australian National Missionary Conference held at Turrumurra 24-28 January 1972.²⁷ Delegates came from 22 countries representing every continent along with 200 participants including 81 Columban priests and students. The Conference hosted notable speakers included: Alfonso Nebreda SJ from Manila, Archbishop Pignedoli from The Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, Rome, Herman Janssen MSC and Anglican Canon Peter Robin from PNG, Walter Black MSC, Theodore Van Asten the Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa, and Bishop Myles McKeon the NMC president.

In 1973, a trial ten-week Mission Studies Program was conducted for nineteen students from outside the College, and following its success it was agreed to make a formal Missiology Studies program available each year.²⁸ In a coordinated effort, Society members, including students, set about informing Australian Catholic leaders about the existence, nature and relevance of the specialised Missionary Studies Program offered at Turrumurra, emphasising its national significance for the local church.²⁹ Columban students played a significant role when an Open Day was held at Turrumurra for Mission Sunday 1972 and the next year it expanded to feature displays with 1,500 people attending, and by 1976 it had blossomed into a Mission Exhibition.³⁰

From 1973-1978, four streams of seminary studies ran concurrently at Turrumurra, Mission Studies being added to those of the Spiritual Year, Philosophy and Theology

²⁶ C. Hally, "Report on the Missionary Dimension of the Australian Church", NMC, unpublished, 1973, p. viii. He documented the need for better missionary formation. At that time there were 1,269 Australian missionaries working overseas plus 403 in the Aboriginal apostolate. Less than half of the congregations sponsoring missionary activity from Australia provided any training for their members, and this was only 8-30 day courses. Diocesan priest missionary volunteers received no training.

²⁷ TFE May issue 1972; B. Cleary, CI March 1972, C. Hally, CI December 1980.

²⁸ *Australian Regional Newsletter (ARN)*, September 1973. Sean O'Connor was co-opted to the work team.

²⁹ Hally to CA 14.8.73, CAI, Australia file. In April, O'Mahony attended the Major Religious Superiors Conferences to engender support. Bishop Albert Thomas, Director of Catholic Mission, was invited to inspect the work of the Columban Society in Peru to gain a better appreciation of the work of missionary societies. An Open Day was held at Essendon for bishops from mission countries at the 1973 Eucharistic Conference and a seminar on mission at St Kilda Town Hall with Father Nebreda S.J. from Manila as the principle speaker.

³⁰ ARN June 1976. Mission information days included a Corroboree in 1975 staged by 400 Mornington Island aborigines. The visiting Columban Superior General asked staff member Francis Herlihy, "What is a Corroboree?" He was told, "Well, it's like a Convention, only they don't keep any minutes."

programs.³¹ The planning, execution and ongoing revision of these programs made complex demands on the seminary staff, testing their insight and dedication.

New Staff, Missiology and Library Facilities

Teachers were contracted from outside the College to ensure that it had a competent staff, and students from local and overseas Catholic institutes also became part of Turrumurra College life. Both groups broadened its horizons. In the past Columban students had sometimes studied in diocesan seminaries and vice versa, but having students from Religious Orders, several of them being missionary societies, studying at Turrumurra was a new experience confirming the perceived value of its programs for a wide clientele.³² From 1969 onwards, diocesan priests and members of Religious Orders taught some of the core-subjects in the seminary curriculum. Overseas experts were also invited to lecture at Turrumurra and to address wider audiences. They spoke on issues not often confronted in Australian church circles such as ecology and justice, dialogue with Islam and nature religions, liberation theology, the African context of church activity, the churches in China, and new directions in missiology.³³

The various mission studies components at Turrumurra were underpinned by the developing theological discipline called “Missiology” which was searching to interpret the different stages of modern foreign mission work as a part of church mission.³⁴

³¹ B. Cairns, “Some Emphases to be made in the Spiritual Formation of Columban Students Preparing for Cross-Cultural Mission”, M.A. thesis presented to JSTB Berkeley, California 1978.

³² Chapman to Kielt 24.11.64, CAE, D/CA files. The Sylvestrine Benedictines attended day classes from 1965, PNG and South Korean diocesan residential students from 1969, plus Vincentian, Blessed Sacrament and Missionary Marist Sister day students from 1972. Between 1975-1978 other students came from the Divine Word Missionaries, Missionaries of Africa, Augustinians, and St John of God, plus a Filipino diocesan seminarian.

³³ Speakers invited to broaden lecture inputs at Turrumurra included: Sean McDonagh and Sean McNulty on Philippine experiences of ecology and Islam, Noel Kerins and Paul Prendergast from South America, Kieran Moloney, Francis Hoare and Richard O'Sullivan from Fiji, missiologists Aylward Shorter and David Bosch from Africa and Bolivian based John Gorski, China expert Pere Brosseau, and the itinerant pastoral team from Sao Paulo Brazil.

³⁴ J. Dudley Woodbury, ed., **Missiological Education for the Twenty-first Century: The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); R. Schreiter, “Reconciliation as a Model for Mission”, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, (Immensee, Switzerland), 52, 4, 1996, p. 246. Schreiter states that in the modern period dating from the early nineteenth century, the first missionary model operative was one of “expansion”, followed by a model of “accompaniment” during de-colonisation after WWII when more independent churches emerged, and then moved into the present model of “reconciliation” to heal colonialist wounds. D. Bosch, **Transforming Mission - Paradigm Shift in the Theology of Mission**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), p. 7. Bosch presented a historical-periods based model.

After the mission encyclical of 1919, Catholic efforts to recapture the innovative missionary spirit of the seventeenth century were tentatively explored in continental Europe but studies tended to be descriptive in character.³⁵ Protestant interest in mission studies as a discipline was evident at the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910, carrying a geographic and evangelising tone.³⁶ While the mission insights of some individuals were exceptional, it took decades for the Christian churches to incorporate insights from social history and its neighbouring disciplines, including social psychology, sociology and anthropology along with their often Marxist academic theoretical frameworks, into missiological research and training programs.³⁷ Common missionary themes have promoted deeper ecumenical cooperation at the academic level between Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches since WWII, producing sources with scientifically researched and referenced reports, statistics, historical case studies, new theological expressions, analysis and interpretation.³⁸ Missionary training programs that specifically drew upon these studies were offered by few Catholic groups in the USA in the mid-twentieth century but they seem to have been the only programs in English-speaking countries that predated the Columban initiatives at Turrumurra.³⁹ Only after Vatican II did missiology gain general acceptance in the Catholic church as a result of an increasing desire for ecumenism

³⁵ TFE, 9, 1923, p. 1. A Catholic Mission Conference was held in Utrecht, Netherlands in 1922, when Holland was supporting 3,000 Catholic missionaries, and at other universities under the general tag of “missiology”. From the early 1930s mission studies were developed in Rome associated with Propaganda College.

³⁶ A. Tippett, **Introduction to Missiology**, (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1987).

³⁷ R. Allen, **Missionary Methods – St Paul’s or Ours?** (London: World Dominion Press, 1956/reprint); R. Hay, “Social History”, G. Davison, J. Hirst and S. Macintyre, eds., **Oxford Companion to Australian History**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 590-591; G. Gossen, **Religion in Australian Culture: an anthropological view**, (Strathfield, Sydney: St Paul’s Publications, 1997), pp. 13-18.

³⁸ E. Hillman, **The Wider Ecumenism**, (London: Burns and Oates, 1968); G. Bassham, “Mission Theology: 1948-1975”, **Occasional Bulletin**, 4, (April 1980), pp. 52-58; G. Hood, “China and South East Asia: Earthquake and Aftershocks”, B. Thorogood ed., **Gales of Change: Responding to a Shifting Missionary Context**, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994), p.127; A. Camps, L. Hoedemaker, M. Spindler and F. Verstraelen, eds., **Missiology, An Ecumenical Introduction: Texts and Contexts of Global Christianity** (Grand Rapids, USA: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995); I. Bria, ed., **Go Forth in Peace: Orthodox Perspectives on Mission**, (Geneva: WCC, 1986); R. Bassham, “A Protestant View of Catholic Missions”, **Verbum-SVD** 28, 3 (1987), p. 237; “Selected Annotated Bibliography of Missiology”, **Missiology** xiv, 1 (January 1986), pp. 92-95; A. C. Smith, compiler, “Index 1912-1990”, **International Review of Mission**, 1993 issue. N. Thomas, **Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity** (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994/London: SPCK, 1995); R. Coote, “Finger on the Pulse: Fifty Years of Missionary Research”, **International Bulletin of Missionary Research**, 24, 3 (July), 2000, pp. 98-103.

³⁹ J. Wiest, “The Maryknoll China History Project: Methodology and Preliminary Findings”, **Missiology**, XI, 3 (July 1983), pp. 343-360; Dries, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, pp. 259-262. The East Asian Pastoral Institute (**EAPI**) from the late 1960s ran programs focused on training personnel to develop local relevant Asian Catholic churches.

and dialogue among religions, and a rethinking of “the mission of the church” in the world, much of it prompted by the experience of missionaries.

The German-founded Catholic Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) developed cultural-anthropological works from the late nineteenth century but it was not until Louis Luzbetak’s 1962 publication on Missiology that much of their work appealed to a wide Catholic English-speaking audience.⁴⁰ His work was seminal in the new formation developed at Turrumurra a decade later, providing models to interpret the historical stages of mission activity and theories on the dynamics of cultural change and change agents. It helped in understanding how individuals and groups take on values and behaviour from outside their culture (in anthropology called “acculturation”), arguing that acculturation at the religious level involves a meeting of Christianity and culture in the lives of local believers (in theology called “inculturation”).⁴¹ Missiology acted as a bridge between the methods of church and secular academic worlds in modern times. From the mid-1970s, Sean McDonagh helped Hally and others introduce anthropological concepts and the empirical method at Turrumurra. Empirical methods had traditionally not been part of classical theological studies, but a type of empiricism was part of the hermeneutics used in both the Cardijn and Liberationist Christian movements that were being taken up in the seminary. However the social sciences were used with discretion at Turrumurra. This was because of the need to respect the differing emphases in each branch and because the ideology behind the sciences could at times be at odds with the seminary’s belief in the universal relevance of the Christian missionary message, its meta-narrative.⁴²

⁴⁰ L. Luzbetak, “William Schmidt, SVD, 1868-1954”, G. Anderson et alia eds., **Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), p. 475. Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) were leaders in applied cultural anthropology having spent long periods in the field as observers and sources of published accounts since the late nineteenth century, producing the mission anthropological magazines **Anthropos** from 1906 and the mission journal, **Verbum - SVD**. Dries, 1998, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, p. 81.

⁴¹ C. Geertz, **The Interpretation of Culture**, (New York: Basic Books, 1973); A. Shorter, **Towards a Theology of Inculturation**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1988); D. Arms, **CI** July 1988; K. Barrett, “Columban Initial Formation - A Preparation for Cross-Cultural Gospel Mission”, Licentiate thesis, Gregorian University, Rome, 1990, pp. 56-62. The word “inculturation” was first used in a papal catechetical document in 1979.

⁴² J. Garrier, “Sociology”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 524-527. S. Franklin, “Cultural Studies”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, p. 135. A. Bernard and J. Spenser, “Culture”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, p. 142. S. Nugent, “Post-modernism”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp.442-444.

In order to facilitate academic studies and research, a modern library was developed at Turramurra and under the supervision of Fergus Duffy and later under Donald Wodarz the collection was properly catalogued and expanded.⁴³ In 1979 the periodical and documentation collection of the National Missionary Council was shifted to Turramurra to become the Resource Centre, giving students access to the latest ideas circulating in the literature.⁴⁴

Columban Identity, Human Development and Spiritual Growth

The staff was conscious of having to maintain a Columban identity for Society seminarians as Turramurra grew more pluralistic and Columban students attended outside theological consortia. But as happened when Columban students studied at Werribee seminary decades before, their identity seemed to grow stronger. Staff-student social gatherings were held from 1971 onwards. Later, selected elderly Columban priests were welcomed to reside at Turramurra to teach by example.⁴⁵ The presence of a steady flow of Columban priests doing renewal and updating courses at the College was also a boost to student Columban identity. On the other hand, morale was tested by a steady decline in Columban student applications, the growing number of students who left formation and Columban priests who were laicised, and the introduction in 1978 of a two years overseas training program which left the college without any senior students.⁴⁶ Living with such change became part of forging a new Columban student identity.

The new programs at Turramurra sought to address the relationship between human development and spiritual growth using the educational insights about stages of growth, personality types and concepts of holistic formation.⁴⁷ From 1972-1976

⁴³ In 1973 the Dewey system was introduced to catalogue the Turramurra library. In 1976 Sister Clare Crawford RSM was employed part time as librarian and from the 1980s, Mrs Judith Goodwin.

⁴⁴ Materials in the Resource Centre were catalogued by Sr Joan Longmore FMM. In May 1991 these materials became the property of the Columban Society.

⁴⁵ "Seminary Report 1982", CAE, Seminary File. The older residents were Kevin Mangan, Gordon Jackson and Keith Gorman.

⁴⁶ Statistics on Regional students 1920-1977 show that of the 399 students and priests who had started formation with the Society, nearly 40% left in their first year. By 1996, of 460 students from the Region, 169 became Columban priests (117 from Australia and 52 from New Zealand). Eight others joined as priests from Australia.

⁴⁷ Centre for Research, Emory University, **Stages of Faith and Religious Development**, (London: SCM Press, 1992).

“Review of Life” groups operated at Turrumurra, the format derived from the South American “theological reflection” model of forming lay people based on reviewing one’s actions within one’s own social reality in the light of faith. The Review of Life groups fell into disuse as more opportunities arose for students to move out of the enclosed College atmosphere, individual students forming outside circles of friends. They increasingly valued their personal experience rather than the human relations and consciousness arising within a structured group.⁴⁸ Concepts derived from educational psychology played an increasing role in formation programs and some newer staff members had studied applications of psychology tried in the USA, Britain and Rome, especially the use of the Rulla method, Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and multicultural formation.⁴⁹ When students took up pastoral placements in parishes and church institutions, even if these were among disadvantaged and culturally different peoples, CPE supervising methods were used to assess their work, gauging the student’s reaction rather than work outcomes.

In the new formation, sexual issues were more directly addressed than they had been in the earlier seminary training. Like most of the Catholic Church, the Society seminary was caught off guard by the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s, or at least the new openness about sex.⁵⁰ In post Vatican II theology priestly celibacy was no longer regarded as “the fast train to heaven”.⁵¹ Members in mission areas knew that women were leaders in church communities and some recognised they needed the

⁴⁸ P. Berger, **The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness**, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 24; P. Berger, **Facing Up To Modernity: Excursions in Society, Politics and Religion**, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books, 1977), pp. 20 and 196.

⁴⁹ L. Rulla, F. Imoda and J. Ridick, **Psychological Structure and Vocation**, (Dublin: Villa Books, 1978); T. Carrol, “The Human Person in Ministry: Rullas’s Contribution”, Brown ed., **Faith and Culture**, 1989, pp. 219-241. Barry Cairns studied at Berkeley in California, the home of the “human potential movement”. Kelvin Barrett became a CPE supervisor. Cornelius Power did counselling and Roddy Grealish used Rulla skills from 1983. John Hegerty and Christopher Farrelly specialised in formation studies at Berkeley. Noel Connolly became Rector in 1979 and new staff arrived including Donald Wodarz, John Ryan, Warren Kinne, Roddy Grealish, Gary Walker and John Hegerty. Trevor Trotter became Rector 1988. New staff included Pauline Rae SMSM, Christopher Farrelly, Charles O’Mahony (Bursar), Padraic Kilroy, Richard O’Sullivan, Thomas Rouse, Kathleen Luchetti RSJ and Patrick O’Shea. During this last decade, two Columban staff died early in life, Roddy Grealish and Donald Wodarz.

⁵⁰ G. Baum and J Coleman, eds., “The Sexual Revolution”, *Concillium*, June 1994, no. 173. A. McLaren, **Twentieth-century Sexuality: a History**, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), pp. 3, 166, 173 and 192.

⁵¹ E. Kennedy, **The People are the Church**, (New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 151; Wittberg, **Rise and Decline**, 1994, p. 250; G. Tavard, “Celibacy”, Glazier, **Catholic Encyclopedia**, 1994, pp. 152-3. After 1980 four staff left the priestly ministry, Cornelius Power, Kevin Kehoe, Christopher Farrelly and Padraic Kilroy. Their departure was judged by the Rector as not stemming from a structural flaw in the seminary system but from personal decisions.

company of women if they were to avoid becoming unbalanced human beings. The growing numbers of priests who left the Society to marry emphasised the need for greater awareness in sexual matters before being ordained and accepting its accompanying obligation of celibacy. Some students received psychological counseling to better integrate sexuality into their daily lives.⁵² The Scriptural promise of “life to the full” was being interpreted by staff and students as meaning that missionaries should aspire to a level of human happiness in their calling.⁵³ A research survey of young Columban priests published in 1987 revealed both a desire for both supportive Columban sharing that went beyond just taking recreation together, and an active involvement in the lives of the people to whom they were ministering.⁵⁴ In retrospect, some students have dismissed the possibility of having quality relationships with people in a cross-cultural situation seeing it as an unrealistic expectation but, at least, the seminary had brought sexual issues to the level of awareness and open discussion.⁵⁵

New Columban Seminary Programs

A major innovation was accommodated within the Turramurra programs when the Society’s 1976 General Chapter decided to initiate a two-year Overseas Training Program (OTP) inserted within the seminary years.⁵⁶ The change followed years of debate. The possibility had been first raised at the 1969 Bristol Society Education Conference but was rejected by the 1970 General Chapter on the basis that some missionary societies were ambivalent about its worth. Doubts were raised about both the students’ capacity to study theology in a foreign country and language, and the standards of the available schools. A second model, in which seminarians would study

⁵² Father Daniel Torpey and Brother Eugene Dwyer FMS did some assessments with students.

⁵³ **CI** June 1983. In June 1983 seven students wrote about the continuing movement in their private and public lives towards the Kingdom of God.

⁵⁴ C. Farrelly, “Missionary Spirituality in the World Today”, M.Th. thesis presented to the Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley, 1987.

⁵⁵ **SSOA**: A number of priests who left after ordination said that the new seminary system had not prepared them well for the reality of missionary activity, especially those who had developed a personalist approach to ministry rather than using the traditional structural or newer team approaches. The traditional and team approaches were more likely to create work satisfaction in mission areas, and, in some opinions, lessening the desire for many close relationships.

⁵⁶ “The Overseas Training Program”, **CI** February 1978. Under the Society’s Education Office during 1977, Society policies and a Handbook for supervisors were drawn up to guide the program’s implementation. C. Lovett, “Evaluation of Replies to OTP Questionnaire” **CI** March and July 1978.

a foreign language overseas and then engage in pastoral work was judged to better achieve the Columban aims of a program as a "lived experience of missionary life". It aimed to test a student's missionary vocation and build greater mission identity. The first OTP began September 1978 with nine students, three from Ireland and the USA and six from Turrumurra. Its staff there had shown sustained interest in the program, confirming the innovative nature of the Australian Columban seminary.⁵⁷

An immediate new outcome of the OTP Program was the creation of a working link between Turrumurra and mission areas through shared formation responsibilities. The five-week post-OTP Program, developed in 1980 to provide a systematic de-briefing for the Australian students on their return, became a model for future years.⁵⁸ The lack of proper supervision of students in some overseas countries and the absence of common criteria for evaluation were identified as two weaknesses in the OTP program that needed correction. One Australian student had a breakdown during his OTP and while "statistically speaking it had to happen", staff wanted early identification of such a possibility. These issues were discussed at the Society-wide Formation Conference held in Santiago Chile in 1980.⁵⁹ As a result, the roles of local OTP Directors and supervisors were clarified and the CPE method was widely adopted to provide the tools in assessing how students reacted to their particular mission situation in language, culture, relations with others and pastoral work placements.⁶⁰ Decisions taken at the Formation Conference borrowed from Turrumurra techniques and entrenched the place of the behavioural sciences within Columban seminary formation.

A second Society-wide change also pointed to Turrumurra's innovative spirit. The 1982 General Chapter decided to amend the Constitutions to allow the Society to "invite candidates from the local Churches in which we work to become members of

⁵⁷ O'Brien to Rectors 26.1.78, CAE, Seminary files; TFE 10, 1978, p. 8. Damien O'Brien and Mark Yeates went to the Philippines, Timothy Gardiner and Laurence Barnett to Korea, Paul Hollis and Gary Greig to Chile.

⁵⁸ Kelvin Barrett and Trevor Trotter led the de-briefing, CAE, Seminary File.

⁵⁹ "Report on Society Education Conference, Santiago January 1-14 1980", CI May 1980, Supplement.

⁶⁰ J. Smith, "Clinical Pastoral Education", CI February 1975, and J. Cahill, CI March 1980. The Society's formation programs had grown disparate in its USA, Irish and Australian seminaries, students were at different stages of formation when sent on the OTP.

our Society and share in our missionary enterprise.”⁶¹ The idea had first been suggested by Archbishop Pignedoli of Propaganda during the 1970 Chapter as a way of promoting the missionary dimension of the whole church, but that Chapter decided that "recruitment of members from mission countries would not serve our purpose".⁶² A major change between 1970 and the 1982 decision was the emerging capacity of former mission churches to supply personnel for a missionary venture and their wish to step onto the international missionary stage. Given this change, two characteristics of the Society in being both diocesan in spirit and international in membership meant that it could offer candidates a unique form of missionary service that was neither Religious nor restricted to one nationality and did not duplicate existing opportunities. From its foundation the Columban Society had an international membership culturally diverse while sharing English as a common language.⁶³ In the following decade Society Regions in South Korea, the Philippines, Chile, Peru, and Fiji have taken local candidates and each now has local members ordained as Columban priests.⁶⁴

As happened with the OTP, the style of formation used in the international membership programs drew heavily on the methods and expertise developed by the staff and students at Turramurra whose staff from 1970 onwards had engaged in formation of people from other countries in the Pacific and Asia.⁶⁵ A confirmation of their expertise is the high numbers originating from this Region carrying prominent roles in seminary programs overseas, far in excess of their percentage of Society membership.⁶⁶ Problems to do with racism, stereotyping, prejudice and communication between cultures arose early as issues in the Australian Region, some

⁶¹ O'Brien to Cleary 27.8.80, CAE, D/CA files. The decision followed research on the issue as proposed by the Inter-Regional Meeting in Lima. Columban Society, "Acts of The General Chapter 1982", no. 153. Cleary to Howard 22.7.83, CAE D/CA files. Guidelines were drawn up to implement the policy change.

⁶² Hoult to O'Mahony 23.6.72, CAE, D/CA files. An application to the Australian Region from a Chinese-Filipino in 1972 was refused on these grounds.

⁶³ TFE 9, 1925, p. 7. A photo shows a celebration room decorated with shamrocks, eagles and kangaroos to represent Irish, USA and Australian Society members. In the Society's first decade members came from Ireland, England, Scotland, the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

⁶⁴ In addition, the Korean and the Philippine Regions developed quality mission magazines and fundraising systems to help support Columban and national overseas mission ventures.

⁶⁵ Connolly to Cleary 10.10.80 and Connolly to O'Brien 3.10.80, CAE, Seminary files; F. Hoare, "Intercultural Formation for Students of the Society of St Columban", dissertation presented as partial requirement for the Licentiate in Psychology, Gregorian University, Rome, 1988. Diocesan seminarians from PNG, South Korea and the Philippines, Vietnamese born Columban students as well as PMI participants from all continents studied at Turramurra.

candidates carrying Syrian, Italian, German and other heritages rather than the Anglo-Celtic dominant one in the Society.⁶⁷ Demands for change and attempts to address these problems formed part of the expectations for a reformed seminary formation in Australia and made local members more sensitive to the needs of an increasingly multi-cultural Society membership.

Opposition from Columban Members

The Turrumurra seminary changes did not come about without opposition from many senior members in the Society, overseas and in the local Region, who remained planted in a pre-modern ideology and style of church. An older and priestly way of thinking was exemplified by an Irish Columban seminary staff member arguing the essential continuity between traditional practices and the missionary challenges in Vatican II:

The dimensions of the missionary apostolate provide an unceasing challenge for investigation, planning and pastoral activity ... This work remains essentially the same, as are its supernatural means. What is new is the desired adaptation to the mentality, needs and circumstances of our age ... The priest's work is everywhere the same essentially.⁶⁸

For many members from Ireland and some from the local Region, the Society was regarded as offering just another opportunity to be a priest. It is not always easy to identify this attitude but a tendency to identify with the ministerial role of the priest and a reluctance to adopt a redefinition of missionary activity after Vatican II are two indicators. Even the Society's new Central Administration writing in 1975 seemed confused by the priest-missionary debate, "missionary first and secondly priest ... we have been unable to isolate how such a mentality arose, if it did."⁶⁹ In spite of Central Administration's confusion it seemed to take the priestly side of the debate. Of a young member of the Society in Australia they wrote, "We would be sorry to lose him to the

⁶⁶ N. Daly "Formation Conference", *CI* April 1987; *ARN* June 1987. Warren Kinne, Trevor Trotter, John Hegerty and Patrick McMullan represented the Region at the Conference. Turrumurra hosted part of the multi-cultural Spiritual Year done in common with other Regions in 1992.

⁶⁷ F. Lewins, *The Myth of the Universal Church: Catholic Migrants in Australia*, (Canberra: The ANU, 1978). In 1972 the local Region was renamed as the *Region of Australia and New Zealand* in recognition that New Zealand was part of it and nearly a third of local members originated from there.

⁶⁸ J. McGlade, *The Missionary Apostolate*, (Dublin: Gill and Son, 1967), pp. iii and vii.

⁶⁹ Tierney to Moran 14.3.75.

missions, but then, his priesthood comes first.”⁷⁰ Some older Columban priests in the Region cast doubts on the young priests coming through the revamped Turrumurra seminary, suggesting that their ideals were something less than those of previous generations when measured against the reservation expressed by co-founder John Blowick in regard to traditional obedience.⁷¹ Writing in the Society newsletter in 1974, a young Australian priest defended the new approach:

... contrary to popular belief among many [Columban members], the ‘new system’ is not breeding a product who thinks that obedience, celibacy and poverty are things to be discarded like old shoes. But it is endeavouring to instill into men the belief that these counsels involve something much wider than their strict canonical definition.⁷²

Another group of members, brought up in the idealistic era of the 1950-1960s and enthusiastic about the missionary vision of Vatican II, were skeptical of the new psychological trends in student formation at Turrumurra, some dubbing it "dull defeatism". The trend to move away from a mentality of grand schemes to “change the world” and towards “coping” in a world that could hardly be changed emerged in general society during the 1970-80s. Columban idealists judged its acceptance in the seminary to be turning away from the “Prophetic” model of mission to a “Therapeutic” one. In response, however, others argued that this was not accurate since the therapeutic model refers to the “process” of formation and the prophetic to the “content” of formation.⁷³ An appreciation of psychological insights grew only slowly in the Society, even among members with a post-Vatican II outlook.⁷⁴

Questions on priesthood, mission and human fulfilment continued as a new seminary formation was being created. Exchanges between the seminary and Director intensified from 1977-81, the Director judging a 1981 draft document from the seminary on formation to be deficient in the Catholic and priestly aspects it

⁷⁰ Campion to O’Mahony 7.11.75.

⁷¹ “John Blowick”, CI June 1972.

⁷² J. Evans, CI November 1975, a response to a letter in the September issue.

⁷³ P. O’Donoghue, CI November 1986.

⁷⁴ Hoare, “Inter-Cultural Formation”, 1988, p. 59. Doctor Gordon Lawrence’s psychological assessment of Columban personnel in the Philippines in the 1980s was not well understood or received in the Philippine Region when he suggested that there had been a “disintegration of the Columban’s primary work group focused on a commonly accepted task”.

presented.⁷⁵ The history of strained relations between the Regional Director and Columban seminary staff contributed to the Turrumurra seminary staff going its own way from the 1970s onwards without much reference to the rest of the Region, understandable but exacerbating tensions. The seminary Rector Noel Connolly regarded the main objectors as a minority, stating that their lack of knowledge made them less than competent to judge.⁷⁶ He confronted them publicly in the Society newsletter in 1983:

There are theological and spiritual and missiological differences that are so deep that sometimes we seem to talk two different languages. The present system takes a lot more self-discipline than that of the past ... Often hidden in this judgement [by dissenting members] is the assumption that one has to be at one's spiritual peak as a seminarian and especially at ordination because, from them on, one will gradually slide downhill ... I find this way of thinking not only personally insulting but odd in the way it evaluates the continued practice of priestly ministry.⁷⁷

Some misunderstandings were faced during an education week for Regional members at Turrumurra led by Father David Power OMI at Turrumurra in 1983.⁷⁸ The Superior General returned to the issue with questions to the Rector at Turrumurra in 1986 about adequacy of the seminary's priestly aspects.⁷⁹ The ideal of shared Columban values, as envisioned by Hally in 1975, was in train but had not been achieved.

The Pacific Mission Institute (PMI) and Theological Consortia

While developed primarily for Columban students, from 1973 onwards the mission oriented programs at Turrumurra seminary were opened up to clerical, lay and inter-church participants from outside of the Society. The best known program was the Pacific Mission Institute (PMI).⁸⁰ Taking advantage of an opportunity provided by the Australian Catholic bishops' National Missionary Council, the Columban Society

⁷⁵ Columban Society, **Constitutions and Directory**, 1992, C. 342-343, and D. 343.2, 342. The relationship "should be characterised by the principles of co-responsibility and subsidiarity" where the Rector has immediate responsibility and necessary authority, the Regional Director exercising a supervisory role.

⁷⁶ Rector's Report 1982, CAE, Seminary file.

⁷⁷ N. Connolly, "Formation Today", CI November 1983.

⁷⁸ Rector's Report 1983, CAE, Seminary file.

⁷⁹ Cleary to Kinne, 6.6.1986, CAE, Rector Turrumurra file.

⁸⁰ English, "PMI", 1991. This is the only aspect of Columban work in Australia that has been the subject of any rigorous external tertiary level analysis. It was carried out from the perspective of the educational method that the PMI developed. His work helps with categories to sift through the scattered sources available on the Columban formation from the late 1960s and interpret changes.

created a one-year residential program. This development in the theory and practice of mission moved beyond revision of the content and style of formation, promoting the idea that non-priestly personnel could be active missionaries in their own right rather than only support people to the priests. Staff at Turramurra consulted with women missionaries both to get their advice on content and to help address a growing dissatisfaction with the role of women in church structures.⁸¹

After the initial 1973 program, demand from outside participants for missionary training at Turramurra increased so in 1977 a year long Mission Studies Program, separate from the seminary in administration, was initiated with Irish Columban Brendan Lovett as Director. The new program went on to become the Pacific Mission Institute (PMI) in 1979 with Hally as the Director.⁸² A 1991 thesis of Anthony English analysed the PMI program as an educational process.⁸³ Liturgical expression was flexible, teamwork was the norm, and staff operated as facilitators rather than lecturers.⁸⁴ He demonstrated that its participants took on a new “perspective” as regards Christian missionary activity and became “transformed” individuals capable of effectively engaging in cross-cultural mission and able to cope personally in their work.⁸⁵ He described how the process de-constructed and then rebuilt their frameworks of meaning within a caring communal situation, taking cultural differences as a positive starting point for constructive and reciprocal learning based on systematic analysis and seeking points of dialogue. He identified the philosophy behind the PMI process as a form of “Christian humanism” that bridged ideals arising in both the secular and religious worlds and “Mission” as a proper noun as the common category.⁸⁶ Changing concepts of development, world poverty, local

⁸¹ A. Mackinnon, “Gender Relations”, Davison, **Oxford Companion**, 1998, p. 276-277; F. Pine, “Gender”, Barnard, **Encyclopedia**, 1996, pp. 253-262; M. Roper, “Masculinity”, Davison, **Oxford Companion**, 1998, pp. 414-415.

⁸² Mission Studies/PMI/CMI program Directors: B. Lovett 1977-78; C. Hally 1979-1985, J. Ryan 1986-1993; T. Trotter 1993-2000; J. Mulrone 2000>. Assistant Directors: Pauline Rae SMSM 1978-1985; Majella Tracey FMM Assistant Director 1983 and acting Director 1989; C. Farrelly 1989; Kathleen Luchetti RSJ 1991.

⁸³ A. English, “Formation at the Pacific Mission Institute”, M.Ed thesis presented to the University of New England, July 1991.

⁸⁴ English, “PMI”, 1991, p. 248.

⁸⁵ English, “PMI”, pp. 240 and 248.

⁸⁶ English, “PMI”, 1991, pp. iii and 15-16. “religion need not be oppressive; people are inherently good, not depraved, regardless of cultural background; their learning should help them cooperate with their God to improve individuals and Society in accordance with Christian principles”, thus blending spiritual mission

churches and cultural anthropology were key areas of learning.⁸⁷ Comparing the aims of the program with an assessment of its effect on former participants he concluded that its holistic approach was largely effective.⁸⁸



Columban Turramurra Seminary and Pacific Mission Institute staff members Sr. Magella Tracey with Fathers Charles O'Mahony and Christopher Farrelly in 1990

Women have played an important role in the Australian Catholic Church.⁸⁹ Feminist analysis, however, had shown that official recognition of women's ministry and a feminine experience of God was slow to develop.⁹⁰ The role of women both as staff members and students had a major effect in developing the post-1970 Columban

and secular development. English used the educational theories of Mezirow (1977-1989) on perspective transformation, and Knowles (1980) on communal environments.

⁸⁷ English, "PMI", 1991, p. 140. The PMI was an integrated process of learning in eight major areas: cross-cultural, intellectual, spiritual, creative, emotional, motivational, physical and social. The course was comprehensive and also had the effect of rediscovering the new and missionary dimension of traditional subjects such as Spirituality, Scripture, Ministry and Justice.

⁸⁸ English, "PMI", 1991, p. 240.

⁸⁹ T. Magner, "The Training of the Australian Girl", **Proceedings of the Third Catholic Congress**, (Sydney: St Mary's Cathedral, 1909), p. 201; S. Kennedy, **Faith and Feminism: Catholic Women's Struggles for Self-Expression**, (Sydney: Studies in the Christian Movement, St Patrick's College Manly, 1985), p. ix.

⁹⁰ L. Byrne, **The Hidden Journey**, (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1993), p. 2; E. S. Fiorenza, **Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-Logy of Liberation**, (London: SCM Press, 1993), p. 2.

seminary, Religious Sisters having been day students and staff members from 1972 and then residential participants for the 1979 PMI intake, challenging traditional church hierarchies. Feminist theology explored at the PMI aimed to construct an egalitarian frame of reference that went beyond categories of liberation to employ postmodernist thinking in questioning the consequences of patriarchy present in Scripture and traditional theology.⁹¹ What was particular to the PMI program was that women and men together, including Columban seminarians, were able to process the emerging women's studies as Christians and able to learn together how to be better cross-cultural missionaries.

A lesser but significant aim of the PMI program was to assist returned missionaries to reflect on their overseas experiences and to go through a period of adjustment before re-entering into their home church or returning overseas.⁹² From the late 1970s, Columban priests were expected to do this preparation before beginning Columban work-assignments in the Region. The returnees had time and help to prepare ordered reflections on their overseas experiences and learnt group techniques that could be applied in mission education workshops.⁹³ Similar benefits were available to diocesan priest volunteers who had worked with the Society overseas.⁹⁴ Their presence at Turrumurra helped re-enliven the traditional Columban diocesan connections.⁹⁵ Another group using the PMI for formation and re-entry programs were members of the Columban Lay Missionary Program. The re-entry part of the PMI was later developed by other groups in programs such as Missionaries in Transition conducted by a former PMI staff member.⁹⁶

Cooperating with other theological schools as part of the reform of the Columban seminary made the Columban mission studies programs available to a wider range of students. At a practical level, new consortium arrangements broadened the range of academic studies offered, made more efficient use of lecturers, and catered for smaller

⁹¹ A. Laffey, "Feminist Theology", *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1994, pp. 317-319.

⁹² Gormly to Hoban 27.8.87, CAE, D/CA files.

⁹³ Some of these Columban members joined Regional Mission Education Teams or did promotion work, and made contacts by tapping into the network of PMI graduates around Australia.

⁹⁴ P. Mugavin, CI, October 1991

⁹⁵ C. Hally, CI, May 1996.

⁹⁶ Sr. Magella Tracey organised the program at Wantirna a suburb of Melbourne.

numbers of clerical students plus increasing numbers of lay students.⁹⁷ Discussions on a consortium between Turrumurra and St Patrick's College Manly had come to nothing.⁹⁸ However, in 1977, after two years of allowing their students to cross register, Turrumurra and the Marist-led Catholic United Theological College based at Hunters Hill joined together so that the two campuses formed the Union Theological Institute (UTI). This enabled the Society to spread its mission studies more widely though this joint venture while retaining a high degree of control over its campus and programs.⁹⁹ UTI gained full academic accreditation with the State Education Authorities in 1979 so that for the first time Columban students doing lengthy tertiary studies at the seminary received secular academic recognition. This had justice implications, facilitating students who left formation to continue with post-graduate studies. Under the Rector Noel Connolly, in 1983 Turrumurra gained greater academic standing when it became the Missiology department of the new ecumenical based Sydney College of Divinity (SCD). The Society's influence was further widened when night classes began for external students in 1985.¹⁰⁰

In November 1996 all formal academic programs at Turrumurra ended. Although the Columban Mission Institute (CMI) which had replaced the PMI in 1993 had followed its successful format, demand for mission studies in a residential setting fell and participants were increasingly using the program as a renewal course rather than for missionary formation. However, mission studies were increasingly recognised as integral to preparing church personnel to work in the home churches as well as overseas and were becoming available within Australian universities.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Lay people were replacing Sisters and Brothers in schools as teachers of religion.

⁹⁸ O'Mahony to Steinhilber 2.9.75, CAE, D/CA files.

⁹⁹ N. Jennings, "Initial Formation: Maynooth 1986", CI June and July 1986. Columban seminaries in Ireland and the USA at that time had lost their own campuses.

¹⁰⁰ Therese Woolfe was employed to coordinate their courses and Sister Pauline Rae returned to Turrumurra as Graduate Registrar in 1989. As a matter of justice, it was considered that lay people were disadvantaged by the requirements of the full time residential PMI structure. Research Papers submitted as part of the requirements for post-graduate degrees addressed subjects such as Inter-Religious Dialogue between Christians and Buddhist monks in Taiwan, The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults as an Instrument of Mission in Secular Society, Korean Minjung Theology of Liberation, The Role of the Church in Latin American History of Dominance/Liberation Dialectic, and Ideology in the Theology of Juan Secundo.

¹⁰¹ F. George, "The Promotion of Missiological Studies in Seminaries", **Mission Studies: Journal of the IAMS**, XVI, 2, 32, 1999, pp. 13-27; M. Teulan, "The Evangelising Diocese", **The Australasian Catholic Record**, 78, 4 (October 2001), pp. 409-421.

The influence of the mission studies programs at Turrumurra has been substantial. From 1974-1996 over 900 people had participated in residential mission studies programs, in addition to the hundreds of non-residential students who from 1985-1996 came to Turrumurra as part of theological consortia.¹⁰² As Columban mission program participants and staff scattered around the world, they spread the Columban contributions to the Australian missionary movement to every continent. Programs developed at the Turrumurra seminary were used as a model by the Irish Missionary Union (IMU), reversing the cycle begun by Maguire in 1920.¹⁰³

The Future of Columban Tertiary Level Missionary Formation

The decline in candidates and the closure of academic program at Turrumurra in 1996 makes the long-term future of the Columban Society enterprise in Australia uncertain. With only a handful of candidates the local Region decided to stop offering academic programs at Turrumurra, sending its seminarians to study in other local institutions and overseas.¹⁰⁴ Society Guidelines stated that the formation of Columban seminarians does not depend on the Society providing academic studies in its own institutions since the needs of the student are primary and he is not the object of a formation in which the institution takes precedence.¹⁰⁵ With few young members being sent overseas, however, and the membership in Australia ageing, the Society will become incapable of fulfilling two of its defining roles, engaging in overseas missionary activity and being a catalyst to mission among Australian Catholics. While historically only a minority of members was ever directly engaged in the latter task, sending personnel overseas has been at the heart of the Columban enterprise. This continues to be the case even if the work has changed to emphasise the importance of enabling newer churches to engage in mission:

¹⁰² "Report on PMI/CMI", November 1996, CAE, CMI file.

¹⁰³ A "Faith and Mission" course was developed for the Irish Missionary Union by the Columban Society at Dalgan followed by one called "Mission and Justice".

¹⁰⁴ John Hill, "The Decline of Priestly Vocations and its Impact on the Local Church", **Australasian Catholic Record**, 1997, pp. 164-180. The decline in Columban numbers was not stemmed by involving laity in its mission as some members hoped. Wanting to create more opportunities for more lay people to go on mission in their own right, and not by default as clerical numbers declined, rested on stronger theological ground.

¹⁰⁵ "Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Society", Superior General 1989, CAE, Seminary File; K. Barrett, thesis, p. 31.

One missionary era is coming to an end while a new paradigm had not yet become clearly manifest ... Our task now, as Columbans, is to help orient Local Churches towards the frontier areas at the margins of Church, society and the world.¹⁰⁶

The Second National Consultation on Mission at Strathfield in September 1995 stands with the First Consultation twenty four years earlier as bookends to the reform of Columban seminaries. Over 250 missionaries working in twenty countries, together with ecumenical observers, gathered to discuss the future of Christian mission.¹⁰⁷ The Regional Director captured its spirit when he said, “We may not have the answers ... [but] are confident that we can move forward with the Spirit”. Although the future of the Society’s contribution to mission studies in the Australian church is uncertain, since 1997 the CMI has been functioning as a research unit.¹⁰⁸ Mixed feelings surrounded the changeover so that while the CMI was staffed largely by academics it ceased to be an academic studies faculty.¹⁰⁹ There is doubt as to whether the Society will be able to rebuild the academic base which made an important Columban contribution to helping advance the theory and practice of mission in the past.

Many who went through the revamped Columban seminary from the 1970s onwards see their formation years as having made a valuable contribution to their ongoing lives, missionary or otherwise. While the re-developed seminary system set some yet to be achieved goals regarding new mission work agendas and teamwork, young Columban members working overseas have shown that they could engage in the task. When they were able to work in teams they carved out new work situations and effectively engaged in cross-cultural mission. Both lay graduates and seminarians were comfortable with the notion of teamwork and found it supplied a structural

¹⁰⁶ N. Daly, *CI*, April 1994. In January 1994 a Society Conference on Initial Columban Formation was held at Tagaytay in the Philippines.

¹⁰⁷ *Kairos*, 12, November 1995, pp. 12-13; *Catholic Life*, November 1995, p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Promoting areas nominated as mission priorities in Columban Society policy, from 1997 the CMI acted as the umbrella of three centres: “The Churches and China”, “Christian-Muslim Relations”, and “Peace Ecology and Justice” respectively headed by Cyril Hally, Pauline Rae and Michael Gormly. The format and aims of the restructured CMI looked similar to those of the Mission Education Team based at Essendon in the mid 1980s as its staff became partners with Columban promotion and education personnel working through parishes, schools and specialised secular and church groups. A Regional Columban web site was started November 1997 by Tom Rouse as a service of the CMI.

¹⁰⁹ Gregory and Margaret Weekes, managed the accommodation and catering requirements of the College 1997-1998. Until 2000, the Turrumurra building housed outside conference groups and Columban meetings. Plans envision shifting the CMI nearer to the campuses of the provincial seminary and the

replacement after the demise of the church-founding era of missionary activity. The fact that some priests and students left the Society should not be seen as invalidating the new system. Rather, their education better equipped them to judge whether their cross-cultural skills were up to missionary work in a modern age and whether their personal expectations of a fulfilled life could be found in Columban missionary work.

Conclusion

The last four chapters have argued that limitations built into the diocesan type of seminary training as offered by the Columban Society became apparent through the experience of members working overseas. The system proved deficient both in offering adequate tools for effective cross-cultural missionaries, and in inculcating attitudes and skills that would help missionaries to be happy and fulfill their role without unacceptable human and spiritual cost. After years of denial and infighting among seminary staff and Regional leaders, in the 1970s a new system of seminary formation was developed. In addition to addressing problems of effectiveness and human cost, these programs accommodated new ways of thinking about educational method and human fulfilment, and new church missionary aims.

In a cycle of planning, experimenting, evaluating and re-planning, a number of mission studies programs were developed at Turrumurra that were purposely opened to a wide range of church personnel, clerical and lay, male and female, Catholic and Protestant, and linked with university consortia. Establishing the post-1970 Turrumurra programs was the Columban Society's second definable contribution to training missionary personnel in Australia, helping advance the theory and practice of mission among Catholics and other churches. The Columban seminary programs post-1970 were not unplanned. Aims and criteria were set, evaluated and revised in an ordered way over nearly thirty years using a combination of traditional and contemporary disciplines.

This study of Columban seminary reform has illustrated the difficulty in changing the traditional ideology of church leaders, but has argued that the Turrumurra experience provides a model that was able to combine personal formation and academic rigour. However it has also demonstrated that specialist institutes have a limited life and benefit from attachment to mainstream university life. The mission objectives of the church have changed. So too have the aspirations of potential candidates who seek a new way so “that all the living might find a voice to sing your praise.”¹¹⁰ Columban members continue to search for ways in which the Society can further help to advance the theory and practice of mission in the Australian church through the avenue of missionary formation.

