

**Columban Regional Assembly
(September 18-21, 2023)
Singalong House**



REPORT

**Sept 18, 2023
4:00 PM**

Opening Prayer: Synodal Prayer for the General Assembly

Opening Remarks: Fr. Leo Distor

Fr. Leo Distor welcomed all the ordained members, lay missionaries, and co-workers coming from the different parts of the region attending the first face-to-face regional assembly after the pandemic period. After the restrictions brought by the recent pandemic, the members have finally come together for an assembly, though some are attending online as they are not able to travel. In addition, Fr. Leo also welcomed the Society's Vicar General, Fr. Brian Vale, and Council member, Fr. Alvaro Martinez who are also present in the assembly. Respectively, they will be doing their visitation to the members of the region during and after the assembly.

For the September 2023 Regional Assembly, Fr. Dennis was invited to facilitate the group for three days as it journeys the process of the Theory U—listening to the Holy Spirit's direction in regards to decisions to be made regarding the Society's future.

The following were also officially welcomed to their first attendance to the Regional Assembly: Marvin Salarda and Lydio Mangao, who just had their first aggregation into the Society; Ronalyn who is from the Bursar's office, and Lily Faunillan, the Mission Promotion Visayas Animator.

The different committees for the Regional Assembly were also announced and are as follows:

Social: Jovito Dales and Mosese Yacalevu
Liturgy: Lanieta Tamatawale and Lahtaw Aung Li
Secretaries: Cirenio Matulac and Marjorie Engcoy
Steering Committee: Preparatory Committee

Lastly, the Regional Director prayed that the Holy Spirit inspire and guide the assembly planning for the future of the Society; make everyone courageous in responding to the different challenges that the Missionary Society of St. Columban is facing.

Areas to Consider in the RA
2024 General Assembly
Synodality
IRMU on its theme: Enlarging the space for our tent
Theory U

5:30 Mass

Observation:

- Sean pointed out that there's no section where we can present a report of our missionary work: where we are at, where can we improve, what did we well, etc. (This might come out in one of the sessions in the following days)
- What do we want to say to the General Assembly?

Other Points to be Included:

1. Suggestions that might help key ministries as they move forward (SM)
2. Columban presence, future – emphasis on the preparation toward the GA (M McGuire)

The Assembly approved the proposed program presented by the preparatory committee. In addition, the same committee was asked to now function as the steering committee during the assembly.

The Regional Director also reminded the assembly of the important documents that should be read before coming into the assembly. These were: IRMU Reports, LM Documents, and an article on Synodality “Give the Spirit the Mic”.

September 19, 2023 – Day 2

Morning Session

Opening Prayer by Aung Li

John Din introduced the facilitator the for the General Assembly

First Morning Session

The first session was led by Fr. Dennis Cagantas as his introduction to the process of the regional assembly in the next three days.

Notes from Fr. Dennis' input session.

Father Dennis calls this Regional Assembly as a gathering of encounter, of one-ness and many-ness, bringing in our rich history of Columban mission and individual experiences.

We start the journey by doing the process of location. Location matters. We locate our journey for the next three days.

Fr Denis used the story of Noah to illustrate this journey. Noah responded to the command of God to build an ark even if there is no sign of rain (or cataclysm). He built the ark that when the rain came and there was a great flood, Noah's ark floated and the ark was brought to the mountain

top. We are at the mountaintop. We view our situation now from the perspective of God accompanying us in our journey.

Before pandemic we live in a world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). So, our response to that world is to address these by measurable and predictable response. It gave us an illusion of control.

However, this measurable and predictable response to control VUCA world was shattered by the pandemic. The world entered into a crisis. People realized that the world we live in is brittle, anxious, non-linear and incomprehensible (BANI). In the midst of BANI world, there is a presence of the Holy Spirit.

There is a need for a greater conversation in a world where we realize that it is fragile, anxious, non-linear and incomprehensible. We need to ask where we are in what we see? We respond to the reality we have but we also open ourselves to the element of surprise. We need to bring in also into conversation our non-negotiable truths.

