

2024 CLM International Meeting

Oceania CLM Report

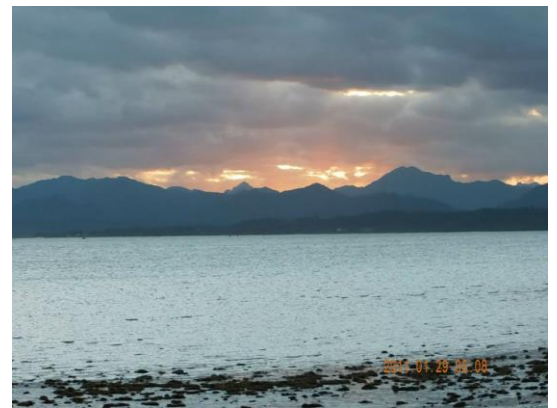
Theme: Be Like Water

Introduction.

The CLM program in Fiji is nearly 30 years. It opened its door to those interested in becoming CLM in 1994. It has sent local columban lay missionaries and received from various countries where the Columbans serve. It has matured and has given life to those that have gone to mission.

The Columban Lay Mission in comparison to a body of water is the sea.

Sea are smaller than oceans and are usually located where the land and ocean meet. In this vast dimension of the sea, there are different types of fishes, seaweeds, corals etc. Typically, seas are partially enclosed by land. Often the sea is enclosed as a lagoon, a bay or out in the deep sea. It sees the sunrise and the sunset in the land. It's waves comes and goes out. Once that wave goes out, into the ocean, it meets up with the different currents in the ocean, huge waves and storms. We believe it makes it a better wave.



The CLM is like the sea in recieveing and sending clm. It allows the clm to become a better person (wave), preparing them, helping them confront the different currents (culture etc) out in the ocean, the storms and challenges of life. But always it will see the beautiful sunrise and sunset which is the LORD who never lets go of sight of the wave.

My first task of being a coordinator was to visit my fellow former clm. It was a time of reminiscing, nostalgia, sharing stories, discussions on the clm and opportunity to request for assistance in supporting the CLM and columban mission.

The outcome of the visit was visitation to the Columban Priests, CLM, seminarians and Fr lowane's mother by the former clms. We hope to continue this.

The CLM in the Oceania region is like the flowing of the sea. What makes it flowing well is the support of the Columban Priests, lay missionaries, former lay missionaries, columban companions in mission(CCIM), co- workers and families. The *support* of these people in their prayers, in engaging with youths, in promoting the CLM through youth activities in the parish, and participation in mission Sundays in Parishes by sharing mission stories and selling calendars.

Today we have an elected vice president of the ccim who is a former lay missionary. Her skills and profession will be a great asset for the clm program in the future.

Another way is the *collaboration of team work* between the LMLT. Having monthly *meetings with Suva Ministry* and open *communication*. These three factors have helped the CLM in looking outwards and having that space to learn and collaborate well.

As for now the CLM of Oceania region has been conducting come and see from last year (2022). Four participants were consistent to the four come and see programs. With the opening of work environment after Covid 19, these four participants, after discernment went back to work. This year 2023 we have had two come and see programs where we have received youths who are consistent; the next come and see will be held on the 16th of December.

Taking up the position of the coordinator in this new era, where challenges are brought by social, technological, economical and political change, there is a need of *creativity* and *enthusiasm* in which we need to evangelise and invite youths to mission.

Listening to youths and sharing with former Lms, CCIM and co-workers and attending youth activities I have come to believe that the CLM needs to be creative and accept the challenges that are in place. We need to set up programs apart from Come and See to invite youths participation and invitation to mission. There is a need for a creative team in the CLM to set up programs (with Columban priorities), like Semester Mission, Ecological retreats, mission run-a-thon etc.

With these rain of ideas, I hope to bring a team to work together with me and the LMLT in the near future.

The effect of the covid in the clm program had the program in a very long low tide. However this did not deter the determination, positive minds, motivation, affirmation and commitment in the region for the clm program. Working in partnership with the Columban Fathers, co-workers and former clm, for come and see programs; we invited the Deacon and columban priest to share their mission journey. We also have clm working in overseas, due to technology, has allowed us to have zoom sharing with the candidates. We are also trying to be seen again as clm, aspirants and former clm outside again with people in giving joy to the gospel. So during come and see in December we will be visiting Old Peoples Home and Sisters retirement homes to sing carols.

The CLM is like the sea, because we need to be able to give water, we need to give food, we need to be in silence with people, we need to share and be utilised for its purposes.

Like the sea the CLM will move where the Holy Spirit is moving us, to face challenges, to look into new horizons, to go deeper into the ocean but not to fear because we have the sunrise and the sunset with us along the way. We need to have hope and trust in the Lords way, when there is a low tide. The Lord will never abandon his people. We should empty our mind, be formless. Shapeless, like water. (be flexible)

I would like to quote from Bruce Lee in which he says "Be like water" means that you should be formless. To be "formless", means that people shouldn't allow themselves to be trapped in a

certain mindset. Instead, a person should be able to adapt to certain situations, grow, and change; that's how one can adopt the qualities of water” .

And I conclude with the words of Isaiah the Prophet 58:1 “ And the Lord will continually guide you, and satisfy your desire in scorched places and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail”.

LET US NOT LOSE HOPE.

Vinaka Vakalevu
Katarina Mukai
CLM Oceania Coordinator