¹¹⁰ International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL), “Preface to a Eucharistic Prayer”, May 1984, quoted in S. McDonagh, **Greening the Millenium**, (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1999), p. 207.

PART THREE

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Chapter 8: Opinion Making: Columban Promotion and Magazine as Credible Sources of Commentary on some International Affairs for Australian Catholics

Chapter 9: Three Case Studies on World Issues of Significance to Australians: Images of Asian Peoples, Communism and Security State Dictatorships

Chapter 8: Opinion Making: Columban Promotion and Magazine as Credible Sources of Commentary on some International Affairs for Australian Catholics

Academic writers in Australia have often taken a dismissive attitude towards Christian missionaries, condemning them as cultural imperialists or judging them to be irrelevant, perhaps even figures of fun.¹ By demonstrating that the Columban Society was both a player on the international stage, principally in Asia and Latin America, and a source of information and opinion for many Australians, this thesis offers a much needed corrective to this attitude. Working particularly from a content analysis of the Columban mission magazine, this chapter argues that by providing a credible source of information on international affairs the Society's promotional materials expanded the horizons of many Australians.

Negative Historical Judgements on Missionary Promotional Sources

Through its promotional work the Columban Society had a nationwide impact on the outlook of Australian Catholics, a substantial percentage of the population. Even when academic writers concede that missionaries belonged to organisations that were active players on the arena they underestimate the degree to which Australians were informed of their work.² David Walker's analysis on Australian attitudes towards Asian peoples briefly repeated nineteenth century representations of missionaries but fails to examine the role they played in informing local attitudes.³ Even though she set out to explore literature as part of the arts, Alison Broinowski gave no place to the Asian image making of Christian missionaries apart from a passing reference to their literature feeding "horror stories" to children. She concluded that the late 20th century shift in Australian attitudes

¹ L. Strahan, **Australia's China: Changing Perspectives from the 1930s to the 1990s**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); D. Walker, **Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939**, (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999); A. Broinowski, **The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1992/1996 second edition).

² L. Dixon, "The Australian Missionary Endeavour in China, 1888-1953", thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1978, p. 129; Broinowski, **Yellow Lady**, 1992/1996, pp. 83-84; Phillip Edgar Brotchie, "The Importance of the Contribution of Australians to the Penetration of China by the China Inland Mission in the period 1888-1953, with particular reference to the work of Australian Women Missionaries", thesis submitted in total fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, Geelong Victoria, 1999, p.1. Phillip Brotchie concedes this about early 20th century China and Alison Broinowski asserts this of Korea in 1950.

³ Walker, **Anxious Nation**, 1999, pp. 19-20. One of his few references to Christian missionaries is to saving Indians from the darkness of heathenism and the blackness of sin.

towards Asia “was a change that had been advocated by government, urged on by shifts in global politics and economics, hastened by immigration, fostered by education, made visible by tourism, and partnered, with varying degrees of success, by business”.⁴ Her conclusion completely ignored the impact of missionary sources. Lachlan Strahan also emphasizes the negative images of Asian peoples cultivated by missionaries although the balance of the evidence in missionary magazines from which he quotes would suggest the contrary.⁵ This is particularly the case for the Columban mission magazine *The Far East*. Typical of the examples he overlooks is a 1925 photo of two Australian school boys, one had Chinese and the other Irish ethnic origins (illustrated on the next page). An accompanying letter published in the children’s section of the magazine explained that they were friends and carried the caption, “The Twain shall meet”.⁶

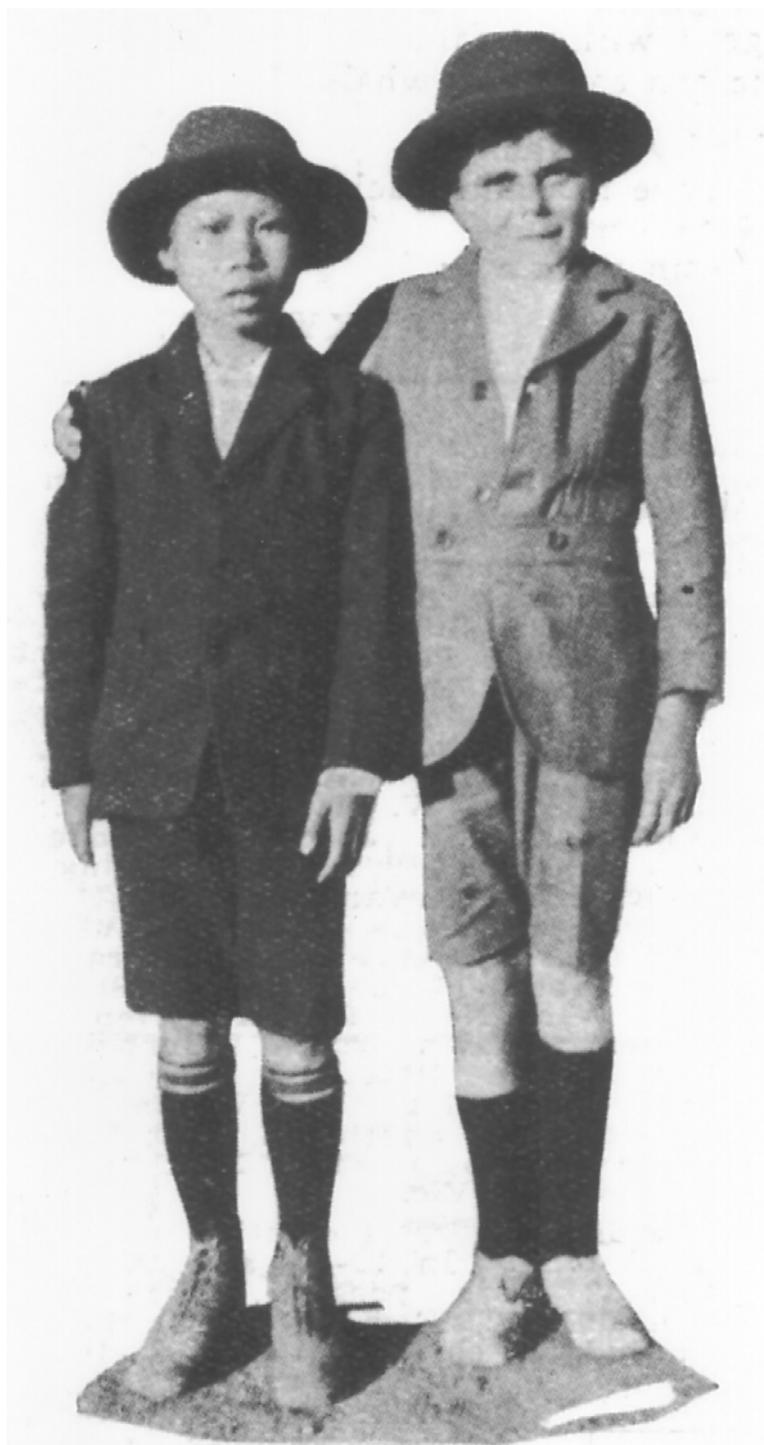
When Christian missionaries are referred to in Australian writings, they are commonly accused of being agents of western cultural and economic imperialism, with the implication being that they conveyed this message to their supporters. In order to support his case Strahan quotes freely from the Columban magazine and from the China Inland Mission’s *China’s Millions*. However these chapters evoke the “simplistic and ill defined images” that the author warned the readers about when in his introduction he writes about the power of language.⁷ Strahan not only distorted the magazine’s presentation of Chinese social ills and religion, but ignored the more substantial percentage of its material that carried vignettes of China’s geography, social life and political changes, and criticised western powers for their collaboration with oppressive local elites.

⁴ Broinowski, *Yellow Lady*, 1992/96, pp. 40 and 216.

⁵ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, pp. 71, 37 and 157. A content analysis of the magazine conducted by this author in 2000 showed that one story in the “Young China” section of *China’s Millions*, 1934, p. 12, carried a scary story but it was out of character with the rest of the magazine.

⁶ *TFE* 6, 1925, p. 17.

⁷ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, pp. 6-7 and 71-121. The two mission magazines he quotes from covered a longer period than his work considers, carrying commentary on the heady days of Chinese nationalism post-1911 and on post-1972 revisions in China.



**“THE TWAIN SHALL MEET”
in Spite of What the Poet Says.**

Photo and text taken from *The Far East* June, 1925

This chapter will argue that from 1920-2000 the Missionary Society of St Columban and its Australian magazine *The Far East* were sources of credible information for Australian Catholics in debates on issues of international importance to Australia. Everett Hunt wrote,

Academic historians are showing increased interest in the missionary and the whole mission enterprise as an important facet of international and cultural relations ... [since] the missionary was aware of cultural, social, psychological, and political forces working both for and against the mission.⁸

The first-hand experience of Columban missionaries was a bridge to otherwise little understood nations and peoples. In the midst of WWII the magazine editor could confidently claim, “For years, readers of the magazine have been acquainted with China, Burma, Japan, the Philippines ... Looking back over our past issues, we see these names which have since leaped into the headlines”.⁹

The chapter will argue firstly, that the direct foreign experience of its Columban members involved in the geographic expansion of local mission churches led the Society to develop an independent viewpoint that recognised both the aspirations of unique peoples within the human family, and the international context of missionary ventures. Secondly, through its Australia-wide network of influence among church leaders and institutions, the Society passed on to Australian Catholics a credible, complex and up-to-date set of ideas and images of world events. *The Far East* allowed readers to share in the Columban journey of discovery.

Overseas Experiences and Official Reflections as a Basis of Credibility

The Columban Society’s role as a commentator on international affairs was a logical extension of its primary task as a church mission agency. Similarly, the Society’s magazine was designed largely to gather support for its religious enterprise, so that its

⁸ E. Hunt, **Protestant Pioneers in Korea**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980), p. 3; Peter van der Veer “Religion”, A. Barnard and J. Spencer, eds., **Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology**, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 482-486; A. Austin, **Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom**, (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1986), p. xv; A. Dries, **The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), p. 270; S. Barnett and J. Fairbank, eds., **Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings**, (Cambridge, MA: the Committee of American-East Asian Relations of the Department of History, Harvard University, 1985), pp. 4-19.

⁹ TFE 11, 1944, p. 2.

ongoing critique of world issues was interwoven with promotional materials. But rather than detracting from its role as a commentator, the Society's evangelical aim impelled it to address international events. These impacted on both the context of its mission operations and the day to day lives of its members, leading the Society to raise social issues it saw as integral to its Christian message. Table 1 lists the locations and years of Columban commitment in each place, illustrating the diverse sources of members' experiences that began in China.

TABLE 1. COLUMBAN SOCIETY MISSION COMMITMENTS 1920-2000

<i>Location</i>	<i>Years</i>
China (Hanyang in Hupeh, Nancheng in Kiangsi, Huchou in Chekieng)	1920-1954
Philippines (Manila, Luzon, Mindanao, Negros)	1929<
Korea (Kwangu, Cheju, Kangwon, Seoul, Inchon, Andong, Pusan, Suwon)	1933<
Burma (Bhamo, Mitchinya)	1936-1976
Japan (Tokyo, Chiba, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Wakayama, Kyushu)	1948<
Peru (Lima, Andes)	1952<
Chile (Santiago, Iquique, Valparaiso, Araucania)	1952<
Fiji (Suva, Vita, Latoka, Yaswasa)	1952<
Pakistan (Lahore, Hyderabad)	1978<
Taiwan (Hsinchu, Taipei)	1978<
Brazil (San Salvadore, Barreiras)	1985-1998
Belize (Belize City)	1986-1996
Jamaica (Montego Bay)	1986-1998
Hong Kong and mainland China	1987<

Columban missionaries quickly discovered diversity. In spite of historical developments leading to Roman Rite predominance and the consequent trends towards uniformity, as a communion of local churches the Catholic Church is diverse by definition and in reality.¹⁰ On entering China Columban members encountered this diversity. In 1926 there were 76 Catholic Ecclesiastical Divisions in the area, and by 1933 the total had grown to 122 served by an even greater number of different congregations from around the world, as well as local personnel.¹¹ The experience of church diversity grew as the

¹⁰ Acts. 13:47-15:29. Particular churches developed as different Catholic Rites with their own liturgy, discipline and theology. The term "universal church" is sometimes used to express the quality of catholic unity within this diversity. Catholic trends towards Roman style uniformity increasing after the Protestant Reformation, compounded by the administrative power of the Vatican offices, but a reversal began after Vatican II.

¹¹ Paschal {Pasquale} D'Ella, "Catholic Missions", H. Woodhead, ed., **The China Year Book** 1934, (Shanghai: The North-China Daily News & Herald Ltd.), pp. 327-334. B. Wolferstan, **The Catholic**

Society moved into other parts of Asia from 1929 onwards and widened even further as the Society took on new commitments in South America and elsewhere. It was through this experience of diversity that Society members came to understand the international family of distinct peoples and were in a position to share that knowledge with supporters in Australia through the Columban magazine.

The foreign experience of Columban members was augmented to a small degree by a number of Society commitments in Australia where its priests worked with immigrant Chinese Catholics in Melbourne from 1942-48, and later with ethnic groups from other countries where the Society had experience.¹² Commitments were temporary and usually initiated a chaplaincy that was handed over to others, all but ceasing from the 1980s.¹³ Columban members were also involved as chaplains to foreign university students in Sydney from 1953 and in Melbourne from 1958 in collaboration with the local Catholic archdioceses.¹⁴ The style of Columban work with foreign students was a significant innovation in that it aimed to help students to maintain their cultural identity while studying in Australia rather than primarily facilitating Catholic religious practice. Columban Cyril Hally promoted a method of reflection about values and life-response, a method which was later adopted by other chaplains and counselors.¹⁵ While the Columban work with ethnic Catholic communities and foreign students in Australia was

Church in China, (London: Sands, 1909), pp. 417-455. D’Ella and Wolferstan give extensive statistics for both Protestant and Catholic missionary numbers and origins, and work districts. A photo of The First China Synod called by the Apostolic Delegate held in 1924 shows a mix of facial types and a mixture of clerical dress, CAE, China file. A. Camps and P McCloskey, **The Friars Minor in China 1294-1955, Especially the Years 1925-55**, (Rome: General Curia, Order of Friars Minor, 1995), p. 28. The Columban Hanyang area in China was cut off from the Franciscan Wuhan Vicariate. P. Rule, “Chinese-centered Mission History”, J. Heyndrickx, ed., **Historiography of the Chinese Catholic Church: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries**, (Louvain: Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 1994), p. 52; B. Smyth, “Columban China History”, Heyndrickx, **Chinese Catholic Church**, 1994, p. 478. Heyndrickx’s work gives an overview of history studies on the 20th century Catholic Church in China.

¹² H. Deakin, “A Notable Anniversary”, **Kairos**, (Melbourne), 1 January (1995), p. 4. Steinhilber to O’Mahony 23.7.73; O’Mahony to Steinhilber 4.9.73 & 17.12.74, CAE, D/CA files. Work began with Catholic Korean migrants in Sydney in 1974 and in Melbourne in 1978. Part-time work with other ethnic Catholics groups from Latin America, Fiji, Japan, Burma and other countries where the Society worked has been common since the 1970s.

¹³ Cleary, 14.11.1978, CAS, D files. In 1978 the Regional Director Bernard Cleary favoured local Columban migrant work but it gradually declined after his time.

¹⁴ Chaplains in Sydney were Cyril Hally and Vincent Batchelor. Chaplains in Melbourne were Bernard Cleary, “Paddy” Griffin, Seamus O’Connor and Francis Carey.

¹⁵ Hally to McGlynn 23.11.54 and C. Hally, “A Report on the Asian Student Apostolate, 1954”, CAS, D files; E. Campion, “At the University in Sydney”, **Eureka Street**, 10, 9 (November), 2000, pp. 14-17. Hally helped to focus work with Asian students in Sydney from 1953, cooperating with local Sisters and Father Roger Pryke.

fleeting, it reinforced Columban overseas experiences and was the subject of reports in its *Regional mission magazine*.¹⁶

The Columban appreciation of cultural differences grew over several decades. Even though theological support for church centralisation was strong when the Columban Society entered China in 1920, the “Magna-Carta style mission encyclical” published the previous year by Pope Benedict XV helped reverse the trend.¹⁷ It set Catholic missionaries the urgent task of developing indigenous churches, unique in their local cultural character and served by local clergy. This task led the Columban Society, even unconsciously, to go against the centralist Roman trend it had known from the Cardinal Cullen style church at home. At first, the Society interpreted its work primarily in structural and geographical terms, helping establish independent dioceses with local personnel and governance by a local bishop, a natural emphasis because of its own diocesan roots and a focus written into its Constitutions.¹⁸ Columban members immersed themselves among foreign peoples in the context of forming Catholic parishes, living in a local community and working in their local languages. But some members began to see that merely establishing a local church presence was a limited goal and began to focus on the quality of local churches, asking if they were relevant to their people’s culture and aspirations.¹⁹ It marked a shift away from building church structures as the Society’s special contribution to missionary activity to look to the missionary quality of the new churches, encouraging their members to take seriously their living on this earth. Columban social awareness grew beyond pity or imposing western solutions to problems, even Christian ones, and focussed instead on the desires of the people themselves and their place within the international family of nations. In particular, Columban missionaries’ concern for the victims of social change became a recurring theme in the magazine.

¹⁶ TFE 6, 1969, pp. 7-9.

¹⁷ J. Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999), pp. 201-204; R. Tiedemann, “China and its Neighbours”, A. Hastings, ed., *A World History of Christianity*, (London: Cassell, 1999), p. 396.

¹⁸ “Constitutions of the Society of St Columban for Mission among the Chinese”, 1919/1925, n. 1, CAE, Constitutions Files.

¹⁹ “General Columban Assembly 2000”, Ch. 5, CAE, Chapters and Assemblies File. By Society policy, members still undergo this immersion during their training and early work life.

Columban members lived through the dramatic changes that followed both World Wars and were forced to respond, political, cultural and religious disputes constantly impacting upon Columban diocesan building activities. Increasingly the Columban message drew connections between the Catholic faith and the process of modern nation building, preaching that Christianity was needed to help bring an ethical dimension into the life of emerging nations:

For better or for worse, China is awakening. The old order is changing there as inexorably as it is in Western countries. If Western civilisation is acquired by the Chinese without its tradition of Christianity, if its scientific knowledge is divorced from its ethical system, the world will stand appalled at the result.²⁰

Members diversified their work that showed a progression from setting up schools and clinics to foster locally adapted evangelisation programs, and to work as chaplains and advisors in areas of university education, economic development, social justice, racial equality, human rights, ecology and religious dialogue. Each involvement led to a broadening of Columban international experience, leading many Society members to consciously promoting a type of “Christian humanism”, true individual and social freedom through belief in Christ.²¹

Importantly, the cumulative missionary experiences of Columban members became the basis of formal Society administrative reflections in local area and international meetings, elevating individual experiences, work priorities and interpretations to a new level of acceptability.²² These formal meetings gave official status and affirmed a growing Society awareness of international issues and people’s aspirations. Following the words of Pope Paul VI that evangelisation and development complement each other, the Society General Assembly in 1970 put missionary activity squarely within the context of international relations and the aspirations of developing peoples.²³ Members were encouraged to write articles about their experience and to take photographs that illustrated the Society’s new understandings of its work. The range of subjects addressed in the magazine expanded and editorials gave reasoned arguments explaining the context

²⁰ “Columban Mission”, **Women’s Social Work**, (November 1920), CAE, Foundation File. The Salvation Army produced *Gleaner* magazine, October 1904, was quoted in Dixon, “Australian Missionaries in China”, 1978, p. 129-30.

²¹ P. Cromblin, **Called for Freedom: The Changing Context of Liberation Theology**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), pp. 16-18.

²² Society policy making and meetings on particular issues involve representative superiors and members.

²³ “Acts of the 1970 General Chapter: Prologue”, p. 51, CAE, Chapters’ File.

for information and articles supplied by Columban members. Columban experiences, backed by official Society reflections and editorials, formed the basis of the material feedback to Australian Catholics. They painted a different picture to the often make believe and fickle images of Asia presented by the Australian arts community, or discussions of Asia-Australia relations in purely strategic or economic terms that downplayed the religious and cultural aspects integral to the unique histories of Asian peoples.²⁴

Information passed on to its Australian audience by the Society argued for an inter-play between two potentially conflicting streams of thought: a Christian meta-narrative, and a Christian valuing of the particular and individual. As a Catholic organisation, the Columban Society subscribed to a religious world-view that saw the Christian calling as having implications for the entire world, all peoples, and for all time, and saw church agencies like itself as having a worldwide mandate to serve that view. This is one reason why Catholics in modern times have pictured themselves as in an ideological battle with the opposing meta-narrative presented by Marxism. Church teaching on the common human call to dignity is also global in its scope, helping explain the growing Catholic opposition to the negative effects of economic globalisation in the social writings of Pope John Paul II since the 1980s.²⁵ However, inter-twined with Christian meta-narratives was an equally strong Christian tradition that values the individual and innovative work to free the individual from personal chains and social oppression. This is one reason why Catholic social teaching since Pope Leo XIII in the late 19th century has been vocal in defence of workers, migrants, poor and hungry peoples, and other groups oppressed by various systems on the right or the left of international politics. Society members did not regard these two streams as mutually exclusive. Helping to convert people to a single worldwide Catholic communion was combined with helping to build local church communities relevant to the aspirations of particular nations and peoples. This communion of inter-dependent churches, one body with many parts, provided a metaphor for comprehending a universal humanity made up of unique individuals and

²⁴ Broinowski, *Yellow Lady*, 1992/1996, pp. xii, 62, 83-84 and 223; Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 1999, pp. 12, 19-20 and 49; Julia Horne, Adrian Vickers and David Walker eds., "Australian Perceptions of Asia", *Australian Cultural History*, No. 9, 1990, (Kensington, NSW: School of History, UNSW, 1991). Walker's work covers the period until 1939 but his travel journal approach to sources passes over 20th century missionary sources, as did the special issue of *Australian Cultural History*.

cultures. Catholic diversity itself gave a entry point for Columban stories and commentary that helped create awareness among Australian Catholics of world affairs as complex but understandable and as the immediate context of missionary work.

While other Catholic and Protestant missionary bodies had worked to establish local Christian churches and promote a form of Christian humanism, the intimate connection between evangelical missionary aims and international affairs was particularly and clearly articulated in Columban feedback in Australia. Columban international perspectives differed from those of most other Australian Catholic groups in ways that went beyond its geographic work locations, diocesan focus and male clerical membership. Choosing to make social concerns integral to its evangelisation formed a particular Society perspective. This was further enhanced by the ongoing sharing of diverse Columban experiences within an international Society operating as one unit in which, in contrast to most other groups, members frequently moved between Regions for conferences and study if not for work.

Eighty years of Columban Society missionary experiences in different parts of the world helped mould a critique of international affairs that was unique. This distinctive commentary was systematically passed on through the Society's mission support network, a network with power to educate and to mobilise public opinion.²⁶ Over eighty years, the Society took its supporters along in its journey of discovery, advancing an international Columban perspective on some foreign peoples, their cultures, religious traditions, hopes and anxieties.

A Content Analysis of the Columban Society's mission magazine *The Far East*

A detailed content analysis of *The Far East* demonstrates the way in which the information and commentary on international events intertwined with stories on direct Catholic mission church expansion that dominated the text and the mechanics of fundraising for Society work. The analysis provides access to over 25,000 pages of

²⁵ Pope John Paul II, (Vatican), "Dives in misericordia: Mercy", 1980; "Laborem excercens: Labour", 1981; "Sollicitudo rei socialis: Social Concerns", 1987; "Centesimus annus: One Hundred Years", 1991.

²⁶ A. Walls, **The Missionary Movement in Christian History**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), pp. 251-252.

Columban opinion in a more detailed and accessible form than the sketchy notes and scattered memories of parish visitation and promotion talks. In addition, the magazine contains otherwise unpublished contemporary photographs usually supplied by the membership. In words and pictures the magazine preserves a record of changing international situations, changing Society responses, and the commentary it chose to present to its supporters in Australia.

The discussion that follows is based upon an analysis of eleven selected years of the Columban magazine beginning with the first issue. (See Table 2). The years are chosen because they were important in secular international affairs and in order to establish whether these were reflected in Columban priorities and commentary at that time.

TABLE 2: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF *THE FAR EAST* 1920-2000

<i>Year</i>	<i>World Event</i>	<i>Society Event</i>	<i>Mission Emphasis</i>
1920	Nationalists in China	Hanyang mission	Expand church, parishes, schools
1927	Anti-foreign uprisings	Disruption, sickness	Modify expectations in China
1937	Japanese imperialism	New Asian missions	Successes, Expansion
1942	WWII, Pacific War	Internment of members	Maintenance, Waiting
1952	Communism, Boom	Deaths, New missions	Post-war reconstruction
1959	“Cold” War	New seminary	Maintenance and Expansion
1968	Youth, Vietnam	Vatican II, Society 50 th	Hunger, Social Justice
1974	Dictators, Capitalism	Expulsions, Divisions	Liberation
1981	Post-Mao China	New missions, structure	China contact, Cultures
1993	Islamic visibility	Indigenous ordinations	Religious Dialogue, Ecology
2000	Globalisation	Cutbacks	Bridge between churches

Four general conclusions arise from this analysis. Firstly, the magazine coverage of culturally diverse peoples, primarily Asian and South American, was wide-ranging and detailed, and usually presented from the point of view of the people involved. With few exceptions, it did not present stereotypes, museum images, or aimless travelogues. Secondly, this coverage dealt with current and emerging political and economic issues such as migrant workers and the environment, changing over time when new international issues such as globalisation were recognised and new church and mission responses were developed. Thirdly, the analysis of world and church events in the magazine presented them as a rational progression in the lives of peoples

rather than a meaningless response to the situations they were confronting.²⁷ Lastly, the magazine constantly presented Catholicism, religion and values as integral parts of any society. It argued that it was part of the role of the church and missionaries to offer commentary on international affairs, having both the right and the duty to encourage changes directed at the common good.

Comparison with Other Mission Magazines and their Impact

The Far East has maintained a greater long-term emphasis on missionary work than other Catholic missionary magazines published in Australia as detailed below in Table 3.

TABLE 3 CATHOLIC MISSION MAGAZINES

<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Magazine</i>	<i>Began</i>	<i>Ceased</i>	<i>Peak Circulation</i>
Catholic Mission	<i>Catholic Missions</i>	1935	1974	200,000 late 1960s
Columban Society	<i>The Far East</i>	1920	Current	65,000 early 1960s
Divine Word	<i>Word</i>	1950	1995	20,000 late 1960s
Sacred Heart	<i>Annals</i>	1889	Current	50,000 late 1920s

Like *The Far East*, during the thirty-nine years of its publication *Catholic Missions* focused on overseas missionary work but devoted substantial space to information and comment on international affairs.²⁸ From 1889, the Sacred Heart Missionary Society's *Annals* had an Australian and south-western Pacific focus to the information it gave on mission countries and their international context. But it completely changed its character in 1968 to emphasise high school catechetics and again in 1981 to become a family focused journal of Catholic culture.²⁹ The Australian edition of *The Word* published by the Divine Word Missionary Society, running from 1950-1995 offered little information on world affairs apart from generic mission news, and gave no direct commentary.³⁰ The missionary minded Jesuit Society, Marist Fathers and Vincentian Congregation of the

²⁷ Strahan, *Australia's China*, 1996, pp. 2-3. The analysis illustrates Strahan's judgement that a "continuous dialogue" rather than "pendulum" image better captures the complex nature of China-Australia relationships.

²⁸ Copies are available at the Veech Library Sydney and the National Office of Catholic Mission Sydney. A sample analysis was done by this author March 2000.

²⁹ P. Stenhouse, "The Annals, 1889-1984", *Australasian Catholic Record*, 61, 3 (July 1984), pp. 271-281. Around 1970, the magazine sometimes had a circulation of up to 70,000 because of its catechetical emphasis.

³⁰ Visit to Veech library and communication with the SVD Society archivist at Epping, Sydney, March 2001.

Missions did not publish mission magazines, even though some articles on overseas missionary work appeared in their publications. Other large international Catholic missionary bodies, such as the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary, did not publish support magazines in Australia, often because they did not have the incentive of raising support from the public, as did the Columban enterprise, since they were largely funded through their institutions. Catholic overseas missions associated with Sisters, Brothers, Religious Priests, Lay Organisations and dioceses developed *Mission Newsletters* for their supporters. The number of such publications increased after WWII when more Religious groups included overseas missionary activity as one of many of their congregational works but these newsletters gave limited information on the larger picture and provided little analysis of a particular mission work.³¹ Taken together, the cumulative impact of Catholic missionary magazines on the opinions of Australian Catholics about world affairs has been significant as they catered to a public that was literate, inquisitive and hungry for material coming from credible sources. However, *The Far East* has more consistently conveyed opinions on the global context of missionary work to its readers than other Catholic publications.

The influence of Australian Protestant missionary magazines is difficult to assess. Strahan admits that “the missionary letter, read from the pulpit or circulated from the porch, stretched the imaginations of ordinary people.”³² The largest Protestant group of Australian missionaries overseas worked with the China Inland Mission (CIM) that published a local edition of *China’s Millions*.³³ However its strong evangelical Brethren and Baptist base may have limited its influence in Australia with only thirty-three localities listed in a support drive in 1920.³⁴ By not soliciting funds in Australia, the CIM may have deprived itself of the opportunity to foster a widespread sense of involvement by local Christians.³⁵ Anglican and Methodist missions in China took finance issues more seriously and built firm Australian church community support

³¹ J. D’Orsa, **The Catholic Missionary Movement in Australia**, (Turrumurra, NSW: Columban Mission Institute, 2000). Groups surveyed included the Society of Mary (Marist Fathers), Jesuit Society, The Little Company of Mary, Paulian Lay Missionaries, and Melbourne Archdiocese Overseas Mission.

³² *Gleaner, ABM Review, YWCA, CIM Annual Reports, China’s Millions, Missionary Tidings, Open Door* were some of the titles that carried a foreign missionary emphasis. Strahan, **Australia’s China**, p. 82, quoting Ingelson and Walker, p. 314.

³³ Brotchie, “CIM in China”, 1999, pp. 231-232 and 245.

³⁴ *China’s Millions*, 1920, p. 74.

³⁵ Brotchie, “CIM in China”, 1999, pp.126-28.

bases within church communities.³⁶ Their work was concentrated in the Pacific and an increasing focus on short-term commitments in recent decades has diminished experience and reflection.³⁷ Strahan suggests that the influence of the greater numbers of Australian Protestant missionary personnel overseas would have exceeded that of their Catholic equivalents.³⁸ However the comparisons made here indicate that the depth and coverage of *The Far East* over the eighty years of its publication may have exceeded that of any of the other magazines.

Some indication of the impact of the Columban magazine may be inferred from the sizeable number of subscriptions maintained over the years and the generally positive feedback received in letters to the editor.³⁹ Even letters critical of Columban concerns for social justice and interreligious dialogue issues post-Vatican II is evidence that conservative Catholics recognised that by taking a public position on international issues the Society was having an influence on Australian Catholic opinion. More than any other Columban promotional materials, the Columban magazine has been a constant line of communication with Australian Catholics on priority issues for the Society. The magazine took its readers beyond a parochial view to place missionary activity in a complex international context. The Society and its messages remained welcome in Catholic dioceses and parishes over eighty years, its magazine functioning as an important stepping off point for Columban campaigns on international issues that would later gain wide local support.

Bias, Selection Processes and Unintended Impacts of the Columban Magazine

Although this content analysis of *The Far East* found no evidence of the magazine intentionally giving wrong information, the question of bias is more problematic. Writing in 1966 on British Protestant Missions to China,

³⁶ TFE, 10, 1921, p. 11; 1, 1922, p. 4; 3, 1928, p. 24. Catholics were encouraged to emulate Protestant support for their missions.

³⁷ D'Orsa, "Missions", 2000. The Uniting Church has a long pre-history of missions, and since the 1980's introduced People in Mission (PIM). The Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) established 1850 ceased in 1999. The Baptist Board of Mission (BBM) planted churches since 1885. A more recent group is the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (EMA) with 206 evangelical institutions emphasising short term work by young people.

³⁸ Strahan, *Australia's China*, 1996, p. 82.

³⁹ CAE, The Far East file.

Marchant warned of the pitfalls in relying heavily on mission journals and reports stating that ‘the periodicals with few exceptions were produced to keep donors, benefactors and friends of the missions informed and interested in the group which they supported. Invariably the editors of these works, in order to maintain that interest and patronage, carefully selected material for publication’.⁴⁰

Similarly, Rivera has argued that, in the 1920s, the USA Catholic Maryknoll Missionaries magazine *Field’s Afar* only included positive themes about the Chinese people and reshaped or repressed negative reports, hinting that this was done to solicit funds.⁴¹ The Columban magazine at that time also presented positive images of “the culture and civilisation of a great, though pagan, people”.⁴² However, the magazine was not consistent in the messages it presented. Conflicting stories were sometimes placed side by side, suggesting that the magazine was not so calculating in cultivating financial support. Articles on the great moral values and cultural treasures of the Chinese people were mixed with those on superstition and political chaos, inviting readers to go along with the Columban endeavour and journey of discovery. Part of the positive emphasis was to create a rapport between the readers and the Chinese people.

You would like to see what a Chinese Catholic home is like? Then come with me ... Now have a smile for everyone you meet ... I shall take a seat on the bed-oven ... My, what politeness! ‘You must take a cup of tea’.⁴³

The temptation to feature articles that would promote fund raising was always present, and cases of this were exposed and corrected by the Society’s internal processes. Formal Society evaluation-meetings were an important safeguard, setting the parameters of interpretation of world affairs within which magazine editors and Regional superiors were expected to work, regardless of their own preferences. Editorial policy was that articles from members were changed to maintain publication standards of English and length but their basic content was not altered.⁴⁴ When in the late 1960s the editor was accused of presenting an image of poverty in Peru that was superficial, corrective

⁴⁰ Brotchie, “CIM in China”, 1999, p. 10.

⁴¹ P. Rivera, “Field Found”, 1998, *Catholic Historical Review*, 84, 3, (July 1988), p. 483. The four themes identified were - China was a great nation and people, the Chinese were ready for Christianity, charitable works would help in their conversion, and the faith of converts was a wonder to behold.

⁴² *TFE* 10, 1920, p. 10

⁴³ *TFE* 10, 1920, p. 13.

⁴⁴ Interview with John Colgan, editor of *The Far East* 1987-2002. Brotchie, “CIM in China”, 1999, p. 9, similarly states that articles in the *CIM* magazine accurately reflected the original writers.

articles followed from the sub-editor.⁴⁵ Some Columban members on promotion argued that work for social justice often did not make good copy for the magazine since it might be either boring to the readers or come into conflict with Catholics more accustomed to relief work appeals. The Superior General, however, wrote in 1980 to remind superiors that the educational role of the magazine was not to be down-played because of its fund-raising function. The Regional Director replied, “We are conscious that more could be done towards educating the readers of *The Far East* and associates generally about the implications of our government’s and trade policies, consumerism etc. on the Third World Countries. The magazine is open to such articles.”⁴⁶ When the magazine parted company with the experience of the members and official Society reflections it was brought back into line. Australian Colin McLean, for example, wrote in the Society’s newsletter complaining that promotion-pamphlets in the USA and Irish Regions had misrepresented his work in Manila to emphasise “how much I was helping the people rather than how they have made me aware of the forces oppressing them.”⁴⁷ A reply from the Irish mission team in the next issue stated that they appreciated such criticism. The Australian Region had not misused McLean’s material.

The process of selecting materials for publication in *The Far East* was one of its strengths as it largely drew on its own sources. Columban editors told stories of mission successes: they kept count of the number of baptisms in China, and later the tally of churches opened in the Philippines, and told stories of cultural adaptation in Fijian religious expression, cooperatives started in Korea and the church’s role in opposing dictatorships in Chile. Taking this positive approach not only reinforced the public image of missionaries as achievers but showed them involved in local affairs. In commenting on international affairs of their choosing, they usually selected ones that affected the missionary work of Society members of which they had some knowledge. The magazine also omitted some details in its reporting of church events that may have caused a scandal, such as the betrayal or suicide of Catholics under Communism

⁴⁵ Peru Group and McWilliams, *Viewpoint* (June and August 1969).

⁴⁶ Cleary to O’Brien 28.4.1980, CAE, D/CA files.

⁴⁷ C. McLean, CI December 1983.

in China post-1949.⁴⁸ In later decades it did not report on a few Columban priests who encouraged armed struggles, or the growing number of Society members who left the priesthood. As the mission enterprise was the focus, stories rarely revealed the inner workings of the Society or the feelings of the individual missionary involved. Also, the magazine did not report on issues when disclosure may have caused harm to people in mission areas, for example, Catholics operating secretly in China under Communism. These processes of selection did hide some historical realities, some internal to the Society, but on balance they did so without veering from the path of presenting significant international issues in the magazine. A process of selection is part of editing a focus into any magazine; the Columban magazine was no exception. In fact this process of selection added to the magazine's integrity since it located Society missionary experiences within particular historical contexts. While commentary did not try to address every aspect of an issue, it presented some aspects in depth as editors selected from primary sources supplied by Columban members themselves rather than repeating information of a general nature. This process became a strength of the magazine.

Attempts by missionary support magazines to put changing mission work in its equally changing international historical contexts created the danger of unintended impacts on their readers, the social impacts of evangelisation being a significant example. While many 19th century Protestant groups promoted welfare, taking to themselves the philanthropic and subsequent civilising agenda of the British Empire, CIM missionaries were careful to distance themselves from the political ramifications of the Protestant Social Gospel movement.⁴⁹ Evangelical groups in the 20th century have largely continued to encourage their magazine readers to distance themselves from social justice issues. The Catholic Missionary movement took to itself the social teachings of the Popes since Leo XIII in the late 19th century. The Columban Society adopted this stance, albeit with an Irish and Australian flavour, and led its supporters to do so. This concern for the social situation of whole peoples set the tone of Columban magazine commentary: Chinese

⁴⁸ The magazine was silent on the departure of the Christian Brothers from China in 1927. M. Fitzgerald, "The Communist Takeover in China 1949-54: Personal Impressions", pp. 20 and 77, CAE, Fitzgerald File. Fitzgerald told stories not reported in the magazine - some Chinese Catholic families under Communist persecution in 1950 committed suicide, and Catholics made false accusations against Columban priests.

⁴⁹ Brotchie, "CIM in China", p. 68-69. He compares the CIM with other 19th century Protestant missionaries.

aspirations from the 1920s, development issues after WWII, and dictatorships in countries with Capitalist Security State economies from the 1970s. Ecological issues entered into an expanded understanding of social justice in recent decades.

Columban publishing on socio-political issues may, however, have helped create a distance between the real and intended impact of its magazine on Australian Catholics. For example, in promoting the Columban task as helping build up churches as significant players in their local country, the magazine presented the task to its readers as achievable. This ran the risk of confusing readers by dissolving the distinction between the idealistic and even utopian transformation of peoples based on Catholic faith and the harsh realities involved in changing the social and political structure of nations. Many nationalist Third World leaders turned to the methods of Communism in the 20th century to bring about these changes rejecting what they saw as the slow methods of Christianity.⁵⁰ Communist governments and guerillas among others also claimed the right to stand for the poor. Future historians may argue that Christian methods would have been less harsh and just as effective as violent ones, but that is speculation. Within Australia, telling emotive stories of Communist atrocities and persecution from the 1930s-1950s helped popularise anti-Communist feeling at the parish level thus obliquely supporting the political agenda of the Movement among magazine readers.⁵¹

In spite of these dangers, the Columban magazine never disguised its intention of trying to place its primary missionary purpose within the dynamic unfolding of international issues. This analysis of *The Far East* shows that it reacted quickly to changing events in China and elsewhere, confirming a similar observation Dries made of missionaries in the USA, rather than, as Strahan asserts, portraying China as being in an “eternal standstill”.⁵² From 1920 to the 1960s, Columban missionary work was often presented as spreading the “full truth” to be found in Christ not only for the individual but for whole peoples, believing that nations involved in an active process of change had to be “built on truth”. The language belonged to its time but dealt with serious

⁵⁰ “Christianity in Asia”, (India: Student Action, Pamphlet, 1965), CAE, Mission Education File. C. Hally, “Chronology”, p. 7, CAE, Seminary File.

⁵¹ B. Duncan, **Crusade or Conspiracy: Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2001), pp. 191 and 396.

realities, putting Columban endeavours within the context of China's future as a nation.

Nine years ago the old Imperial government of China was overthrown, and a Republic established ... China had had enough of the Manchus. For centuries they had misgoverned the country and arrested her development ... Ministers seem to have no thought for the welfare or integrity of their country. They keep draining her resources and borrowing extensively from Japan and other 'interested' outsiders to advance their personal interests and to support the rival armies of China's contending leaders, while 20,000,000 of her children are literally starving. Anarchy would be preferable to such a government ... It is to be feared, however, that mere charity is unequal to the task of rescuing so many millions.⁵³

The notion of the full truth in Christ was reformulated after Vatican II as the magazine emphasised the goal of finding "full life" in Christ, a Scriptural and theological category like that of "truth" but also carrying implications in the shaping of nations. This change was reflected in an increasing number of magazine stories told from the point of view of people living at the bottom of society, depicting the marginalised peoples in the Third World as victims caught up in complex international affairs involving modern political, economic and technological systems.

... today the poor are with us in a new and revolutionary context, because modern science, medicine and technology have helped bring about a single world economy, a neighborhood which is interdependent, but largely lacking the institutions and the policies that express solidarity, compassion, and human obligation ... The gap between the rich and the poor [nations] is rapidly widening ... this is a wholly unprecedented historical fact, and it presents the Christian conscience of the Western nations with a challenge ... A loving human family does not permit its members to suffer in this way.⁵⁴

When researchers have interrogated the text of mission magazines they were often searching for answers to a particular question and passed over issues not of interest to them. Sometimes this is quite legitimate as in the case of Brotchie's analysis of the CIM mission magazine *China's Millions* to find evidence of what Australian CIM missionaries achieved in China. A content analysis of that magazine shows that it also informed its readers about the Chinese peoples and the way they lived, but that was not

⁵² Dries, **USA Catholic Mission Movement**, 1998, pp. 142-143; Strahan, **Australia's China**, 1996, p. 37. Strahan judges the Columban magazine to have presented this image through his interpretation of a single photograph of a junk on a calm river in China.

⁵³ **TFE** 10, 1920, pp. 1-2; 12, 1920 p.1; 3. 1921, pp. 1 and 4. 1921, p. 2.

⁵⁴ **TFE** 10, 1965, pp. 8-9.

the purpose of the researcher.⁵⁵ However, other researchers have not been so open. The acknowledged bias of 19th century missionary magazines does not justify the neglect or superficial treatment by writers such as Broinowski, Walker and Strahan of 20th century sources. This neglect suggests that some researchers pre-judged the content of mission magazines without any detailed examination. It also suggests that some academics carry romantic notions of culture, regarding it as static and museum-like or purely exotic, leading them to dismiss missionaries as cultural imperialists who disturb a supposedly ideal harmony frozen in time.⁵⁶ Such researchers ignore the dynamic nature of cultures and peoples' ability to acculturate, taking from other cultures what it chooses in a sophisticated process as the Japanese have done, without losing their own identity. Alternatively, it may simply be that academic circles are only beginning to recognise mission magazines as a neglected source for historical research.⁵⁷

Conclusion

While operating within the confines of its primary aim to gather support for the mission enterprise of the Society and subject to the dangers inherent in any publishing, the Columban magazine, *The Far East*, included substantial commentary on world affairs. It established a context of Society missions and explained the factors that continually helped to reshape Society work priorities. The magazine's thrust drew on direct Columban experiences and sources to present readers with the Society's own critique of international issues, providing an alternative voice and promoting knowledge of areas and issues not widely presented in the secular media. In an age of loyal church membership, *The Far East* carried authority, and because of its regular and large circulation, its influence is not be underestimated. Published in order to attract support for the Columban enterprise, the magazine did display a bias towards the positive and avoiding what may scandalise, but because its selection process favoured first-hand

⁵⁵ A content analysis of *China's Millions* was done at renamed CIM organisation's office in Epping, Sydney 23.03 01, the *Overseas Mission Fellowship International*. Using the years used in the analysis of *The Far East* shows that it contained a wealth of descriptive travel stories and maps. It occasionally directly addressed political and humanitarian issues in the context of its missionary work, passing negative judgements on colonial methods in 1927. When the CIM changed its name and scope in the mid-1950s, it continued to produce a magazine called *East Asia's Millions*. It is more church oriented and reports of humanitarian ventures.

⁵⁶ A. Quack, "The Ambivalent Relationship between Mission and Anthropology: Criticisms and Suggestions", *Verbum-SVD* 27, 3 (1986), pp. 221-234.

accounts, the magazine was an informed source of commentary on some international affairs. By presenting varied, up-to-date information, argument and fresh perspectives, *The Far East* helped open Australian Catholics to important international realities and stands worthy of recognition as a source of historical research. The quality and variety of the content of the Columban magazine demonstrates that it is rash to argue that all missionary magazines have no credibility as historical sources just because of their promotional aims.