Fr. Denis called the previous perspective as the macro perspective. However, we need to go into then micro perspective.

There are four levels of being in the world.

1. Auto-pilot –
We do what we do because this is what we've been doing.
2. Effectiveness –
Is what we do getting us what we want?
If the question is: Is this getting me what I really want? Thus, we go into “design-thinking”
Design thinking is efficient, efficacious and effective.
Design what you believe and then get into auto-pilot.
Progress means going into another level of auto-pilot.

The first two levels are getting us into what we call maintenance.

3. Self-awareness
This is the time we moved into transition. What do we really want to do at this time? As a community of Columban missionaries, what do we really want?
In a world of so much options, do we rather just go back to maintenance? It is a world of auto-pilot and effectiveness. We need to move into the level of self-awareness and not being self-referential.
4. Self-transcendence
From the level of self-awareness, we need to move to the level of transcendence.
In this level, your reference point is the truth and not whether it is viable or not.
What do we want at the service of truth that is worth pursuing even until now.

Comments on the guide to the General Assembly: Where is the truth here? It is the truth that literally changes everything. We can also say that at the level, mission is really what matters in the end. And openness to transcendence is beyond measurement.

Group sharing question:

Guide question: Where are you in the chart? ([Click here to read Group's responses](#))
In the group sharing, form a circle. Circle is a shape of encounter.

Second Session in the morning

Trevor Trotter Sharing Through Zoom

Trevor Trotter walked us through the journey of Columbans in the Australia-Oceania region in their synodal process. He emphasized the role of the Holy Spirit in this journey. This is done through a prayerful process. Time was given for prayer and silence in every stage of conversation for everyone to discern the movement and guidance of the Holy Spirit to the community and to each member. He called this a spiritual conversation. This conversation is inclusive. Anybody that is affected by the decisions made must be part of the conversation.

Trevor shared the statement from a co-worker that stood out for him in this conversation. "We are all Columbans." What unites us is the Columban mission. ([see the PowerPoint here](#))

However, there are obstacles to being synodal. This is in the form of statements that came out from some members.

- I don't believe in intercessory prayer
- I don't believe that I can listen to the spirit either in myself or in a group.
- People have made up their minds before they walked in the room.
- Most lay people don't know enough theology to contribute to the conversation.
- We have shared our ideas before and nothing happened. All the decisions were taken by the superiors of the society.
- Some think this is a majority vote process like a parliament.

Some statements that are helpful from the article on Synodality: "Give the Spirit the Mic."

- The leaders and the guides of the Church are not the bishops but the Holy Spirit.
- Give the Spirit the Mic
- Saint Ignatius had come to see that God wishes to deal directly with us.
- Discernment is about deep listening. If you don't believe in discernment, you don't believe in synodality.
- This is God's world and God is always at work everywhere.

Church mission: The church exists to offer us the means of the true human flourishing for all humanity.

Another source that Trevor drew from was the book *The Acts of the Apostles* by Tom O'Reilly. Tom offers a reflection on Acts 15:12-35 which narrated the Council of Jerusalem.

- Involvement of the whole church in the decision-making process

- The focus must remain on what God is doing and what God wants, rather than on what we would like
- The mood in the meeting changed from one of debate and argumentation to respectful listening
- During the meeting a lot of attention was given to sharing of experiences
- In the discernment process there is a dialogue between experience and the revealed word of God. One throws light on the other.
- Finally, in discernment people should be on the lookout for confirmatory signs that the decision taken is in accordance with God's designs. The decision of the Jerusalem Council gave rise to joy and peace. Among other signs are renewed heart, stronger sense of purpose and enthusiasm, greater unity, and confirmation by legitimate authority rightly exercised." (p.175)

Trevor offers us this guide questions and process for discernment:

- Question: "What have I/ we heard the Spirit saying to us during this presentation?"
- Silent individual prayer in large group on the Question – 4 mins
- Go into small groups and choose a timekeeper
- Individual sharing: "What did I resonate with and what did I resist in my prayer just now?" – 2 min each
- Quiet prayer for 2 min – "What did I resonate with and what did I resist as I listened to the sharing in the small group?"
- Individual sharing – 2 min each
- Group sharing
- Prepare report to larger group
- All return to larger group

Day 2 Afternoon Session

Fr Dennis continued his reflection from the morning on our way of being.