⁵⁷ H. Carey, "Introduction: Colonialist Representations of Indigenous Religions", **The Journal of Religious History**, 22, 2 (June 1998), p. 130.

Chapter 9: Three Case Studies on World Issues of Significance to Australians: Images of Asian Peoples, Communism, and Security State Capitalist Dictatorships

Along with most other Australian citizens in the early twentieth century, Australian Catholics have largely been led by their history, education systems and secular media to accept a western view of the world. While settler colonies were largely self-governing, Europeans continued to exercise imperial power over large areas of Africa and Asia. In the ideological struggles that accompanied the dismantling of these empires Australians were rarely encouraged to question the notion that the English speaking world offered the correct path for every nation and peoples to follow. By the late twentieth century, pressure to impose a uniformity on all nations was reshaped in the form of increased globalisation of First World economics that resulted in a leveling of cultural differences as peoples worldwide were expected to accept standardised market commodities.¹

However, many Columban members began to appreciate world issues from the point of view of the peoples they had worked among. Drawing on their experience the Society added an independent and often dissenting voice to the Australian conversation on international affairs.² In particular, the Columban magazine told a story which helped destabilize what Bolton calls the “traditional fear of Asian hordes fused with fear of Communism”, going on to argue against the belief that military dictatorships were a defence against Communism.³

To illustrate and test the critique of international affairs offered by *The Far East*, this chapter will more closely examine three particular topics as presented in the magazine, namely, Australian images of Asian peoples, the methods and ideology of Communism, and dictatorships operating with a Security State capitalist ideology. These topics have been selected for two major reasons. Firstly, each had a profound and immediate

¹ J. Camilleri and C. Muzaffar, **Globalisation**, (Selanger, Malaysia: International Movement for a Just World [Pax Christi], 1998). There are some positive trends in globalisation such as the growing agreements about human and cultural rights under international law.

² B. A. Santamaria, **Daniel Mannix: a Biography**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1984), p. 74. Dissenting voices like that of those of Archbishop Mannix were few.

³ G. Bolton, **The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 5, The Middle Way 1942-1995**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1990, 2nd edition 1996), p. 84; P. Woodruff, “The Church response to

influence on the work situation of Columban priests overseas, and was high in their consciousness when they sent back articles for the magazine derived from their missionary experiences. Secondly, these issues were of significance within Australian society in the twentieth century where there were ongoing local and international debates over immigration, Communism, human rights and the practices of international capitalism.

An examination of the three areas nominated will be put in the context of the prevailing attitudes in Australia in each period. An extensive literature exists on Australian attitudes to Asia since the nineteenth century. There have also been detailed studies of debates on Communism in Australia which have acknowledged the large contribution made by Catholic bishops and church groups. Australian literature on military dictatorships leading capitalist Security States, however, is less extensive and tied largely to the discussion of human rights abuses rather than their links with modern western capitalism.

FIRST CASE STUDY: Images of Asian Peoples in Australia

The freshness of Columban perspectives given to readers of *The Far East* since 1920 must be put in the context of the increasingly hostile images of Asian peoples that developed during the nineteenth century. Exotic adventure stories about India and eastern Asia, often coming through English literature, gave way to anxiety over immediate issues for Australians. The hostility towards the Chinese people that developed during the gold rushes was the major reason for the introduction of the so-called “White Australia Policy” in 1901. In the early years of the twentieth century there were increasingly calls for government to promote the development of sparsely populated northern Australia to protect the country from invaders.⁴ Caricatures, often represented by the phrase “the yellow peril”, as well as sympathetic perspectives were

the ideology of national security’s anthropology in Latin America”, M.Th. thesis, Jesuit School of Theology Berkeley, 1981.

⁴ A. Huck, **The Chinese in Australia**, (Croydon, VIC: Longmans, 1968), p.1; C. Choi, **Chinese Migration and Settlement in Australia**, (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1975), p. xi; S. Willis, “The Formation of Australian Attitudes towards China 1914-1974”, PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 1974; D. Walker, “Climate, Civilisation and Character in Australia, 1880-1940”, D. Walker and M. Bennett, eds., **Australian Cultural History: Intellect and Emotion**, (Geelong: Deakin University, number 16, 1997/98), 77-95; L. Strahan, **Australia’s China - Changing perspectives from the 1930s to the 1990s** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); D. Walker, **Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939**, St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1999).

mixed with serious debate over geopolitics, cultural and economic issues.⁵ Although the experiences of Australian soldiers in three major wars continued to be influential, by the middle of the century, security and cultural issues were increasingly overshadowed by debates over the trade potential of Asia.⁶ Even Asian students came to be seen as money earners for Australia rather than as agents of cultural exchange.⁷ However opposition to Asian immigration survived and became an emotive political issue with the rise of the One Nation political party in the 1990s.⁸ The arts and, more recently, social histories have explored changing Australian views, often catering to a fascination with Asian peoples and their cultures.⁹

China has been central to Australian debates about Asia and Columban missionaries were particularly well positioned to resource that debate. The number of Catholic and Protestant missionaries in China in the early twentieth century was substantial. Resident in urban and rural areas and mostly working in the Chinese language, they constituted what Dixon demonstrated as the most “consistent, ongoing and intimate” contact of Australians with China until the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁰ This contact ended when the Communist government came to power in 1949, but Christian groups have continued to monitor what is happening there and its relevance for other nations.¹¹ Naïve

⁵ Bill Hornadge, **The Yellow Peril**, (Dubbo, NSW: Review Publications, 1971/1976 second edition), pp. 5-7; P. Cochrane, “Review Essay: the many anxieties of Australia and Asia”, **Eureka Street**, 9, 7 (September 1999), pp. 37-39.

⁶ N. Viviani “Australia’s Future in Asia: People Politics and Culture”, D. Walker, ed. **Australian Perceptions of Asia: Australian Cultural History**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales), No 9, 1990, p. 102.

⁷ J. Coughlan and D. McNaamara, ed., **Asians in Australia: Patterns of Migration and Settlement**, (South Melbourne: MacMillan Education Australia, 1997).

⁸ C. Inglis, S. Gunasekaran, G. Sullivan and C. Wu, ed., **Asians in Australia: The Dynamics of Migration and Settlement**, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992).

⁹ A. Broinowski, **The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1992/1996 second edition); Yuanfang Shen, **Dragon Seed in the Antipodes: Chinese-Australian Autobiographies**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001). This book studies four stages of changing experiences for Chinese migrants from the nineteenth century until the post-1960s period.

¹⁰ Dixon, “Australian Missionaries in China”, 1978, p. 4. Woodhead, “Protestant Missions”, **China Year Book**, 1934, p. 334 and 342-44. Protestant statistics taken from 1923 number 7,663 missionary staff reaching a maximum of 8,325 in 1926, dropping to 3,133 in 1927 and by 1930 rising to 6,112 before beginning to drop steadily from 1933, missionaries came from a variety of groups – 86 English speaking and 21 from Continental Europe. D’Ella, “Catholic Missions”, **China Year Book**, 1934, p. 334-6. The Catholic church in 1933 had 122 Ecclesiastical areas served by 16,633 missionary staff, representing 27 priestly societies, members coming predominantly from Continental Europe but often including English speaking members.

¹¹ A. Sovik, “China Books and Periodicals: A Selective Review”, **International Review of Missions** LXX, 278 (April 1981 - Special China Issue), pp. 43-48. M. Masson, “Chinese Culture and Christianity”, **Pacifica**, 7 (1994), p. 123.

initial reactions that regarded the 1949 event as a judgement of God on bad missionary methods have given way to more mature evaluations, some by collaborative large-scale projects attached to universities.¹² In recent years Chinese scholars, both Christian and Communist, have entered into the debate.¹³ Their research has begun to lay to rest caricatures of the missionary suggesting that while there were exceptions, missionaries concentrated their efforts on conversion rather than the imposition of western civilisation, respecting Chinese cultural localisation as the natural form of adherence to Christianity.¹⁴ The images of Asia presented in the Columbian magazine support this more balanced judgement on missionary work.

This section will argue that *The Far East* presented the history and contemporary experiences and aspirations of Asian peoples, from their perspective, and did not reinforce the cultural imperialist agenda of the western powers. By setting out criteria through which readers could relate to a diversity of Asian peoples, the magazine led them to recognise both unique differences and the common humanity they shared with Asian peoples. In the process, Australian Catholics grew to see the peoples of Asia not as a threat but as sister and brother actors on the world stage, equal players in international affairs.

¹² China Missionary [name unpublished] "First thoughts on the Debacle of Christian Missions in China", **International Review of Missions**, XL, 160 (October 1951), pp. 411-420; D. MacInnis, "The North American Churches and China, 1949-1981", **International Bulletin**, 5, 2 (April 1981), pp. 50-54; A. Glasser, "Timeless Lessons from the Western Missionary Penetration of China", **Missiology** 1, 4 (October 1973), pp. 443-464; M. Smalley and S Peterson, "Resources in Yale Divinity School Library", **International Bulletin of Missionary Research**, 9, 3 (July 1985), pp. 104-106. In 1968 a committee contacted 1600 people and groups carrying records on China missions and collected materials at Yale University, USA. By 1985 it contained over 500 linear feet of materials. The university's missionary literature covers one third of its 337,500 books and half of the 1,455 periodicals and 1000 serials it receives are on missionary topics.

¹³ D Bays, ed., **Christianity In China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present**, (California: Stanford University Press, 1996). p. x. The papers at two symposia held in the Lawrence, Kansas, 1989 and 1990, focused on Chinese participants and resources to explore the "Christian factor" in their modernisation in twentieth century.

¹⁴ T. Christensen and W. Hutchinson, **Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era: 1880-1920** (Denmark: Aros Press, 1982); Kwok Pui-lan, **Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927**, (Boston, MA: American Academy of Religion, 1992), p. 3. The "Chineseness" of the church, even in colonial times, is growing in recognition as the missionary role is put in a wider perspective. An example is Protestant Chinese church-women, and the similar role of Chinese Sisters, Virgins and similar groups equally needs to be told. S. Barnett and J. Fairbank, eds., **Christianity in China "Early Protestant Missionary Writings**, (Cambridge, Ma.: The Committee of American-East Asian Relations of the Department of History, Harvard University, 1985), pp. 4, 5 and 19. The authors argue that the historic function of missionaries was "to transmit ideas and images in both directions". They argue that the neglect of Christian missions by modern historians' myopia is due to factors in western societies, especially secularisation of social sciences, and a patriotic disinclination by Chinese scholars to explore positive contributions made by Christian missionaries.

Columban View of the Social Situation in China post-1920

The Columban magazine in 1920 strove to present its Australian readers with an independent view of Asian peoples in world affairs and the role of the Catholic Church within those affairs. The very first magazine editorial in 1920 focused on Society religious aims in the context of the concerns of the Chinese people caught up in cultural and social upheaval, portraying Catholicism as at the service of China's future. It quoted the ex-Premier of China, "Without true religion there is no salvation for China, for true religion is the soul of the State."¹⁵ In the nineteenth century a cluster of factors ranging from political through technological and economic to ecological culminating in civil unrest had left many Chinese people striving for modernisation and a new political system. Stephen Neill wrote that after the Boxer Rebellion of 1901, local converts were not asking, "How can I be saved?" but "How can China live anew?"¹⁶ The Columban Society set itself the task of helping to fill a void identified by the Chinese people themselves by offering what it considered most valuable for the future of China, a moral base for its reforms set on the Catholic faith. In 1916 Patrick Cleary, who would later become a Columban bishop in China, predicted that:

... granting a firm stable government in China, the country, before the twentieth century is over, will be a world power of immense importance ... It is surely a question of momentous importance whether China is to be a great pagan or a great Christian nation.¹⁷

The magazine cast China's future as a struggle

between Neo-Paganism, Rationalism, Protestantism and Catholicism ... one of those world dramas which radically change the history of mankind. This world drama is the modernising of the pagan nations, a movement which involves a thousand million human beings, which embraces everything which makes for their culture, and which concerns in a striking degree their religion ... Why it is asked should money be squandered at this time on the heathen Chinese ... Only yesterday those practical minded men [asking the question] were not only willing but eager to give all they had – and in many cases much more – when it came to slaughtering millions of their fellow-men in the interests of trade ... Japan was

¹⁵ TFE 10, 1920, p. 1.

¹⁶ S. Neill, "The Heyday of Colonialism 1858-1914", **History of Christian Missions**, (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin, 1964), p. 341. China was "opened up" to the West by the Opium Wars 1839-42, badly exploited for economic gain through forced "unequal treaties", and the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 can be seen as the old China's last gasp of protest. J. Fairbank and E. Reischauer, **China: Tradition and Transformation**, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979).

¹⁷ P. Cleary, "Some Glimpses of Chinese History", **The Irish Ecclesiastical Record**, VIII, 1916, pp. 475-84. He detailed Columban missionary aims, methods to be used, awareness of Chinese history and culture, particularly the political and educational changes happening and the influence of western ideas and aspirations of the new nation.

allowed to drift from paganism into irreligion. The Japanese were modernized without becoming Christian.”¹⁸

The magazine’s particular concern was with the struggle and aspirations of individuals and groups caught up in the machinations of larger political schemes and disasters. The list of sufferings endured by Chinese people was long – gambling and opium addiction, diseases such as leprosy and tuberculosis, natural disasters such as famine and flood, and banditry and political disputes which forced people to become refugees. But the magazine did not use such disasters as cause for condemnation but presented them instead as motivations for change. The people were neither regarded as evil nor blamed for their plight; that judgement was reserved for bad leaders, and Columban sponsored work to address their suffering was presented as a temporary measure until governments took their proper responsibility.¹⁹ After the Marco Polo Bridge incident of August 1937 led to open warfare between Japan and China, the industrialised Hanyang City was bombed for forty weeks. The magazine reported that Chinese troops had abandoned the people, presenting refugees as another symptom of the sufferings inflicted on ordinary people by outsiders.²⁰ Chinese and Westerners alike came under judgement, Columban magazine reports condemning equally the local corruption and foreign arms-dealers that fed the conflicts.

Charges of Missionary Collusion with Foreign Powers

Some writers in China and Australia, secular and Catholic, have argued that missionaries colluded with foreign powers to the point of espionage in the mid-nineteenth century, especially after they gained widespread access to China from the Opium Wars of 1844 onwards.²¹ It is true that just as early Christianity used the infrastructure of the Roman Empire to spread out from Jerusalem and establish new

¹⁸ TFE 9, 1922, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹ TFE 8, 1925, p. 4; 10, 1925, p. 9; 12, 1926, p. 5; 6, 1927, p. 4; 12, 1929, p. 2; 1, 1930, p. 4; 11, 1931, p. 2; 10, 1947, p. 7; 6, 1948, p. 5; and 7, 1949, p. 3.

²⁰ TFE 4, 1939, p. 2; and 7, 1943, p. 3.

²¹ D. MacInnis, “A Chinese Communist View of Christian Missions in the Nineteenth Century”, *Occasional Bulletin*, 2, 2 (April 1978), pp. 49-53. The leader of the Taiping revolution in mid nineteenth century used Christian tenets to inspire his followers. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 1964, pp. 421-423; B. Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1992*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), pp. 175-207, 303-335 and 427. Overall Protestant groups focused on key areas of social change working along the coast and in rivers ports. A future leader Dr Sun-Yat Sen was educated in USA whose missionaries often promoted democratic visions. Dries, *USA Catholic Mission Movement*, p.122. USA

communities, modern Christian contact with Asian peoples was often dependent on the infrastructure laid down by European explorers, traders and empire builders, using their ships, banks and communication systems. Individual examples of cooperation were rare and did not mean that missionary bodies colluded with empire builders, more often they grew to condemn their methods, revoking national loyalties and agendas to do so.²² In 1916 the Columban Society founders had shown more interest in establishing a new Catholic mission venture than in the Irish republican movement. In order to reinforce this stance, the discussion of Irish politics was banned in the Columban seminary.²³ From the early years the Columban magazine warned that nationalist political affiliations distract from the universal appeal of Catholicism.

Our Divine Lord came on earth to abolish nationalism in religion by bringing salvation to all men, coloured as well as white. To think therefore of the Church as a hole-and-corner, national or parochial thing is wrong.²⁴

Although the Society at times was forced to deal with foreign diplomats in China and elsewhere because of local laws or unusual circumstances, this did not destroy its anti-party-political and anti-nationalistic stance.²⁵ Prior to 1922, all Catholic missionaries in China fell under French diplomatic and legal protection because of terms in French-Chinese government agreements formed in 1860. Under Chinese law, foreign people had to be under the protection of some foreign power to obtain residency or buy property, Irish Columban priests having to go against the grain and register with the local British authorities in the first few years.²⁶ In 1919 the Irish church lawyer M. Ronan supported the speedy establishment of an Apostolic Delegate in China to which missionaries could be attached for legal purposes. He argued that missionaries needed to break away from French-Chinese diplomatic agreements, a position long advocated

missionaries put the virtues of “democracy, liberty, adaptability, regard for the individual, and enthusiasm” at the forefront of the mission enterprise.

²² **TFE** 7, 1922, p. 7; 6, 1923, p. 7; 12, 1927, p. 12; 10, 1930, pp. 4 and 11. The Society published its policy of not being involved in nationalistic alliances in the magazine from 1922 onwards. In 1927 the Apostolic delegate reiterated the policy that missionaries not become involved in politics, and Galvin did the same in 1930. One bishop told an assembly of missionaries that they were called to revoke national affiliations. “As a missionary in China, I love China ... Act here in the mission as if everyone among us [missionaries] were Chinese.”

²³ Hawkins to Maguire, 1921, letter from Columban Seminary Ireland, **CAE D** File. Interview with Gordon Jackson January 2001.

²⁴ **TFE** 9, 1923, p. 2; 5, 1929, p. 2. In 1929 Pope Pius XI stated that Catholicism was above all flags.

²⁵ M. O’Neill, **CI**, March and April 1996.

²⁶ McCarthy to Maguire 6.9.21, **CAE**, D/USA file; M. O’Neill **CI** April 1996. Columban members had to register with authorities on both accounts even though they at first refused to come under [Britain] “John Bull”.

by revolutionary Catholic thinker in China, Father Vincent Lebbe.²⁷ In 1922 Vatican-Chinese diplomatic relations were established and became the normal pattern when the Society took on new missions in other Asian countries.²⁸ This Vatican network of communication was significant for the Columban Society, complementing but distinct from the services provided by modern Western infrastructure, allowing the Society to distance itself from imperialist agendas.

Strahan argues that in the 1930-1940s all Australian missionaries of Irish and British background “tended to perceive the world from the perspective of a white, British dominion”.²⁹ Columban history shows otherwise. During centuries under England’s control, the Irish resisted their oppressors. While they took the English language to themselves, they developed an extensive literature of their own and forged a new identity that was both Catholic and English speaking.³⁰ Through the mass migration of the nineteenth century, they created the Irish cultural empire that was to be so important in fostering both the Columban enterprise and the attitudes of its members.³¹ Operating as a single unit with a predominantly Irish membership, the Society disseminated an Irish critique of international issues, a critique that Archbishop Mannix among others demonstrated in Australia.

Isolated reports in *The Far East* and individual letters to the contrary did not break this pattern of critique. It is true that in 1927 and 1930 when bandits captured Columban priests in China, the Society sometimes used British diplomatic personnel to deliver ransom money, and, during WWII and the Korean War to repatriate Society members.³² These incidents were reported in the magazine as were instances in later

²⁷ M. Ronan, “The Holy See and the Protectorate of the Chinese Missions”, *Irish Ecclesiastical Review*, XV, 1920, pp. 468-481; J. P. Wiest, *Maryknoll in China: A History 1918-1955*, (New York: W. E. Sharpe., 1988), pp. 36, 75, 205 and 318-19.

²⁸ C. Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross: Studies in Mission History*, (London: Longmans Green, 1953), p. 239.

²⁹ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, p. 11.

³⁰ A. Hastings, “Constructing Nationhood: Ethnicity Versus Geography”, Keynote Address at the Australian Historical Association’s Conference, Adelaide, July 2000.

³¹ *TFE* 4, 1923, p. 2; 11, 1934, p. 23; 3, 1944, p. 3. Propaganda encouraged English speaking agencies to replace European groups depleted during WWI. In 1919 Pope Benedict XV’s mission encyclical letter “Maximum Illud” lamented missionary groups clinging to vicariates they could not service. English speaking missionaries were at an advantage when English increasingly became the language of international affairs and education.

³² D. Burton, *Brave Wings*, (Omaha, USA: Columban Society, 1957); T. Rillstone, *...And Behold We Live*, (Essendon: Columban Society, 1947); C. Cary-Elwes, *China and the Cross*, (Longmans, Green and

decades when Allied soldiers in Korea and elsewhere cooperated with Columban priests to distribute relief goods. However, these reports emphasised the generosity of individual soldiers rather than any nationalistic Columban connections or Western World agenda.³³ While at an individual level Australian Columban “Gerry” O’Collins wrote to his brother that he was thankful for the British gunboats and appalled at the anti-British press in Australia, this opinion was personal and not indicative of Society policy, nor was it reflected in the magazine.³⁴

Strahan also suggested that many Australian missionaries adopted colonial rituals and lifestyle to cope with the difficulties they encountered in China, copying British ways such as “taking tiffin [lunch]”, and seldom venturing beyond the port cities.³⁵ Statistics demonstrate that this was not so. In 1924, 59 Australian missionaries worked in rural areas compared with 41 in urban centers.³⁶ Apart from keeping an administrative and support house in the port-city Shanghai, all Columban members worked up-river. Strahan wrote that Columban priest Bill McGoldrick said in a private letter that he found solace in the Catholic rituals of a “Catholic sanctuary” near Shanghai, which Strahan termed a “little Vatican”.³⁷ Yet McGoldrick did not promote the easy life and lamented Columban members having to come to the city for medical care. Columban standards of housing, food and transport were simple and set with maintenance of members’ health as the main criterion, the magazine openly stated that health was the reason for them going each year to a summer holiday house in the hills at Kuling for a holiday and retreat.³⁸ While Hogan has argued that Irish missionaries looked after themselves better than the French, most Columban members were alone in parishes

Co., 1953), pp. 238-241. M. Fitzgerald O’Collins, *CAE*, O’Collins File. Australian Columban priests were initially to be repatriated but travelling from inland they missed the ship in Shanghai and until 1945 were in prisoner of war camps. McGoldrick was in a camp for male religious, O’Collins and Hennessy asked to go with civilian POWs to unofficially work as chaplains, and Australian Columban Sister Carmel was in a female camp, all in Shanghai. Eight Columban British Empire and USA priests were repatriated from Korea after six months via Portuguese East Africa and Capetown in exchange for Japanese prisoners. Australians were among the thirty Columban priests interned in Manila. In Burma, twenty five Columban priests had three years of internment.

³³ *TFE* 1, 1952, pp. 5-6; 7, 3, 1955, p. 7.

³⁴ M. O’Collins to Bishop O’Collins, 31.1.27, *CAE*, O’Collins File. This letter was quoted in the Dixon thesis.

³⁵ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, pp. 91-94 and 104.

³⁶ Dixon, “Missionaries in China”, 1976, p.147.

³⁷ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, p. 91.

³⁸ *TFE* 3, 1935, p. 16; McGoldrick to Mullany 10.4.40; McGlynn to MacAlindon 10.3.53.

and did not have the institutional support common to Irish missionaries engaged in educational establishments or communities of Religious.³⁹

Missionaries Charged as Agents of Cultural Imperialism

Part of the charge that missionaries collaborated with western imperialist designs was that they helped impose “western civilisation”, notably Western humanist ideals in education and medicine.⁴⁰ However, the first issue *The Far East* argued,

St Patrick came to introduce no new civilisation. He merely came to Christianise the old one ... [The Society’s task] must be accomplished in the same way as St Patrick’s work was done – with respect and reverence of the culture and civilisation of a great, though pagan, people.⁴¹

The Columban Constitutions from 1919 in essence stated that the first priority of the Society was to have the Chinese accept Catholicism, not western views, humanitarian or otherwise. A secondary task given to Society members was to help establish schools as a temporary measure. The magazine argued that the desire for western education came from the people themselves.

Owing to the undeveloped condition of China and the disgraceful expenditure of public money on her rival armies, the Government at Peking is too poor to build and endow State schools in anything like adequate numbers ... In these circumstances it is easy to understand that, for some time to come, the children of China must look to Christianity to provide them with the modern knowledge they crave for, and that, as a result, our activities in the country must not be exclusively religious.⁴²

The way in which the Society implemented this educational task in China reveals Columban attitudes towards the suggested “civilising” role of missionaries. Columban priests followed the pastoral practice of Catholic schools they knew from home where

³⁹ *TFE* 9, 1986, pp. 6-9. E. Hogan, **The Irish Missionary Movement**, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1990); A. Walls, “Book Review: The Irish Missionary Movement”, **International Review of Mission**, LXXXII, 327 (July 1993), pp. 419-410. According to Walls, Hogan held that concern for the health of the missionaries was a modern advance introduced by the Irish missionary movement over the French movement.

⁴⁰ J. Harris, **One Blood: Two Hundred Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity**, (Sutherland, NSW: Albatross Books), p. 79. In early nineteenth century Australia the Rev. Samuel Marsden’s view that the Aborigines should be first “civilised” was opposed by such people as the Rev. Lancelot Threlkeld.

⁴¹ *TFE* 10, 1920, p. 11.

⁴² *TFE* 8, 1921, pp. 1-2.

the small parochial school were primarily an arm of faith development.⁴³ The Society later also opened a trade school in Hanyang but it hardly developed beyond an embroidery school.⁴⁴ *The Far East* trumpeted the Society's facilitating the Christian Brothers going to China as professional educators in line with editorials about the need to educate China's future leaders.⁴⁵ When Hanyang College for boys was set up, however, the routine included daily Mass and Catholic instruction for all students regardless of their religion, a policy like that in many evangelical Protestant schools in China but contrary to normal Catholic practice followed there that allowed liberty of conscience.⁴⁶ The Brothers withdrew from China in 1927, anti-foreign riots led by Communist trained students being the occasion of their going, but a major factor was that Columban Society policies vacillated in prioritising and financing education.⁴⁷ The diocese never reopened Columban College in Hanyang and after the departure of the Brothers, education in China all but dropped out of the Columban China story presented in the magazine.

Magazine reports showed that Columban policies on involvement in education varied throughout its missions for pragmatic reasons. While the task of forming Chinese leaders was beyond the parochial schools of Hanyang diocese, the theme of influencing leaders was taken up again in articles on the Philippines when from 1930 onwards the Society promoted the Catholic Student Action movement in Manila universities.⁴⁸ In Korea and Japan where government educational facilities were normally plentiful, the Society ran a few specialist trade schools but preferred to focus on adult education. In the Philippines and Burma, by contrast, schools were a feature of Catholic life, attached to the parishes as an integral part of the faith development work. Overall, the Society responded to local

⁴³ E. Galvin, *Report to the Apostolic Delegate*, Hankow, China, Hanyang, 5.3.23, CAE, China files. A statistical comparison for the first three years of the Society's working listed a positive upswing: 15 to 31 priests; 27 to 97 schools; 32 to 139 teachers and catechists; 72 to 115 chapels; and 4 churches remaining the same. *Diocese of Hanyang Statistical Report 1942*, CAE, China files. Between 1920-41, Catholic numbers in the Columban Vicariate of Hanyang grew from 17,000 to 56,000 Catholics.

⁴⁴ Quinlan to Hayes, CAE, Embroidery School File. Selling vestments occasioned warm letters between Thomas Quinlan (later bishop in Korea) as Hanyang Columban superior to Romuald Hayes as Director in Australia.

⁴⁵ Called the Christian Brothers in Australia, they were called the Irish Christian Brothers in the USA.

⁴⁶ W. O'Hanlon, "Christianity in China", *Christian Brothers' Record*, 1975, pp. 62-63 and 213. The boarding school opened with 120 students, among them 30 Catholics.

⁴⁷ Smyth, *Galvin Letters*, Galvin to O'Dwyer, no. 201, 12 October 1927. In 1925 the Superior General first confronted the Hanyang Superior over its vacillation. Early Columban letters speak of the priests and Brothers acting as one but by 1927 letters criticise the Brothers who saw "only the boy at the desk." Another reason for their departure was that under Chinese law the Brothers could not set up schools under their own legal title.

⁴⁸ TFE, 3, 1930, p. 11; 2, 1960, p. 2.

requests to provide education and made it part of a faith building, not a “civilising” process.

Society members in China and other Asian mission areas also became involved in organising temporary relief work and facilitating other missionary groups to introduce modern social services, but saw these only as an adjunct to parish work.⁴⁹ In 1937, after the Japanese invasion, Bishop Galvin was a member of an international relief aid committee.⁵⁰ Galvin, two other Catholic bishops, an Episcopal bishop and members of foreign chambers of commerce teamed up with the heads of the Red Cross to form an international relief aid committee where Galvin headed the distribution of goods. Whenever there was an obvious need in a particular place, Columban members would help Sisters, Brothers and lay people to start social service work, but there was no policy requiring direct Society involvement.⁵¹ Only a few lay doctors worked with the Society in the early China days and medical clinics begun by the Society were soon handed over to independent groups of missionary Sisters, setting the pattern that would be followed in other Columban Asian missions. This method of Columban facilitation of service groups often appeared in the magazine. Galvin, as the first Columban superior and bishop in China, kept to his policy of prioritising the work of priests. Having witnessed the difficulties experienced by Protestant missionary groups he cast doubt on the effectiveness of both educational and social work noting that “In the past Protestantism believed it could convert China by opening schools and hospitals and dispensaries. It did not succeed, far from it”.⁵²

⁴⁹ J. McCaslin, **The Spirituality of Our Founders**, (Manila: Society of St Columban, 1986), p. 133. McGoldrick wrote about natural and human causes of suffering, including fatalism, and also the feelings of helplessness among Columban priests. “Whatever chance we have of fighting the cause of these conditions, our ever present struggle is to alleviate the heart-rending effects that follow in their wake.” A Catholic diocese was expected to offer a range of social services, but some large complexes established by foreign missionaries were a burden and could not be financed by indigenous churches after they accepted responsibility for a diocese.

⁵⁰ “Cathrelief Hankow: Appeal to the Catholics of Europe and America for the Relief of War Victims”, P. Lou Tseng-Tsiang, ed., **The Voice of the Church in China**, (London: Longmans Green, 1939), pp. 77-80.

⁵¹ E. Fisher, **Maybe a Second Spring: The Story of the Missionary Sisters of St. Columban in China**, (New York: Crossroads, 1983). Columban Sisters from Ireland, Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross from Kentucky, and Mercy Sisters from the USA and two groups of local Sisters staffed some schools and clinics in the Columban Hanyang area. P. Crowley, **CI** August 1989. Several volunteer doctors worked in Hanyang from 1922. **TFE** 10, 1971, p. 6 and 9, 1930, p. 16. Also involved was Columban priest and medical doctor, Francis McDonald who was a fellow student at medical school with the author of A. J. Cronin who wrote the *Keys of the Kingdom*, and may have helped inspire the book.

⁵² Galvin to Mullany, 24.2.34, **CAE**, China File.

Missionaries Charged with Religious Imperialism

The distinction between imperialistic imposition and mutual exchange in missionary activity is not always clear. The Columban magazine argued that the Chinese people themselves were looking for the benefits of both Christianity and western education, and when missionaries offered medical and social services it was a modern style of Christian charity.⁵³ However, critics have questioned such claims. Broinowski, for example, accepts “food fusion” and “hybridisation” of Australian spirituality with practices arising in eastern religions but casts Cardinal Moran’s hope of sending missionaries to Asia in a negative light.⁵⁴ For such critics, any group that claimed the right to spread Christianity was an agent of cultural imperialism. If the case was argued on the dangers of imposing foreign cultural forms of religion it would be valid, but it often slides into secular argument against any proclamation of Christianity. The Columban Society believed that peoples should not be modernised without being presented with new religious concepts, experiences, values and moral system that might build on what people had known and also provide a substitute more compatible with their new situation. The Columban goal was to have people retain a spiritual consciousness rather than fall into “irreligion”, a recurring word in the magazine. Criticisms of such goals that are based solely on ideological grounds need to be recognised by both sides of the debate.

Strahan, for example, argues that missionary magazines spread a composite image of the Chinese people as diseased and dirty, godless and heathens. He suggests that they fused concepts of western health standards with those of Christian salvation-damnation, judging China as a “lower order of civilisation”.⁵⁵ To support his case, he misuses anthropologist Mary Douglas’s argument about the use of moral blame to explain Christian interpretations of physical conditions in China. Jumping between Columban and CIM sources, between health and religious issues, he argues by innuendo (and is not above inserting a caption on a photo to suit his purposes) that missionaries

⁵³ Wiest, **Maryknoll**, 1988, p. 430.

⁵⁴ Broinowski, **Yellow Lady** pp. 3 and 216; A. Cahill, “Cardinal Moran and the Chinese”, **Manna**, 6, 1963.

⁵⁵ Strahan, **Australia’s China**, 1996, pp.79-90.

perpetuated negative images of the Chinese.⁵⁶ He is selective in his use of the Columban magazine, ignoring materials that explicitly say that the ordinary people are not to blame for their social conditions. He only grudgingly conceded that “missionaries crossed the lines of racial and social exclusion and plunged into Chinese society, sheltering the homeless and healing the sick”. However, he still concludes that they depicted the Chinese as simultaneously victims and perpetrators of what he terms “diabolism”. This is a very serious charge. Chinese belief in the power of spirits cannot be equated with devil worship, nor was it portrayed as such in the Columban magazine.

Strahan does not allow for the readers’ ability to distinguish between descriptions of social conditions and religious positions. “Pagan” and “heathen” are emotive and negative words to modern ears, but in church and Columban usage up to the 1960s, they were used as a type of shorthand to designate people who were untouched by Christianity or did not follow any of the great world religions.⁵⁷ The Columban magazine often reported on religion in China and other Asian countries at two levels, one described its popular practice and the other considered it as religious truth, but neither attributed malice nor “diabolism” to the people. Its description of places of worship, rituals and their effects on the people focused on the popular practice of the traditional religions and the way it evoked “fear” among the common people. It was the fear and not the people that was cast as evil, “... religion for the average Chinese consists entirely in the worship of his ancestors and of a number of spirits, mostly malignant”, a 1920 report noted. “The Chinese of today resemble the Athenians of the Apostolic age in being at once cultured and superstitious.”⁵⁸

Traditional religion in China was portrayed in the magazine as lacking in the fullness of truth that the mission work of the Columban Society could help provide by promoting

⁵⁶ Strahan, *Australia’s China*, 1996, pp.157 and 83. Strahan adds a caption to a picture of a serpent in *The Far East* calling it a dragon, twisting a religious Scriptural reference in an article to make it racial. A painting of Jesus bearing a light in *China’s Millions* was interpreted by Strahan to mean that China was judged to be “a land trapped in spiritual darkness”. Passing beyond his literal interpretation of this particular picture, it was one among many photos in the magazine and not representative. Even a cursory look at **CIM** magazine commentary on superstition and syncretism shows that it used evangelical language to occasionally speak of “works of the devil”, but did not condemn the people as a devilish race.

⁵⁷ M. Hellwig, “Paganism”, M. Glazier ed., *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia* (Newtown, NSW: E. J. Dwyer, 1994), p. 626.

⁵⁸ **TFE** 11, 1920, p. 13.

a Chinese Catholic Church based on truth.⁵⁹ Preaching the “full truth” was important to the early Columban missionaries raised on Catholic theological manuals and influenced by a rationalistic age, so the magazine told stories of looking for points of truth in traditional Buddhism and Confucianism on which Catholicism could build.

... a scroll right over the statue of the Big Buddha ... reads: ‘Truth is eternal, heaven and earth may pass away, but truth cannot pass away.’ Chinese religion is full of maxims of that kind. The writings of Confucius – the Chinese sage who lived before Aristotle – gave the Chinese a very beautiful and elevated philosophical system, and many of his maxims are preserved in the temples.⁶⁰

Although the Chinese and other Asian peoples were often called pagans in the magazine they were never condemned to hell for not being Christians. While he was still professor of theology at Maynooth College, the Society’s co-founder, John Blowick, had written that the tag “no salvation outside the church” did not condemn pagans to hell but highlighted instead belief in the essential role of the Catholic church in God’s plan for the salvation of all people.⁶¹ The theological difference is important in researching the history of Catholic religious institutes and communities. The magazine often spoke of promoting conversion and baptism as the aim of its mission, but it took God’s gifts of grace for all people as given and accepted that God’s ways cannot be fully known. Edward Galvin led his priests to focus on the pragmatic human role of the missionary enterprise as an instrument of God in offering the opportunity of baptism and membership of the Catholic Church.

The conversion of pagans is a kind of science (not a very exact one) or if you like an art, and that like any science or art it is founded on certain principles. These principles we are trying to drum out from experience, success and failure ... we have come to the conclusion that money, method and men, in the order named, are the important factors.⁶²

⁵⁹ The Editor, **The Irish Ecclesiastical Record**, XVII, (1920), pp. 146-148. “the task which has been set to priests of the Irish Mission [Columban Society] is gigantic. They have to preach the Gospel to about five million people [population of the area assigned to the Society by Propaganda]; they have to divide this vast multitude into workable parishes, in which the people will be in reach of a priest; they will have to build churches, chapels and schools; they will have to provide for the teaching of the orphans and the young; they have to provide higher education for the sons and daughters of the Chinese; they have to found a college for the education of native students, who will be the future priests and Bishops of China. In a word, they must build up and set working in their own vast territory a healthy, vigorous Chinese Church.”

⁶⁰ **TFE** 11, 1920, p. 9

⁶¹ J. Blowick, “Extra Ecclesiam Nemo Salvatur” [no salvation outside the church], **The Irish Ecclesiastical Record**, XIII (1916), pp. 176-189. Blowick wrote that neither pagans nor heathens (the unbaptised) were condemned to hell in Catholic theology as a literal reading might indicate.

⁶² Galvin to Mullany, 24.2.34, **CAE**, China File.

From the early 1960s onwards, there was a conscious move in the Columban magazine away from presenting Catholicism through intellectual propositions to write in terms of “religious experience” and promoting “life”. It promoted new language to facilitate inter-religious dialogue as it argued for an appreciation of other religions, especially those of Asia.⁶³ Strahan does not acknowledge this change, relying instead on an isolated letter in a 1989 newspaper that repeated negative view that China as a “Seat of Godlessness”.⁶⁴ In fact the magazine was increasingly featuring stories of Asian Catholics expressing their Christian faith in local cultural forms.⁶⁵ Sharing with followers of traditional religions in a process of dialogue and practical cooperation in social programs directed at the common good were presented as uniting the aims of seemingly opposed belief systems.⁶⁶ While up until the 1960s the magazine had focused on the deficiencies of traditional Asian religions because of Society belief in the fullness of truth, after that time it modified this stance looking instead to find points of convergence.

Helping Educate Australians to relate to Asian Peoples

The images of Asian peoples presented in the magazine educated Australian Catholics about some parts of Asia, helping them redefine their Australian identity and better see themselves in relation to Asian peoples. The magazine gave them a set of “images” that went beyond past stereotypes of the “yellow hordes” of China and the “cruel” Japanese soldiers of WWII. In so doing, the magazine was helping Australians to see inside Asian countries and to empathise with the efforts of their peoples to rebuild and modernise.⁶⁷ In a process over eighty years, the magazine affirmed that while its readers “belonged” as citizens of Australia and were “separate” from other peoples, it led them to see

⁶³ P. Knitter, *CI*, July 1985.

⁶⁴ Strahan, *Australia's China*, p. 303.

⁶⁵ *TFE* 10, 1969, pp. 4-5 & 13. Accepting Asian elements such as honouring the ancestors, music and architecture, Zen and Hindu prayer practices were presented as legitimate expressions of Catholic life. Example of a Shinto Festival adapted to Christian use as the magazine carried articles on experiments to adopting indigenous cultural practices into Catholic worship and spirituality in Japan, South Korea, Burma, the Philippines, Pakistan and Taiwan.

⁶⁶ *TFE* 10, 1967, pp. 6-9. The article traces the history of the Moros of the southern Philippines from 1380 when they adopted Islam before Spanish missionaries arrived in 1542. Columban priests “believe that through education they will eventually be able to reach out and breach the barrier between the Moros and the Catholic Church.”

⁶⁷ *TFE* 2, 1949, p. 1; 8, 1949, p. 9.

themselves as called to be “in relationship to” other peoples within a world community.⁶⁸

The magazine constructed a picture of Asian peoples as fellow human beings, who had long and often good cultural traditions to be affirmed and carried similar aspirations for their families and countries to those of ordinary Australians. It argued that these peoples deserved the opportunity to choose better ways of faith, politics, economics, education and health, and to be ruled by competent and moral governments. It lauded many as sister and brother Catholics and defended the right of others to preserve or change their beliefs. In sharing images of common humanity, aspirations and belief, directly through its readership and indirectly through its influence on Catholic leaders, the magazine helped Australian Catholics to relate more closely with a multiplicity of Asian peoples, bringing at least a quarter of Australian citizens to place themselves more comfortably within the Asian area.

The educational function of the Columban magazine helped counter Australian xenophobic fears about Asian peoples because of difference, fulfilling Archbishop Mannix judgement about the positive effect of the Society four years after its arrival in Australia. It continued this educational role for adults and children in Catholic parishes and schools over eight decades, moving beyond simple techniques such as crossword games with an Asian twist to advertise and report on organised Columban mission education programs throughout Australia.⁶⁹ The Society provided a model for other mission agencies and the Catholic Education system to follow in forming attitude to other peoples. One of the first editorials in *Catholic Missions* stated, “I cannot too strongly emphasise both the urgency and the value of the study of the missions and all that is connected with them ... we have come up against vast civilisations”.⁷⁰

The Columban magazine helped explain to readers the differences between many cultures, peoples and nations of Asia. Maps showing the location of different

⁶⁸ R. Byron, “Identity”, Barnard, *Encyclopedia* 1996, p. 292; C. Price, ed., *Australian National Identity*, (Canberra: Academy of Social Sciences, ANU, 1991).

⁶⁹ *Aussie Yappings*, January 1924; Campion, *Australian Catholics*, 1987, p.151; *Australian Regional Newsletter (ARN)* June 1980; L. O’Keeffe, “Report of the First Two years of the National Mission and Justice Education Program”, 1981; C. Hally, *CI* September, 1982.

Columban missions led the readers to locate seaports and relate them to navigable rivers, flood plains and mountains, and in turn to know something about the relative density of populations and common livelihoods. Stories on the travels of missionaries to cities, parishes and mission stations led to description of the houses, food, family structure, commerce, social classes, the outcasts, tribal minorities, education, writing systems and all that went to make up the life of the local people. In its first twelve months from 1920, the magazine carried 53 articles, mostly on China, and over 160 photographs to illustrate them. As Columban missions opened in other Asian countries of the Philippines, Korea, Burma, and Pakistan, the process of description and discovery for the readers was repeated. Differences within each nation were explained, be it the Islamic Moro minority of the southern Philippines, the Kachin tribal people of northern Burma, or the untouchables of Japan. The magazine presented “culture” in its proper anthropological sense as the collective values and behaviour of particular peoples, as well as in the narrow sense as referring to the arts. The message given was that difference was to be admired as a part of the wonder of God’s diverse family.

Photos were of particular significance, presenting readers with a range of different peoples of all ages to relate with as fellow human beings even though their faces were different. Asian Catholics were shown building churches, preparing to receive the sacraments, going to Mass, and talking with their priests and Sisters as the readers did in Australia. Such photos reinforced feelings of religious bonding with believers in the same faith, while also introducing new symbols and rituals that stretched the Catholic and Australian imagination. The magazine portrayed Asian Catholics taking responsibility for their own churches: teachers striving to spread the faith, believers initiating social programs, churches fostering local vocations and the great rejoicing when local seminarians were ordained. In all, it showed Asian Catholics developing their local churches according to genius of their place, confident enough to engage with the local society and religions.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Catholic Missions*, 1, 1939, p. 17; Catholic Education Office, **A Sense of the Sacred**, (Sydney: Catholic Education Office, 1993-1995).

⁷¹ **TFE** 1, 1942, p. 5.



Chinese Madonna imaged as an Empress on the cover of *The Far East* 1926

Conclusion

This analysis of *The Far East* 1920-2000 goes contrary to the common allegation that missionaries promoted negative images of Asia to their supporters, colluding in western imperialist agendas. Over eighty years, the magazine devoted a substantial part of its pages to inform Australian Catholics about many complex but understandable life situations in Asian countries, situations that Columban members had often experienced first-hand, and it presented their views as a gradually unfolding set of stories. Through reports and commentary, it steadily educated readers about the cultures and diversity of Asian peoples, giving them positive images that corrected rather than reinforcing negative images carried from the past. It presented criteria by which they could respect Asian difference. While the Columban Society's magazine portrayed its work in Asian countries as primarily religious, it put that work in the context of world affairs, helping its Australian magazine readers to see Asian peoples with new and sympathetic eyes. Continuous support for the Columban venture indicates that its perspective on Asia was accepted by Australian Catholics.

SECOND CASE STUDY: Images of Communism Presented to Australians by the Columban Magazine

After the 1917 revolution in Russia, Communism gained supporters among some Australian intellectuals and those sections of the labour movement who saw it as leading the struggle against the last remnants of imperial powers.⁷² The terms Communism, Socialism, Bolshevism were often used interchangeably in common speech but in the 1930s details of the oppressive methods used by Communist governments began to filter through the press, and ideological objections to Communism were more clearly articulated.⁷³ Although the attempt to ban the Communist Party in the early 1950s failed, Australian support for Communism waned in the face of industrial disputes at home and the escalation of the cold war.⁷⁴ While Russia's invasion of Hungary in 1956 severely damaged the credibility of international Communism, some Australian ideologues were

⁷² S. Macintyre, **The Reds: The Communist Party in Australia from Origin to Illegality**, (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1998).

⁷³ T. Keneally, P. Adams and R. Davidson, ed., **Australia Beyond the Dreamtime**, (London: BBC Books (Heinemann), 1987), p. 173.

⁷⁴ Bolton, **Oxford History of Australia**, 1990, 2nd edition 1996, p. 59.

unmoved in their support, and internationally the movement continued to offer hope to many oppressed peoples.

Social Justice and Ideology in Official Catholic Teaching

Catholicism was involved locally and internationally in the critique of Communism. This involvement intensified in 1931 when Pope Pius XI rejected Communism in his encyclical letter “Quadragesimo Anno: Fortieth Anniversary” on social order and workers. It stated that Marxism arose as a response to the failures of capitalism, and offered "Catholic social principles" as a solution. On 3 February 1934, Pope Pius XI called for Catholics worldwide to pray for the conversion of Russia and this practice became an important component of Australian Catholic spirituality for several decades, bringing the issue to a deep level of religious conviction and emotion. The 1937 papal letter “Divini Redemptoris” which continued this attack sold 87,000 copies in Australia.⁷⁵ These letters conveyed information about Communism as an ideology and fear that it would spread worldwide, reinforced by worries about the effect of its activity in Catholic Spain.⁷⁶ Catholic bishops in Australia preached against Communist ideology and generally encouraged the activism of lay groups such as those associated with B. A. Santamaria’s Movement under the umbrella of Catholic Action.⁷⁷ By 1955, however, many bishops had followed Sydney’s Cardinal Gilroy’s lead and distanced themselves from the Movement’s methods. This opened the way in the following decade for publications sanctioned by the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference and Committees, following a pattern set by new Papal social teaching that utilised Marxist tools of social analysis.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ O’Farrell, **Australian Catholic Community**, 1985/92, p. 380.

⁷⁶ M. Hogan, **Australian Catholics: The Social Justice Tradition**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Collins Dove, 1993), p. 52; Bruce Duncan, **Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the anti-Communist Struggle in Australia**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2001), pp. 25-26; U. Bygott, **With Pen and Tongue: The Jesuits in Australia 1986-1939**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980), pp. 260 and 288.

⁷⁷ **TFE** 12, 1935, p. 3; Duncan, **Crusade or Conspiracy**, 2001; D. Strong, **Jesuits in Australia: An Ethnographic History of the Society of Jesus in Australia**, (Richmond, VIC: Aurora Books, 1995), p. 410.

⁷⁸ Pope John XXIII began his 1959-61 encyclicals “Pacem in Terris: Peace on Earth” and “Mater et Magistra: Mother and Teacher” with analysis. While some Catholics were less confident in entering the public due to the Movement, after Vatican II the bishops resumed a proactive stance on social issues as teachers on the “common good” and Justice and Peace.

It was within this Australian and Catholic context that the Columban Society presented information and opinions drawn from the direct experiences of its members seeing Communism in action in eastern Asia and Latin America. Overall, the messages given in *The Far East* 1920-2000 differed little from the general thrust of the Australian bishops. They went through the same stages of development from 1920 onwards: concern for poor workers, fear of Communist ideology, condemnation of its methods and its persecution of religion, before moving to some dialogue between Christians and Marxists in the area of social analysis. A variation from this pattern was in the late 1950s when the magazine became more vocal in condemning Communism although local acrimony was in decline. Another departure was the sympathetic reporting from the 1980's on the Chinese church under Communism. The particular contribution that the Columban Society made to the ongoing discussion of Communism was to provide detail on its practice in mission countries.

Initially the Columban Society took an apolitical stance, sympathetic to any group that it believed could help the Chinese people. Founded in 1922, the Chinese Communist Party made its base among farmers discontented with the lack of land reform under the post-1911 government, and with help from Russian advisors developed cells of student activists. Such activities led to two negative results for the Columban mission, namely Communist bandit groups and student strikes.⁷⁹ However, the Director of the Australian Region was slow to take an anti-Communist line in the magazine even in the face of letters from China from 1926 onwards lamenting Bolshevik activity and its anti-religious stance. He wrote to the Columban superior in China:

We think it imprudent and perhaps not devoid of error to use the words 'Red', 'Soviet', 'Bolshevik', 'Communist' etc in a very disparaging way. It is imprudent, for letters can be opened; it is doubtfully correct because there are plenty of people - good Christians too - who have a soft place in their hearts for all that these words stand for, with the exception of course of what is contrary to the teaching of Christ. Because the 'Red' policy (as propounded in the newspapers) has an anti-Christian element in it, it should not be condemned as being 100% wrong.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ W. O'Hanlon, "From Old Cathay to Nationalist China", **Christian Brother's Educational Record**, 1975, p. 42. Students were instructed to go ahead of the army into Hunan and Hupei areas to spread propaganda, from 1926 disrupting the Brothers' schools in Wuchang and Hanyang.

⁸⁰ Hayes to O'Leary, 14.6.27 and 8.7.27.

At this time a letter from a Columban supporter in Australia, containing £200 for Mass intentions and mission work, combined sentiments of social liberation and faith, indicative of the sympathy this approach had engendered:

What you say [in *The Far East*] about the friendly disposition of the Chinese is very consoling - I hope that God will aid them in their struggle for freedom against their European and American foes, and that the Sacred Heart will bring them into the true faith.⁸¹

The harassment and capture of priests by Communist groups from 1927 onwards was at first related in the Columban magazine almost as types of adventure stories, a humorous one telling of two priests who conveyed the impression that they were Russian advisers to escape an angry crowd.⁸² However, the professionalism of the challenge posed by Communist ideology became clearer by 1931: "The Red armies are well equipped, and they are led by capable officers, many of whom have been educated in Western schools and Universities," the magazine noted.⁸³ Admiration for Bolshevik ideals persisted although it was increasingly mixed with lament at its methods and the failures of the Western nations to respond:

The only efficient and permanent remedy is, first of all, the restoration of the multitude to moral health which springs from Christian principles, and secondly, or concomitantly, the removal of the legitimate grievances of the workers, which if applied a century ago, would have nipped the socialist movement in the bud.⁸⁴ ... many of the evils that afflict China today are not of China's making ... is to be acknowledged with shame that the revolvers with which they are terrorizing the people are of foreign manufacture, and brought over by foreign agents for motives of gain or to ferment evil strife.⁸⁵

Anti-Communism Sentiment Grows

In the early 1930s Columban attitudes hardened as its members witnessed how brutally the Communists operated among the Chinese people and more priests were captured for ransom by Communist groups, one dying in captivity.⁸⁶ The number of stories

⁸¹ Columban supporter from Brunswick to Hayes, 1926, CAE, Office File.

⁸² TFE 10, 1927, pp. 10-11; 10, 1930, p. 4; and 10, 1968, p. 4. Telling Columban prison stories was a favourite among some members and editors. While in prison for nine months under the Communists Columban Hugh Sands met Mao Tse Tung Christmas Day 1931. He tells of the kindness of Mao's son who offered him his pet white rabbit.

⁸³ TFE 12, 1931, p. 1.

⁸⁴ TFE 1, 1931, p. 15.

⁸⁵ TFE 7, 1932, p. 4.

⁸⁶ B. Smyth, ed., *...Part of The Bargain: Letters of Fr. C. Tierney*, (Essendon, VIC: Columban Society, 1963), p. 55. In 1931 Columban Cornelius Tierney died in captivity.

telling of Communist bandit groups criss-crossing Columban mission areas extorting funds to finance a Communist army redoubt in the Red Lake area just south of Columban missions in Nancheng increased.⁸⁷ In Nancheng, Columban members witnessed the Communist land redistribution which dispossessed 6988 landlords and 6638 rich farmers, many of whom were killed.⁸⁸ “General accounts”, one Columban wrote, “give no idea of the terrible ordeal that the Chinese people are going through during the revolutionary period.”⁸⁹ Columban magazine stories of the methods used by Communist groups to recruit, offer propaganda, persecute, demolish opposition and kill put flesh on the bones of a growing Australian Catholic stance against Communism.

The magazine also popularised the Catholic ideological stance against Communism. In 1931 it quoted the Apostolic Delegate to China, Archbishop Costantini: “Bolshevism has entered the country as contraband, wrapped up in the nationalist flag.”⁹⁰ By 1940 the magazine was arguing that Communism was engaged in an ideological battle, “fought not with rifles and machine guns, but with fountain pens and typewriters.”⁹¹ An ex-Communist Douglas Hyde later wrote,

As time went on, they [the missionaries] came to realise that these were not ordinary bandits; that they were people with a deep belief, who had ideas, who knew where they were going and what they were trying to achieve. They saw they were dedicated men and knew that they were Communists.⁹²

The Japanese invasion of China changed the course of this struggle with Chinese Communists in the secular press, more likely depicting them as allies than enemies of both the Chinese Nationalists and their supporters in the West. Within China the church experienced a “second spring” benefiting from the ordered social structures imposed by the Japanese and Columban members were distracted from political issues because of their success in church expansion. Also, the Society had expanded its commitments to the Philippines, Korea and Burma so that Columban stories from these places in the magazine tended to push aside those on Communism in China. However, the magazine continued to offer commentary on Fascism and Communism with articles from 1935 on

⁸⁷ **TFE** 8, 1927, 10; J. Houston, “A Service Interrupted: A Brief History of the Columbans in Nancheng”, **Tripod**, No. 122, Summer 2001, pp. 55-67.

⁸⁸ **TFE** 2, 1931, p. 5; 7, 1931, p.1.

⁸⁹ O’Connell to Hayes 1931, **CAE**. D File.

⁹⁰ **TFE** 3, 1932, p. 2.

⁹¹ **TFE** 6, 1940, p. 2.

⁹² **TFE** 9, 1969, p. 3.

explaining Communist international strategies and accusing Russia of connivance in China, tracing the history of “advisors” such as Michael Borodin from 1924-27.⁹³ Although such accusations disappeared during the war in the Pacific, they multiplied after 1949. Mao had declared “the people have stood up” as the Communists took government of China, and the Columban Society and its supporters had to face up to the renewed Communist challenge.

The seeming destruction of thirty years work in China, personal humiliation and the death of fellow priests led the Society’s magazine to harden its anti-Communist position in the 1950s. The Communist Party, compelled by the logic of its ideology to eliminate all opposition, sought to destroy many of the groups that could have been most useful in national construction, particularly the churches.⁹⁴ Stories of resistance to Communist harassment and persecution emerged in the magazine. One priest wrote a letter in coded words, not unlike the Book of Revelation, about how he tried to defend his people against the Communist “epidemic” and “inoculate” them against brain washing.⁹⁵ Bishop Galvin was arrested and for months faced such charges as obstructing the independence of the local Chinese church movement, establishing the “reactionary” Legion of Mary, engaging in anti-patriotic propaganda and failing to obey Communist laws before he was expelled.⁹⁶ Whereas there had been 150 Society members in China in 1949, the last one was expelled on 13 May 1954. Negative experiences in other parts of Asia, including trouble with the Communist Huks operating in the Philippines and the death of six Columban priests at the hands of the invading Communist army in Korea in 1950, hardened the Society’s stance.⁹⁷ The language in the magazine became increasingly inflammatory with captions such as “Satan’s hour” and the “anti-Christ” applied to Communism and its atheistic ideology as it had never been applied to non-

⁹³ *TFE* 4, 1935, p. 2; 7, 1936, p. 10; 2, 1937, pp. 9-12.

⁹⁴ J. Myers, *Enemies without Guns*, (New York: Professors World Peace Academy, 1991), p. xiii; B. Leung, *Sino-Vatican Relations: Problems in conflicting authority*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 5. Communist political leaders always have problems in dealing with a universal religion so that the Catholic Church and its missionaries became a prime target.

⁹⁵ *TFE* 1, 1950, p.1; B. Smyth, ed., *...But Not Conquered*, (Dublin: Browne and Nolan Limited, 1958).

⁹⁶ L. O’Reilly, *The Laughter and the Weeping*, (Dublin: Columba Press, 1991), p. 143. The “accusers, almost without exception, had been helped in some notable way by the Church”.

⁹⁷ P. Crosbie, *Pencilling Prisoner*, (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1960, edited by Denis Lyons). Philip Crosbie, along with Bishop Quinlan and others, were captured and taken north soon after the outbreak of war in the peninsula. MacAdindon to McGlynn 17.12.53, *CAE*, D/CA File. *TFE* 2, 1959, p. 12. E. Hanson, *Catholic Politics in China and Korea*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980), p. 112.

Christian religions.⁹⁸ Anti-Communist feeling among Australian Catholics was fuelled by emotive accounts of the desecration of Chinese churches by plain clothes police and mobs trampling the Blessed Sacrament underfoot.⁹⁹

As Communism replaced Fascism as the great world evil, Columban experiences, reinforced by the judgements of the Australian Regional Directors, led the Society to take a stronger anti-Communist stance. In 1955 when the Australian Catholic Bishops began to move away from the strident anti-Communism of Santamaria's Movement, the Australian Columban Director wrote to *The Age* newspaper in Melbourne to protest against its claim that there was no persecution of religion in China, accusing it of peddling misinformation to its readers.¹⁰⁰ A "church person" who loathed atheism, he continued to foster a spiritual tone in the magazine emphasising church persecution rather than looking to the future of China and its people in the modern world. The issue, the magazine argued was

not being fully understood [in the West]. The military problem involved in opposing Communism is rightly stressed, but little or no attention is being directed to other aspects of the challenge that Communism poses. Communism is much more than a political or military menace. Communism is essentially a spiritual problem.¹⁰¹

An article in the Columban magazine in 1958 presented the battle between Communism and Catholicism as a "Duel to the Death".¹⁰² It went on to expose instructions given to Chinese officials abroad about espionage possibilities through churches, using them to form united fronts and penetrate schools, as part of a world Communist conspiracy. In the following year the magazine ran a series on Communism in different mission countries written by Pat O'Connor, USA-based Columban media correspondent. The local Region sponsored several Columban members on speaking tours around Australia during which they detailed instances of Communist persecution and martyrdom, and these were reported in the magazine. Aiden McGrath was invited in 1957 to focus on the

⁹⁸ TFE 11, 1950, p.1; 9, 1951, p. 2.

⁹⁹ TFE 3, 1954, p. 10.

¹⁰⁰ Chapman to the editor of *The Age* 22.12.55. "... there are seven of our priests in Victoria today who worked in China an aggregate of ninety years, and who would be there today if permitted to freely exercise their priestly ministry." He had personally witnessed the brutal tactics used by the Communist inspired Huk movement for liberation in the Philippines.

¹⁰¹ TFE 11, 1956, pp. 4-9.

¹⁰² TFE 8, 1958, pp. 5-7. "Two absolutes, Christianity and Communism, cannot exist in harmony. The man of God simply cannot be a man of Marx."

persecution of the Legion of Mary in China.¹⁰³ Public talks were arranged in most capital cities attended by audiences of two thousand or more people. In 1959 Bishop Quinlan of the Korean “Death March” to the Yalu River fame toured Australia, and he attended the opening of the Society’s new seminary at Turrumurra where “anti-Red” sentiments were expressed in several of the speeches.¹⁰⁴ The next anti-Communist sponsored Columban tour was by Douglas Hyde, former militant English Communist who had converted to Catholicism, in May-June 1961.¹⁰⁵ As late as 1967, the biography of Bishop Galvin, *The Red Lacquered Gate* was heavily promoted in the magazine, and while its focus was the Columban mission in China, the latter part of the book was influenced by the McCarthyism current in the USA at the time. However, throughout the period the anti-Communist stance of the magazine was to a degree buried in articles about other Columban mission areas, keeping to the Society’s original pragmatic purpose of strengthening indigenous churches in a period of post-war church re-building and expansion.

Liberation, Social Analysis and Reappraisal of Communism

New Columban experiences, especially in South America, began to soften Society attitudes towards Communism in the 1960s. The magazine argued that the endeavours of people trying to make the world a fairer place represented a new form of Christian humanism, a view backed by the official church teachings of Vatican II in the years 1962-65.¹⁰⁶ Despite its Communist connections, the rhetoric of “liberation” had a Christian ring to it with Catholicism starting to reclaim its vision of a harmonious unity of humanity and asserting its own views on the causes of alienation among people, the

¹⁰³ **TFE** 8, 1957, p. 1-5; and 12, 1938, p. 4. Founded in Ireland in 1921, the first groups of the Legion of Mary in China were started in Hanyang by Columban Joseph Hogan in 1937. It trained Catholic leaders who assisted priests in their pastoral work, but the Communist Party targeted the groups because of their effective organisation. McGrath had been appointed full-time to promote the Legion in China by the Apostolic Nuncio Riberi and between 1948-50 over two thousand groups (Praesidia) were started. M. O’Collins, “Recollections”, p. 60, **CAE**, O’Collins File. Persecution probably enhanced the Legion’s reputation as an anti Communist group, reinforcing its stance.

¹⁰⁴ The Australian Columban seminary did not go so far as to follow the example of the Columban Irish seminary which yearly held a Study Week on the *Theory and Practice of Communism* from the late 1950s.

¹⁰⁵ Chapman to Connolly, 9.5.61, **CAE**, Tours’ File. “Charlie O’Mahony says: ‘I am sure this is one of the most influential things that has ever been done by St Columban’s in Australia’”. He spoke to large gatherings in the major cities of Australia arranged by Charles O’Mahony, to seminarians and on TV and Radio. Over 4,000 people attended at Festival Hall Brisbane and 2,500 at Sydney Town Hall, capacity crowds

proper course of history, and the ideal society.¹⁰⁷ The Columban magazine told stories of new Columban experiences of poverty, but importantly, of Catholics involved in Christian-Marxist dialogue. Articles by Hyde, the same man invited to speak against Communism in 1961, wrote of support for this dialogue from 1967 onwards including dialogue with China and Vietnam.¹⁰⁸ Articles on the Communist Huks presented the armed struggle of the rank and file as driven by intolerable rural conditions and social injustices, and not ideology.¹⁰⁹ An editorial stated that “the Christian ideal will not prevail over that of the Communist unless Christian men not only preach the ideal but live it.”¹¹⁰

While little academic discussion of Marxist dialogue or social analysis appeared in the pages of *The Far East*, from 1967 it introduced the issues involved through explanatory articles of Papal teaching and the causes of poverty, and stories of Columban work for social justice. Pope John XXIII had begun a trend in papal social teaching by using a form of Marxist analysis while proclaiming the church as a mother and teacher on social issues. Social analysis led some Christian Marxists to judge that under-development in many countries was a by-product of western style development leading them to oppose the domination by western and local elites.¹¹¹ They looked for radical changes in the world economic structures that were affecting all aspects of the peoples’ social and cultural life, and rejected incremental approaches to de-colonisation in favour of revolution.¹¹²

The official use of social analysis was evident in the Society during its General Chapter in 1982 and has been used in Society documents since then in coming to terms with the pervasive presence of economic globalisation.¹¹³ While the Jesuit Father General Arrupe,

¹⁰⁶ J. Comblin, **Called for Freedom: The Changing Context of Liberation Theology**, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), pp. 16-18.

¹⁰⁷ T. Chu “Catholicism, Chinese Traditional Values and Marxist Thought: Searching for Common Ground”, **Missiology: An International Review**, XIII, 3 (July 1985), pp. 337-346.

¹⁰⁸ **TFE** 6, 1967, pp. 4-7.

¹⁰⁹ **TFE** 5, 1969, pp. 2-5.

¹¹⁰ **TFE** 9, 1969, p. 1; 3, 1968, pp. 1-3; 9, 1968, p. 1. The church sponsored rural reform in the Philippines.

¹¹¹ T. Chu and C. Lind, eds., **A New Beginning**, (Conference Montreal: Canada China Programme of the Canadian Council of Churches, 1983), p. 9.

¹¹² J. Gunnemann, **The Moral Meaning of Revolution**, (Yale; Yale University Press, 1979).

¹¹³ “The Chapter and the World”, **CI** June 1982, Supplement; F. Regan, **CI**, August 1988; “Columban Society General Assembly Sydney 2000”, Introduction, **CAE**, Chapter files. Analysis was increasingly used to critique capitalism after the communist world’s economic decline in the 1980’s.

writing in 1980, supported this approach he argued that it should not be seen as a panacea:

... in our analysis of society we can accept a certain number of methodological viewpoints, which to a greater or lesser extent, arise from Marxist analysis, as long as we do not attribute an exclusive character to them.¹¹⁴

The issue of “class struggle” was central to Christian qualification of Marxist analysis. The magazine continued to criticize the Communism’s ruthlessness that was inherent in the Communist notion of the violent class struggle as a means of bringing about social change, contrasting it with the social dynamic for change proposed by Christianity that had love as its axis.¹¹⁵ This was still regarded as revolutionary in that it set the Kingdom of God in opposition to all the kingdoms of the world. The magazine condemned a Communist action in May 1991 when Australian missionary Sister Irene McCormack, cousin of Archbishop Little of Melbourne, was killed by the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) Maoist group while working in a Columban parish.¹¹⁶ This report, like those from the early 1950s, again resulted in many letters from readers that provide evidence for the motivational power of reporting direct Columban experiences.

The Far East was one of the first Catholic publications in Australia to pass beyond condemnation of the possibility of Catholic Church cooperation with the Communist state organised Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. This position however, took time to develop, just as it did among commentators in the secular press, and did not become common until after the death of Mao when restrictions on the activities of the churches within China were relaxed.¹¹⁷ In the 1950s the picture was not clear to church people

¹¹⁴ P. Arrupe, S.J., “A Letter from the Superior General of the Jesuits to Provincials of Latin America 8.12.1980”, reprinted in *CI*, December 1982.

¹¹⁵ R. Coste, **Marxist Analysis and Christian Faith**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985), pp. 14, 140 and 183.

¹¹⁶ Australian Josephite Sisters went as missionaries to Peru in 1981. They worked first in Lima with the Columban Sisters and later in the mountain area of Huasahuasi, learning Quechua to do so. E. Campion, **Great Australian Catholics**, (Ringwood, VIC: Aurora Books, 1997), p 206

¹¹⁷ P. Wickeri, **Seeking the Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, The Three-Self Movement, and China’s United Front**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), pp. xiii and xxiii; S. Lam, **The Catholic Church in Present-Day China: Through Darkness and Light**, (Louvain, Belgium: Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, and Hong Kong: the Holy Spirit Study Centre, 1994, English edition, 1997); J. Francisco, “The Division of the Church in China”, **East Asian Pastoral Review**, 34, 1-2 Special Issue (1997, Manila). Protestant churches too were subject to state control through a separate but similar organisation. All churches suffered persecution and initial loss of numbers but seem to have grown in number and towards

either inside China or outside, and the Columban magazine reported there was a possibility of schism.¹¹⁸ Yet by 1962 the magazine reported how some Chinese Catholic bishops had negotiated a position with the Chinese government which had formed a Catholic Patriotic Association five years earlier. The Association was presented as a political entity through which the bishops could deal with the government without any rejection of the spiritual authority of the Pope, arguing that it only demanded that Catholics would "cut off all political and economic ties with the Vatican".¹¹⁹ A second period of silence during the Cultural Revolution led the magazine to prepare its readers for the possibility that the church "externally at least, is no longer recognisable as an organisation".¹²⁰ But by 1969 it was hinting that the church was surviving persecution, quoting Mao as admitting that, "There are people who have granite heads and prefer to go to see their God rather than give in."¹²¹ In the post-Mao period articles on cultural, economic and international changes impacting on China increased but, although the Society was in secret contact with individual church leaders, no reports were published for fear of jeopardising their position. By 1981 the magazine was able to report that communities had survived in spite of persecution and internal divisions between public and underground church communities. Citing a Bureau of Religious Affairs spokesman, the Regional Director "stressed that the Patriotic Association is not a Church, but a political organisation open to Catholics".¹²² In the magazine this was cited as evidence that building an indigenous church in China is ultimately a task of the Chinese Catholics themselves and that Catholics outside were called to understand and help, not to condemn.

The opening of a new mission to Taiwan in 1978 provided the opportunity for the Columban magazine to address the question of the church in modern mainland China. A

better state relations during the last two decades of the twentieth century under able lay leaders, priest and ministers, clandestine as well as public. Figures vary widely.

¹¹⁸ P. Cleary, "Schism in China?" *TFE* 6, 1959, pp. 2-7.

¹¹⁹ *TFE* 1, 1962, p. 6.

¹²⁰ *TFE* 8, 1967, p. 2;

¹²¹ *TFE* 9, 1969, pp. 6-9.

¹²² *TFE* 3, 1981, p. 1; 8, 1983, p. 1-5; China Catholic Bishops' Conference, "Jubilee 2000 Pastoral Letter", *Tripod* (Hong Kong: Holy Spirit Study Centre), XX, 116 (March), 2000, pp. 19-30. The magazine emphasised that the Catholic Church in China was one, and refrained from using incorrect labels such as "Patriotic" and "Under-ground" churches. It argued the need for foreign Catholics not to isolate the Chinese church, to build bridges and trust Chinese Catholics negotiating cooperation with state authorities. R. O'Brien, "The Catholic Church in China: A Clarification", *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 78, 4 (October 2001), pp. 468-470.

re-evaluation of Communism did not come easily to Catholics or ex-missionaries who had often retained a “detached and naive attitude” towards political issues and did not question the traditional anti-Communism that dominated their thinking.¹²³ Columban members were encouraged to reconsider their attitudes to contemporary China and the magazine carried stories of attempts to renew personal contacts with Chinese Christians. These moves were significant because church divisions were particularly acute in former Columban mission areas in China where “loyalty to the Pope” leading to non-cooperation with civil authorities was identified as a central issue, a legacy of the Irish church tradition of looking to Rome as part of opposing British oppression.¹²⁴ Other articles featured Chinese Catholics approved by the Patriotic Association, including the Archbishop of Shanghai as an important figure for the future of the Chinese church, his seminary being active in training student priests in post-Vatican II theology.¹²⁵ With Columban encouragement he visited Australia and its local seminary in 1989; however, because of the strained relation between Chinese and Vatican diplomats, the Archbishop was not given any official welcome by Catholic bishops in Australia. Sympathetic reports in the Columban magazine on Chinese Catholic cooperation with the Patriotic Association gave a different slant to the publicly accepted church position.

Conclusion

The messages about Communism conveyed to readers of *The Far East* clearly changed over the decades, and while it had a close adherence to the teaching of the Australian Catholic bishops at most times, there were significant differences. The magazine continued to present readers with direct Columban experience of the Communist behaviour using stories rather than analytical pieces, augmented by editorial comment, as was its practice. During the 1950s, such stories added feeling and passion to Catholic philosophical positions fuelling existing anti-Communist sentiment in Australia. But direct Columban experiences of dire poverty among peoples in both Asia and Latin America during the 1960s led the Society to encourage a re-evaluation of Marxist ideals,

¹²³ D. MacInnis “The North American Churches and China, 1949-1981”, **International Bulletin**, 5, 2 (April 1981), pp. 50-54. “Their concerns are parochial, institutional, introverted, subjective, focused on themselves, the mission, the church, and the institution they served” rather than the 1949 event. Some older Columban members had a similar reaction as evidenced by their opposition to Society changes from the 1970s as will be explored in later chapters on the seminary and theological innovation.

¹²⁴ J. Kelly, **CI**, January, May and August 1989, May 1989.

and an appreciation of the Marxist method of social analysis entered the magazine, echoing an approach that had already appeared in Papal documents. From 1980 onward, the treatment of China in the Columban magazine helped Catholics come to terms with the fact that their Church can survive under a Communist government, even in countries where it holds a minority status. By retaining its focus on China long after all its members were expelled, the magazine helped its Australian readership to develop a more considered opinion on Communism.

THIRD CASE STUDY: Military Dictatorships and Capitalist Global Economics

From the late 1950s onwards *The Far East* began to feature articles and commentary on dictatorships in Capitalist Security States.¹²⁶ In connecting capitalism and militarism, the magazine opened an area not often addressed in detail in the local secular media, even though many migrants coming from parts of Europe, Asia and Latin America were fleeing such military regimes. While local media noted the record of human rights abuses under these dictatorships, they put this in the context of their role in holding back the march of Communism. The Columban magazine challenged this stance by drawing direct connections between dictatorship and global capitalist military systems.

Links between Capitalism, the Military and Dictators

Once again drawing from direct Columban experiences, stories in the magazine began to explore the relationship between what had been seen as disparate forces in the global arena. In the aftermath of WWII, nations like the Philippines had been left dependent on western economies and ethnic minorities in countries like Burma were at the mercy of more powerful groups. Korea and later Vietnam were artificially split along ideological lines, and across Asia the aspirations of many peoples for independence were

¹²⁵ TFE 4, 1986, p. 6; 1, 1987, pp. 1-5; 10, 1988, pp. 1-5.

¹²⁶ J. Comblin, *The Church and the National Security State*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 30-34.

left unfulfilled.¹²⁷ Together these issues sowed the seeds for conflict and perhaps revolution.

In 1958 a Columban magazine article on South America stated, “Analysis shows that foreign capital invested in these parts, having reaped huge rewards, gave comparatively little in return, for production was geared in the main for the benefit of industries back home”.¹²⁸ By 1963 the magazine was arguing that alliances between modern capitalism and the military were having a negative impact on the world’s poorer nations that went beyond equity issues.¹²⁹ The source of this new focus was Catholic commentary coming out of Latin America and the Philippines, much of it distributed in English by Orbis Books, publishing house of the USA Maryknoll Missionaries.¹³⁰ This analysis mirrored Columban experiences of Third World military dictatorships.¹³¹ While state welfare programs softened capitalist growth in most western countries after WWII, welfare had little place in Asia or Latin America states where laissez-faire capitalism became attached to right wing military regimes. Articles in the magazine warned that the practice of military dictatorships allowing local elites to secrete money in foreign banks would provide fertile ground for social unrest.¹³²

The governments of General Park Chong-hee in South Korea, General Pinochet in Chile, President Marcos in the Philippines and the multiple military juntas in Peru were all cited in the Columban magazine as examples of dictatorial systems that were courted by Western countries.¹³³ When the socialist government of Allende in Chile was overthrown by a USA-backed military elite on 11 September 1973, the magazine

¹²⁷ Special Broadcasting Service, **SBS Year Book** (Sydney: Special Broadcasting Service, 2000). Korea was split by an Allied Agreement into two countries for the first time in over a millenium, It was formalised in 1948 after Russian troops took control of the north and the USA the south, most foreign troops were withdrawn and local officials assumed control. War began 25 June 1950 with a North Korean attack.

¹²⁸ **TFE** 12, 1958, p. 5.

¹²⁹ **TFE** 11, 1963, p. 12.

¹³⁰ J. Considine, ed., **The Church in New Latin America**, (Tenbury Wells, UK: Fowler Wright Books, 1964) began a trend. Publishers in the Philippines became the source of most books in English reflecting on the Asian situation with **East Asian Pastoral Institute** and **Claretian Publications** as two prominent sources.

¹³¹ R. Evans and A. Evans, **Human Rights: A Dialogue between the First and Third Worlds**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 198.

¹³² **TFE** 9, 1968, p. 1; 4, 1971, p. 5. "The threat of Communism is always present where there is hunger and social injustice."

¹³³ **TFE** 8, 1974, p. 2; 3, 1975, p. 1; 10, 1089, p. 14.

reported that welfare economic policies were at the root of the affair.¹³⁴ When Columban priest Brian Gore was falsely charged as a member of the “Negros Nine” under the Marcos regime in the Philippines, his imprisonment and trial 1983-84 became well known through the Australia media. However, the Columban magazine presented a different slant on the affair as it chronicled a chain of economic and dictatorial injustices that preceded the incident, naming them as the real reason that the charges had been laid. The Negros Nine had not only questioned the regime’s repressive economic policies towards poor farmers, but were also helping to develop an alternative economic base controlled by the farmers themselves.

... sugar has a bitter taste for peasant farmers and labourers. Poor wages, miserable living conditions, strike breaking and oppression by the military, have produced a volatile situation ... their bishop, Antonio Fortich summed it up ... ‘we are sitting on a social volcano’. Gore said, ‘They [sugar estate owners] control the courts, they control the military and they think they control our lives’.¹³⁵

The Columban magazine backed up such reports from its members overseas with a growing body of official Catholic teaching on global economics. It reported that the style of national development promoted by dictatorships and international capitalism was severely criticised by the Latin American Conferences of Catholic Bishops meeting at Medellin in 1968, and at subsequent meetings.¹³⁶ Moving beyond Papal social teaching, the bishops specifically addressed the issue of dictatorships and connected issues of peace, just development and human rights. They called on Catholic communities to engage with the surrounding society rather than focus on the local governing elites with whom the church had been associated in the past. Catholics were encouraged to work for social transformation, if not for revolution. The ideas of Paulo Freire and the practice of “worker-priests” helped to bring about this change.¹³⁷ Columban members working among the poor argued that “Liberation” was a Christian Scriptural category that encapsulated moves to build up a new style of church through Basic Ecclesial

¹³⁴ TFE 8, 1974, p. 10. Father Damien Heath, a Columban associate priest from Ballarat wrote from Chile.

¹³⁵ TFE 8, 1984, pp. 1- 9. Awareness raising work among Catholics was supported by Columban movies to widen its impact.

¹³⁶ TFE 9, 1974, p. 1; 3. 1975, p. 1; 7, 1979, p. 1; G. Cook, ed., **The New Face of the Church in Latin America: Between Tradition and Change**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994).

¹³⁷ TFE, 1, 1975, p. 13; 8, 1976, pp. 2-6; B. Smyth, **Chile**, 1988, p. 54. The image of the priest changed so he was no longer seen as "safely and harmlessly tucked away... but somebody with a unique transforming role at the heart of it."

Communities (BECs).¹³⁸ Similar developments took place in the Philippines where the groups were given the English title of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs), and places such as Korea developed their own versions by working from “the pain” (Han) of the people.¹³⁹ Magazine articles on such movements and official church responses presented a critique of dictatorial oppression, related but distinct from theological considerations.

Columban representations of military dictatorships carried a fundamental questioning of the capitalist economic system under which dictatorships operated. If a Western model of economic development was to become universal, the poor nations should not be forced to endure the “collateral damage” of trade battles. The “soft” approaches western nations were taking towards military dictatorships were shown to be motivated by self-interest and dictated by trade opportunities.¹⁴⁰ Uncontrolled capitalist expansion, however, had never been accepted as an absolute in Catholic social teaching, and Columban stories exposed the ways in which National Security State systems served the expansionist trade hopes of most western governments and multi-national companies providing both low risk investment opportunities and guaranteed markets. It encouraged Australian Catholics imbued with anti-Communist ideas of defense to question the proposition that military regimes were a necessary or effective counter to Communism. Effective national defense had to be based on international economic justice.¹⁴¹

Human Rights, Dictatorships and Catholics

In a second area of critique, Columban writers began to situate incidents of human rights abuse within the prevailing political systems. They questioned the popular Australian assumption that military dictatorships ran Western style countries because they mostly followed free market economics and seemed to operate according to law.¹⁴² Stories in the

¹³⁸ “Bishops of Chile Letter 11.4.72”, *CI*, October 1974. “We give our episcopal approval to those who, by becoming brothers to the marginalised and the weak, have adopted a life-style similar to their and who help them to become conscious of their dignity as men ... we condemn the party-political attitude.” G. Gutierrez, *Las Casas*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996). Father Bartolomeo Las Casas underwent a similar change of heart five centuries before while working among oppressed Central American Indians.

¹³⁹ *TFE* 11, 1975, pp. 8-11; Kim Ji-ha, *The Gold Crowned Jesus and Other Writings*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978); Commission on Theological Concerns, ed., *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, (Singapore: Christian Conference of Asia, 1981/ Orbis Books, 1983).

¹⁴⁰ *TFE* 11, 1980, p. 2-5; 3, 1981, pp. 10-13.

¹⁴¹ *TFE* 7, 1980, p. 2; 8, 1982, 14-17.

¹⁴² *TFE* 1, 1981, p1; 9, 1981, 10-13; 10, 1984, 12-15; *The Tablet*, 23 December, 2000, p. 1775. The School of the Americas was a USA “military academy notorious for training Latin America soldiers later accused

magazine showed how dictatorships abused the human rights of local people but discussed such instances within the wider context of social justice. For example, when in 1975 government troops broke in the central Columban house in Santiago, killed the housekeeper, and later imprisoned and tortured Doctor Sheila Cassidy hoping to force her to reveal details of her patients, the Chilean military context was explained.¹⁴³ Later articles from Chile told how two Columban priests were expelled for their activity against torture, while from Korea came news of Columban priests joining with local Catholics in defying martial law by demonstrating on the streets against dictatorship.¹⁴⁴ The 1989 expulsion of Columban Tom Rouse from Fiji under the Rabuka military dictatorship that supported racially biased policies was put in the context of his twelve years work emphasising social justice and cultural dialogue.¹⁴⁵ Other reports from militarist Pakistan told of rights abuse of tribal peoples, women, child workers, Hindus and Catholics. Abuses of human rights were presented to readers as human and Catholic faith issues, but within the wider context of international social justice and peace.

Exposing human rights abuses and social injustice connected with Security State Capitalist regimes did not capture the Catholic imagination as quickly as had the anti-Communist campaign even when presented as both human and faith issues. During the 1980s the Australian Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace was criticised for its insistence on linking human rights abuses in the Philippines with the western style development aid being imposed on the people under the Marcos dictatorship.¹⁴⁶ The Commission's insistence on putting the two issues together contributed to its disbanding and illustrated the reluctance of local commentators to look at wider economic frame within which the abuse of human rights arose. The stance of the Columban magazine

of human rights abuses" that has changed its name but still promotes an alliance between the military and preserving western economic control in the region.

¹⁴³ *Australian Women's Weekly* 21 and 28 January 1976; Halliden, *CI* November 1975; *TFE* 7, 1978, p. 6; E. Campion, *Great Australian Catholics*, 1997, p. 206. S. Cassidy, *Audacity to Believe*, (Melbourne: Collins, 1977).

¹⁴⁴ *TFE* 11, 1975, p. 8; 1, 1984, p. 14; 5, 1985, p. 17. The Korean protest was for the release of Bishop Tji jailed for his public stance on workers' conditions and university student freedoms under the dictator Park. The "jack-boot" dictatorship in Chile tortured many, expelling those who protested.

¹⁴⁵ *TFE* 1, 1989, p. 6; 8, 1989, p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ Therese Woolfe, "Witness and Teacher – The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1968-1987: A study of the Ideology of a Catholic Church Agency", PhD Thesis, Department of Government, Sydney University, 1988, pp. 281-288. The Commission focused their questions on the western style development aid being given and would not allow its commentary to be taken over by the human rights agenda.

against military dictatorships, similar to that of the Commission, was unusual within the Australian Catholic scene.

For Australian Catholics, the fact that some of these countries were at least nominally Catholic seemed to reassure them that human rights would not be too badly abused. Although military dictatorships never engaged in the level of widespread killings that took place in China, North Korea and other Communist nations, they were none the less brutal. Catholicism itself has only a short tradition of sympathy towards liberty within its own institutions.¹⁴⁷ So while Australian Catholics benefited from a growing acceptance of pluralism, liberalism and concern for individual rights, the forms of democracy in Catholic Latin America often represented little more than cliques of old families with military connections.¹⁴⁸

In reporting on the tacit connections that often existed between military and Catholic elites in countries with Catholic majorities, the magazine confronted its readers with this uncomfortable reality. As the “mask” of Catholic morality was ripped away from dictators, some editorials forced readers to contemplate uncomfortable questions about their own prosperity under a capitalist system spurred on by increasing consumerism.¹⁴⁹ Although some Catholics and groups, such as the National Civic Council which had publicly supported such regimes in the past, were uncomfortable with this change of allegiances, they chose to use innuendo rather than directly attack the Society.¹⁵⁰

Conclusion

In developing this critique of capitalist affiliated military dictatorships, the Columban Society magazine was opening up an area new to most Catholics. During the long economic boom that began at the end of WWII, Catholics, like most went along with its welfare capitalist agenda dismissing any negative international consequences of that agenda as Communist inspired. Through articles and reports in *The Far East*, the

¹⁴⁷ P. Collins, **From Inquisition to Freedom: Seven Prominent Catholics and their Struggle with the Vatican**, (East Roseville, NSW: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

¹⁴⁸ P. Ryan, *New Zealand Tablet*, 16 July, 1980, p. 12. Ryan was Society member in Chile.

¹⁴⁹ *TFE* 5, 1980, p. 1.

Columban experience of capitalist dictators was integrated with modern church social justice teaching and spread to a readership largely unfamiliar with such issues from the normal Catholic agenda. The magazine used editorial and commentary as well as stories of poverty and human rights abuse to construct both an argued and emotional case in support of its critique. The Columban critique went beyond the common secular understanding of Security State dictators and abuse of human rights to look at the capitalist matrix from which they arose.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has argued that *The Far East* magazine was an influential source of information on a range of international debates important to Australians, particularly attitudes to Asian peoples, International Communism, and Capitalist Security State dictatorships. The Columban role as a commentator on international affairs was seen as integral and flowing out of its task as a Catholic Church mission agency. Editorials, articles and reports, backed up by pictures carried an invitation to the reader to look at the world through the eyes of other people. It challenged their existing attitudes and prompted them to become active in promoting the common good of peoples internationally.

Magazine presentations were based on the direct experiences of Columban missionaries overseas, the Columban story beginning as a journey to help strengthen indigenous churches. As the story unfolded in each decade, this work occasioned a growing Columban appreciation of world issues, knowledge of the varied value systems diverse peoples lived by while sharing in one humanity, and sympathy for the particular aspirations of local peoples as parts of the international community of nations. The magazine reflected a growing Columban understanding that the Church's missionary role should result in a degree of freedom, happiness and prosperity for people on this earth, as well as life eternal.

The role of the Society as a commentator on international affairs was thrust upon it as it explained the context for its mission work and the implications of preaching the Gospel.

¹⁵⁰ Woolfe, "CCJP", 1988, p. 288-91.

It consciously embraced the role. The Society depended directly on the good will of Catholics as it drew no support from any institution, and Australian Catholics demonstrated approval for Columban endeavours through their ongoing financial contributions and large number of magazine subscription. In 1985 the magazine was given the Gutenberg Award by the ecumenical Australasian Religious Press Association in recognition of its sustained quality of journalism.¹⁵¹ Reporting on the award, the editor included the following Chinese poem to capture the complex and often hidden international context of the Columban Society's mission and the perspectives it conveyed to its supporters:

Behind the red lacquered gates,
wine is left to sour, meat to rot.
Outside these gates lie the bones of
the frozen and the starved.
the flourishing and the withering are
Just a foot apart -
It rends my heart to ponder on it.
- Tu Fu, circa 700 AD

¹⁵¹ **TFE** 8, 1985. The award was given by the Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA).

PART FOUR

THEOLOGICAL TEACHING

Chapter 10

Peoples' Joys and Pain:

Catholic Social Teaching, the Mission Churches and Columban Programs

Chapter 11

The World's Agenda:

Cultural, Religious Dialogue and Ecological Issues and Mission Theology

Chapter 10: Peoples' Joys and Pain: Catholic Social Teaching, the Mission Churches and Columban Programs

Like other missionary groups the Columban Society strove to give a rationally based motivation to potential supporters. Articulating this rational base meant that the Society began to systematically disseminate information on new developments in Catholic theological teaching springing from missionary activity.¹ In the early decades the Society played a low-key and often unconscious role in propagating shifts in theological propositions about diverse indigenous churches, carrying out its teaching role through mission magazine editorials and stories told by Columban members as they travelled around Australia on promotion. From 1970 the Society initiated targeted Mission Awareness programs in Australia to make its theological teaching role more explicit and organised.

In this chapter, “theology” is taken as an intelligible analysis and articulation of human experiences of God and the behavioural responses that result from them. Because of its reflective nature, theology is dynamic as it mirrors the changing faith experiences of believers and uses new language to describe those experiences. The Spirit of God is believed to guide the “sensus fidelium” (consensus of believers) through logical deduction, judgements in new historical situations affected both by time and culture, and the organic assimilation of new materials.² Church order and its belief system is ever under reform and growing. From 1962-65, the gathering of Catholic bishops and their supporting theological experts from around the world at Vatican II was a watershed series of meetings in recent times that articulated a new synthesis of Catholic teaching and set a reformist agenda for the Catholic Church.

While the Columban teaching programs developed in Australia followed the spirit and themes of Vatican II, however, they carried a distinct character in that they drew primarily on new theologies and practices coming from the mission churches, amplified by direct Columban experiences. The programs conveyed the lived

¹ P. van der Veer, “Religion”, A. Bernard and J. Spenser, eds., **Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology**, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 482-486.

² H. Newman, **The Development of Dogma**, (London: Westminster Classics, 1878/1968). Most articles in **Theological Studies**, 62, 2 (June 2001) focus on the development of dogma as seen by the theologians Thomas Aquinas, Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner and Avery Dulles.

experience of Catholics in the mission churches, explaining the new theological propositions underpinning their new priorities and telling stories to illustrate the new practices derived from them. The programs not only amplified older Catholic beliefs and popularised new ones, they also challenged Australian Catholics to new responses in faith following the example of their fellow Catholics in mission lands.

Several “clusters” of actors were central to the formation and implementation of these programs: bishops, Columban superiors, Society members, professional educators, national agencies, and those who opposed the programs. Following Vatican II, the teaching of bishops, individual popes and episcopal conferences around the world articulated new and generally progressive official church teaching that was quoted liberally in the Columban programs. The Society’s leadership fostered the spread of new theological expression, assigning personnel and putting structures in place for that purpose. Regional superiors initiated local outreach programs, co-opting seminary staff and members “on the road” in dioceses Australia-wide doing promotion. Some of these had recently returned from overseas missions where they had experienced first hand the emergence of new theological teachings that they were keen to share through the programs. They showed themselves capable of connecting justice, cultural and other issues with mission. They were later backed by professional educators employed by the Society to design and promote Columban Mission Awareness programs targeting adult education and the formation of school teachers. Collaboration with national and local Catholic agencies, many of which had been initially encouraged by Columban efforts, resulted in developing shared programs (photograph next page).³ A last cluster of player were Australian Catholics, including Columban members, opposed to the themes of Columban Mission Education programs and their underlying theology, agitating against church reform as advocated by Vatican II and poisoning the ground which Columban members were trying to sow.⁴

³ Catholic agencies included Caritas Australia (formerly called Australian Catholic Relief), Catholic Mission, the National Missionary Council, the Catholic Commission for Justice Peace and Development, and diocesan Catholic Education offices.

⁴ Therese Woolfe, “Witness and Teacher – The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1968-1987: A study of the Ideology of a Catholic Church Agency”, PhD Thesis, Department of Government, Sydney University, 1988, p. 19. Bruce Duncan, **Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the anti-Communist Struggle in Australia**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2001), p. 409.



Melbourne Mission Team 2000: (standing) Tony Cox, Jim Foran, Charles Rue (seated) Trevor Trotter, Tamara Fisher, George Hogarty, Kathryn Boyle and John Colgan

This chapter argues that Columban Society took on a conscious Mission Education role in the Australian church from 1970, focusing on the planning and implementation of national programs. They drew their content and style largely from the theological reflection in the mission churches and direct Columban experience, leading them to emphasise social justice issues. The distinctive character of the programs helped Australian Catholics expand their ideas of what was acceptable and indeed orthodox Catholic belief and practice, pushing the margins of faith. Integral to this advance is an exploration of the ways in which opposition from within the Society's membership was handled while the Region took the first steps in expanding its teaching role. The emergence of new programs was not automatic and inevitable, depending on the conviction and work of individuals and planning groups to bring them into existence.

Modern Catholic Theological Teaching on Social Issues

Establishing Christian church teachings on the type of social behaviour that is proper to a believer is not a new concept within Christianity, but it has developed in depth and scope since the late nineteenth century. The New Testament witnesses to people who, because of their beliefs, shared their goods in common, sent material help from one community to another and developed teachings on the equality between the sexes, races and social ranks as equal children of God.⁵ A vision of God's love that revealed itself in the charitable works of its members developed into a Catholic social justice tradition based on concepts such as the "common good".⁶ The phrase summarised the belief that sufficient means for human living is a right of all people and that the earth's goods should be distributed equitably. Michael Hogan wrote,

Justice has to do with rights, freedoms and the well-being of people ... a concern of social justice normally demands more than a mere sectional interest. It implies a vision of a just society for all peoples ... different from charity ... [since] charity is concerned with the personal problems of people rather than the causes of those problems ... [Social justice] is concerned with the creation or maintenance of a just society.⁷

Modern Catholic social teaching is regarded as beginning in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII's first social justice encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* ("The Condition of the Working Class"), demonstrating a re-entry of the Catholic Church into world affairs, not through political power but in its role as teacher.⁸ As matters of faith it addressed at length social questions arising from the industrial revolution, particularly those to do

⁵ Acts. 4:34, 11:47; 15:22; 17:28.

⁶ Congregation for Doctrine and Faith, Vatican City, **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, (Homebush, NSW: St Pauls, 1994), no. 1905; G. Dorrien, **Reconstructing the Common Good: Theology and the Social Order**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 2 and 5; C. Burke, "Common Good: The Church and the Australian Conversation", **Australasian Catholic Record**, LXXI, (July 1994), pp. 286-297; J. Grindel, **Whither the U.S. Church? Context, Gospel, Planning**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), pp. 2-3; R. Weakland, **Faith and Human Enterprise: A Post-Vatican II Vision**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), p. viii; Christiansen and W. Grazer, eds., **And God Saw that It was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment**, (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996), pp. 183-195.

⁷ M. Hogan, **Australian Catholics: The Social Justice Tradition**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Collins and Dove, 1993), p. v.

⁸ D. Dorr, **Option for the Poor - A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983); J. Coleman, ed., **One Hundred Year of Catholic Social Thought: Celebration and Challenge**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); B. Duncan, **The Church's Social Teaching: Rerum Novarum to 1931**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Harper and Collins, 1991). Duncan notes that *Rerum novarum* has various names in English including "The Condition of the Working Class"; J. Morrissey and R. Keelan, **The Call to be Just: An introduction to the Social Teaching of the Church**, (Suva: Columban Society, 1990).

with the dignity and rights of the worker, and the relationship between capital and labour. The twentieth century has seen multiple Papal social encyclicals on atheistic and materialistic philosophies, development models and other issues that expand Pope Leo XIII's analysis.⁹ Notably, the new approach demonstrated an appreciation of the tools of the modern social sciences to raise awareness of the power of the social dimension of human life to affect the individual.¹⁰ In 1961 when Pope John XXIII chose to address "all people of good will" he further demonstrated a church openness to the world, a style that Vatican II followed in multiple documents so that Catholics might immerse themselves in a "truly human conversation".¹¹

Vatican II, which reformulated much of Catholic teaching to integrate modern theological developments, was important to the Columban enterprise in three major points. Its definition of "mission" spoken of in the singular, as a task for every church community and individual, at home as well as abroad demanded a broadening of theological ideas to allow for a wider engagement with world issues. Secondly, Vatican II recognised the legitimacy of cultural diversity through its teaching that the local church existing in particular cultural and national groups is the place where the universal church subsists, and by implication that the theology arising in these churches was culturally affected in concept and language. Local churches increasingly claimed the legitimacy of their own Catholic theological expression and the need for Catholics to dialogue inside and outside the church on the basis of cultural diversity.¹² Thirdly, the social justice tradition of the church was affirmed by Vatican II. In subsequent theological developments the work of social justice was declared as central to mission and evangelisation. The Columban Society was called to exercise mission in a new way, feeding back to Australia from the new churches theological reflections that carried a strong social message.

⁹ Pope Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno: On Reconstructing the Social Order", 1931.

¹⁰ A. Peacocke, **Theology for a Scientific Age**, (London: First Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 5-6.

¹¹ Pope John XXIII, "Mater and Magistra: Christianity and Social Progress", 1961; "Ad Gentes: Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity", W. Abbott, ed., **The Documents of Vatican II**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), no.11.

¹² L. Orsy, "Power to the Bishops", *The Tablet*, 7 July, 2001, pp. 976-978. Reactionary movements within the Roman Curia are trying to reclaim its bureaucratic centrality in opposition to the authority of local bishops.

Popes Paul VI and John Paul II continued to build the Catholic social teaching tradition with writings that specifically addressed questions of progress and economic development, the dignity of human work, nuclear armaments, human rights, structural evil, the ecological environment, the need for individual moral responses and conversion of heart. Globalisation affects all these issues as modern technology has multiplied its impacts resulting in rapacious trade regimes and homogenised cultures.¹³ After the fall of Soviet Russia, official Catholic teaching began to be more vocal in the opinion that capitalism needs to be strongly restrained by four social objectives, namely, just distribution, increased aggregate wealth, conservation of resources and enhancing human dignity.¹⁴ Combined Catholic social teaching is often referred to as the work for “Justice, Development and Peace” and forms a substantial part of the Catechism of the Catholic Church published in 1994.¹⁵ The variously called Columban “Mission Education”, “Mission Awareness” or “Reverse Mission” programs in Australia fit within these new ideas of mission, social justice and respect for cultural plurality. The Society used its position as a bridge between Third World Catholic churches and the Australian church to popularise their theological propositions among ordinary Catholics. Claiming a conscious role as a Catholic theological teaching agent within Australia gave the Society a role concomitant with but distinct from its role as a commentator on international affairs.

Catholic social teaching has been called the church’s “best kept secret”.¹⁶ Over the last four centuries, the secular world of academics grew suspicious of a church that had a reputation for suppressing freedom of inquiry and dictating solutions in preconceived philosophical categories. When some twentieth century European social democratic theorists and followers of B. A. Santamaria in Australia placed their party political agendas within Catholic social teaching they caused suspicion, threatening the legitimacy of public debate on all Catholic social teaching. Workers too often saw the church as aligned with the ruling capitalist class and as a consequence were not

¹³ J. Camilleri and C. Muzaffar, **Globalisation**, (Selanger, Malaysia: International Movement for a Just World [Pax Christi], 1998). B. Wolferstan, **The Catholic Church in China: from 1860-1907**, (London: Sands, 1909), pp. 134-140. It is of note that in the decade before the founding of the Columban Society, some church missionary voices were raised about the abuses of European imposed trade treaties.

¹⁴ J. Coleman, ed., **One Hundred Years of Catholic Social Teaching**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), p. 240-41 and 253.

¹⁵ Congregation for Doctrine, **Catechism**, 1994, Part 4, Article 7, pp. 577-588.

interested in its teaching despite the success of the Catholic movement among European workers in the early twentieth century led by Father Cardijn. This suspicion arose in Australia in spite of a Catholic tradition of effective social involvement. The Australian church has a history of direct charitable and organised social services work through groups such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, hospitals and other service institutions. It also has participated in political debate to build just social structures embodied in the laws and economy of the nation through its stance with the working class since the nineteenth century. Writings by the Bishops' Conference on the social implications of Catholic faith have continued this tradition.¹⁷

However, the impact of such teachings was lessened because the Catholic Church in Australia had cultivated a devotional base rather than an intellectual one. Adherence to bishops or priests teaching on social issues was based more on obedience than understanding. In the post-war years as Catholics began to join the more prosperous section of Australia and enjoy more personal freedom, they were less inclined to automatically fall in line behind church social teaching. This was especially so if it called into question the western capitalist basis of the comfortable Australian lifestyle, even if it was based on "civilised" welfare capitalism. Even the average priest was less likely to preach about social concerns in church communities focused on Catholic schools where adult education never had a strong place.¹⁸ These undeveloped or distorted intellectual traditions acted as barriers to Columban education programs until the late 1960s when the bishops set up the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP).¹⁹ It aimed to educate the Australian community on social issues, be a resource

¹⁶ P. Henriot, E. de Berri and M. Schultheis, **Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret**, (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1985, revised 1988).

¹⁷ M. Hogan, ed., **Justice Now: Social Justice Statements of the Australian Catholic Bishops, 1940-1966**, (Sydney: Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Sydney, 1990); M. Hogan, ed., **Option for the Poor: Annual Social Justice Statements of the Australian Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1973-1987**, (Sydney: Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Sydney, 1992); M. Hogan, **Australian Catholics: The Social Justice Tradition**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Collins Dove, 1993); P. O'Farrell, **The Catholic Church and Community**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales, 1987/1992), p. 315. Some contend that it was Catholic self-interest but the benefits spread beyond the Catholic population.

¹⁸ Brian Gore often said that Jesus taught the people and patted the children on the head whereas the Australian Catholic Church often teaches the children and pats the adults on the head.

¹⁹ Hogan, **Social Justice Tradition**, 1993, pp. 95-96. The Vatican established a Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace in 1967. In Australia it developed into the National Commission for Justice and Peace in 1972; K. Kerr, ed., **Australian Catholic Bishop's Statements Since Vatican II**, (Homebush, NSW: St Paul Publications, 1985); B. Moore, ed., **Inequality in Australia**, (Port Melbourne: William Heinemann, 1991).

centre, and encourage lobbying as part of helping seek the common good, and Columban Mission Education programs arose in that period.

When Catholic social teaching refrained from being prescriptive to explain, warn and appeal in Christian and human hope to its listeners, it has been most successful.²⁰ In a largely post-colonial, post-Communist and post-modern age, the task common to all people to work for social justice was emphasised by Pope John Paul II in his use of the term “solidarity” as a call to common empathy and action. In spite of misunderstandings on its prescriptive nature, Catholic social teaching has always been largely a call to “an ongoing task” rather than a blueprint of action. Justice Gerald Brennan wrote in 1999 on the function of Catholic social teaching to allay the fear that it was prescriptive:

The message of the Encyclicals ... does not tell us what our laws must be, but it tells us what our laws should guard against. It does not deny the value of the free capitalist economy, but it does show the evils which such a system brings if it were not controlled. It does not prescribe a particular system of government but it rejects any system which excludes the participation of people or which intrudes unnecessarily into their lives.²¹

Columban Mission Education programs presented church social teaching as a call to an ongoing task rather than as fixed solutions. Even when they confronted particular social issues such as international debt and Christian-Islam understanding, the emphasis was on the goal rather than the means.

Theology developed in the Mission Churches

From the 1960s, local conferences of Catholic bishops around the world, particularly in Third World and mission countries, were instrumental in developing church theological teaching. They firstly broadened the subjects addressed as illustrated by an African call to respect tribal religions, and secondly applied general teaching to particular issues exemplified by the connections made between the military and capitalism in Latin American. Missionaries were in turn instrumental in spreading the theological influence of these local churches as they fed back information to their

²⁰ M. MacGinley and T. Kelly, **The Church's Mission in Australia**, (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1988).

²¹ G. Brennan, **Property, Power and the Rule of Law: Rerum Novarum Lecture, 1999**, (Melbourne: Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace, 1999).

churches of origin.²² Mission churches began writing in their own name and influenced the whole Catholic communion by using the languages of their former European colonial rulers.²³ Of particular relevance to the Columban feedback to Australian Catholics were major meetings in the Americas and Asia. The Latin American Bishops' Conferences from 1955 published detailed documents on the Church's mission to enter into each local sociological reality (*realidad*).²⁴ They committed their churches to leave behind a colonial Christendom and in 1968 made the church's "Preferential Option for the Poor" an umbrella phrase to focus their work. Similarly, from 1974 onwards, official statements from the Federation of thirteen Asian Bishops Conferences strongly supported church activity in the social sphere and significantly, promoted a culturally more "Asian face" for the church.²⁵ First World Conferences of Catholic Bishops too have called for pastoral responses and written extensively on social issues such as consumerism, the armament industry, trade, refugees and the environment that affected both their own people and the wider world.²⁶ In this way, local conferences of bishops expanded Catholic social teaching. Columban members in touch with developments first hand, incorporated their theological insights into Society teaching programs.

Columban experiences and subsequent Reverse Mission programs were influenced through working contact and friendships with bishops in mission areas who have been prominent to questioning western development models and promoting the cultural integrity of their people. Bishops Tutud and Clavier of the Philippines, Cardinal Kim and Bishop Tji in Korea, led their people and the Columban missionaries to reconnect the areas of evangelisation, development and culture in a new reading of the Gospel

²² G. Costello, **Mission to Latin America**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979).

²³ LADOC Latin America; Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa **AMECA-Gaba Institute**, Eldoret, Kenya.

²⁴ **TFE** 7, 1979, p. 6; J. Eagleson and P. Scharper, eds., **Puebla and Beyond**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1979); E. Dussel, **A History of the Church in Latin America**, (Grand Rapids, USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981), pp. 113-115; E. Dussel, ed., **The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992**, (Tunbridge, Kent: Burns and Oates, 1992). The bishops met at Rio de Janeiro in 1955, Medellin in 1968, Puebla in 1978 and Santo Domingo 1992. T. Hennelly, ed., **Santo Domingo and Beyond: documents and commentaries from the Fourth General Assembly of Latin American Bishops**, (Maryknoll, NY :Orbis Books, 1993). The First Missionary Congress of all Americas met as the Sixth Missionary Congress of Latin America at Parana in Argentina, October 1999.

²⁵ I. McGrath, "Taipei Conference", *Columban Intercom (CI)*, No. 74.

²⁶ USA Catholic Bishops' Conference, www.uscbc.org

according to the “signs of the times”.²⁷ Columban bishops, often considered conservative, also showed signs of conversion as they responded with leadership in their work situations.²⁸ Inspirational stories about Archbishops Hurley of South Africa, Helder Camera in Brazil and San Salvador’s Oscar Romero motivated western church people to work to change the policies of their own government.²⁹ Like Romero they, “awakened from a sleep of inhumanity ... to see God from the point of view of the victimised ... [and] learned to exercise mercy and find joy and peace in doing so.”³⁰

Columban Mission Awareness programs have drawn on Post-Vatican II publications by Third World churches and international church agencies. The Philippines became an English language publisher of church writings and mass media productions from Asia. It also was home for many tertiary courses designed to develop a culturally relevant missionary theology offered at places such as the Manila-based East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI).³¹ The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences set up an office and magazine in Manila to help both their church leaders and missionaries.³² Similar theology centres and publishers emerged in Latin America and Africa and these too influenced Society work in Australia, particularly through their English publications. In a multiplicity of languages, the Catholic social research institute in Belgium, Pro Mundi Vita, and the Rome-based missionary research unit SEDOS provided a constant flow of quality documents analysing modern missionary activity within its multiple social contexts.³³ In the English-speaking world, influential Catholic writers, such as Barbara Ward, pointed to the economic follies of western style development, and, over decades, the English language publishing work of the Maryknoll Missionary Society in the USA has provided a systematic, prolific and ecumenical voice in its

²⁷ **TFE** 6, 1970, p. 8; 5, 1972, pp. 8-10.

²⁸ For example, Bishop Thomas Stewart, dressed in vestments and mitre, literally waded in to support a demonstration against dictatorship that erupted during the 1975 Holy Year celebrations in Seoul, South Korea.

²⁹ T. Rouse, **CI**, June and July 1989.

³⁰ J. Sobrino, **The Principle of Mercy: Taking the Crucified People off the Cross**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), pp. 11 and 69; L. Boff and V. Elizondo, eds., **1492-1992: The Voice of the Victims**, (London: SCM Press and Concilium, 1990).

³¹ National Secretariat of Social Action, Justice and Peace (NASSA), “Educating to Justice: Readings”, (Manila, RP: NASSA, 1975).

³² “A Spirituality for Social Activists”, Info on Human Development (**IOHD**), Manila, September 1988.

³³ **Pro Mundi Vita**, Brussels, Belgium; **SEDOS**, Rome, Italy.

publications.³⁴ In addition, educational materials on development and cultural issues have been published by foreign relief and aid agencies such as England's OXFAM and Australia's AUS-AID and ACFOA, and Catholic development agencies in Ireland (TROCAIRE), England (CAFOD), Scotland (SCIAF), and the USA (Caritas). In preparing for its Mission Education work, the Society in Australia was able to draw from all of these sources.³⁵

While Catholic theological teaching has called for social justice and culturally relevant churches as necessary conditions to create life-giving opportunities, it also taught that people had to change their hearts and minds if what Pope John Paul II was later to call a "culture of peace" was to be achieved.³⁶ This teaching bound together the calls to evangelisation, social justice and cultural issues, but it was also confronting as the focus shifted from "out there" to "here at home". It called both for personal responses of people in Western society to modify their expectations and lifestyle, and for structural economic and trade changes at the international level.³⁷ Consistent with the teachings of Vatican II in addressing the "joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties" of the age, subsequent Catholic encyclicals on missionary activity made advances. They affirmed both that evangelisation was central to the Church's mission, and that missionary activity was to embrace the total human reality and the social dimensions of peace, development and human rights.³⁸ The New Zealand bishops stated in 1982 that while Church work for human advancement cannot be reduced simply to improving the conditions for living, the liberation in Christ touches a person in all aspects of life in community and social organisation.³⁹ The Society never presented its mission work as purely humanitarian, but it increasingly recognised that while its

³⁴ TFE 7, 1972, p. 1.

³⁵ Purcell to O'Mahony 21.6.71, CAS, D/CA; F. Purcell CI, December 1971; "Trocaire", CI September 1997.

³⁶ Pope John Paul II, "New Year Message 2001", and "The Gospel of Life", 1995.

³⁷ J. Fitzgerald, "Ten Years of Evangelii Nuntiandi", *Australasian Catholic Record*, LXII, (October 1985), p. 331. The whole issue is devoted to the issue of evangelisation. A consensus has developed in the Catholic worldview that links evangelisation and justice.

³⁸ "Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World", Abbott, *Vatican II*, 1966, no. 1, p. 199; A. Shorter, "Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes)", A. Hastings, ed., *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, (London: SPCK, 1991), pp. 163-168; Pope Paul VI, "Evangelii Nuntiandi: Evangelisation", (Manila: St Paul's Publications, 1975); Pope John Paul II, "Redemptoris Missio: Mission" (1991), M. Miller ed., *The Encyclicals of John Paul II: 1979-1995*, (Indiana, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 1996); J. Calvez, *Faith and Justice: The Social Dimension of Evangelization*, (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985/1991).

³⁹ New Zealand Bishops' Conference, "Consultation on Evangelisation", (Wellington, 1982).

primary mission is to proclaim spiritual conversion, conversion has social consequences.⁴⁰ In 1993 the bishops of Latin America expressed the spiritual and social connection in Catholic teaching thus,

genuine exterior social union has its origin in the union of minds and hearts ... in faith and love, ... she [the church] never loses sight of the priority of the transcendent and spiritual realities ... [the gospel message is] the basis of its thinking, its fundamental principles of life, its criteria for judgement, and its norm of activity ... [and from there] is projected into the ethos of the people ... its institutions and all its structures.⁴¹

Columban Internal Struggles

Before the Columban Society could bring a comprehensive and argued body of church theological teaching on social issues from around the world to bear on the Australian Church, it had to develop a new Society consciousness. Most members were not ready for this shift because the Society's central leadership had done little to prepare them. It failed to implement the recommendations of the 1962 Society General Chapter that renewal courses begin for members, and that a news bulletin involving members be considered, even if it was only "an outlet for negative criticism and not have loose cannons on the deck of HMS Columban".⁴² The call of Vatican II to "read the signs of the times" was revolutionary, hopeful for some, but causing disorientation, anger, and fear of the future for others.⁴³ Leadership was needed but often lacking.⁴⁴ Some of the implications of Vatican II for missionary work were known to the Columban leadership through forums held in Rome for representatives of Catholic Mission Institutes.⁴⁵ That the new role of missionary societies was to serve indigenous bishops became the accepted new thinking, already in place in some missions, but the prospect

⁴⁰ Even when a Columban Overseas Aid Fund (COAF) was set up 17 February 1986 so donors could gain tax deductions for their contributions to relief and development work, the fund did not prove overly popular with most Society supporters.

⁴¹ T. Hennelly, ed., **Santo Domingo and Beyond**, 1993, pp. 116 and 135.

⁴² "Resolutions of the General Chapter 1962", nos. 19, 21 and 50, CAE, Chapter File; Kielt to Chapman 24.1.64, CAE, D/CA files.

⁴³ R. McBrien, **Report on the Church - Catholicism after Vatican II**, (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), p. 38; A. Hastings ed., **Modern Catholicism - Vatican II and After**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 335. As late as the 1970 Society General Chapter, Columban Bishop Byrne from the Philippines typified a common lack of vision stating that Columban members had always been parish priests and would continue to be so, not destined to be specialists.

⁴⁴ G. Arbuckle, **Refounding the Church: Dissent from Leadership**, (Homebush: St Paul Publication, 1993), pp. 98-127.

⁴⁵ Kielt to Chapman 8.5.63 CAE, D/CA files. He wrote on a meeting of Superiors of Mission Societies in Rome

of the Society not controlling its own mission areas was a shock for many members.⁴⁶ Chapman, as Australian Regional Director, replied to an invitation to contribute to the forums by saying his concern was limited to the missionary's "spiritual life", taking himself out of the debate but also setting the trend in Regional Columban reflections until the end of the 1960s.⁴⁷

Those members opposed to renewal drew on earlier debates and assertions that the primary aim of Society was the spiritual sanctification of members. The aim of the Society according to the wording in its interim 1919 Constitutions was to preach the Gospel in China, but the stock Roman Curia phrase "for the sanctification of members" was inserted into the Constitutions by Propaganda in 1925. This was later expanded to make the sanctification of members and Glory of God the principal aims of the Society, missionary activity relegated to being the special work of the Society.⁴⁸ Although small, these changes had the effect of blurring the missionary focus of the Society so that personal spiritual exercises and the celebration of the Mass as a private devotion became the focus for some members. In 1969 Francis Herlihy warned that it was wise to distinguish between the canonical articulation of the mission aims of the Society and the actual hopes for mission carried by the membership. Columban service to the Church in foreign mission activity was "the centre of hope and energy for Society members".⁴⁹ At that time some members were consciously changing from identifying themselves as priests in a Society that contracted to develop the pastoral care of dioceses in foreign lands. They began identifying themselves as members of a Society of professional missionaries who also were priests, negotiating their work situations with local foreign churches. In December 1966, eight Columban priests studying at the East Asia Pastoral Institute in Manila began producing a newsletter called *Viewpoint* as a forum for debate within the Society. It ran for twenty-three issues until June 1970 when a Society General

⁴⁶ An account of the meeting of Superiors in Rome 7.9.63; Report from the Superior General on the Mission Secretariat 12.12.63, Kielt to Hunter 13.11.67, CAE, D/CA files. A. Gittins, "Tomorrow's World: Training for Mission", *Verbum*, 28, 1 (1987), pp. 89-104. The "ius commissionis" system created in the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas in which Rome divided up mission territories and assigning them to missionary groups and their royal patrons, officially ended on 24 February 1969 as local bishops took authority.

⁴⁷ Chapman to Kielt 5.8.63, CAE, D/CA files.

⁴⁸ "Resolutions of the General Chapter 1962", nos. 33-34, CAE, Chapter file. Columban Society, **Commentary on the Constitutions**, (Navan, 1925/1932), pp. 40-42. Constitutional Society aims were changed according to Roman suggestions but a commentary published by the Society stated that all Columban special duties should be directed towards fulfilling the Society's principle aim of preaching among the Chinese people.

⁴⁹ "First Regional Convention, 1969", CAE, Regional Convention files.

Chapter of renewal began.⁵⁰ Colourful images described the tension between newer and older ideologies and theological positions:

... It's better than a circus, at times, to watch a clutch of young lions stalk the Columban forest in search of tasty old lions waiting to be devoured -- even more comical to spot an occasional old lion doing a counter-stalk. All in good sport we trust. We know enough about Renewal now to know that it can turn into a deadly game.⁵¹

The struggle to adopt a new theological framework for the Society and its members was to continue through cycles of internal renewal running up until at least the year 2000.⁵² The struggle was first obvious during the 1970 General Chapter, the preface to its documents stating, "Our Chapter was a Chapter of renewal. The purpose of renewal is simply to make us a more effective missionary Society".⁵³ However, knowledge and acceptance of the teachings of Vatican II was uneven, one senior member saying "it confirmed what I had always believed" while others, old and young, were shocked at official questioning of the closed scholastic system of theology they had learnt in the seminary. O'Mahony said on the Chapter floor, "I came here as a conservative and found that I was a front runner out on the left wing. I do not think we have yet got quite as far as Vatican II".⁵⁴

In spite of positive elements in the Chapter documents, their effectiveness was undermined by the election of a lack-lustre Society central leadership team for the next six years. The forward thinking Australian Frank Purcell was elected as the junior councillor but was to find it difficult to work with the four people already elected, "... a symptom of a division which exists at all levels of the Society."⁵⁵ A dispute within the leadership later led Purcell to resign, and eventually leave the Society and the

⁵⁰ Editorials in *Viewpoint*, nos. 1, 4, 14 and 20 focused on renewal. One of the two editors was Australian Francis Purcell. In 1968, Dalgan hosted a National Mission Study Week under the theme "The Missionary Task after Vatican II". Chapman to Hunter 26.12.68, CAE, D/CA files. Staff at Turramurra helped Bernard Hawke edit the newly established in-house "Columban Review" which had broad missiological aims.

⁵¹ D. O'Mahony, *Viewpoint*, no 9, p.69.

⁵² P. Wittberg, **The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders: A Social Movement Perspective**, (Albany, USA: University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 190, 243, 251, 256 and 263. Wittberg wrote on the importance of creating new ideological frames if any group is to reinvent itself.

⁵³ "Documents of the Society General Chapter 1970", Preface. CAE, Chapter files.

⁵⁴ Chapter Reports, 1970, CAE, Chapter files.

⁵⁵ C. Hally, "Submission for the Agenda of the Inter-Regional Convention", 1.3.1973, CAE, Inter-Regional files.

active priesthood.⁵⁶ The affair came to public attention in 1975 through an open letter by Purcell to all members of the Society and reports in the *Irish Times*, and the case was never amicably resolved.⁵⁷

Following on from the 1970 Chapter, a Society Education Office was created both to oversee new Columban seminary formation programs and to facilitate the on-going theological education of ordained members of the Society, a structural help towards renewal. Charles “Chuck” Flaherty on the staff of the Turramurra seminary was appointed the first full-time Coordinator in 1971.⁵⁸ Regional Coordinators were also appointed.⁵⁹ Their tasks included advising members and arranging individual courses, arranging short Regional or area educational programs for Columban groups, and disseminating literature which might help members in their personal updating efforts:⁶⁰

Continuing education ... is seen as an urgent need requiring immediate and comprehensive attention ... the duty of every Society member ... a life long process of growth of the whole person. It includes the spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, missionary, professional and attitudinal domains.⁶¹

Under Society Guidelines members were able to avail themselves of a variety of courses offering around the world.⁶² Scripture studies had been revitalised in Catholic circles since the 1940s and became the source for many categories central to modern

⁵⁶ Purcell to all Directors 7.5.1973; Steinhilber to all Directors 6.7.1973; Steinhilber to all Directors 22.2.1974, **CAE**, D/CA files

⁵⁷ F. Purcell, “To All Members of St Columban’s Missionary Society”, 23.11.1975; *The Irish Times* 19.6.75, **CAE**, Purcell file. Purcell proposed a hunger strike to protest the “unjust delaying tactics adopted by the Vatican and Columban General Council to deprive him of a trial. E. Kelly, **CI** August 1975; **ARN**, July 1977 and June 1978.

⁵⁸ Steinhilber to O’Mahony 21.5.1971, **CAE**, D/CA files.

⁵⁹ Regional Educational Officers/Coordinators were John McGrath from 1973, William Moran 1974, Fergus Duffy 1977, Noel Connolly 1979, Trevor Trotter 1981, Warren Kinne 1983, Charles Rue from 1984-87, and after a gap, Trevor Trotter from 1997.

⁶⁰ Smyth to Cleary 10.2.1976, **CAS**, D/CA files; F. Purcell **CAB** March 1971; D. Wodarz, **CI**, July 1972; B. Cleary, **CI**, November 1973; P. Digan, **CI**, February 1989 and March 90.

⁶¹ “General Chapter Acts 1976”, section 6. 21, **CAS**, Chapter files

⁶² Letter to All Regional Directors and District Superiors 12.3.1974 **CAS**, D/CA files. Members attended courses in duration from several months to a year at various locations including: the Columban run “Faith and Mission” and “Faith and Justice” courses at Dalgan, the Redemptorist Marianella Program, or the Dundalk Catechetical School, all in Ireland; Notre Dame University, Ohio; The Institute of Spirituality and Worship or School of Applied Theology at Berkeley California; Matthew Fox Institute or the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago; The Divine Word NEMI institute or academic courses in Rome; the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila; and clergy renewal at Canberra. Personal study was also encouraged, especially Scripture.

mission as a work of the Spirit.⁶³ New style spiritual retreats were tried.⁶⁴ Regional Conventions before and after Society General Chapters also gave members “as a group” a forum to consider issues at a planning level, an opportunity not readily available in the geographically scattered Australian Region.⁶⁵ The October 1972 Convention at Essendon noted the limitations imposed by the personnel in the Region where only 16 of its 39 members were active, the rest being retired or in “non-Columban work”. Internal ideological Society divisions were present in all Regions, most obvious in the Peru mission and had a ripple effect throughout the Society. A circular from the Superior General emphasised the need for the spiritual aspects of renewal in each Society member to create an attitude of acceptance to change.⁶⁶ However, focusing exclusively on personal spiritual renewal proved less than effective. Hally commented,

The renewal of the Society is not the same as the renewal of individual members, though obviously both realities are interrelated ... Personal prayer is obviously essential but in itself is not sufficient for maintaining Society morale ... [this approach] prescind entirely from our missionary responsibilities. There seems to be an underlying value judgement that if we are good priests we will automatically be good missionaries, a view rather widely held in the Society.⁶⁷

Basic to some divisions was fear of Communism that had been well learnt by Australian Catholics and Columban members alike making many blind to new social abuses arising around the globe and distorting their theological outlook. By the 1970s, the predominant overseas experience of Columban members was not of Communism but of military dictatorships associated with Security State capitalism. Under dictatorships, the destruction of local economies and cultural ways were obvious and

⁶³ D. Senior and C. Stuhlmüller, **The Biblical Foundations of Mission**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983). Such issues as liberation, indigenisation, prophecy, Kingdom, mission, discipleship, communion, calling, and work of the Spirit have developed Scriptural roots.

⁶⁴ “Sheshan Retreat” **CI**, November 1995. Passionist Scripture scholars, Fathers Stuhlmüller and Senior were invited to South Korea to give retreats and many members originating from this Region participated. Some members did the revamped “Thirty Days Retreat”, lasting three months, at various Jesuit Retreat Centres including that in Wales and at Pymble in Sydney. Other retreats were done as pilgrimages retracing the steps of Saint Columban through Europe or the Columban pioneer steps in Hanyang and Shanghai. The Charismatic Movement was another source of renewal. T. Trotter, **CI**, December 1975.

⁶⁵ **ARN**, April 1983.

⁶⁶ R. Steinhilber, **CAB**, July 1971.

⁶⁷ C. Hally, **CI** August 1974.

pushed many people into protest and attempted revolutions.⁶⁸ Columban members wrote that even local food sufficiency suffered as cash cropping increased to pay mounting national debts, the few to benefit being local elites trained in western economic schools and the military employed to maintain stability. They wrote about changed minds and hearts of Third World peoples and the power of the Gospel in helping to bring changes.⁶⁹ Catholic theologians worldwide, and individual Columban members, attempted to explore the changed realities through the categories used in Christian-Marxist dialogue.⁷⁰ Its analysis was seen as a move forward from either purely rationalist or Communist approaches to decolonisation, judging underdevelopment in poor countries to be a by-product of western development, suggesting radical changes in world economic structures because of their effect on all aspects of social life.⁷¹ Taken by itself, anti-Communism was regarded by many Columban members as a dated answer to social questions and theological reflection.

However, Catholic responses to dictatorships brought an atmosphere of mutual suspicion among the Columban membership at home and overseas.⁷² Within Australia some sympathised with judgements coming from the right wing National Civic Council in Australia. Overseas experience radicalised others, one Australian questioning access to western medical care by missionaries to become a "martyr to his religious idealism", and another joining the revolution.⁷³ Most rejected both the excesses of both the Right in wrongly identifying Christian liberation with Communism, and of the Left in making a

⁶⁸ J. Comblin, **The Church and the National Security State**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979); G. Costello, **Mission to Latin America**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979); E. Durcell, **The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992**, (Kent, UK: Burns and Oates, 1992).

⁶⁹ **TFE** 12, 1966, p. 11; P. Digan, **Churches in Contestation: Asian Christian Social Protest**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984), p. 78. For example, articles appeared on the cooperative work of the Federation of Free Farmers in the Philippines, and the work to form Young Christian Workers (**YCW**) groups in Korean factories to lobby for better conditions, just wages and participation in the industrial decisions affecting them. The **YCW** movement, together with the Presbyterian Church supported Urban Mission, were major players in focussing church involvement in the downfall of dictatorship in South Korea.

⁷⁰ J. Gunnemann, **The Moral Meaning of Revolution**, (Yale; Yale University Press, 1979). Theories on social revolution were undergoing a moral critique as evidence was drawn from history, sociology, Scripture, and Marxism, guided by theologians such as Moltmann and Metz.

⁷¹ Comblin, **Security State**, 1979, pp. 30-34.

⁷² O'Mahony to Steinhilber 27.1.71, **CAE**, D/CA file.

⁷³ Hallidan to O'Mahony 17.1.71, **CAE**, D file. B. Smyth, **Columbans in Chile**, (Chile: Columban Society private printing, 1988), p. 118, quoting from the Columban Regional Convention Chile. "We are rich among the abject poor, never hungry among starving people, always secure amid insecurity." James McCaslin, **The Columbans in the Philippines: Negros 1951-1990**, (Manila: Columban Society, 2000), p. 55.

preferential option for the poor an ideological ghetto.⁷⁴ But the ideological split kept arising, Society members never being immune from the influence of ideological and theological divisions within the wider church.

Mission Education Programs begin

While the Society consciously expanded its theological teaching role among Australian Catholics there was, however, a significant degree of continuity between its post 1970 programs and the theological understandings that had underpinned its earlier activities. When the Society argued that China needed a strong church presence in order to build a nation dedicated to the common good of its people, this message explicitly claimed that building just nations was one benefit coming from preaching the Gospel. In creating a nationwide support network for its mission enterprise, the Society was the first local Catholic group to put the educational machinery in place to tease out the theological implications of foreign mission activity. When the Society introduced an international perspective into local Catholic thinking on significant topical issues such as images of Asian peoples, Communism and the need to build peaceful societies, it presented these as religious and not merely secular issues. In all these activities, the Society claimed authority to teach because of its standing among Australian Catholics and church leaders and the credibility of its members overseas. The specific religious teaching role of the Society among Australian Catholics from 1970 carried out in a conscious and planned way was therefore an extension of an existing role.

Columban teaching on the necessary connection between evangelisation and social concerns was never static, sometimes running parallel to prevailing secular models and at other times challenging them. At first, its mission magazine presented the Columban aim to convert the Chinese people as necessary since only then could China “live anew” as a people influenced by Christian values with leaders willing to remedy the human causes of social ills. Similar theological motivations were given when the Society distributed relief goods, cared for refugees, and established schools and small hospital clinics as examples of social concern. After WWII Society thinking followed

⁷⁴ J. Holland, “Faith and Ideology”, *CI*, June 1984.

the prevailing secular model with the unspoken assumption that Western style development was the rational way to go, and in Christian terms, a practical modern act of charity. The methods of social reform presented in the magazine changed emphasis to carry reports on modern economic development and projects aimed at having poor people help themselves, with mission parishes providing training, facilities and credibility for such movements as the Credit Union and 4H Clubs.⁷⁵ Australian Catholics responded to this message as they generally carried a belief in a God of optimism in their lucky country and supported efforts such as the Colombo Plan developmental aid for Asia. The model underlying this plan was one of economic expansion through education, technical skills and large project planning often summed up in the phrase, “Rather than give a person a fish, teach him how to fish.” A magazine editorial declared, “The potential is as limitless as the ingenuity of man” and encouraged readers to “include in our parish budgets a specific sum”.⁷⁶ Magazine reports, and later a film, told of Australian help for the farm development project of Columban Patrick McGlinchey in South Korea.⁷⁷ However, from 1963 the Society magazine began to go deeper into Catholic social teaching and its theological basis to challenge readers. It carried articles explaining official church documents on world poverty and posing questions about just development when Tom O’Brien became its assistant editor.⁷⁸

Society leadership in Australia moved ahead of most other Columban Regions from 1970 onwards under the new Australian Regional Director Charles O’Mahony. He helped advance the local Catholic response to overseas emergency aid from Australia by opening up the area of church advocacy through an organised campaign, prompted into action by an article in the Melbourne Archdiocesan paper *The Advocate* headed,

⁷⁵ **TFE** 1, 1949, p. 5; 10, 1958, pp. 8-9; and 2, 1960, pp. 1-7.

⁷⁶ **TFE** 9, 1966, p. 15.

⁷⁷ **TFE** 1, 1960, p. 2; 4, 1963, p. 9; 8, 1969, p. 13; 11, 1969, p. 12; 12, 1973, p. 1; Murphy (Director Irish Region) to O’Mahony 3.9.1971, **CAS**, D File. What began in 1958 as a 4H Club (Junior Farmers) by 1963 had blossomed into the Isadore Development Scheme with four hundred and fifty associated farms, a farming school and experimental farm. Cattle were sent from Australia with the Region underwriting much of the deal. Agricultural and veterinary experts from this Region worked on this project as lay missionaries. Copies of a film on the project were sent to Australian Catholic Relief as part of Regional promotion work.

⁷⁸ **TFE** 4, 1963, p. 4; August-September issues 1966; and 10, 1991, pp. 1-9. Tom O’Brien had pamphlets published by the Australian Catholic Truth Society such as “World Population and World Resources”, Chapman to Connolly 12.2.1962.

“Let us Protest for the Pakistanis”.⁷⁹ In conjunction with a special Columban relief appeal for Bangladesh refugees that raised \$98,000, he led the Society to enter into an advocacy role by sending 42,000 letters to “invite all our contacts to protest against the meagre amount of aid provided by the Australian Government.”⁸⁰ The Australian government doubled its allocation of relief funds on October 26th to \$5.5 million, and the “Leader of the Opposition reported that he had received more than 500 letters in the past ten days [on the issue], ‘his heaviest mail ever on any issue’”.⁸¹

Of advantage to the Society in its Mission Awareness programs was its focus on overseas stories since they provided an easy entry point into the area of church social teaching for Australian Catholics. It fitted well with the international Columban perspective and expertise, but it was also less confronting than starting with the national Australian scene where bias and calls for change tended to be more contentious. The ease in starting with overseas issues was demonstrated early when in the 1960s the Catholic Bishops Conference founded Australian Catholic Relief (ACR) to offer overseas relief and development aid as modern form of charity based in faith. This work quickly blossomed after it took responsibility in 1967 for an initiative of the Paulian Lay Association, a yearly Lenten sacrificial appeal called “Project Compassion”.⁸² Every year since, ACR has prepared motivational materials to accompany the Lenten appeals, but having established its position, its materials gradually changed in character to probe the causes of world poverty and need for relief funds. ACR later developed national educational programs for schools and adult discussion groups on the subject of appropriate development, sometimes under advice from Columban members and in cooperation with Society programs.

⁷⁹ In 1970 Charles O’Mahony was appointed Director (1970-1976) followed by Bernard Cleary (1976-1982), Reginald Howard (1982-1986), Michael Gormly (1986-1990), William Moran (1990-1994) who showed themselves to be effective administrators rather than as innovators, who implemented Society policies as required. Some new patterns emerged with Directors Brian Gore (1994-2000) and Trevor Trotter (2000<).

⁸⁰ O’Mahony to Purcell 16.9.1971, CAS, C/CA files. The Director originally thought that the idea was “a little wild”, but found enthusiastic support from his fellow priests even though the appeal may affect the Society’s normal Christmas appeal for funds.

⁸¹ Steinhilber to O’Mahony 27.10.1971 and O’Mahony to Steinhilber 3.11.1971, CAS, D/CA files.

⁸² Chapman to Hunter 30.4.1966, CAE, D/CA files. The project was led by Roy Boylan, drawing on Columban precedents, to initiate Lenten collections in parishes throughout Australia to be sent as overseas aid. In a pragmatic response but one to enhance local church efforts, the Society transferred its Mite Box

The receptivity of active Catholics to social justice and other church teaching, even on missionary work itself is complex. It has been argued that in the USA the credibility of the church is low among those who actively pursued the spirit of Vatican II and then were reprimanded for their efforts, the dismissal of the CCJP being an equivalent issue in Australia.⁸³ At another level, when the basic causes of many world problems were traced to the First World and the Third World elites they supported, Catholics in the First World were less receptive to a message that challenged their comfortable lifestyle. In spite of these reservations, Columban members on Mission Education work reported that their overseas experience provided an easy entry point into issues of justice, models of church, religious dialogue, and ecology and their theological implications.

Heated social debate both inside and outside the Catholic Church during the 1970s centered on the worldwide implementation of the western model of development. This debate was particularly acute in Asian and South American mission countries where Society members worked. Western thinking emphasised rational planning and expansion captured in the iconic words “development and progress”, but this modern world-view was judged by many missionaries among others to have helped promote nationalism, technological determinism, bureaucratic rationalism, profit maximisation, and the marginalisation of religion.⁸⁴ In spite of papal condemnations of modernity and rejection of the atheistic materialism, rationalist thinking was entering Christian teaching so that Pope Paul VI could say in 1967 that the “new name for justice was development”.⁸⁵

The Regional magazine increasingly began to print stories on Third World problems that questioned rationalistic models of development. Writers related their experiences of life in the Manila slums, the life of serfdom on the sugar estates of Negros, mass internal migration of subsistence farmers to cities like Lima, horrendous conditions in

appeals from the Lenten period so as not to cause a clash, and removed its Mite Boxes from Catholic schools in favour of Australian Catholic Relief and also Catholic Mission collections.

⁸³ William Burrows, “Redemptoris Missio after Ten Years: Reflections from an American Perspective”, **Mission Today**, (Shillong, India), July 2001, pp. 239-247. The issue marks the anniversary of Pope John Paul II’s 1991 mission encyclical.

⁸⁴ G. Dorrien, **Reconstructing the Common Good: Theology and the Social Order**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 2 and 5.

⁸⁵ Pope Paul VI, “Progress of Peoples”, 1967.

the sweat-shops of South Korea, or exploitation in the tourist trade.⁸⁶ The writers were often personally known to readers adding weight to their opinions on feeding the world, fisher-folk and farmers' problems, women's cooperatives, international trade, capitalism and transnational companies. To the poor it was the rich nations that were in need of a new understanding that was not colonial, paternalistic or exploitative, "You are the problem". A Columban from Peru wrote in 1972,

Evidently efforts at development have failed ... The Third World has very recently discovered a system of international capitalism, aided by foreign governments, which has denuded the Third World of its wealth and resources. The third world countries now look for ways and means of liberating themselves from that system. I would say personally, that Pope Paul's famous phrase, 'The new word for peace is development', is being revised to read, 'The new word for peace is liberation' ... The Bishops of Peru in their document *Justice in the World*, say 'We share with the nations of the Third World in being victims of systems which exploit our economic resources, control our political decisions, impose on us the domination of their cultural values and their consumer civilisation ... The salvation of Christ does not exhaust itself in political liberation, but finds its place and true significance in the full liberation announced incessantly in Scripture.'⁸⁷

In a mark of increasing ecumenism within Australia the Society joined in a program linking ACR and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) with the international body Action for World Development (AWD) and the Australian Council of Churches. The program, begun in 1972, aimed to educate public opinion and awaken the Christian conscience on the responsibility of all Australians for equitable world development, and in particular to make development a public and political issue.⁸⁸ Participants believed that as Christians they could bring "salt and spirit" to the issues and offer the concept of integral development.⁸⁹ The growing level of concern among Catholics for the international dimension of social justice was indicated by the number of submissions to government Committee advising on foreign policy in 1979.⁹⁰ To pursue the values of social justice, often named as seeking "Kingdom values" in church terminology, the Columban Society extended its networking to

⁸⁶ *TFE* 6, 1971, p. 8; 7, 1971, p. 2; 7, 1972, p. 10; 11, 1979; 4, 1980, p. 14; 11, 1980, p. 2; 8, 1982, p. 14; 5, 1991, p. 10; 6, 1994, p. 18.

⁸⁷ F. Regan, *CI*, April 1972; F. Purcell, *CI*, June 1972.

⁸⁸ *ARN*, June 1972.

⁸⁹ *TFE* 11, 1972, p. 1

⁹⁰ O. Harris, Chairman of the Committee, *Australia's Relations with the Third World, Australia and the third world*, (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs, 1979), pp. viii and 365-368. There were 150 submissions in all, but 8 of the 12 submissions made by church groups came from Catholic sources.

groups outside of the churches such as the Asian Bureau Australia, Pax Christi and Amnesty International.⁹¹

The first structured Mission Education program in Catholic parishes initiated by the Society in Australia was run by the *Mission in Focus* team of returned missionaries from 1973-1976.⁹² Columban Cyril Hally led the venture sponsored officially but not financially by the National Mission Council (NMC) of which he was Secretary. The Mission in Focus team's method was to solicit an invitation into a parish for several weeks to conduct a new type of parish retreat using materials and group methods drawn from missionary experiences. At the invitation of Bishop Ronald Mulkearns and clergy of Ballarat diocese, teams went there from June-September 1973 "to inform ... to inspire ... to challenge".⁹³ Teams also operated in some parishes in Melbourne, Lismore and Newcastle dioceses.

To more clearly establish Mission Education programs at the structural level, a Regional Advisory Committee was set up in 1973 with a distinct role separate from that of the traditional Director's Council as a forum for thinking creatively about the Society's role as a theological teacher.⁹⁴ It aimed to go beyond internal Society renewal to elicit support and participation by Columban members in Reverse Mission programs. The Region saw its new Mission Education work as an added form of "service" to the Australian church and encouraged positive action among promotion personnel to spread the insights of theology and practice the mission churches had to offer the older sending churches, organised programs marking a tentative start.⁹⁵ In this vein, some returned missionaries said, "I learnt more than I taught, received more than I gave".

⁹¹ E. Larsen, **A Flame in Barbed Wire: The Story of Amnesty International**, (London: Frederick Muller, 1978).

⁹² P. Burke, **CI**, June 1973; **TFE** 7, 1973, p. 9; M. Schell, "Report on Promotion in Sydney 1974-75", **CAE**, Vocations File. Core members included Majella Tracey FMM, John O'Hehir, Andy Deckers WF, returned lay missionary Diane Forbes and members of the Divine Word, Pallottine and Marist Sisters missionary groups. Other Columban members were involved part time while doing vocations work or home on vacation.

⁹³ **ARN**, September 1973. The initial meetings were held in homes and focused on discussion introducing a new process of learning that moved away from a one-directional delivery of information. This was seen not only as an effective means of communication but also as a more just way of carrying out education in accord with new insights from mission lands.

⁹⁴ Campion to O'Mahony 15.3.1973, **CAS**, D/CA File.

⁹⁵ **TFE** 10, 1978, p. 1.

Conclusion

The growing connections between peace, justice and development issues and evangelisation within Catholic teaching was the background to the Columban initiating and implementing Mission Education programs. The almost unconscious theological teaching role of the Society's early years became a specific aim of its work among Australian Catholics with the voice of newer indigenous churches placed centre stage. Columban members had to come to terms with these voices prompting a period of organised internal renewal programs in the Society. In the early 1970s the Region began its first Reverse Mission programs to promote thinking on the international aspects of social justice when the Society took an advocacy role, later forming partnerships for particular campaigns to multiply their effect. It risked division within the Society and misunderstanding by some segments of the church in order to do so. The strength of such opposition is indicative of the serious nature of the theological changes the Society was helping to bring about but it remained committed to the task, improving the professionalism of its theological teaching role from 1976 onwards.

Chapter 11: The World's Agenda: Models of Development, Culture, Religious Dialogue and Ecology as issues within Mission Theology

In 1976 the central Society leadership articulated a clear Columban vision for renewal and put structures in place to bring it to fruition. Personnel were appointed in the Australian Region to both facilitate internal renewal and develop new Mission Education programs targeting Catholics nationwide. These programs at first focused on the consequences flowing from the models of development being imposed on the Third World but cultural, religious dialogue and ecological issues were also addressed as parts of deepening Mission Theology. This chapter argues that the Region's initial commitment to take a conscious theological teaching role among Australian Catholics in the early 1970s went a step further after 1976 when its programs became more professional. This change was achieved in spite of continuing opposition from within and beyond the Society, nevertheless, it remained committed to its theological teaching role.

Society General Chapter 1976 Vision and Structures and Educating Members

Columban representatives and superiors who came together at the 1976 Society General Chapter in the Philippines demonstrated a different spirit to previous assemblies. Society constitutional adjustments meant that the Chapter was less top-heavy with former superiors and made up of delegates elected under the voting influence of a large number of recently ordained members trained in the spirit of Vatican II. The Chapter endorsed the reforms of the 1970 General Chapter but went further in articulating a new mission theology for members, and in electing a central leadership team committed to it. The "Reign of God", a phrase popularised by Society campaigns from 1970, became an overarching category. It implied an un-centering of the church, and Columban aims were directed to seeking "kingdom values" in common with all people of good will and other faiths.¹ The Chapter set objectives for the Society that began as a charter for action but were later included in its Constitutions.²

¹ Mark 1:15 and Luke 4:18; **ARN**, March 1979. The 1976 Society Chapter emphasised the person of Jesus who inaugurated the reign of God, and the discipleship of those who were to seek it above all else.

² "Acts of the General Chapter 1976", no. 3.1, **CAE**, Chapter File.

Our special role as an exclusively missionary Society is in crossing boundaries of language, culture and faith to establish the Church and to assist local churches in bringing the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ to the unevangelised. In the light of the tremendously urgent challenges of our age, Christ calls us:

- 1) to incarnate the Gospel in cultures which are not our own;
- 2) to bring full Christian liberation to the poor and the oppressed of the countries in which we work;
- 3) to facilitate dialogue between Christians and non-Christians;
- 4) to facilitate the exchange of ideas, programs and personnel between local churches.

It took time and organization to bring about this change. At the 1976 Chapter the Australian Director had found,

... antagonism towards the home regions as being out of touch with the real life situation and aspirations of men in the field ... an admission that as a Society we have done little through research and through education to equip ourselves to live in today's world.³

“The simple truth is that it has taken me longer than many to wake up to the world I really live in” wrote Leo Donnelly in 1979.⁴ At the Society Inter-Regional Meetings of superiors in Hong Kong 1977 and Lima 1979, concerns were raised that the 1976 Chapter objectives had not been fully accepted by the membership and worse, that individuals who accepted and acted on changed priorities were not finding support from fellow members.⁵ Younger priests appointed to the Essendon house on Mission Education work were subject to disdain from some older members who regarded them as doing less than priestly work. The divisions that emerged paralleled those related to reforming Columban seminary training programs. From the Philippines came the cry: “It is not the Society which we joined. This is not the priesthood as we know it.”⁶

The Society's response to resistance was to organise more “ongoing education”. Data gathered from attitudinal surveys of Columban members helped in planning successive renewal workshops, staff at the revamped Columban seminary at Turramurra usually supplying the lecturers.⁷ Outside experts also helped, for example,

³ **ARN**, January 1977.

⁴ L. Donnelly, **CI**, October 1979.

⁵ “The Inter-Regional Convention Lima 1979, Official Report”, **CI** March 1979.

⁶ “To Our Brothers Meeting at Lima - January 1979, Philippines December 1978”, **CAE**, Inter-Regional Conventions File.

⁷ “1968 Questionnaire”, **CAE**, **COR** and **CARA** files; **ARN**, July 1976, January 1977 and September 1978. The Education Office held two five week “Spiritual Renewal Programs” in 1977 at Turramurra and two the

in 1983 Father David Power OMI was invited to Australia to address the topic of Sacramental Theology, key to the understanding of Catholic priesthood and a source of many Columban divisions.⁸ In a related effort at renewal, the Director asked several members in the Region to write on the theme “Towards a Columban Missionary Spirituality” in order to capture some of the “charism” (specialty) of the Society and apply it to modern times.⁹ The Society’s Education Coordinator later appealed to the Society members to take new church teaching as seriously as they took its teaching on sexual morality.¹⁰ The various methods used for internal renewal including the frustrations experienced in attempting it, acted as a learning ground for the Columban role in Mission Education programs among the wider Australian Catholic community.

Structuring Avenues to Developing Columban Programs

Local Catholic receptivity to new theological ideas about mission was weak and in 1978 the Director stated that less than helpful ideas circulating were a tendency among many Catholics, including church personnel, was to see modern mission work either as exclusively developmental, or, as an optional extra.¹¹ The 1979 Regional Convention stated,

Therefore one of the tasks of a missionary Society such as ours is to transmit to our home churches some of the richness, Gospel insight, a new model of ministry ... which our missionaries have experienced abroad.¹²

following year. Courses were largely for non-seminary members, “Its aim is attitudinal change rather than a complete theological re-education”. From January-February and in August 1978 updating courses offered for all members of the Region addressed missiology, cultural anthropology, theology of mission, mission activity, ethics and culture, and official church documents on mission. Input from the seminary staff was followed by discussion under the theme, “World, Church, Ideology and Mission. Arms to Regional Directors 8.1.0.1979; O’Brien to Regional Directors 13.5.1980; Cleary to Columban Members 1.3.1985; Murray to Gormly 21.9. 1989, CAE, D/CA files; P. Digan, CI April 1982. The Society’s Centre for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) sent questionnaires to members in 1979. Personal Preference Surveys were held in 1985 and 1989.

⁸ ARN, September 1983.

⁹ ARN, “Towards a Columban Spirituality”, November 1984.

¹⁰ N. Kerins, CI May 1985.

¹¹ B. Cleary, “Regional report on Mission Awareness 1978”, CAE, D/CA File.

¹² “Convention Report for the Region of Australia-New Zealand, 1979”, p. 1, CAE, Convention File; P. Toohey, CI December 1977. Toohey wrote, “Missionaries are like words in a dialogue between churches. If there is no reciprocal sharing ... you have not a dialogue, but a monologue ... Our role, as I see it, is to act as facilitators in this two way exchange.” J. Mulroney, CI January 1988. A number of dioceses explicitly wanted Columban promotional work to be put in the context of Mission Education Programs for the parishes, or Reverse Mission.

Creating Mission Awareness programs marked a qualitative change in the local Columban mission agenda by giving the Society's Reverse Mission role a comparable status to its role as a missionary sending agency. Learning sessions for members involved in the outreach programs were regularly organised to help them be more effective but also to offer them encouragement. To learn more about development aid, three members attended ACFOA summer school in Hobart January 1978.¹³ From March 1979 a ten-week course was held at Turramurra to help members prepare materials to be used in promotion. A second course in 1981 promoted the use of "social analysis" as a technique for identifying the social forces affecting missionary work, naming some of them as evil and adding to them the theological tags "structural sin" or "social sin".¹⁴

Structural changes followed the 1976 Chapter's decision that the Society and each Region should have a Justice and Peace Office (J&P). Their task was to raise awareness among Columban members, review Society procedures, and organise networks committed to social justice education and advocacy.¹⁵ While the central J&P Coordinator provided backup publications and conferences, most of the work was to happen at the Regional level.¹⁶ In the Australian Region "Paddy" Burke was appointed Coordinator in March 1977 and when John Hindmarsh followed in 1979 on a full time basis, he received a detailed work description.¹⁷ The J&P Coordinator influenced such things as the focus of the Regional magazine and the tone of appeal letters, and prompted an ethical review of Regional investments.¹⁸

¹³ **ARN**, September 1977. Cleary as Director gave a lead and, together with Noel Connolly from the seminary and Peter Woodruff on the Vocations Apostolate attended a course on development.

¹⁴ **TFE** April, 1980, p. 12. G. Farquharson, **CI** April 1990. The Paris based Ecumenical Institute for the Development of Peoples (INODEP) specialised in Social Analysis. **ARN**, September 1981. The Regional members' education week August 1981 was run on the theme "Australia and its Institutions".

¹⁵ "Job Description for Society Justice and Peace Officer" 1.7.1978, **CI** July 1978, Supplement, and **ARN** June 1979. M. Cryan, **CI** October, 1987; T. Rouse, **CI** March, 1989. Group advocacy through letter writing and net-working were seen as effective means of educating politicians and the public.

¹⁶ "Solidarity with the Poor in Korea", a supplement, **CI** January 1980, "Full Christian Liberation of Fiji's Poor and Oppressed", a supplement, **CI** March 1980; "Society Justice and Peace Conference", **CI** July and September 1980, supplements. Conferences of Regional Social Justice Coordinators were held in the USA in 1980 and 1991. In Ireland from 1983 a regular fourteen week long "Justice and Peace Workshop" was begun at the Columban Dalgan seminary and later held in Asia. Purcell to O'Mahony 14.2.1972, **CAS**, D/CA files; "Justice and Faith Workshop", **IC**, January 1983; B. Hoban, **CI**, March, 1986. "Justice and Peace Report to the Director 1980", **CI** January, 1994.

¹⁷ **ARN**, June 1979.

¹⁸ **ARN**, March 1977. The position of Regional Director of Promotion, was created in 1977 to coordinate all fields of promotion, arrange for personnel and appeals, prepare publicity materials and assist all Regional houses in these tasks, helped disseminate the new attitudes.

News releases were sent sporadically to Catholic and secular papers when the Society had news-breaking information drawn from Columban members overseas, superiors encouraging cooperation with the media.¹⁹ The J&P Coordinator also purchased up-to-date film and video materials on foreign missionary work to supplement printed educational materials used in Reverse Mission work.²⁰ These were used with adult and school groups and also shown nationally through the Australian Catholic Radio and Television Office.²¹ Particular scenes well remembered by local audiences included a sign hung on the door of the cathedral in Seoul, “Church full. Next Mass in one hour”, and well dressed Chileans in the streets of modern city eliciting the response, “How can they be under a dictatorship, they look like us?”

In the long run, the J&P Office’s most significant work lay in the establishment of information networks among official Catholic national and diocesan agencies together with action groups among clergy, Religious and lay people across Australia. This revived a style of local and personal contact with all levels of Catholics that had marked the Society’s early years but had waned during intervening decades as diocesan priests grew to see the Society mainly as a source of “supply” priests for Sunday Masses.²² Moving beyond its diocesan ethos the Society also fostered official cooperation with Religious Orders, accepting an invitation to join the Conference of Australian Major Religious Superiors in 1976.²³ When in 1978 the Conference established a “Forum of Australian Religious for Justice”, Columban influence seemed to be the local catalyst.²⁴ But the relationship was mutually beneficial since the Society became part of Religious communities’ connections throughout Australia and beyond. Meanwhile the Society maintained a working relationship with the usually priestly-led Catholic Mission diocesan and national offices, assisting with their parish

¹⁹ M. O’Neill 2.2.1983, CAE, D/CA files

²⁰ Smyth to O’Mahony 17.7.1975, CAE, D/CA files. Materials used included those produced from 1975 by the Irish Catholic media team Radharc in cooperation with the Columban members in Latin America and eastern Asia on the themes of culture, modern methods of evangelisation and military backed capitalism.

²¹ “Annual Report on the Region of Australia and New Zealand 1977”, Cleary to O’Brien 25.3.1978, CAE, D/CA files.

²² M. Schell, “Report on Promotion in Sydney 1974-75”; Steinhilber to Cleary 24.2.1976, CAE, D/CA files. In 1976 the Superior General wrote that “It has often struck me that our effort to maintain our image of secular priests produces little fruit.”

²³ ARN, March 1976. The following year, the three independent Conferences of Clerics, Brothers and Sisters formed a National Council of Major Superiors of the Religious of Australia.

appeals, addressing national conferences to foster a Missiological perspective and seeking their cooperation in national educational programs.²⁵

A team approach was taken when Columban members on J&P, vocation recruitment and promotion work full time operated as a “Mission Education Team” from their base at Essendon 1979-86. To spread understanding of the connection between church mission and social conditions, the Team compiled *Mission Resource Kits* for religion teachers in secondary schools, drawing mainly on articles in *The Far East* magazine.²⁶ Team members travelled around dioceses to promote both the kits and J&P groups. To support this activity, speakers from mission churches were invited to travel with them. Australian Catholic Relief followed the Columban lead, regularly inviting Lenten speakers to tour local dioceses. Catholic Mission did the same to support its appeals and other Catholic bodies started regular lecture series on social issues.

Each member of the Essendon Team carried recent overseas experience and was familiar with the “Basic Christian Communities” (BCC) methodology and aware of the hope it was creating in the South America and the Philippine churches. Spreading knowledge of BCC experience of church life was adopted as the main focus of the Team’s work. This experience influenced both its content and participative-style of presentation in connecting faith and social issues for local Catholics. Through action and reflection, the BCC movement combined Gospel living and developmental justice, leaders forming self-sustaining church communities that also took a direct role in transforming the social environment as a matter of faith.²⁷ In 1981 Karl Gasper, a lay expert in the BCC movement and executive secretary of the Southern Philippines Pastoral Conference, was the first speaker from overseas invited to tour with the Team.²⁸ Even though the Philippine church was eventually to have difficulty

²⁴ J. Aixala, **Pedro Arrupe: Justice with Faith Today: Selected Letters and Addresses**, (St. Louis : The Institute of Jesuit Resources, 1980). The Jesuits, one of largest group of Religious men in the church, and one carrying a strong missionary and international perspective, made social justice integral to its work.

²⁵ J. Waldersee, **A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Australia 1837-1977**, (Kensington, NSW: Chevalier Press, 1984), p. 401. Cooperation was close in particular places such as Sydney under Father Brian Cosgrove as local Catholic Mission Director.

²⁶ **ARN**, June 1980.

²⁷ **TFE** 10, 1969, p. 7; 5, 1970, p. 2; N. O’Brien, “Basic Christian Communities”, **The Furrow**, February 1984; C. Lovett, **CI** April, 1995.

²⁸ K. Gasper, **How Long? Prison Reflections of Karl Gasper**, (Quexon City, Manila: Claretian Productions, 1985). He was arrested in the Philippines in 1983 when the Marcos government tried to identify church social work with subversion.

incorporating the BCC movement into its official structure, communities survived and the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship by “people’s power” was helped by the experience of grassroots BCC style movements.²⁹

Team members subscribed to “Liberation” which was the umbrella theological category covering both the aspirations of people under oppression to be free and gain ultimate liberation offered in the risen Christ, and their activity in pursuing that liberation.³⁰ It arose in the late 1950s among “theological reflection” groups that “conscientized” the people to be aware of their situations. It used “popular interpretation” of the Bible in a new hermeneutic where the situation of the readers was the focus. By 1971 Liberation Theology had emerged to articulate the religious experience of many Christians and was at the heart of the BCC movement.³¹ Reactionary church people, however, often defending past church associations with elites, later lobbied Vatican officials to condemn Liberation Theology because it fostered a growing independence of local church communities as demonstrated in the southern Philippines. But pressure from many quarters, especially the East Asian and Latin American Federations of Bishops’ Conferences, using recent theological and scriptural scholarship, forced the Vatican to give approval to the liberation experience as a theology in 1984. The Vatican did this in spite of its ambivalence to liberation theology as a basis of Catholic community living or its effectiveness in bringing social change.³² Columban and Scripture scholar Christopher Baker has explored the Biblical roots of liberation in several major writings and declared, it “has become self evident to me that a theology which is anti-liberation must be a false theology.”³³

²⁹ W. Kinne, **The Splintered Staff: Structural Deadlock in the Mindanao Church**, (Manila: Claretian Press, 1990).

³⁰ T. Rouse, **CI** January 1991.

³¹ R. McAfee Brown, **Gustavo Gutierrez: An Introduction to Liberation Theology**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); A. T. Hennelly, ed. **Liberation Theology: a Documentary History**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990); “Liberation Theology”, a Supplement, **CI** October 1986; P. Freire, **Pedagogy of the Oppressed**, (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972); **TFE** 10, 1984. The BEC way became a way of doing theology, rather than relying on a fixed set of dogmatic conclusions, and was approved by the Bishops’ Conferences in Latin America.

³² Congregation for Doctrine and Faith, “Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation”, (Vatican City: Sacred Congregation for Doctrine and Faith, 1984). Latin American bishops met at Rio de Janeiro in 1955, Medellin in 1968, Puebla in 1978 and Santo Domingo 1992. T. Hennelly, ed., **Santo Domingo and Beyond: documents and commentaries from the Fourth General Assembly of Latin American Bishops**, (Maryknoll, NY :Orbis Books, 1993). R. Nagle, **Claiming the Virgin: The Broken Promise of Liberation in Brazil**, (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 158.

³³ C. Baker, **Covenant and Liberation**, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991), p. xv. C. Baker, **Jubilee Spirit for a Global Family**, (North Sydney: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, 1999).

Another approach to raising awareness of development issues was the Region's part in developing the *Mission and Justice Program* for use by teachers and students in schools. At its launch Cyril Hally captured some of the motivation.

For quite a number of years the National Missionary Council (NMC) tried to bring about formal cooperation between staffs of the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies (PMAS [Catholic Mission]), Australian Catholic Relief (ACR) and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), particularly in their educational outreach World Vision began promoting its understanding of development within Catholic schools and, incidentally, collecting substantial sums of money in the process. Both ACR and PMAS perceived this initiative as a direct challenge to the effectiveness of their own educational efforts.³⁴

Cooperation among church agencies, understanding of development issues, and values-identification by participants were characteristics evident in the production of the *Mission and Justice Program*. Professional educators drew on the BCC methodology and official church social teaching in five books developed 1979-1981.³⁵ James Cleary as Director worked with Eric Sedoti, Marie Lourey, Therese Woolfe and support members. Liam O'Keeffe was the Columban liaison person in Sydney and Carmel Pearson worked in conjunction with the Columban Team in Melbourne to implement the program. Their method was to run an in-service introductory day with the teachers of a school followed by workshops for students. Teaching the skill of "values identification" as a way to explore morality and spirituality was a key method employed in the program and was later used in Catholic Education curriculum development.³⁶

To financially support academic research into social justice issues, the Society offered "Galvin-Blowick Fellowships" in each country where it worked. Church politics, however, prevented the scheme being fully implemented in Australia. Anxious to avoid being tainted by growing criticism directed towards ACR for using money for local educational purposes rather than sending it all overseas, the Society did not widely publicise the availability of these fellowships.³⁷ The only one awarded locally went to Sr. Carmel Leavy OP who in 1981 did an ethnographic study of Catholic

³⁴ C. Hally, *CI* September, 1982.

³⁵ "Report of the First Two years of the National Mission and Justice Education Program" by L O'Keeffe, 1981, CAE, JPIC File.

³⁶ Catholic Education Office, *A Sense of the Sacred*, (Sydney: CEO Sydney, 1993-1995). The Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Education Office developed *A Sense of the Sacred* 1993-1995 using similar concepts for developing Gospel values in school curriculums.

³⁷ Cleary to O'Brien 18.11.1981, CAE, D/CA files.

schools entitled “Education for Justice and Mission - some questions and possibilities”.³⁸

Plotting a Columban Path through local Catholic Controversy

Controversy among Australian Catholics in the 1970-80s over economic development models, Communism and Security State military dictatorships, lay leadership within the church and other issues led to a public airing of deep ideological and theological divisions. These themes were familiar to Columban members and readers of its magazine, but criticism which had been simmering in the local church burst forth and led to the disbanding of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCJP) by the Australian bishops in 1987. The National Civic Council (NCC) was the main influence that led the bishops to withdraw the CCJP mandate replacing it with two more controllable agencies called the Bishop’s Committee for Justice Development and Peace (BCJDP) and the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council (ACSJC).³⁹ Therese Woolfe traced what she called the “cultural” roots of division as lay people and bishops lined up on both sides of a battle over the content of CCJP statements and its advocacy on specific government policies.⁴⁰

Columban members were caught up in controversy at several levels. They knew people on both sides of the debate, helped in the selection of CCJP topics, wrote statements and the Society gave financial support to publications.⁴¹ The Society’s consciously developed teaching role in Australia combining mission studies at Turramurra, magazine, promotional materials and Mission Education programs meant that some of the controversial issues addressed by the CCJP publications were central to its own agenda.⁴² Turramurra was a place for consultation for many CCJP members. The NCC attempted to implicate the Columban Society as part of its move to discredit the CCJP and the other official Catholic organisation Australian Catholic Relief

³⁸ C. Leavey, “Education for Justice and Mission”, **Word in Life**, 1983-84.

³⁹ **Justice Trends**, June 1987, and Supplement November 1987.

⁴⁰ Therese Woolfe, “Witness and Teacher – The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1968-1987: A study of the Ideology of a Catholic Church Agency”, PhD Thesis, Department of Government, Sydney University, 1988, pp. 19-22 and 26-28. She names the ideologies involved as a cultural stance.

⁴¹ Woolfe, “CCJP” 1988, p.108, 336 and 224. Hally wrote the first draft of the 1977 **CCJP** statement “Changing Australia”.

(ACR) because they used money for educational work in Australia and raised questions on development. The Society was able to guard its teaching role, having the advantages of not being subject to the direct control of the local bishops and of being financially independent, even though it depended on the good will of the bishops to operate. It negotiated its way through the dismissal, maintaining control of its own national network of contacts, conscious that it wanted to control its own agenda and the issues it chose to address.

Before any resolution was reached, however, the NCC accused missionaries and NGOs of having been duped into supporting Communist groups. This accusation was of immediate concern to the Columban Society as it put the lives of Columban and other missionaries in danger when an apparent lack of Australian church support was reported by Philippine media, and the Regional Director confronted the accusations.⁴³ Also, the Director of the council for non-government aid agencies, ACFOA, of which ACR was a member, rejected accusations that it had “veered left” as exaggerated, as were the charges against missionaries.⁴⁴ Likewise the National Director of ACR defended its efficient and proper use of funds.⁴⁵

The expulsion of Society members from countries under dictatorships because of their social justice stance, provided publicity for the Society and it used the opportunities to counter the arguments of the NCC and educate Australians on development models as a mission issue with theological implications. Brian Gore had been in prison in the Philippines as part of “The Negros Nine” and after his return to Australia he addressed many religious and secular groups, thanking them for their support during his imprisonment. Several books were written on the affair.⁴⁶ He used the opportunity to

⁴² Woolfe, “CCJP” 1988, pp. 425-431. Issues included racism, work with Australian aborigines, peace, development, the role of women, lay participation in the Catholic church, Catholic mission etc.

⁴³ R. Howard and Joan Santamaria, *CI* May, 1984.

⁴⁴ *News Weekly*, 1 February, 1978.

⁴⁵ M. Whiteley, “Where does ACR Stand?” *Justice Trends* (Australian Catholic Relief), January 1986.

⁴⁶ A. McCoy, *Priests on Trial*, (Melbourne: Penguin, 1984); B. Stannard, *Poor Man's Priest - The Brian Gore Story*, (Melbourne: Collins, 1984); B. Wurth, *Justice in the Philippines*, (Sydney: ABC Enterprises, 1985). N. O'Brien, *Seeds of Injustice: Reflections on the Murder Frame-up of the Negros Nine in the Philippines from the Prison Diary*, (Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1985); N. O'Brien, *Revolution from the Heart*, (Manila: Claretian Press, 1988); N. O'Brien, *Island of Tears, Island of Hope: Living the Gospel in a Revolutionary Situation*, (Manila: Claretian Publications, 1993). O'Brien called for conversion of both the oppressor and the oppressed, not victory for one or the other. Otherwise the cycle of dominance and violent revolt continues.

explain connections between Australian wealth and Third World poverty as a religious issue, deepening Columban commentary on international affairs.⁴⁷ Partially because of NCC influence, Catholic clergy were at first slow to invite him to speak. But Religious and lay people arranged multiple events and Catholic bishops were generally supportive after Society leaders took the initiative in contacting them to explain the Columban position. The wide media coverage that the Gore affair attracted created a sense of pride among most Catholics and “awakened many Catholics ... to that realisation that Asia’s problems were not merely those of poverty, but those of politics, manipulation, corruption, factionalism and power.”⁴⁸

The Gore affair cannot be seen as a one off aberration within Columban experience.⁴⁹ Other Columban members were expelled for their justice activities, Neil Magill from Taiwan, Tom Rouse from Fiji, Denis O’Mara from Chile and Neil O’Brien, another member of the Negros Nine. When Denis O’Mara, who had taught at Turramurra, was imprisoned several times and then expelled from Chile for his anti-torture campaigns, fellow Columban Don Hornsey wrote a poem with this final verse:

So after five times deep inside
the walls where all who enter wonder
if they’ll leave intact and whole
the one who called the shots said ‘Out!’⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Howard to Cleary 7.6.1985 with “Evaluation of the Brian Gore Event” by Pat Kelly, Colin McLean, Jim Mulroney and Ray Scanlon, CAE, D/CA files. An internal Society evaluation on a year of his travels reported that he spoke to approximately ninety groups numbering about 16,000 people, and fifty meetings in addition to secular media interviews.

⁴⁸ P. O’Farrell, **The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales University, 1985/ revised 1992), p. 436.

⁴⁹ “Expulsions”, CI May 1989 and July 1989.

⁵⁰ D. Hornsey, CI January 1985.



Father Brian Gore in prison in the Philippines being interviewed by a reporter.

These other Columban expulsions, however, did not create the public impact in Australia of the Gore case. One reason was that they involved non-Australian Columban members who did not have local media appeal. Equally important, the cases demonstrated the need for organised publicity in the media to argue the connections between faith and work for social issues as moral issues. This is what the Society did in Australia and Ireland but not in the USA. O'Brien was Irish and his imprisonment resulted in an orchestrated Columban campaign in the Irish Region that went as far as the USA President Ronald Regan as a person of Irish ancestry. O'Mara came from the USA but his case was not taken up by the USA Columban Region. On the contrary, opposition to his work against torture was mounted by USA-based

Chilean supporters of the dictator Pinochet and they demonstrate against O'Mara when his plane landed on USA soil.

Division over who and what agencies could claim a teaching role within the official church was seen as a fundamental problem for the Catholic personnel involved in the CCJP controversy, raising issues of power and agenda. Hogan contends that a major stumbling block to cooperation between bishops and lay Catholics has not been the issues of social justice as such but the problem of episcopal control over who can claim a teaching role in the name of the church.⁵¹ Woolfe somewhat leaned to this judgement. The Columban experience would suggest that fundamental ideological and theological differences over the issues themselves were more basic than the issues of power and control. Whoever controls the teaching role controls the agenda, so that control may have been more a means to an end rather than the end itself, the agenda being more significant. The intimate connection between social issues and acting on them as integral to Catholic faith and morals remains problematic at the practical level.

Intertwining Culture, Indigenous Churches and Religious Dialogue Issues

As Mission Education programs in Australia changed to keep pace with new Columban overseas experiences and Society defined priorities, cultural issues came to the fore. The need to concentrate on justice issues lessened as J&P Gospel consciousness became more "mainstream" among Australian Catholics in the 1980s in spite of the CCJP controversy. By the turn of the century, 75% of the 24 Catholic dioceses had their own Social Justice Commission.⁵² The lack of follow-through in Catholic advocacy and changed government policies caused the justice area to be revisited by Columban programs in the 1990s, but in the interim the focus shifted to culture and faith issues. This was in part a response to the negative homogenising effect global economic development was having on the diversity of cultures,

⁵¹ M. Hogan, **Australian Catholics: The Social Justice Tradition**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Collins Dove, 1993), p. 139.

⁵² National Council of Priests (NCP), **Catholic Directory**, (Corio, VIC: NCP, 2001). The Melbourne Archdiocese Commission secretary (August 2001) reported that it had a Social Justice contact in 150 of 230 parishes with about 70 active social justice groups. The Sydney Archdiocese has groups in about 30% of its

accompanied by a growing positive appreciation of the plurality expressed by diverse cultures and religions. Ecology and environmental issues also emerged as awareness grew not only about tribal religion as a cultural phenomena but the intimate connection between religion and land. It brought an amplification of the social justice debate where “the twin suffering of the poor and the earth” were connected. Columban Mission Education programs were becoming more complex but necessarily so as seemingly diverse issues were recognised as being intertwined.⁵³

Social commentators in the 1980s contended that social struggle is both “ongoing and particularised” by local conditions.⁵⁴ Generalised first world terminology can cover over internal political and social structures that are culturally based, working against local interpretations of what are central human rights and imposing a western emphasis on the individual. The victims of Western style development and cultural alienation became a focus in writings using socialist and feminist analysis but also those using post-modern analysis.⁵⁵ Because of “essentialist” philosophical base, Catholic social teaching traditionally looked to universal prescriptions for the common good. However, Catholic Third World theologians called for “solidarity” with victims as a new approach to social justice, demanded apologies for events such as the genocide of native peoples under European colonization and called on church people to make local cultural appropriations of Christ’s message of religious liberation.⁵⁶ Some missiologists made “reconciliation” the only relevant model of mission. That model goes beyond accompaniment and co-operation in post-colonial nation building to focus on the perpetrators of evil and identification with “the victim who experiences God’s reconciling grace, restoring the victim’s humanity and so lifting the victim out of victimisation”.⁵⁷ This model and the theology that underlies it may well be a dystopian view of missionary activity and a new form of romanticism, but is none the

140 parishes. Also, four dioceses had renamed their ecumenical commissions to include inter-faith dialogue, and two had commissions concerned specifically with ecology.

⁵³ D. Dorr, **The Social Justice Agenda: Justice, Ecology, Power and the Church**, (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1991).

⁵⁴ R. Evans and A. Evans, **Human Rights: A Dialogue between the First and Third Worlds**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), pp. 7-12, 240 and 243.

⁵⁵ M. Lamb, **Solidarity with Victims: Towards a Theology of Social Transformation**, (New York: Crossroads, 1982). p. xv.

⁵⁶ L. Boff and V. Elizondo, **1492-1992 The Voice of the Victims**, (Nijmegen, Holland: Stichting Concilium, 1990, and London: SCM Press, 1990), pp. vii-ix.

⁵⁷ R. Schreiter, “Reconciliation as a Model of Mission”, **Neue Zeitschrift für Missions Wissenschaft**, (Immensee, Switzerland), 52, 4 (1996), p. 247.

less widespread. Others argue that in an age of globalisation, a model emphasising solidarity as “interdependence” may provide a more constructive path, modeled on the organic character displayed by nature.⁵⁸ Columban mission experiences of direct involvement have tended towards the “ongoing and particularised” approach to social issues and the “interdependence” model of mission, as have the Columban Mission Awareness programs created in Australia derived from them.

From 1983-86, a Columban Mission Awareness Team based in Melbourne worked with school and parish groups in the southern Australian States, the Regional Director having assigned more personnel and finance to the work.⁵⁹ The Team continued the social justice thrust in its mission teaching, adding the tools of social analysis. Guiding groups through a social analysis of local problems identified by the local group itself as part of the process produced surprising results for the participants, be they farming communities or city based.⁶⁰ Through analysis they were able to name the major players in particular problems, and to identify the forces dictating the play of their lives. The Essendon team also began to shift focus to include cultural issues, supplying information on the non-Christian religious experience and Christian dialogue with Islam and tribal religions, but did not become involved with this work locally.

The Team also continued to critique Regional operations. The sustained use of European art became a controversial choice in the 1980s when the Essendon Team championed the use of Christian paintings from mission lands in the Columban Art Calendar. It argued that their use would be a sign of respect for their culturally unique expressions of faith. Pragmatism won the day as Australian Catholic buyers were judged to prefer European art and so its use continued. A related proposal by the Team to gradually change the name of *The Far East* magazine to *Columban Mission* was adopted at this time but it never eventuated. The Team argued that the title carried colonial overtones and asked, “How Far? And East of where?” The magazine title was

⁵⁸ P. Vallely, *The New Politics Catholic Social Teaching for the Twenty-First Century*, (London: SCM Press, 1998), pp. 160-161.

⁵⁹ The Essendon Team comprised Colin McLean, Leo Donnelly, Walter Tudor and Charles Rue, with Reginald Howard as Director.

⁶⁰ A church group in the central Victorian farming area of Nagambie analysed the situation of youth dissatisfaction in their town. It found to its surprise that local youth had been raised with the skills and expectation of becoming farmers but that it was near impossible for any of them to afford to own a farm like their parents.

not changed for the pragmatic reason that the name was recognised by Australian Catholics and had a better ring to it than a theologically derived title.⁶¹

Factors internal to the Society limited the Team's success. The first Society "Inculturation Seminar" was one example of plans that did not come into fruition because of a lack of agreed focus, finance and professional expertise. Organised at Turramurra in August 1984 to explore the connections between particularised cultural expressions and religion, it failed to establish its relevance for the work of members in the Region.⁶² The receptive capacity of members was a limiting factor as was the limited professionalism of Team members as teachers. Although the talks delivered at the seminar were videotaped for inclusion in Mission Awareness information materials, they were never edited for use.

The new program for schools entitled *Being Church* was more successful. Early in 1985 the team had edited a new collection of BCC papers for adults carrying the title and a positive response to them prompted a search for materials catering to wider audiences.⁶³ The *Being Church* concept used a Columban schools program from the USA, radically adapted and localised by Justine Sweeney.⁶⁴ Presented in eight folders of materials for primary and high schools, it offered a "case studies" approach on the church in foreign countries, a style later adopted and further developed by the Catholic School system in Sydney and elsewhere.⁶⁵ *Being Church* added to the impact of the *Mission and Justice* program on a school's curriculum and teachers themselves.

⁶¹ CAE, Mission Education files.

⁶² ARN, September 1984; H. McMahon, CI December 1984. The seminar was a pilot project for the Society so representatives came from some other Regions and Central Administration. "Inculturation Supplement" CI August 1985. The keynote speaker was local historian Father Edmund Campion and seminary staff provided most of the other speakers. Campion spoke on "Popular Religiosity among Australian Catholics". He is well remembered for his description of a former chapel now converted into a pub where he said he "still drops in for a visit".

⁶³ *Being Church* focused on the importance of local issues and cultural aspects within the BCC experience. It was made available for adult discussion groups through the National Council of Priests Convention in Melbourne in 1985. It influenced local groups such as small communities in the Adelaide Archdiocese.

⁶⁴ Charles Rue initiated the program and promoted it in diocesan education offices while Raymond Scanlon looked after its production assisted by Mr. Ciaran Crehan. It was trialed in 12 schools before production.

⁶⁵ D. Parnham, ed., **Exploring Religion** (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1997), Introduction. Australian schools have introduced religious studies as a way to help students understand the values, beliefs, traditions, and cultures by which many people commonly give meaning and establish goals. It helps Australians acknowledge their history of exploitation and with the task of all citizens to forge a common future.

The case studies approach in *Being Church* highlighted the dignity and rightful cultural diversity of particular local Catholic churches. While the Columban experience of church diversity in China from the 1920s led it to convey a positive image of the cultural diversity and dignity of Asian peoples to Australians, the issue of different cultural expressions of Catholic Church faith and order had deep theological repercussions. This theology entered the Society's consciousness after Vatican II, going beyond the pragmatic aims expressed in encyclicals of 1919 and 1926 promoting non-nationalistic outlooks and a "decolonisation" of missions. This had led in practice to missionaries trying to establish an "a-cultural" view of the Catholic church that was in fact Roman. Vatican II reversed this thrust, taking a theological stand to affirm the dignity of culturally distinct local Catholic churches within the one Roman communion, and teaching that the reality of the one, holy and catholic church exists only within the diversity of particular cultural churches united in Christ.⁶⁶ Theological expression itself also was recognised as culturally diversified, the introduction of the vernacular into the liturgy passing beyond translation to destigmatise all Gentile cultures and affirm a radical pluralism of culture.⁶⁷ The churches in the Asian, African and South American continents began to exemplify the diversity of new churches, often built on principles of self help and liberation from colonialism.⁶⁸ The Federation of Asian Bishop's Conferences in 1986 noted "that the past history of the Church in Asia has been handicapped by the foreign character of the churches transplanted from Europe and by the exclusive claim to truth and salvation."⁶⁹

Columban programs told how the missionary was called to enter into a particular people to evangelise that culture and allow the Gospel to permeate it without being subject to it, upsetting and renewing, challenging and being challenged in a process

⁶⁶ "Ad Gentes: Mission", Abbott, **Vatican II**, Nos. 19-22. F, Lewins, **The Myth of the Universal Church**, (Canberra: Faculty of Arts, ANU, 1978); Arbuckle, **Clergy Review**, August 1985. After Vatican II, every Catholic, including missionaries, was challenged to work out a stance as regards a multicultural church.

⁶⁷ A. Dulles, **The Reshaping of Christianity**, (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 35; R. Schreier, "The Anonymous Christian and Christology", **Occasional Bulletin**, 2, 1 (January) 1978, p. 9. Theologian Karl Rahner contended that church in future will not define itself in orthodox formulae but by its diverse practice. A. Hamilton, "What has Asia to do with Australia: Reflections on the Theology of Aloysius Pieris", **Pacifica**, 3 (1990), p. 304.

⁶⁸ W. Buhlmann, **The Coming of the Third Church: An Analysis of the Present and Future Church**, (Slough, UK: St Paul's Publications, 1974), p. x and 73; Hennelly, **Santo Domingo**, p. 135.

⁶⁹ D. Padmos, **CI** December 1986.

under the Holy Spirit to enrich the church universal.⁷⁰ The *Being Church* case studies drew on the new theological teaching and exemplified it with the experiences by Columban members originating from this Region, many of them having entered the waters of local religious cultural expression and liturgical innovation in Japan, Fiji and elsewhere.⁷¹

Columban vision and work priorities were in transition as the missionary movement entered a new era where partnership with the mission churches rather than foreign control was paramount. Indigenous churches grew so that missionary societies acted more as bridges between older churches and locally staffed indigenous churches that had become self-confident enough to begin sending their own missionaries overseas. Columban missionaries were challenged, not only to spread knowledge of the varied value systems and cultures peoples lived by while sharing in one humanity, and sympathy for their aspirations to be partners and not mere pawns in the international community of nations. They were also called to promote the dignity of indigenous churches on the international religious stage.

Inter-religious dialogue was a parallel theological development that was helped by a greater appreciation of the diverse cultural expression possible within Catholicism, leading to an easier appreciation of religious pluralism.⁷² The Regional Columban magazine rather than Mission Education programs was the main vehicle promoting Columban teaching on religious dialogue among Australian Catholics. Religious pluralism was still a new area for Catholics, even if theologians had come to accept that God wills to grant grace to every person and this grace takes on a socio-historical ‘body’ in order to be available, the most likely mediating bodies being the various religions.⁷³ No one religion has a monopoly on God since they all “see in a mirror darkly”.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Paul VI, “On Evangelisation”, 1975, Nos. 18-20 and 62-63; J. Kroeger, **Asia-Church in Mission: Exploring Ad Gentes Mission Initiatives of the Local Churches in Asia in the Vatican II Era**, (Quezon City, RP: Claretian Communications, 1999).

⁷¹ **TFE** 4, 1961, p. 6; 10, 1969, p. 4; 4, 1970, p. 2; 5, 1973, pp. 10-13.

⁷² P. Rule, “The Negotiation of Religious Diversity in Christian Theology”, **Australian Religion Studies Review**, 12, 2 (1999), p. 47. Rule’s article was one in a Special Edition of ARSR titled “Managing Religious Diversity: From Threat to Promise”.

⁷³ P. Knitter, “Roman Catholic Approaches to Other Religions: Developments and Tensions”, **International Bulletin of Missionary Research**, 8, 2 (April 1984), pp. 50-54. J. Metz, “In the Pluralism of

Reports in *The Far East* on dialogue with Islam took a prominent place from 1979 when the Society took commitments in Pakistan with religious dialogue as an objective. During earlier decades the magazine carried a few references to Moslems, usually wrongly named as “Mohammedan”, articles multiplying from the 1980s in a call for understanding and dialogue.⁷⁵ Dialogue was particularly relevant in a pluralistic democracy like Australia, and the Society was innovative in its calls to understand less tolerant regimes.⁷⁶ Internal Society bulletins promoted understanding among members of this type of dialogue being carried out by fellow Columban members with Islamic believers in the Southern Philippines.⁷⁷ Their leader, the loved mentor to many Columban members, Bishop “Benny” Tutud wrote,

... dialogue means an adding and genuine search for goodness, beauty and truth. This search is based on the conviction that no one has a monopoly of these. For are not goodness, beauty and truth emanating from the one and the same source, God?⁷⁸

Emphasising dialogue with Islam, the magazine carried reports of members in Pakistan working with Islamic believers through local Catholic communities guided by “the deeper truths of human realities that make us one”.⁷⁹ Others worked with tribal peoples in the Sindh in a three-way “dialogue” also involving Hinduism.⁸⁰ Dialogue work was not easy, especially when Catholic and Hindu villages have been attacked and looted by Moslem extremists.⁸¹ Islamic fundamentalist groups were often instigators of this change away from tolerance, and in 1998 Bishop John Joseph of Faisalabad committed suicide in protest at the government imposing strict Islamic law. The Society General Assembly 1992 had warned:

Religious and Cultural Worlds: Notes Towards a Theological and Political Program”, **Cross Currents**, Summer 1999, p. 227.

⁷⁴ 1Cor. 13:12.

⁷⁵ **TFE** 9, 1925, p. 16; 3, 1984, p.1; 7, 1985, p. 8; 5.1990, pp. 14-15. A full issue on Islam was published November 1995.

⁷⁶ R. Ireland, “Religious Diversity in a New Australian Democracy”, **Australian Religion Studies Review**, 13, (1999), p. 94.

⁷⁷ Joint Catholic-Protestant Consultation, “A Christian Presence among Muslim Filipinos”, **Occasional Bulletin**, January (1979), pp. 31-32; “Islam”, **CI** April 1982.

⁷⁸ B. Tutud, “Islam”, **CI** July 1988.

⁷⁹ **TFE** 11, 1990, p. 2. After graduating in Islamic studies in Rome, Patrick McInerney was one of these.

⁸⁰ Robert McCulloch developed better local liturgical expressions of faith and helped Pakistan seminarians appreciate multi-faith experiences. **TFE** 10, 1977, pp. 8-9. Several Columban members worked with Hindus in Fiji. **TFE** 5, 1989, p.6. Linguist David Arms came from Fiji to help with developing a Parkari-Kohli script for the tribal language and a bi-monthly parish bulletin was the first publication ever printed in the newly devised script.

⁸¹ **TFE** 5, 1997, p. 1.

there is a growing tendency among world religions towards fundamentalism, especially when linked with other ethnic, cultural and political movements. The results of religious bigotry can be seen in the increase of intolerance and escalation of violence in inter-religious conflicts.⁸²

The “Columban Centre for Christian-Islamic Relations” has operated since 1997 at Turrumurra with several full time staff members under the Convenor Sister Pauline Rae. This marked a development of Mission Education programs to include direct local work in dialogue. The Centre offers written resources, publishes a regular newsletter *Bridges* to an Australia wide network, and its staff members facilitate dialogue and information sessions at a professional level.⁸³ The Centre provides expert backup to Columban members engaged in Mission Education work across Australia.

Ecology and Theology

In a distinct but related development within existing Columban Reverse Mission programs in Australia, connecting ecological awareness with Catholic theology emerged as new task in the 1980s, a “Greening of the Gospel”. That ecological insights had implications for faith was a new notion for Catholics, and as its leading Columban exponent Sean McDonagh observed, the Catholic church arrived “late and a little out of breath” to the environmental debate. Over the decades Catholic theologians Pierre Teilhard de Chardin had helped bring a paleontological perspective into his theology and Thomas Berry searched for a “New Story” of cosmology to replace the Genesis account combining Christian and scientific insights, but their voices were muted.⁸⁴ Even among Catholics open to new theology who had coped with the un-centering of the church, some feared the un-centering of the human and the subsequent de-emphasis of the human social justice agenda in a homocentric Christian worldview.⁸⁵

⁸² “Choosing Life: Acts of the Columban General Assembly, 1994”, no. 10, CAE, Chapter/Assembly File.

⁸³ W. Omar and K Allen, **The Muslims in Australia**, (Canberra: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 1996).

⁸⁴ Teilhard de Chardin, **Le Milieu Divin**, (London: Fontana Books, 1962), and, **Hymn of the Universe**, (London: Collins, 1965); T. Berry, **The Dream of the Earth**, (San Francisco: Sierra Books, 1988); M. Fox, **Original Blessing**, (Sante Fe, USA: Bear and Company, 1983); M. Fox, **Cry of the Environment**, (Sante Fe: Bear Publishing, 1984); J. Moltmann, **God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God**, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985); T. Berry and T. Clarke, **Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth**, (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991); J. Conlon, **Earth Story: Sacred Story**, (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1994).

⁸⁵ Dorr, **Option for the Poor**, 1983, pp.131-132.

Since the 1962 work of Rachael Carson, *Silent Spring*, there has been a growing awareness of natural environmental degradation among the scientific and reading communities that flowed over into economic and political debates in the 1970s.⁸⁶ Non government and Australian groups wrote independent evaluations of the human impact on the environment while calling for scientifically based and just community solutions.⁸⁷ Other writers on the spiritual dimensions of earth-awareness opened up a space for cooperation with Christians.⁸⁸ Some began with a justice focus and offered a Christian ecological ethic that ran counter to the “will to control” in modern thinking.⁸⁹ Some connected ecology and peace issues.⁹⁰ Others have rejected anthropocentrism to think beyond concepts of modernity and individual liberty to oppose patriarchal values, hierarchy and competition.⁹¹ Some eco-feminist theologies have developed from this starting point to re-establish a more organic world-view to counter the oppression of both women and nature by a mechanistic philosophy.⁹² Charles Birch maintains that ecological insights are consistent with a post-modernist viewpoint. It helps to develop a post-mechanistic view of nature, post-reductionist

⁸⁶ R. Carson, *Silent Spring*, (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1962); E. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1973); A. King and B. Schneider, *The First Global Revolution: A Report by the Council of the Club of Rome*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1991); USA Government Department, *Global 2000 Report to the President*, (Harmondsworth: The Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of Energy, 1980); The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); K. Topfer, *Global Environmental Outlook*, (Geneva: UN Environmental Program, 1999).

⁸⁷ L. Brown, *The State of the World 2001*, (Washington, DC: Earthscan, 2001); Advisory Council to the Minister of the Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories, *Australia: State of the Environment 1996*, (Collingwood, VIC : CSIRO Publishing, 1996); T. Flannery, *The Future Eaters: An Ecological History of the Australasian Lands and People*, (Port Melbourne: Reed Books, 1994), p. 14.

⁸⁸ R. Gottlieb, ed., *This sacred Earth: Religion, Nature and the Environment*, (New York: Routledge, 1996); J. McDaniel, *With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), p. 4-5; H. Skolimowski, *A Sacred Place to Dwell: Living with Reverence upon the Earth*, (Brisbane: Element Books, 1993).

⁸⁹ A. McGrath, *Science and Religion: An introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. 120; L. Boff, *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), p.128.

⁹⁰ C. Wilhelm, ed., *Ecology and Peace: A Platform for Pax Christi International*, (Brussels: Pax Christi, 1996). Joseph Camilleri, ed., *Religion and Culture in Asia Pacific: Violence and Healing*, (Carlton South: Pax Christi Vista Publications, 2001), pp. 205-6.

⁹¹ Gottlieb, *This Sacred Earth*, 1996, pp. 8 and 532-536; J. Cobb, *Sustainability: Economics, Ecology and Justice*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), pp. 82-99.

⁹² G. Uhlein, ed., and trans., *Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen*, (Santa Fe, USA: Bear Press, 1982); R. Ruether, *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1992); E. Rae, *Women, the Earth, and Divine*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994); M. MacKinnon and M. McIntyre, eds., *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theology*, (Kansas City: Shed and Ward, 1995); R. Ruether, ed., *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism and Religion*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996). C. Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1980/83); R. Ruether, *New Women - New Earth: Sexist ideologies and Human Liberation*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1975, 1992); I. Diamond and G.

view of science, post-anthropocentric view of ethics and economics, post-discipline view of knowledge, and post-patriarchal and post-sexist view of society, but he concludes by saying “the news has not yet reached the headlines”.⁹³

These various starting points resulted in a sizeable body of Christian theology on the environment.⁹⁴ Much of it was ecumenical and inter-religious.⁹⁵ Australian theologians too have begun to develop the ecology-Gospel connection.⁹⁶ In a major statement in 1989 Pope John Paul II declared the environmental issue to be a responsibility of all Catholics, having praised the Aboriginal experience of God through the land during his visit to Alice Springs three years earlier.⁹⁷

The Columban entry point into ecological issues was through social justice, broadening to appreciate both the ethical issue of nature’s integrity and nature’s spiritual character. Working in the Philippines, Sean McDonagh was the prime mover

Orenstein, eds., **Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofemenism**, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1990), p. xi.

⁹³ L. C. Birch, **On Purpose**, (Kensington: University of New South Wales, 1990), pp. xi and xvi.

⁹⁴ C. Birch, W. Eakin and J McDaniel, eds., **Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1990); B. Hill, **Christian Faith and the Environment: Making Vital Connections**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998); M. Hayes and L Gearon, eds., **Contemporary Catholic Theology – a Reader**, (New York: Continuum, 1999).

⁹⁵ The five major world religions gathered at Assisi in 1986 at the invitation of Pope John Paul II. The World Wildlife Fund, **The Assisi Declarations: Messages on Man and Nature from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism**, (London: World Wildlife Fund, 1986); F. Khalid and J. O’Brien, eds., **Islam and Ecology**, (London: Cassell, 1992), p. ix.; R. Prime, **Hinduism and Ecology**, (London: Cassell, 1992); R. Thompson, **Religion in Australia**, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994); M. Palmer, “Christianity”, R. and W. Eblen, eds., **The Encyclopedia of the Environment** (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), pp. 93-95; D. Palmer, “Religion and the Environment in a new Era”, Eblen, **Encyclopedia**, pp. 602-603; M. Palmer, “Religion”, Eblen, **Encyclopedia**, pp. 599-602. The World Council of churches made it a major focus from the late 1980s. W. Granberg-Michaelson, ed., **Redeeming the Creation, The Rio Earth Summit: Challenges for the Churches**, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1993), pp. 86-90; E. Breuilly and M. Palmer, **Christianity and Ecology**, (London: Cassell Publishers, 1992).

⁹⁶ E. Stockton, “Voice in the Desert: Aboriginal Influence on Australian Spirituality”, **Australasian Catholic Review**, lxxviii, (January 1991), p. 56. Martin Wilson, **Ministry Among Aboriginal People**, (Melbourne: Collins Dove/National Catholic Research Council, 1988), pp. 14 and 22. Appreciating the Australian Aboriginal experience of the land was growing, a spiritual one radically different from the European farming tradition or practical moral stewardship. P. Collins, **God’s Earth: Religion As If it Really Mattered**, (North Blackburn, VIC: Dove, 1995); D. Edwards, **Jesus the Wisdom of God: An Ecological Theology**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995); Wisdom: 6:12-16; N. Habel, **The Land is Mine**, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); N. Habel ed., **Readings from the Perspective of the Earth**, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000). The teachings of Scripture and ecology are being related in the Earth Bible Project in Adelaide though Rev. Dr. Norman Habel.

⁹⁷ Pope John Paul II, **Peace Day Message 1990**, 8 December 1989; S. McDonagh, **To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology**, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986), pp. 207-216; Hogan, **Option for the Poor**, 1992, pp. 253-281. In 1985 the Australian CCJP statement explored aboriginal spiritual and Christian biblical connections to the land and duties of care, and from 1990 several CCJPD statements have followed.

in bringing ecological issues into official Columban Society deliberations and work.⁹⁸ This led to the official documents from the 1988 General Assembly addressing issues of ecological refugees, care for the earth, the effect of national debt on the environment, and the spirituality of indigenous peoples in an integrated way. The Society expanded the title of its J&P Office to read, “Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation”, and even encouraged tree planting on Columban properties.⁹⁹ The Assembly wrote,

In making the effort to clarify our gospel motivation for being in solidarity with the poor we have ... [to] include the entire earth community ... When we appreciate the interconnectedness of the gift of creation, we affirm in faith the inherent unity of all life ... all living species in the web of life.¹⁰⁰

In Australia, Columban Mission Education programs had used videos produced from the early 1980s on the tribal T’boli by McDonagh as the first materials to specifically address environmental issues, weaving together social justice, deforestation and spiritual issues. The videos, accompanied by discussion guides and prayers derived from the tribal religious-ecological experience, popularised cultural and ecological issues. An ecological perspective was part of the 1986 Columban program for schools *Being Church* telling of how local communities saw the limits of natural resources and the need to preserve natural eco-systems as a sustainable basis for life for this and future generations as religious and moral issues. Stories in the Regional magazine presented the ecology-Gospel connection as integral to missionary work in 67 articles from 1984-2000.¹⁰¹ Ventures such as the *Environmental Justice Program* of the USA Catholic bishops in 1993 offered an example of a national program, and a

⁹⁸ McDonagh, *Care for the Earth*, 1990; S. McDonagh, *The Greening of the Church*, (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1990); S. McDonagh, *Passion for the Earth - The Christian Vocation to Promote Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1994); S. McDonagh, *Greening the Christian Millennium*, (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1999). McDonagh worked in the Philippines 1969-89 in parishes, among the T’boli tribal people, lecturing in anthropology and ecology around the world, including semesters at Turrumurra. He prepared the Philippine bishops statement on the environment in 1988.

⁹⁹ “Supplement on Ecology”, *CI* May 1987; *CI* June 1990. Philippine Catholic Bishops’ Conference, “What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?” 1988.

¹⁰⁰ “Becoming More Missionary - General Assembly Acts 1988”, no.71-74, *CAE*, Chapter File.

¹⁰¹ *TFE* 3, 1987, p. 14; 1, 1988, p. 1; 5, 1988, p. 18; 1, 1992, p. 6; 7, 1992, p. 9, 4, 1996, p. 9; 4, 1996, p.20; 4, 1997, p.19. Writers told stories about earthworms as an alternative source of fertiliser to help break the dependence of poor sugarcane growers on costly imports in the Philippines; conservationists opposed to the proposed killing of penguins by a Japanese-Argentine company for protein rich meat for Japan; work to create alternative jobs for fishermen in the development of marine parks in Jamaica; and integrating social justice, forest ecology, culture and religion in a holistic approach among tribal peoples in the Philippines.

professionally based Columban initiated program in Australia has been discussed by the leadership but has not yet emerged.¹⁰²

The religious experience of people within nature religions is often forgotten in formal dialogue among the well ordered and so called “great religions”. This is a common tendency among the great religions that tend to carry evolutionary timeline concepts of culture and religion.¹⁰³ Columban member had direct experience of people following nature religions. The process of Catholics relating with nature religions has an established base in Columban experiences of shamanism in Korea, and dialogue with popular religion in Taiwan that contains Taoist and Buddhist elements in the context of a Confucian ethic. Other Columban members worked with mountain people in Peru, and people of African derived religions in Brazil.¹⁰⁴ It followed that Columban programs popularising the cultural uniqueness of local churches have also told of a particular people’s spiritual relationship with the local land as experiences of God. Video productions obtained from missionary groups such as Maryknoll about Africa and Latin America were introduced to supplement Columban sources. Videos often became the basis for talks and discussion among justice and school groups. Adopting the attitude of Bishop Dias of Registro Brazil was recommended: “Evangelisation starts not at the point when the preacher begins to speak but when the listener begins to respond.”¹⁰⁵

The notion that God operated outside the church was difficult for some Christians to accept, and this was particularly acute when it came to fear of syncretism with nature religions. At the WCC world meeting in Canberra in 1991, fear of syncretism was expressed over a Korean theologian’s reflection on the Holy Spirit, a fear backed by

¹⁰² “Renewing the Earth - A Pastoral Statement of the US Catholic Conference”, *CI* June and July 1992; Christiansen, **Catholic Theology and the Environment**, 1996. The program by the USA Bishops’ Conference aimed to promote research and spur concern among Catholics at the parish level by publishing a simple collection of readings and arranging reward programs for participating communities.

¹⁰³ *TFE* 3, 1976, pp. 2-4; 6, 1976, pp. 2-5; S. Dwan, *CI* January 1987; M. Marzal, E. Maurer, X. Albo and B. Melia, **The Indian Face of God in Latin America**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 20; G. van Rheenen, **Communicating Christ in Animistic contexts**, (USA: Baker Book House, 1991).

¹⁰⁴ *TFE* 7, 1989, p.18; 4, 1990, pp. 15-17; 7, 1993, pp. 18-20; 8, 1995, p. 19. Neil Fraser, Sean McDonagh and Paul Oxley worked with tribal peoples in the Southern Philippines. Sean Dwan presented examples of dialogue during the 1984 Inculturation Workshop at Turrumurra. Paul Prendergast worked with the mountain peoples of Peru. Brazil has a high percentage of people of African background along the coast and Colin McLean worked with them. Larry Barnett entered into dialogue in Taiwan.

¹⁰⁵ C. McLean, *CI* May 1994.

official Catholic observers.¹⁰⁶ Evolution in Christian thinking about the “the salvation of people outside the church” still confuses many Catholics.¹⁰⁷ This was especially so among Australian school students under religion teachers employed as Sisters became scarce in Catholic schools. Some teachers had little knowledge and took religious language literally under the influence of heretical groups such as “Creationists” who paraded as scientists.¹⁰⁸ Essendon Team evaluations concluded that to bring about a theological shift in people, relating Columban experiences about new inculturated Catholic rituals were often the best avenue to exemplify the synthesis of culture, ecological insight and Catholic faith, helping to open the issue of Christian dialogue with other religions.

Some theologians hold that a Christian synthesis of justice, peace, cultural and integrity of creation issues in some ways puts it ahead of movements in secular society which focus on a single issue.¹⁰⁹ Indicative of the intertwining of issues, Columban members in Taiwan working with jailed migrant workers as a justice commitment were also involved in religious dialogue as many migrant workers followed the great religious traditions of Asia, as well as nature religions.¹¹⁰ Ecological issues have become part of Catholic Missiological writings and entered the Catholic Catechism.¹¹¹ However, this may be limited good news as regards environmental issues since many citizens and politicians heed selectively the evidence presented, having neither the historical perspective nor imagination needed to create the political will to apply

¹⁰⁶ The connection between the Holy Spirit and experiences of God’s spirit found in Nature was explored by a female theologian from South Korea. E. Heideman, “Syncretism, Contextualisation, Orthodoxy, and Heresy”, *Missiology: An International Review*, XXV, 1 (January 1997), pp. 37-49; A. Hastings, *Modern Catholicism*, (London: SPEK, 1991), p. 403; S. McDonagh, *CI* January 1991; *TFE* 6, 1992, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ F. Sullivan, *Salvation outside the Catholic Church: History of Doctrines*, (New Jersey, USA: Paulist Press, 1992), pp. 5-6, 121 and 199; S. Hiem, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), pp. 10; B. Griffiths, *The Marriage of East and West*, (London: Collins, 1982). Early Columban members had to keep together two basic principles, namely, that God has assigned to the church a necessary role in the plan of salvation for all humanity, and that no judgement is passed on those who are outside the church since God wishes all to be saved.

¹⁰⁸ The Team reported that in some upper high schools, students stated that they rejected all religion because they were told that following theories of scientific evolution was incompatible with being a Catholic. The Team recommended to students that such teachers be reported to their School Principal.

¹⁰⁹ D. Hallman, *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994), p. 5.

¹¹⁰ E. Sheridan, *CI* June 1996.

¹¹¹ J. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission? Theological Explorations*, (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1999), pp. 164-183. Kirk has a chapter on Mission and Care for the Environment in his introduction to *Missiology*. John Paul II, “Sollicitudo Rei Socialis: The Social Concerns of the Church”, 1987; *Catholic Catechism*, 1994, nos. 2403, 2415, and 2403.

scientific insights.¹¹² Planners of future Columban campaigns have noted that a 1997 statistical study by Phillip Hughes in Australia revealed that Christian beliefs have a considerable effect on believers' actions towards the environment, for good or bad, suggesting churches need to systematically educate their followers.¹¹³

The Emphasis on Columban Teaching Programs Waned

The specialised Essendon Mission Education Team ceased to operate in 1987 even though a 1986 report stated that Society houses in the Region seemed to have little capability to engage in Columban Reverse Mission, judging that teams would make a better contribution in the long term.¹¹⁴ Houses continued a "narrow range of involvement" through the traditional means of Columban outreach, mainly doing supply work to parishes. One reason for the Essendon Team's demise was that the new Regional Director Michael Gormly chose to focus on diocesan based promotion appeals and lay initiatives as Regional work priorities. Another reason was shortage of personnel, team members coming to the end of their assigned terms of four years and returning overseas. The Columban theological teaching role continued primarily through the Society's College at Turramurra and *The Far East* magazine.

Official internal Columban education seminars continued in spite of the seeming incapacity of many Regional members to become active in the Mission Education agenda of the Region.¹¹⁵ Their incapacity relativises the claim by Cyril Hally that local Society members had an advantage of national background since Australia had become a social laboratory for pluralism and multi-culturalism.¹¹⁶ Some members still

¹¹² D. Pepper, **The Roots of Modern Environmentalism**, (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 2 and 215-218.

¹¹³ P. Hughes, **Values and Religion: A Case Study of Environmental Concern and Christian beliefs and Practices among Australians**, (Kew, VIC: Christian Research Association, 1997), p. 24. Hughes suggests that respect for God as Creator provides a powerful motivation in promoting care for the environment.

¹¹⁴ Howard to Cleary 20.1.1986, CAS, D/CA files

¹¹⁵ H. McMahon, CI July 1986.

¹¹⁶ TFE 4, 1995, pp. 4-5. P. Connolly and B. Troyna, **Researching Racism in Education: Politics, Theory and Practice**, (Buckingham, UK: Open University Press, 1998). Australia can be seen as a laboratory for the exercise of tolerance in a common quest for the values proper to the human spirit, and shows an emerging desire for religious experience that emphasised harmony.

found it difficult to get past a literal interpretation of the uniqueness of Christ and self-sufficiency of the Catholic Church, while others were plainly disinterested.¹¹⁷

In 1985 the Superior General arranged for two ten-week international Society Workshops as an institutional response to create “an experience of self, experience of God, experience of discipleship and experience of mission”.¹¹⁸ The workshops were not rated highly in participant evaluations but the “Faith Sharing Retreat” segment was adopted by the Australian Region and all local members gathered in 1986 at Pallotti College in Millgrove.¹¹⁹ It helped members to develop skills in sharing stories of their lives with each other although some found it difficult saying, “We spent most of our lives being told not to trust personal spiritual insights and to keep them to ourselves, but now we are asked to share them.” There were surprises as members told their personal histories of family and faith journey of which other members had no idea.¹²⁰ The format proved that given the right atmosphere, Columban members were willing to share at a deep level, and to do it with trust in their fellow members. Tensions remained and could be projected onto the Columban enterprise, such as supposed friction between Australian and New Zealand Columban interests. Strangely, the date set for the Regional Convention 1988 clashed with Australia’s 200th anniversary commemoration celebrations, the date having been set by a New Zealander.

¹¹⁷ P. Knitter, **No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes towards the World Religions**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986); J. Hick and P. Knitter, eds., **The Myth of Christian Uniqueness**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987); E. Hillman, **Many Paths: A Catholic Approach to Religious Pluralism**, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989).

¹¹⁸ Cleary “Looking to the Future” to Regional Directors and Spokesmen 31.1.1983; 1.3.1984 and 1.2.1985, CAE, D/CA files. B. McHale, ed., **Renewal: Workshops Baguio 1985/Pusan 1986**, (Navan: Columban Society, 1987); B O’Sullivan, **CI** August 1986. Participants originating from the Australian Region at the Baguio Workshop were Michael Gormly, Charles Rue, Raymond Scanlon and David Arms. Those attending the Pusan Workshop were Peter Woodruff, James Mulroney, John J O’Loughlin and John Hishon, while John Hegerty was one of the workshop team.

¹¹⁹ Cleary to Howard 20.1.1986, CAE, D/CA files; **ARN** September 1986. “The staff at Baguio were surprised to learn that so few of the participants had done a primary renewal program”. J. O’Connell, **CI** August 1986; P. Woodruff, **CI** February 1987; J Hegerty, **CI** July 1987. Many participants had good will but little knowledge of new theology or of the insights to be gained from modern techniques of retreat process, group work or human growth indicators. Divergent expectations led to some tension and lowered aims among the participants. The Myers-Briggs personality indicator assessment proved an ongoing talking point with many participants. Others found a new relationship with God as friend.

¹²⁰ E. McColgan, **CI**, November 1986.

Reviving the Columban Teaching Role by focusing on Particular Social Issues

Little organised Columban Mission Education took place 1986-1993 in Australia under Regional Directors Gormly and Moran although individual Columban members kept up sporadic efforts.¹²¹ When in the following years more organised programs reemerged, three changes were evident: the Society's Central administration had taken the initiative in starting them, it appointed a Regional Director from outside the Region who was committed to such activity, and Reverse Mission programs focused on specific issues.

Following directives from Central Administration, the 7th Regional Convention held at Turramurra July 1991 considered a Regional Plan of Action arising from the previous year's Regional Assessment and this formed the basis for Mission Education planning and revisions in the following years.¹²² Another Society leaders' initiative was the Second Society JPIC Conference held in Washington DC in 1991.¹²³ It identified international debt as a common root of both human social injustice and environmental destruction, naming it as a focus for Columban campaigns. Many writers had detailed the history of modern international debt build-up and its consequences for both the Third and First Worlds, but a campaign on debt reduction was primarily a strategic decision by the Society.¹²⁴ A debt focus for Columban programs worldwide would be understandable and acceptable to Society members and Catholic hearers alike. To help Regions in their local campaigns, a Society office was based in Washington where USA Columban members were already part of a lobbying network.¹²⁵ As Society JPIC Coordinator, McDonagh encouraged the Columban membership by writing regular articles connecting economic, cultural and ecological

¹²¹ C. Rue, "Environmental considerations in foreign development projects sponsored by Australian NGOs", M.Env.Plan. thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney, March 1990.

¹²² CAE, Regional Planning File.

¹²³ "The Second Peace and Justice Conference September 1991", CI November 1991.

¹²⁴ S. George, **A Fate Worse than Debt**, (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1988); S. George, **The Debt Boomerang**, (London: Pluto Press, 1992); Michael Rowbotham, **Goodbye America! Globalisation, Debt and the Dollar Empire**, (Annandale, NSW: Envirobook, 2000); Richard Falk, **Human Rights Horizon: the Pursuit of Justice in a Globalizing World**, (New York: Routledge, 2000); Christopher Sheil, ed., **Globalisation: Australian Impacts**, (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2001).

¹²⁵ C. Cobourn, CI October and November 1989. The USA Columban Region made submissions to such bodies as the US Senate Foreign Operations Committee on "Human Rights and Ecology." Structurally, a Society office was established in Washington DC with full time coordinator, personnel and resources as, "The Campaign on Debt and Development Alternatives (CODDA)".

issues.¹²⁶ The Region promoted the issues, disseminating his books and arranged speaking engagements during his visits to Melbourne and Sydney in 1997 and 1999.

From assignment in the Philippines, Brian Gore was appointed the Australian Regional Director early in 1994 with the hope that he would refocus and re-energise the Region, having a public profile since the “Negros Nine” incident in the early 1980s. He took direct responsibility for local Reverse Mission programs, coordinating the efforts of interested Columban members, the Regional JPIC coordinator, members on promotion, and staff of the Columban Mission Institute (CMI) at Turramurra. He re-enlivened Society relations with local church leaders by becoming active in both the National Council of Priests and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. Through them he had official positions within the Catholic Bishops Committee for Justice, Development and Peace. Gore also took a public role as a lobbyist in campaigns such as the one to abolish the production and use of landmines internationally, giving many talks sponsored by parish and national groups such as ACR.

The Far East magazine led off the local campaign on international debt reduction by presenting detailed articles of analysis and motivation to readers, especially in 1994 which marked the 50th anniversary of the Bretton Woods agreement setting up the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.¹²⁷ The campaign went against Australian government policies that had become increasingly based on national self-interest and government perception of citizen sentiment.¹²⁸ The Columban strategy was to ferment pressure from citizens urging the Commonwealth government to forgive debtor nations and encourage other nations to do likewise. “Jubilee 2000” was a worldwide Catholic event to be celebrated in a spirit of “starting anew” and it provided the opportunity to focus on debt forgiveness as a Scriptural category.¹²⁹ To prepare, in 1997 videos and booklets were developed in cooperation with the British

¹²⁶ S. McDonagh, *CI* December 1991, October 1993 and June 1995. McDonagh has written on such issues as the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, and declarations of international bodies such as the Parliament of World Religions, International Networks of Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and the United Nations World Conference on Women. The word “Eco-Martyr” entered Columban vocabulary.

¹²⁷ *TFE* November issues 1992 and 1994

¹²⁸ Harris, *Australia and the Third World*, 1979, pp. 103, 155, and 188

Region of the Society.¹³⁰ In 1999 the local Region produced a *Debt Forgiveness Kit*, amplified by Columban mission justice themes, that was distributed Australia wide to dovetail with diocesan Jubilee 2000 programs.¹³¹ Public opinion on debt forgiveness was mobilised and articulated through a 1999 ecumenically organised signature campaign that collected 375,000 signatures, two thirds coming from Catholic groups that the Society had helped organise.¹³²

The Columban Society undertook a re-engagement with Catholic schools from 1995. Writers on education themselves have been seeking a vision of Catholic schools in the Third Millennium that takes into account major philosophical shifts and situates them within the evangelising mission of the church, especially in relation to culture and values.¹³³ A professional teacher, Kathryn Boyle, was one of several people employed to work within the Columban Mission Education effort. One initiative was a program conducted through *The Far East* granting International Year Awards for schools to highlight the relationship between the Gospel and global world issues. Introducing the program Gore wrote,

As an international missionary Society, we Columban missionaries identify ourselves with worldwide issues and invite our friends to explore them with us ... We are trying to build bridges between all God's people.

The Columban seminary at Turrumurra was restructured in 1997 as the Columban Mission Institute (CMI) consisting of three centres focused on the Churches and China, Christian Muslim dialogue, and Peace Ecology and Justice (JEP).¹³⁴ Three teams were formed largely from previous CMI academic staff.¹³⁵ In cooperation with

¹²⁹ China Catholic Bishop's Conference, "Jubilee 2000 Pastoral Letter", *Tripod* (Hong Kong), XX, 116 (March-April 2000), pp. 19-30.

¹³⁰ *ARN*, June 1997.

¹³¹ *ARN*, December 1999. The "Year of the Lord's Favour" Program distributed 26,000 work sheets throughout Australia in each of 10 months.

¹³² *ARN*, September 1999.

¹³³ J. and T. D'Orsa, "Reimagining Catholic School Leadership for the Third Millennium", Ross Keane and Dan Riley eds., **Quality Catholic Schools: Challenges for Leadership as Catholic Education approaches the Third Millennium**, (Brisbane: Catholic Education, 1997), pp. 74, 77 and 80-81; Barry Dwyer, **Catholic Schools: Creating a New Culture**, (Newtown, NSW: E. J. Dwyer, 1993), pp. 15 and 83. Dwyer wrote, "School has the task of passing on the culture – the common values, beliefs and ways of doing things – but it must do this uncritically, without evaluating and making thoughtful judgements." Helen Raduntz, ed., **Potential and Opportunity: Critical Issues for Australian Catholic Education into the 21st Century**, (Blackwood Press, SA: Auslib Press, 1995).

¹³⁴ *ARN*, March 1997.

¹³⁵ New members often worked with ethnic groups around Sydney as well as some academic teaching. Brendan Hoban worked with the Korean community and in Parramatta diocese, and Paul McGee with

the Director, the JEP did networking and lobbying on particular agendas such as gold-mining in sensitive mountain areas in the Philippines. Some staff became directly involved in inter-religious dialogue, especially through contact with Islamic women's groups around Sydney, stepping beyond the traditional Columban approach of relating experiences of overseas work rather than local work. Religious dialogue had rarely prompted invitations for Columban speakers to address it until the centre was established at Turramurra in 1997. Chinese bishops and representatives from the Patriotic Association were invited to visit the CMI and direct connections were made with some Chinese seminaries.¹³⁶ The work of the CMI and other Columban groups in the Region have been brought together under the Regional Director and the umbrella of Mission Education, emphasising the theological teaching role of the Region as a whole.

The Society General Assembly 2000 recommitted the Society to its role as a prophetic community proclaiming the mission of Jesus.¹³⁷ The Columban mission fits within what Pope John Paul II recently named as the church's mission, a call to help promote a "civilisation of love and peace" in opposition to a "culture of death".¹³⁸ The Assembly documents imaged an ongoing journey of the Society led by Spirit to help read "the signs of the times" in a globalised world and create new responses. The effect of Genetic Engineering on Third World countries was highlighted as an issue since they were being hardest hit by international trade rules about intellectual property and being robbed of their genetic riches. The Assembly recommended planned campaigns in each Society Region concentrated on the negative effect of international patenting rights. The statement represented a convergence in Columban teaching on economics, ecology and culture, and a recommitment of the Society to its role as a theological educator and advocate on particular social issues.¹³⁹

Chinese communities in Sydney. Cyril Hally headed the China Centre, Michael Gormly the JEP Centre, Sr. Pauline Rae the Christian Muslim Centre, and Trevor Trotter followed by Jim Mulrone was CMI Director.

¹³⁶ *ARN*, March 1988. Peter Kelly later worked to produce a teaching text for theological English studied as a second language.

¹³⁷ "Columban Mission in the Third Millennium", 2000, *CAE*, Chapter/Assembly files.

¹³⁸ John Paul II, "New Year Message 2001", and "The Gospel of Life, 1995, www.vatican.va/holy_father

¹³⁹ Benjamin Webb, *Fugitive Faith: Conversations on Spiritual, Environmental, and Community Renewal*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998). The scholars interviewed in this book comment on their own expertise and the convergence of their disparate fields on environmental issues.

Biopatenting threatens to give control of the staple foods of the world to Transnational Corporations in the Northern Hemisphere. Global economic policies are destroying communities and their distinctive cultures.¹⁴⁰

Conclusion

The theological teaching role of the Columban Society in Australia began as a by-product of its work to motivate supporters but grew to become a conscious commitment to share theological insights coming from indigenous churches. The redefinition of Catholic teaching at Vatican II in the two areas of mission and social justice provided a stimulus for the Society to organise Columban Mission Awareness programs from the 1970s. Because of the Society's cumulative mission experience, it was able to not only particularise and popularise general Catholic teaching, but could add theological insights arising in the mission churches. In the 1980s, new programs specifically targeted the areas of culture, religious dialogue and ecology. The 1990s introduced issues of world debt and gene patenting into Society teaching. Significantly, these different issues were consciously connected within Third World Catholic theology to claim culture, religious dialogue and ecology as constitutive of social justice and Catholic spirituality. It was also significant that active involvement, campaigning and advocacy were presented as part of the hermeneutic of developing Catholic belief.

By the year 2000, Columban missionary activity was carried out in a context that was largely post-Communist and post-dictatorship, an era of globalised capitalism, even in China, but one of increasing local conflicts, refugees and ecological problems. Missionary activity itself changed as local Catholic churches grew more self-reliant as culturally diverse parts of the church universal, many themselves becoming missionary. A redefinition of Columban mission emerged as facilitating two-way exchanges between sister churches, equal in dignity. The Society took initiatives in Australia to teach about responses of newly confident churches, its Mission Education programs continually reformulated to foster understanding of new issues and the theological propositions at their base. By doing this over eighty years, particularly through organised programs from

¹⁴⁰ McDonagh, *Greening the Millennium*, 1999, pp. 119-192.

1970 onwards, the Society has helped contribute to the development of the theory and practice of mission in Australia.

This chapter has two major findings about the development in Catholic theology and its acceptance by Catholics, namely the importance of leadership and organisation. Church leaders need to visibly lead church renewal. Only when leadership was exercised by Columban Society and Regional superiors did Mission Education initiatives take place. Only planned awareness raising of the plurality of theological teaching continually bubbling up within a communion of sister Catholic churches will save Catholics from atrophy in the understanding and practice of their faith. The Society organised re-education sessions for its own members, and these internal experiences functioned as training runs to help the Society to play its role in the story of church renewal within the Australian Catholic church.

The 1982 Society General Assembly used the phrase “the *dangerous memory* of the Crucified and Risen One” to summarise the Gospel which Society members proclaim as their reason for overseas missionary activity.¹⁴¹ It imaged Jesus as fundamentally a subversive character undermining the most oppressive institution under which he lived, the theocratic state of Israel backed up by the globalised Roman Empire. Likewise, Columban Society members felt called to act like Jesus in a changed milieu, subverting anything that might work against his life giving Spirit active among the diversity of human cultures set within an equally diverse natural world, promoting a wider search for God that pushes the boundaries of belief.

In an address marking the closure of the residential section of the CMI at Turramurra in 1996 Cyril Hally stated, “Paul VI in 1975 in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (No 75) reminded us that we live in a Church at a privileged moment of the Holy Spirit ... In 1991 John Paul II in “*Redemptoris Missio* (No 30) returns to the same theme ... ‘The horizons and possibilities for mission are growing ever wider and we as Christians are called to an apostolic courage based upon trust in the Spirit who is the principal agent of

¹⁴¹ Jn. 16:1-4.

mission””.¹⁴² Fired by that Spirit, Columban members are convinced of being called to teach in the name of Jesus, proclaiming the *Dangerous Memory*:

Through Jesus, God is revealed
as irrevocably committed to human history.
He is the One
who has made people’s concern for life his own.

His disciples, empowered by the Spirit, were sustained
by the same joy of the Kingdom of love and justice.
We are called to life in the world
as the assembly of believers named the Church.
We owe our lives in faith to the Church, the communities of disciples
that have been and are the visible presence of Jesus Christ in our world.

Along with them we too
can only live out our discipleship through keeping alive in our midst
the ‘dangerous memory’ of the Crucified and Risen One.¹⁴³

¹⁴² C. Hally, “Mission Today: Towards a Spirituality”, address at Turramurra 23 November 1996.

¹⁴³ “Columban Mission Today”, General Society Chapter 1988, nos. 4 and 6, CAE, Chapters/Assemblies File.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that from 1920-2000, the Missionary Society of St Columban has helped to inject an overseas missionary character into the Australian Catholic Church. The Society offered vision and organisation to advance the Australian Catholic foreign mission enterprise, and established training programs at the tertiary level for church personnel destined to engage in cross-cultural missionary work. Through its magazine, it presented an independent perspective on some international issues important to Australians, and drawing on experience in mission churches it developed and promoted new theological ideas to broaden the range of Catholic teaching.

Rather than Columban activity overseas, this thesis has focused on the history of the Society in Australia where it offered local Catholics both the opportunity to engage in overseas missionary work and motivation to build a resource base to support it. But like other missionary groups, the Society soon became a conduit for ideas with missionaries going out to present its experience of Christian life to foreign peoples also bringing an awareness of the values of peoples and Christian communities they had experienced overseas to supporters at home. Columban members grew to speak of this as *Reverse Mission*. Using the Columban Society's work in Australia as a case study, this thesis has argued that the process of developing a two-way exchange constituted a redefinition of missionary activity, ultimately changing the very nature of Society work and challenging its members to acquire new attitudes and skills. The message it presented to Australian Catholics within this two-way exchange grew to see faith issues as including such areas as international social justice, religious dialogue and ecological concern. Seminary training was reformed as a result, and the Society consciously took on a teaching role organising education programs about mission in a globalised world. Mission work included incorporating the theological insights of newly indigenised churches.

A major aim of this thesis has been to put the Columban story within the wider context of Australian social history. The Society had an identifiable social impact by helping form Catholic opinion on international affairs as a significant social movement. The missionary movement should not be ignored or summarily dismissed, a thesis supporting Wittberg's contention that specialist church groups should be regarded as significant social movements. While secular scholars are rightly wary of biased missionary

historical accounts, the archives of such organisations contain extensive accounts of the international experiences of their members. Their value as primary sources cannot be completely discounted simply because missionaries were committed to working within a church structure that had belief in Jesus Christ as its meta-narrative. Columban members shared a belief encountered in most of the non-western cultures in which they worked that, to be fully human a person had to be a spiritual being. The approach taken in this study was to accept the phenomena of religious belief and practice as experienced by people, and to take seriously the religious factor in people's lives as manifest within diverse ethnic groups, and among missionaries and their supporters alike.

Missionary groups need to take the initiative in writing up particular aspects of their histories. In the process of writing this thesis, some aspects of the Columban story have emerged as worthy of deeper research, the content of the Society's magazine and the post-1970 Columban seminary programs being two examples. Both of these areas would reveal fuller stories about the attitudinal changes that were going on among Columban members and other Australian Catholics during the 20th century. Local Catholic communities have been undergoing rapid transformation in belief and practice since Vatican II, and better understanding of the history of the Columban Society in Australia as part of that process may help towards a better understanding of the overall transformation.

There is as yet no history of the Australian Catholic missionary movement as a whole. Taking the Columban Society as a case study has highlighted some of the characteristics of that movement that deserve to be explored: the varied resource bases that were built up, the diverse international contexts within which groups worked dictating both the nature of their work and the information fed back to their supporters, the underlying Missiology of particular groups, and the changes in the policies of mission groups that took place over the decades.

This thesis has diverged from most previous accounts of Catholic missionary efforts undertaken from Australia in that it has concentrated on the missiological aspects underlying the missionary venture as exemplified by Columban work. Society members have lived through periods of dramatic change in Asia, the Pacific and Latin America.

Since 1970 the Society has consciously reflected upon itself using a missiological perspective to modify the priorities underlying its work in relation to such changing circumstances. It also fed back these reflections to its supporters so bringing missiological questions into the general Australian church discourse post-Vatican II. The missiological perspective has also led the Society to confront the ecumenical dimension of religious dialogue in missionary work undertaken from Australia. The history of sectarian divisions between Catholic and Protestant churches in Australia meant that Catholic missionary efforts have characteristics different from those of the Protestant churches. In spite of these differences, a comparative study of these missionary experiences may help towards more ecumenical cooperation in cross-cultural missionary exchanges and service to a multi-faith Australian people.

This research has confirmed the value of Patricia Wittberg's application of the social sciences to the studying of the rise and decline of specialist "virtuoso" groups within the Catholic Church. The way the Columban Society was set up in Australia largely followed her framework. The Society quickly gained resources for its work, using existing Catholic theological understandings of mission and working within the established diocesan system of parishes and schools. It also confirms her analysis that specialist groups begin a cycle of decline within five decades of their initial success and have to reinvent themselves, not so much around a work but around a shared set of ideological premises. While the Columban Society has had to struggle to create a new set of shared premises among its members, the notion of overseas mission has remained as the Columban work focus, specialty and source of identity. Within this focus, Society work objectives were reformulated as cross-cultural, highlighting the change from what had been a one directional movement to a two way exchange between local churches, both striving to be more missionary as cooperating sister churches.

This thesis suggests that the Society "piggy backed" on an emerging movement in order to promote its aims and provide motivation for people to join or support the enterprise, presenting its mission to China as a significant and positive contribution within this wider nation building movement. This was the hub of Bishop Galvin's belief that the Society benefited from the idealism fired by the Nationalist movement in Ireland, and helps

explain the rise in support for the Society in Australia during the post-WWII period of reconstruction and expansion.

Following from this position, this study indicates that identifying emerging social movements might provide suitable entry points into a future wave of successful missionary activity. While looking to the past will not provide direct solutions for the future, it encourages a search for points of social transition when values and spiritual ideologies are being re-defined. These changes in public ideas and behaviour have a trajectory of their own forming the background to new movements that precede changes in individuals who then encapsulate the changes by telling a new story.¹ If missionary societies were able to identify emerging modern social transition points, enter into the process, a re-defined missionary venture appropriate to the new circumstances may emerge. A comprehensive history of the Catholic missionary movement in Australia would assist them in this task.

This study has shown how the Columban experience both shaped and was shaped by the history of the Irish in Australia. Ireland supplied the original inspiration and organisational structure for the Society, and Irish church personnel in Australia were the backbone of establishing the local Columban enterprise. However, the Society was forced to adapt to Australian ways of perceiving such traits as religious pluralism, the insights of the secular world and a willingness to "give it a go", traits which local Catholics had at least partially taken into their living of the faith. This helped Australian Columban members to seek changes in the inherited Irish style of seminary training, to be open to the cultural and religious differences they experienced living in other countries, and to organise new Columban mission agendas. Australian Columban members were in the vanguard of applying a reformed ideological base to Columban work, feeding their experiences and experiments into Society deliberations as well as passing them on to Catholics at home. This thinking not only made a distinct Australian contribution to the Catholic missionary movement, it offers one illustration of how the Irish factor was accommodated within Australian church and cultural life.

¹ J. Tosh, **The Pursuit of History**, (Harlow, Essex, UK: Longman Group, 1984, 1991), p. 19; A. McHoul and W. Grace, **A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject**, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1993), pp. 3-4.

A recurring theme in this thesis has been the “international perspective” offered by the Columban Society in its dealings with Australian Catholics. There were several reasons for this. Most Columban members have experience of work outside their own culture and language. They have drawn upon this international experience both to engender support for the enterprise, and to organise mission awareness campaigns and advocacy on particular issues in Australia. These programs derived their credibility from the direct personal experience of members, ratified by official Society reflections and policy decisions. This research confirms the wisdom of the Society’s decision to retain first-hand international experience of working overseas in another language as defining of Columban membership.

This research has also contributed to the under-researched area of Catholic seminary life in Australia. It showed both the strengths and weaknesses of the early training and identified the shifts in social and religious values that prompted the change. An area deserving of more research is the family background of seminarians (in particular their Protestant connections) for the importance familial preparation to candidates, and the relative importance of such factors in the selection of future candidates in an increasingly multi-cultural Society. This thesis identified the new ideological framework that was translated into seminary programs after Vatican II. The reformed seminary and Mission Institute formation created post-1970 helped meet expectations among most Columban students for both competency and a sense of human fulfillment in their lives as missionaries and lifestyle as celibate priests. However, the dramatic drop in the number of new candidates and the significant number of Columban priests who have left the Society point to the role of professional missionaries, their lifestyle and appropriate formation as areas that will need ongoing attention. In recent decades, younger Columban members seemed to have led happy and fulfilled lives when they worked in teams, sensing that they belonged and were participating in carrying through shared Society objectives. Since the Society membership has grown more culturally diverse in accepting members from former mission churches, improving the quality of the internal life of the Society seems to be part of addressing ongoing questions about the human cost of mission, seminary formation, and the shared Columban enterprise.

The development of new theological expressions, particularly since Vatican II, has proven to be a cause of dissension among Australian Catholics and Columban members. It has inspired some to renewed commitment while alienating others, both clergy and lay. Within the Society too, some adapted to church change while others remain fixed in a past ideological stance. The Society, particularly in the larger Regions including Australia, has grown top-heavy with ageing members whose record on change has not been good. Columban structures will need to support members implementing a new vision of mission, and criteria for accepting new candidates will need to assess their ability to live creatively within the mixed make-up of a group continually redefining its mission priorities.

Columban contributions to the advancing and popularising of new theology in Australia have focused on sharing Society experiences in former mission churches that are now recognised as partners. Their voices speak of cultural plurality and diverse priorities within their church communities, and ask that the older churches listen to their opinions. The Columban Society organised programs to convince both its own members and local Catholics to listen, and in so doing expanded the boundaries of orthodox Catholic theology. The Society elevated this teaching role to equal that of sending mission personnel overseas. This research would argue that the Columban Society and other church leaders need to take the initiative in developing education programs that are targeted, organised, professional and properly resourced if they are to succeed. Teaching in itself is not enough but needs to be accompanied by organised participation of the hearers to achieve specific goals, action being a constitutive part of learning.

This thesis chose to privilege the historical contribution of ordinary Columban members so that their stories would not be lost within a concentration on the institutional work of the Society. However, it has also highlighted the importance of choosing leaders and advisors capable of listening and inspiring individual members in their efforts and has identified the consequences when others failed to do so. This research indicates that not only was the leadership of individual superiors decisive, it was the clusters of people they gathered around them that made them powerful. When the Society first organised to mobilise resources from Australia for the Columban enterprise, members began as a close-knit unit with clearly defined externally orientated work aims as the basis of their

unity and identity. That the Society was set up within four years of coming to Australia demonstrated the ability of a few capable leaders and members to cooperate in organising a widespread and influential network. When the ideological framework for overseas mission began to change, it was not a quest for individual personal spiritual growth but tasks shared by committed clusters of members that realigned Society priorities and carved out new places for it within official Catholic Church structures both locally and around the world. In order to take advantage of new circumstances, the leadership took the initiative, involved members in each stage of the process and made decisions to foster team action. The thesis has illustrated the effectiveness of shared responsibility to best help in forging institutional and individual identity.

Overall, this research has found that over eighty years the legal and structural framework of the Columban Society in Australia has remained fairly stable, as was the commitment of Columban members to mission in Jesus Christ lived within the structures of the Society. The number of Society members from Australia has never been large, one hundred and twenty two priests over eighty years, with rarely more than a dozen on Columban work in Australia at any one time.² However, the major Columban work priorities changed over the decades. The Society took on a supporting role in churches overseas, revamped its programs for training missionary personnel in Australia, and consciously took on a teaching role to help form local Catholic opinion. These changes were not inevitable, nor did they progress in a smooth or necessarily linear fashion but rather they had to be negotiated. At different times clusters of ordinary members and Society leaders implemented or impeded changes, regressive as well as positive. The story of such struggles is at the heart of this history of the Columban Society in Australia.

Most Society members have found spiritual meaning, a sense of adventure, happiness, self worth and fulfilment in their Columban mission activity. They shared a conviction of having been called by God, joining with others in naming their goals, honing individual abilities and then having the opportunity to go on missionary service. Catholic supporters of the Columban enterprise across Australia, from laity to bishops, shared in

² The number of members originating from the local administrative Columban Region jumps to 174 when New Zealand members are included. Over the eighty years there has been a constant presence of Columban members from other Regions, particularly Ireland, doing Columban work in promotion, teaching, magazine editing and administration.

the work of the Society and in doing so were challenged to expand their own understanding of mission in a changing world. While some members chose to leave the Society and others stay on anchored in the past, most committed themselves to the mission journey as pilgrims for Christ. In the process of many lives lived, the Columban Society helped advance the thinking on missionary activity and practice within the Australian church, working with Australian Catholics to push the boundaries of faith in an ongoing “Journey to the Margins”.

Appendix 1

Columban Priests and Permanent Members who originated from or worked in the Australian Region 1920-2000

The first members of the Columban Region were the founding priests who came from Ireland in 1920. They were joined by Australian born priests and other members who came from Ireland to work in the Region for a period of years on specific tasks. Later, students joined the Society from Australian and New Zealand and many were ordained as Columban members. To help with the ongoing works in the Region, Columban priests also came from the USA, Scotland and England. In total 267 Columban priests have been associated with the Region in one form or other. The number in the Region at any one time in the first decade early was usually less than ten, increasing to the twenties in the next two decades. From the Second World War onwards numbers varied from forty to sixty as Regional works multiplied and sick/retired members increased.

Columban Priests connected with the Australian Region by Country of Origin

Australia	120
England	3
Fiji	1
Germany	1
Ireland	80
New Zealand	54
Scotland	1
USA	6
Vietnam	2
Total	268

Following is a list of all Columban members associated with the Australian Region, their diocese before entering the Society, their country of birth and date of ordination. Most members were associated with the Region soon after their ordination.

Priest's Name	Diocese of Birth	Country of Birth	Ordination
Aldag, Ross Anthony	Sale	Australia	23/07/1961
Arms, David George	Wellington	New Zealand	29/06/1962
Austin, James Paul	Wellington	New Zealand	21/12/1942
Awburn, Frank	Bendigo	Australia	21/12/1953
Baker, Christopher J	Melbourne	Australia	23/09/1950
Baker, Leo	Ballarat	Australia	25/07/1948
Baker, Patrick John	Ballarat	Australia	21/07/1962
Barfield, Charles	Rockhampton	Australia	27/07/1952
Barnett, William Laurence	Wellington	New Zealand	05/12/1981
Barrett, Kelvin Francis	Port Pirie	Australia	09/07/1969
Bartlett, John Anthony	Adelaide	Australia	12/07/1969
Batchelor, Vincent A	Sandhurst	Australia	21/12/1944
Bergin, John	Christchurch	New Zealand	01/07/1963
Brennan, Robert John	Auckland	New Zealand	03/07/1965
Burke, Patrick		Ireland	21/12/1942
Byrne, Paul William	Brisbane	Australia	29/06/1968
Cagica, Isimeli		Fiji	16/04/1994
Cairns, Barry Jude	Wellington	New Zealand	18/12/1955
Carey, Francis Henry	Melbourne	Australia	13/12/1962
Carey, Paul Anthony	Perth	Australia	29/06/1963
Casey, Alan	Christchurch	New Zealand	17/12/1955
Cashman, Patrick Pearse Charles		USA	19/12/1942
Chapman, Francis Edward	Perth	Australia	21/12/1937
Cleary, John Bernard	Ballarat	Australia	17/12/1955
Cleary, Thomas Gerard Patrick		Ireland	06/04/1969
Cockburn, Garry	Dunedin	New Zealand	04/07/1967
Cody, Nicholas		Ireland	21/12/1925
Colgan, John		Ireland	21/12/1960
Collins, Henry P		Ireland	21/12/1931
Collins, James		Ireland	21/12/1931
Collins, Martin		Ireland	21/12/1940
Conneally, Patrick J		Ireland	21/12/1946
Connolly, Noel John	Brisbane	Australia	08/07/1969
Cooper, Charles	Wellington	New Zealand	27/07/1952
Cosgrove, Paul		New Zealand	07/05/1976
Cox, Anthony Ainslie	Melbourne	Australia	27/05/1978
Crosbie, Philip Joseph	Ballarat	Australia	21/12/1939
Crowley, Patrick J		Ireland	21/12/1951
Cryan, Michael Jerome		Ireland	21/12/1948
Cuddigan, Michael (Junior)		Ireland	11/04/1971
Cuddigan, Michael (Senior)		Ireland	21/12/1925
Cullen, Seamus Anthony		Ireland	21/12/1966
Curran, Dennis Laurence		Ireland	21/12/1952
Dagge, Bernard Francis	Melbourne	Australia	19/05/1973
Dakin, Edward Francis	Melbourne	Australia	17/12/1955
Devlin, Patrick		Ireland	21/12/1921
Dobey, Martin Andrew		Ireland	21/12/1950
Doherty, Roger		Ireland	21/12/1931
Donnelly, Hugh		Ireland	01/05/1922
Donnelly, Leo Francis	Ballarat	Australia	21/07/1957

Douglas, Francis	Wellington	New Zealand	29/10/1934
Doyle, Peter (John)	Rockhampton	Australia	28/06/1968
Duffin, Michael Bernard	Melbourne	Australia	24/07/1965
Duffy, Fergus		Ireland	21/12/1949
Duffy, William		Ireland	21/12/1936
Duggan, James Edward	Sydney	Australia	17/12/1955
Dwyer, Thomas	Wellington	New Zealand	21/12/1937
Ellis, Richard Joseph Gerard		Ireland	21/12/1954
Evans, John Thomas	Sydney	Australia	19/05/1973
Farissey, Kevin Ryan	Auckland	New Zealand	23/07/1960
Farquharson, Grant		New Zealand	24/06/1977
Farrelly, Christopher	Auckland	New Zealand	11/05/1976
Feld, Norbert Rudolph		USA	17/12/1949
Ferrie, Francis John	Melbourne	Australia	17/12/1955
Fewtrell, Michael	Brisbane	Australia	26/11/1976
Finlayson, Paul	Palmerston	New Zealand	17/05/1975
Fisher, James		Ireland	21/12/1924
Fitzgerald, Anthony	Maitland	Australia	21/12/1939
Fitzgerald, Daniel Patrick		Ireland	01/07/1967
Fitzgerald, Michael Declan	Wellington	New Zealand	25/07/1959
Fitzgerald, Michael Joseph		Ireland	21/12/1949
Fitzpatrick, Denis		Ireland	21/12/1933
Flaherty, Charles Bowen		Ireland	23/12/1950
Flinn, F Kevin	Adelaide	Australia	01/07/1943
Flynn, John P		Ireland	21/12/1944
Ford, Warren	Perth	Australia	09/07/1966
Foy, Thomas		Ireland	21/12/1934
Fraser, Neil	Brisbane	Australia	21/08/1971
Gabriel, Peter	Adelaide	Australia	21/12/1929
Galvin, James		Ireland	01/06/1918
Gardiner, Timothy	Wilcannia	Australia	23/08/1982
Garlick, Maxwell	Christchurch	New Zealand	24/07/1960
Goddard, Paul	Auckland	New Zealand	20/05/1978
Gore, Brian	Perth	Australia	29/06/1968
Gorman, Keith	Brisbane	Australia	18/12/1943
Gormly, Michael James	Wellington	New Zealand	29/06/1965
Grealish, Roger		Ireland	21/12/1973
Greig, Gary	Brisbane	Australia	24/10/1981
Griffin, James Rufus	Melbourne	Australia	18/12/1927
Griffin, John Desmond	Wellington	New Zealand	25/07/1950
Griffin, Thomas J (Paddy)	Wellington	New Zealand	26/07/1945
Hally, Cyril	Christchurch	New Zealand	22/07/1945
Hanahoe, Thomas		Ireland	21/12/1938
Harding, Daniel	Brisbane	Australia	12/03/1994
Harris, Derek Fergus		Ireland	20/12/1961
Hawke, W Bernard	Wellington	New Zealand	21/12/1944
Hayes, James		Ireland	01/01/1908
Hayes, Romuald	Melbourne	Australia	10/08/1917
Hayres, John	Sydney	Australia	01/01/1968
Hayward, Hubert	Christchurch	New Zealand	21/12/1938
Hegerty, John Reginald	Melbourne	Australia	14/08/1971

Henderson, John		New Zealand	14/08/1971
Hennessy, Patrick	Melbourne	Australia	16/07/1933
Herlihy, Francis Jeremiah	Dunedin	New Zealand	21/12/1935
Hickey, Lawrence	Auckland	New Zealand	21/12/1937
Hickey, Patrick Claver	Perth	Australia	27/07/1957
Hindmarsh, John	Wellington	New Zealand	04/07/1970
Hishon, John	Dunedin	New Zealand	01/12/1962
Hoban, Brendan Thomas		Ireland	11/04/1971
Hogarty, George	Melbourne	Australia	12/11/1983
Holian, Kevin	Melbourne	Australia	27/05/1978
Hollis, Paul	Sydney	Australia	14/11/1982
Holmes, William	Melbourne	Australia	21/12/1940
Hornsey, Donald John Augustine		New Zealand	04/07/1964
Hoult, Roderick	Wellington	New Zealand	22/07/1951
Howard, Reginald Thomas	Maitland	Australia	17/07/1966
Hunter, Francis Edward	Melbourne	Australia	21/12/1941
Hunter, Hubert	Melbourne	Australia	24/07/1949
Jackson, Gordon Tarn Joseph	Goulbourn	Australia	21/12/1939
Jennings, Peter	Bathurst	Australia	20/05/1972
Kavanagh, Peter	Port Pirie	Australia	21/12/1944
Keenan, Patrick T		Ireland	21/12/1947
Kehoe, Kevin	Cairns	Australia	20/05/1972
Kehoe, William		Ireland	21/12/1935
Kelly, Patrick		Ireland	01/07/1915
Kelly, Patrick Joseph		Ireland	21/12/1950
Kelly, Peter Julian	Melbourne	Australia	27/07/1963
Kennedy, James	Ballarat	Australia	21/12/1940
Kenny, Paul		Ireland	21/12/1954
Kenny, Peter Andrew		Ireland	12/12/1958
Killeen, Patrick		Ireland	21/12/1936
Kilroy, Padraic		Ireland	22/04/1973
Kinne, Warren	Rockhampton	Australia	01/06/1970
Laffan, Patrick F		Ireland	21/12/1922
Laffan, Patrick J		Ireland	21/12/1924
Lane, Bernard John	Melbourne	Australia	02/06/1978
Linnane, James	Brisbane	Australia	21/12/1936
Long, John Roderick (Derrick)		Ireland	21/12/1959
Lovett, John Brendan		Ireland	21/12/1966
Lowe, Raymond	Perth	Australia	14/08/1969
Lynch, Kevin	Dunedin	New Zealand	21/12/1944
Lyons, Denis	Melbourne	Australia	21/12/1940
Lyons, Malachy		Ireland	21/12/1934
MacLean, Patrick		Ireland	01/12/1921
Maguire, Edward		Ireland	01/12/1912
Malone, Peter	Sydney	Australia	01/01/1957
Mangan, Kevin	Bendigo	Australia	21/12/1939
Martin, Barry	Melbourne	Australia	05/07/1969
McAuley, Patrick		Ireland	01/12/1907
McCarthy, Anthony Michael	Melbourne	Australia	25/07/1964
McCartin, Paul Lawrence	Ballarat	Australia	26/05/1978
McColgan, Edward Phelan		Ireland	21/12/1952

McCormack, Alfred		Ireland	21/12/1926
McCulloch, Robert	Melbourne	Australia	04/07/1970
McCullugh, Bernard J		Ireland	01/01/1944
McDevitt, James		Ireland	21/12/1935
McDonald, Francis		Scotland	21/12/1924
McFarland, Ronald	Melbourne	Australia	04/07/1970
McGee, Paul	Sydney	Australia	17/07/1965
McGlynn, James		Ireland	18/12/1923
McGoldrick, William	Toowoomba	Australia	25/07/1911
McGrath, John S		Ireland	21/12/1955
McIlraith, Donal Anthony		Ireland	13/04/1971
McInerney, Patrick Joseph	Adelaide	Australia	26/05/1978
McKay, Francis	Melbourne	Australia	20/05/1972
McLean, Colin Richard	Melbourne	Australia	05/07/1969
McMahon, Brian	Toowoomba	Australia	06/08/1970
McMorrow, Leo		Ireland	21/12/1960
McMullan, John		Ireland	21/12/1934
McMullan, Patrick	Dunedin	New Zealand	12/12/1987
McPoland, John		Ireland	21/12/1932
McWilliams, James		Ireland	21/12/1935
Meyer, Hans Joachim		Germany	29/06/1968
Moloney, Maurice	Ballarat	Australia	21/12/1953
Moran, William Gerard	Melbourne	Australia	23/07/1961
Moynihan, James		New Zealand	19/12/1955
Mulkerrin, Thomas		Ireland	21/12/1935
Mullany, Luke	Melbourne	Australia	14/09/1919
Mullins, Kevin	Sydney	Australia	01/01/1978
Mulronev, James Michael	Adelaide	Australia	20/05/1972
Murphy, John	Melbourne	Australia	23/07/1966
Murphy, Thomas L		USA	19/12/1942
Murray, Brendan Joseph Patrick		Ireland	21/12/1956
Murray, Francis A		Ireland	18/12/1923
Naughton, Edward Vincent		USA	21/12/1960
Nguyen, Van Hung (Peter)		Vietnam	23/11/1991
Nguyen, Xuan Tien (Joachim)		Vietnam	24/06/1995
Nolan, Denis Dominic	Melbourne	Australia	05/07/1969
Noonan, Leo	Sydney	Australia	
Norris, James Douglas	Auckland	New Zealand	27/07/1947
O'Brien, Brian Thomas	Bathurst	Australia	29/07/1946
O'Collins, Michael Fitzgerald	Bendigo	Australia	01/04/1924
O'Connell, James		Ireland	21/12/1927
O'Connor, Daniel T	Dunedin	New Zealand	13/12/1986
O'Connor, John Maurice (Sean)	Wellington	New Zealand	02/07/1964
O'Connor, Maurice Patrick	Dunedin	New Zealand	24/07/1960
O'Connor, Seamus		Ireland	21/12/1950
O'Connor, Patrick Aloysius		Ireland	21/12/1958
O'Donnell, Michael	Palmerston	New Zealand	27/05/1978
O'Hara, John Patrick ("Pop")	Port Pirie	Australia	01/01/1963
O'Hehir, John	Melbourne	Australia	01/01/1959
O'Keefe, Liam Francis		Ireland	20/12/1967
O'Loughlin, John J		Ireland	21/12/1950

O'Mahony, Charles Gregory		Australia	21/12/1944
O'Mahony, Donal		Ireland	21/12/1943
O'Mahony, Kevin	Perth	Australia	21/12/1944
O'Mara, Dennis		USA	01/01/1961
O'Meara, John	Hobart	Australia	21/12/1940
O'Neill, Kevin	Melbourne	Australia	10/07/1992
O'Neill, Patrick	Christchurch	New Zealand	01/07/1962
O'Neill, Peter	Melbourne	Australia	05/10/1990
O'Shea, Edward		Ireland	13/06/1920
O'Shea, Patrick Martin John		Ireland	27/10/1974
O'Sullivan, Peter	Perth	Ireland	07/06/1940
O'Sullivan, Richard		Ireland	01/01/1959
Oxley, Paul	Wagga	Australia	17/05/1975
Papworth, Christopher	Melbourne	Australia	20/05/1972
Portley, Joseph	Brisbane	Australia	21/12/1927
Power, Cornelius	Melbourne	Australia	29/06/1968
Prendergast, Paul Henry	Christchurch	New Zealand	01/07/1963
Price, Arthur Philip	Auckland	New Zealand	21/12/1935
Procopis, Brian	Brisbane	Australia	26/05/1974
Purcell, Francis	Melbourne	Australia	17/12/1955
Rathbun, James Irvine	Wellington	New Zealand	24/07/1960
Rillstone, Thomas	Dunedin	New Zealand	21/12/1935
Rouse, Thomas	Palmerston	New Zealand	08/05/1976
Ruddy, Francis		Ireland	21/12/1940
Rue, Charles Douglas	Bathurst	Australia	29/06/1968
Ryan, John Damien	Brisbane	Australia	24/05/1974
Ryan, John Joseph		Ireland	20/12/1961
Ryan, Peter	Dunedin	New Zealand	30/06/1964
Ryan, Thomas		Ireland	01/01/1908
Scanlan, Patrick	Ballarat	Australia	12/07/1969
Scanlon, Raymond Francis	Melbourne	Australia	29/06/1968
Schell, Michael	Melbourne	Australia	05/07/1969
Schumacher, Terence Leo		New Zealand	05/12/1987
Shanahan, Richard	Ballarat	Australia	1940's
Shanahan, William Joseph	Auckland	New Zealand	17/12/1955
Sherrard, Malcolm	Wellington	New Zealand	21/12/1954
Sherry, Edward Ignatius		United Kingdom	21/12/1935
Siddle, Anthony	Canberra	Australia	20/05/1972
Steele, Peter	Port Pirie	Australia	18/07/1964
Stratton, John Rowden Sutton	Adelaide	Australia	30/06/1962
Strong, Martin	Auckland	New Zealand	21/12/1935
Sullivan, Timothy	Toowoomba	Australia	21/12/1926
Sweeney, J Austin	Melbourne	United Kingdom	21/12/1934
Sweeney, Jerome	Melbourne	United Kingdom	21/12/1932
Tiernan, Daniel		Ireland	24/12/1926
Toohey, Peter James	Sydney	Australia	21/07/1963
Triado, Anthony	Melbourne	Australia	27/05/1978
Trotter, Trevor	Maitland	Australia	04/07/1970
Tudor, Walter	Ballarat	Australia	05/04/1975
Vale, Brian Gerald	Palmerston	New Zealand	17/05/1975
Van Leest, Adrian	Ballarat	Australia	11/07/1970

Vaughan, John Dennis	Dunedin	New Zealand	01/08/1946
Walker, Gary		Australia	19/05/1972
Wallace, Keith	Brisbane	Australia	29/06/1960
Walsh, David	Maitland	Australia	31/10/1987
Walsh, John Thomas	Wellington	New Zealand	23/07/1950
Watters, Harold B		Ireland	21/12/1937
Way, Bernard	Melbourne	Australia	21/12/1935
White, Kieran		Ireland	21/12/1935
Whitely, Lynn	Perth	Australia	01/01/1967
Wilkenson, Peter	Melbourne	Australia	23/07/1961
Williams, Brian	Bathurst	Australia	11/07/1970
Wodarz, Donald		USA	21/12/1960
Woodhouse, Russell	Sale	Australia	22/11/1986
Woodruff, Peter Vincent	Melbourne	Australia	14/07/1967

Appendix 2

Australian and New Zealand Columban members who transferred to other church institutions or dioceses (incardinated)

Romuld Hayes, Vic, 1920-32, Bishop of Rockhampton 1932
 Gerald Hawkins, Vic, 1923-35, Cistercian Abbott, USA
 Austin Joseph Portley, Qld, 1924-30, incardinated into Toowoomba
 James Griffin, Melbourne, Vic, 1924-46, incardinated into Melbourne
 William Walsh, NZ, 1926, ordained for Wellington, NZ
 James Cameron, Vic, 1930-32, ordained for New Norcia
 Thomas Curran, Vic, 1930-31, ordained for Melbourne
 James Goldfinch, NZ, 1930-36, joined Vincentians
 William Kenny, Qld, 1930-33, ordained for Brisbane
 Edward Brill, NZ, 1931-32, ordained for Townsville
 Patrick Cronin, NZ, 1933-34, lay brother with Blessed Sacraments
 Patrick Fitzgerald, Vic, 1933-36, ordained for Blessed Sacraments
 Bernard Wallace, Vic, 1935-36, ordained for Rockhampton, Bishop 1974
 James Austin, NZ, 1936-60, incardinated into Wellington
 A John Gallagher 36-42, Vic, ordained for Sandhurst
 Richard Shanahan, Vic, 1936-49, incardinated into Armidale
 Tom O'Donnell, Tas, 1944, ordained for Hobart
 Willliam Dwyer, Vic, 1946-49, ordained for Ballarat
 Thomas Keyes, NZ, 1946-49, ordained for Dunedin
 John Mutch, NZ, 1948-49, ordained for Wellington
 Peter Malone, NSW, 1951-86, incardinated into Maitland
 Fergus Reeves, NZ, 1954-55, ordained for Wellington
 Leon Russell, WA, 1957-62, ordained for Bunbury
 Peter Brown, Vic, 1957-62, joined the Little Brothers of Jesus
 John Hayres, NSW, 1961-69, ordained for Hobart
 Michael McInerney, NSW, 1963-64, joined Sons of Mary, USA
 Roger Picone, Vic, 1963-64, ordained for Melbourne
 Terence Pidato, Vic, 1963-64, ordained for Melbourne
 Ronald McFarlane, Vic, 1964-76, incardinated into Sydney
 Raymond Lowe, WA, 1965-67, ordained for Geraldton
 Kevin Baker, NZ, 1968-72, ordained deacon for Parramatta
 Christopher Saunders, Vic, 69-72, ordained for Broome, Bishop 1996
 Maurice Crocker, NZ, 1971-73, ordained for Woollongong
 Damien Kavanagh, Vic, 1976-78, ordained Oblate of Mary

Irish born Columban priests who worked in the Region before joining local dioceses:

Malachy Lyons, Dunedin
 Joseph O'Hagan, Sale (then Ireland)
 Edward O'Shea, Wellington
 Daniel Gerald Tiernan, Rockhampton

Appendix 3

Seminary Class Schedules and Timetables

The timetables for Columban seminary life in Australia differed little from those in the Columban seminaries in Ireland and the scheduled prayers, study and recreation remained fairly constant from 1926-1970.

The following class schedules and student timetables (Horarium) are for the years 1963 and 1968. Abbreviations to be noted are “Lit” which was Liturgy, “Psych” which was Philosophical Psychology, “Conf” which was a Conference on learning the methods for following the Spiritual Life, “Const” which was study of the Constitutions of the Columban Society, and “Eloc” which was Elocution.

CLASS SCHEDULE, 1963

THEOLOGY:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9.00	Dogma 1	Dogma 2	New.	Dogma 2	Dogma 2	Dogma 2
9.45	Moral 2	Moral 1	Test.	Moral 1	Moral 1	Moral 1
9.50	New	Old.	Church	Old.	New.	Church
10.35	Test.	Test.	History	Test.	Test.	History
10.50	Dogma 2	Dogma 1	Canon	Dogma 1	Dogma 1	Dogma 1
11.35	Moral 1	Moral 2	Law	Moral 2	Moral 2	Moral 2
11.40	Lit.(1	Intro.	Chant		<u>Ascet.</u>	Sociology
12.25	& 2 Th.)	<u>To S.S.</u> Breviary			Pastoral	

PHILOSOPHY

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9.00	Philos.	Latin 1	Philos.	Philos.	Philos.	Philos.
9.45	(Fr. McG.)	Latin 2	(Fr. McG.)	(Fr. McG.)	(Fr. McG.)	(Fr. McG.)
9.50	Latin 1	Philos.		Latin 1	Latin 1	Latin 1
10.35	Latin 2	(Fr O’C.)		Latin 2		
10.50	Philos.	English		Philos.	Philos.	English
11.35	(Fr. O’C.)	(Fr. C.)		(Fr. O’C.)	(Fr. O’C.)	(Fr. D.)
11.40	English	Physics		English	French	Latin 2
12.25	(Fr. D.)			(Fr. C.)		
p.m.		Spanish & Speech			5 p.m:Cate- chet.,Theol	

H O R A R I U M - 1963

<u>Daily</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>
6.10	6.25	1.30
Rising	Rising	Recreation
6.35	7.25	5.30
Angelus	High Mass	Rosary
7.15	8.35	5.45
Community Mass	Breakfast	Visit
8.00	9.35	
Breakfast	Study	
8.40	11.00	
Recreat. (outside)	Morning Tea	
9.00	11.15	
Classes	Study	
10.35	12.25	
Morning Tea	Recreat. (outside)	
10.50	12.35	
Classes	Spiritual Reading	
12.25	1.00	
Recreation	Dinner	
12.35	5.20	
Spiritual Reading	Vespers & Benediction	
(Tues.: S.D's Talk)	7.30	
1.00	Lit. & Debating,	
Dinner	Or Study	
2.15	9.30	
Outside Recreation	Night Prayers	
3.30	(Points & Examen may be	
Rosary (Those at Spanish etc. say it	anticipated)	
prior to study	10.15	
5.45	Lights Out	
Visit to M.B.S. ¹		
6.00		
Tea		
7.15		
Study		
(Tues: Theol.Confessions		
Fri: Philos. “		
9.15		
End of study; Supper		
9.30		
Night Prayers		
10.15		
Lights Out		

¹ M.B.S stands for Most Blessed Sacrament. Students prayed before the Sacred Hosts reserved from the Eucharistic Celebration (Mass) and kept in a Tabernacle, usually at the centre of the main altar.

CLASS SCHEDULE
First Term - 1968

THEOLOGY

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9.10 9.55	Dogma I-2 " II-1	Moral I-2 " II-1	New Test-1		Dogma I-2 " II-1	Moral I-2 " II-1
10.00 10.45	Can. L.-1	Dogma I-2 " II-1	Moral I-2 " II-1		Sociol.-4	Dogma I-2 " II-1
11.05 11.50	N.Test-1	O.Test-1	Ascet.-1		O.Test-1	Lit.IV-2 Dogma II-1
11.55 12.35	Ch.Hist-1	Lit.III-1 Past.Th-2	Can. L.-1		Ch.Hist-1	Chant-1

(Canon Law and Ascetical Theology will be taught for the First Term only.)

PHILOSOPHY

9.10 9.55	Psych.-3	Eng.Lit-3	Psych.-3		Eng.Lit-3	Logic-3
10.00 10.45	Lang.-3	Psych.-3	Logic-3		Psych.-3	Script-3
11.05 11.50	Logic-3 (Epist.)	Lat.III-3 Lat.IV-4	Lang.-3		Eng.Exp-3	Lat.III-3 Lat. II-4
11.55 12.35	Script-3		Lat.III-3 Lat. II-4		Logic-3 (Epist.)	Chant-1

(Scripture will be taught for the First Term only. Hist. of Philosophy will be taught in the Second Term. Liturgy, for Theologians and Philosophers will be taught by Fr. D. Hornsey in the Second Term.)

SPIRITUAL YEAR

9.10 9.55	Conf.-4	Conf.-4	Script.-4		Conf.-4	
10.00 10.45	Life of Christ-4	Eng.Exp-4	Eng.Lit-4		Chant-1	Conf.-4 (Socius)
11.05 11.50	Logic-4 (Fr.O'C)	Lat.III-3 Lat. II-4	Const.-4		Lat.I-4 (Lang.for II & III)	Lat.III-3 Lat. II-4 Eloc.I-5
11.55 12.35	Miss.-4	Lat.I-3 Eloc.-5	Lat.III-3 Lat. II-4		Lit.4	Lit.I-3 Lang.-4

Appendix 4

Seminary Statistics and Opinions Assessment (SSOA) of Columban Society Training-Formation Programs in Australia

Notes on the SSOA:

- 1 The SSOA was drawn up in 1997 from a Profile and Personal History Survey (PPHS) of members of the Australian and New Zealand Region done 1995-97. The PPHD covered all Columban priests who either had their origins in or had worked in the Columban Society Region of Australian and New Zealand from 1920 onwards. The database built on existing records as part of the Regional History Project within the Columban Society History Project initiated in 1988. The results are held in the Columban Archives Essendon (CAE, History files).
- 2 Those who contributed comments to the SSOA were ordained as Columban priests 1935-1995. The SSSO covers Columban priests who did at least part of their training in Australian Columban seminaries 1926 onwards and alive in 1996 (more than thirty had died by that date), either functioning as Columban members or who had left the Society to join a diocese or left the priesthood (thirty five). The SSOA does not take into account priests who were trained elsewhere and later joined the Society in Australia as priests, or Columban priests who did all their training in Columban seminaries overseas.
- 3 A number of topics were suggested on which they might comment on, one being to tell of their seminary experiences. The SSOA comments were predominantly about their student days, and almost no comments came from members as seminary staff people. No particular categories were suggested in the data collection so that comments were freely given in language chosen by the respondent, and 42% commented on their seminary training.
- 4 Opinions of priests ordained from before and after 1973 are considered separately for comparison purposes. The year 1973 was taken as a division point in compiling results for the SSOA as an appropriate point to mark the division between the older and newer ways of Columban training. The style and content of the Columban training-formation program began to change

from 1967 and by the end of 1973 major changes had taken place. Those who began as students in 1967 were ordained in 1973 and their opinions reflect a period of change.

- 5 The total number of ordained who did part of their training in Australian Columban seminaries, and were living and contacted in 1995, was 134, the earliest being ordained in 1935. Of these, 99 were ordained 1935-1972, and 35 ordained from 1973-1995.

- 6 The PPHS data was collected under conditions of privacy. The SSOA comments are representative of the replies but some of the actual phrases of the respondents are used. The comments have been put under categories but these were not in the original data. Sometimes contradictory opinions and judgements were passed on the same period and about the same academic subjects and staff members. The two comments that the seminary “belonged to its time” and that the staff “did their best” appeared in several commentaries.

COMMENTS ON SEMINARY TRAINING PRE 1973

Spiritual Year: farce, bored, archaic, feared expulsion, learnt prayer forms, good friendships, fear ...

Philosophy: Latin a problem, academics disappointed, no interest in study as no skills imparted, pathetic using Latin and bit of a joke for most, high school better atmosphere, spent a lot of time reading, parody of other philosophical opinions ...

Theology: basics only, no written assignments, no academics, no library, leisurely pace, basic, Vatican II made no impact and was ignored, shallow, no secular studies for comparison, Scripture studies in 1965 a break through, lightweight compared with Brisbane seminary, not professional, easy and given no challenge, intellectual formation okay, not as broad as US seminary teaching, no wider reading recommended ...

Professors: showed little preparation, idiosyncratic, show temper at time, came as “fill ins”, no plans for staffing apparent, doing their best, immature, few post-graduates, unhealthy clericalism, they were victims more than the students, not aware

of the wider world, could have been more positive and assertive, warm people, odd, not mature, Hally impressive, not well read, a weak Rector ...

Mission: bored by Hally's stuff, Hally alive, wanted ideals, sporadic talks, aim of my commitment, gave a common vision, adventure of it, held goals as a missionary ...

Prayer: shock that the spiritual life a seven day a week job, liturgy preparation for show, formal ...

Spiritual Direction, minimal, scrupulous director, an agony, had no idea of a spiritual journey, private spirituality emphasis and not spirituality shared with others, celibacy presented as a sacrifice, doubts not listened to and called a temptation of the devil ...

Maturity: as a student was too immature to appreciate the seminary, no consultation on decisions, wearing a soutane was a shock, soothing time, protected, hardly aware of WWII, small numbers a strain on students, clerical symbol of caped soutane, superior merely asked are you well and have enough to eat, Kiwi awareness missing, uncritical atmosphere, not confronted, cut off from society ...

Pastoral: none, cut in the bud, not taken seriously (by staff) ...

Discipline: silly rules, authority emphasised, told don't question the broad program, regimented, not a free environment, imposed, free days like children, safe place if not cross the line, sport runs as discipline at Essendon, sometimes allowing smoking a funny arrangement, little time to chat with other students, rules, parish priest prepared me for the rules, Wahroonga non-institutional, Turramurra unbearable discipline, not take rules seriously, like kids ...

Seminary Life: smooth transitions through the stages, companionship, friendships, mates, sense of belonging with friends, friends good, friends, belong, camaraderie, enjoy it, sports great ...

Physical Conditions: cramped at Essendon, accommodation poor, beauty of surrounds at Sassafra, manual works routine, cramped conditions, walks a time of relief, no space, picnics give time to meet and chat, space to run in the Chase park ...

Families: holidays great freedom, back in the real world, visit other students' families, strong influence, family connections important ...

COMMENT ON SEMINARY FORMATION 1973 ONWARDS

Theology: updated, good teaching, simplify what gone before ...

Mission: enthusiasm, given preparation, common purpose, changes in concepts ...

Spirituality: team of directors gave choice, formal exercises and not spirituality, integrated theology and studies ...

Discipline: regimented, processed supervision good, clerical hierarchical structure start to break down post 1984, openness to opinion, community emphasis, black and white options, loss of freedom a shock at first ...

Seminary Life: camaraderie, fond memories of friends, alive when a full college, changes with **PMI** and lost a Columban identity, identity in transition, demanding to be self critical all the time, identity as missionary or parish priest fill in a question, sport emphasis faded ...

Pastoral: many good opportunities given, hated the preparation needed ...

OTP: weak follow up on experience, visiting missions interesting ...

DRAWING IMPLICATIONS FOR THEIR LIVES AS PRIESTS

A Note:

A significant difference appears between those who remained and those who left when drawing conclusions about the implications of seminary training for their life as priests. Out of total of 86 alive that remained as Society members, only 9 made any comment. Out of the total of 48 alive that left the Society, 18 drew implications for their life as priests.

Implications for later Life drawn in pre-1973 responses:

was critical of the seminary at the time, repressive system stayed with me, fidelity emphasised, built habits for me, not build self-confidence, an endurance test before I began my life, not develop student talents, empty years to follow, immature as priests, sex ignored, only renewed as face self in later life, little prepared for challenge of justice, trained for a hermit life, human cost

of doing mission, did not learn to be a loving person in ordinary life, clerical secrecy stayed with me, not questioned or challenged so became irresponsible ...

Implications for life as a Priest among 1973 onward replies:

movement away from clerical power, learnt to exclude others, sexuality not faced and problems arose soon, intimacy not developed so felt lonely, homosexuality repressed and hidden so felt alone, spirituality not adequate for the hardship of mission, no post-seminary spiritual direction that had grown to depend on, seminary life had not addressed my place in history, isolation in the missions as there were not the support opportunities for young priests as had experienced as students ...

COMMON THEMES ARISING IN COMMENTS BEFORE AND AFTER 1973

Common Themes Addressed:

Mission orientation and clerical identity connections

Academic Standards, Professional teaching methods and Pastoral opportunities

Spiritual and Human Development Issues

Columban identity and student numbers

Importance of Sports

Physical convenience

Importance of family support

It is of note:

Seminary changes evolved only gradually even post 1973

Discipline changes continued to lag behind student expectations

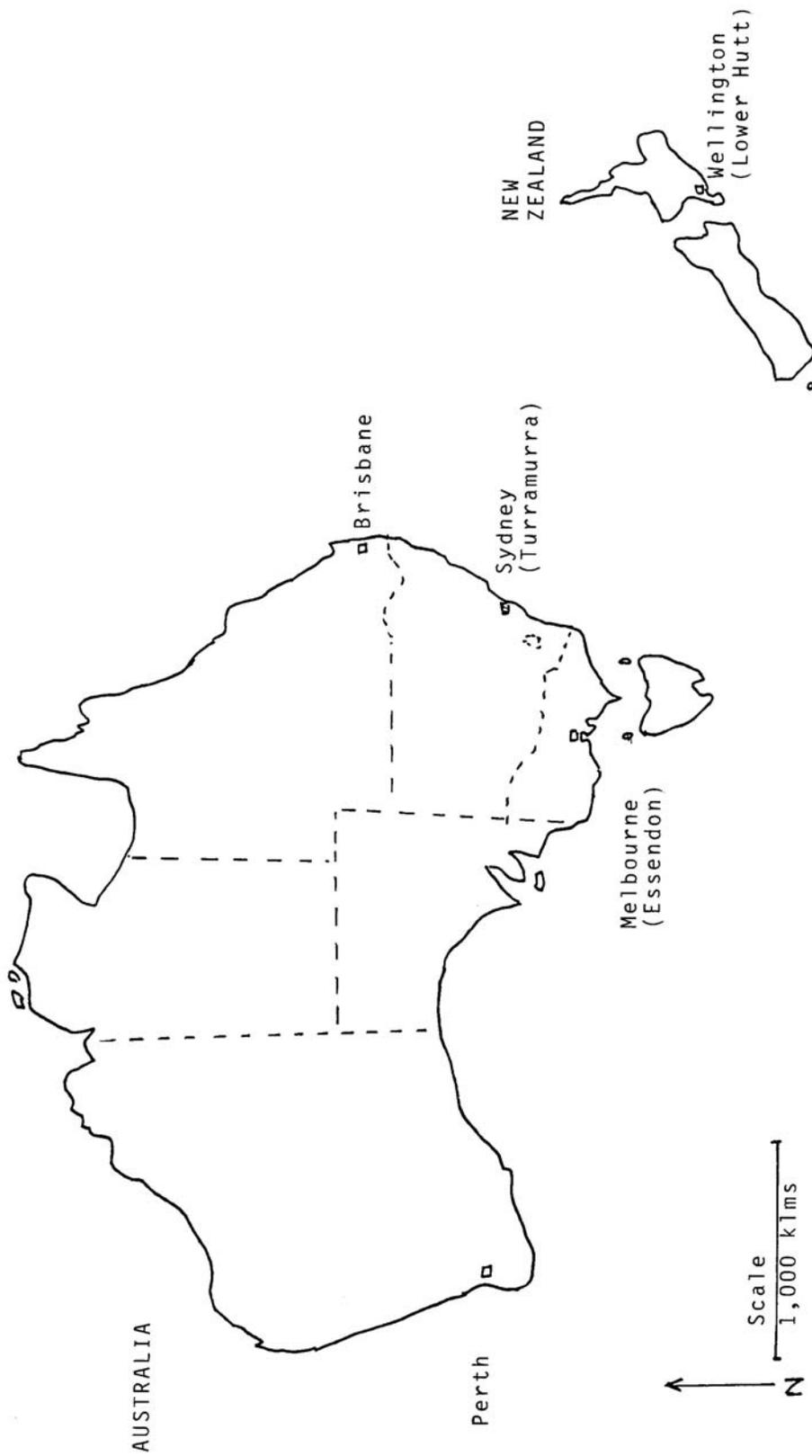
Sexuality remained an ongoing issue

Friendship among students of ongoing importance

The Overseas Training Program (OTP) did not bring as many benefits as had been expected.

for.

Appendix 5
Location of Columban Houses in Australia and New Zealand



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Row 1: Papers of individual Columban members, Columban History Project

Row 2: Correspondence with other Regions, Rome, Australian government

Row 3: Correspondence with Central Administration, Society issues, policies and procedures

Row 4: Aust/NZ Region internal correspondence

Row 5: Regional foundation, Aust/NZ properties, Regional council meetings, boards and policies, Catholic Missions, Asian students

Row 6: Finance and personnel (lists and statistics)

Row 7: Lecture tours, events, personal papers, diaries, Columban Sisters, early newsletters

Row 8: Vocations, volunteer priests, overseas training program, first missionary appointment, indigenous vocations, lay missionaries, partners in mission, Regional Education Office, National Missionary conferences

Row 9: Seminary correspondence

Row 10: Regional Office, appeals, magazine, calendar, justice and peace, Mission Education

Row 12: Society General Chapters & Assemblies, Inter-regional Conventions, Regional Conventions, workshops and meetings

Row 13a: Constitutional matters, CARA research

Row 13b: bound copies *The Far East*

Row 14: Turrumurra Seminary

Row 15: Sydney College of Divinity

Row 17: Missiology program 1972, Pacific Mission Institute, Columban Mission Institute

Row 18: Columban Intercom, Regional newsletters

Annex – Regional Bursar's Files