- What you choose to see is what you get to see!
- Look at things from the perspective of abundance. (Spirit-led process)
- (The result of the survey is on the personal level which is contradictory to the output of the Regional Assembly)
- Auto-pilot/Effectiveness – Mechanical Framework (seeing the world in the mindset of control and prediction; measurement)
- Viewing reality merely as a problem to be solved (perspective)
- ---Deficit Framework --- Scarcity— (resources, edge, leverage, strategies, etc)

He led the assembly to reflect on the question, "What will happen if things 'remain as they are'?" and juxtapose it with the responses of the first small group sharing output. Reflection and sharing were done in small groups for a few minutes. Then each group was asked to present their output to the big group. ([Click here to see the collated responses](#))

Large group sharing after having posted the responses in the afternoon session.

- Hopeful, Joyful, appreciate the Journey of the process; Creativity; “Fit for Purpose”, Vibrance of members, we increase while decreasing, expanding in many different directions;
- General Feeling: Hope and Joy
- Finbar: I’m not afraid of the small number based on my experience since entering the Columban Missionaries.
- Where is the energy of hope and joy in the documents?

Online Responses:

- Doing nothing is a sure ticket to the cemetery. How do we get it so wrong? Very happy with what is Happening now.
- Columban Missionaries is beyond the statistics. Why imprison the future of the Society behind the numbers?
- If this is truly God’s work, then we do what needs to be done. (In the words of Bishop Ned Galvin)

September 20, 2023 – Day 3

Morning Session

Morning Prayer and Song by Jovito Dales

The facilitator asked the group to share phrases and words that captures the experience from the previous day.

Words from the Participants

- Beautiful challenge
- Giving room to the spirit
- Meaningful conversation
- Insightful
- Encouraged/courage
- Hope
- Moving
- Grateful
- Delighted
- Inspired
- Enlightened
- Deep listening
- Resilience

- Abundance
- Providence
- Surprise
- Numbers decrease, God increases
- Constant change
- Thought-provoking
- Realism
- Collective awareness
- Humble confidence
- Strengthened

Fr. Dennis continued to lead us into further reflection. He sees the society as going through a transition. The dominant framework is to see the society in terms of auto-pilot and effectiveness. In this perspective, there is emphasis on scarcity. If the resources are scarce then it sees the world as a problem to be solved. The direction is to improve the past rather than a radical and creative continuity. He invites us to move into self-awareness that hopefully would lead to self-transcendence.

In terms of self-awareness, everyone was invited first to reflect on the limiting story. These limiting stories have led to inability of people to find possibility to the present predicament of scarcity of resources and its effectiveness. The questions for the participants are: What stories have been told that no longer brings energy and passion? What story has limited you and keep you in prison? It is only outside of this limiting story that magic happens – a creative emergence and possibility. We need to re-tell the story from a different framework, but still be able to tell a narrative that is faithful to our identity and mission. These are stories of encounter that are immaterial and immeasurable.

- What really matters to you as a Columban?
- What works at the service of what matters?
- What refusal have you been postponing?
- What commitment am I willing to make?
- What price am I willing to pay?
- What is my contribution to the problem/concerns that I face now?
- What crossroads do I find myself at this moment?
- What is it that we want to create together?

The large group were broken into smaller groups for sharing. The sharing from the small group were collated and written on the brown paper and were displayed at the meeting hall. (*Click [here](#) to see collated group's responses*)

10:45AM

Plenary sharing from the small group

Questions:

Looking at your responses, what narrative is emerging in your group?

The groups then made their statements/narrative. ([Click here](#) to see the collated group reports)

Group observation.

Our stories tell the different ways we respond to God's call through Columban mission. There is a strong sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our individual and communal mission journey. We give all but the needs for the structure seem to take priority.

Fr. Dennis revisited the question he asked the group. What is most essential? What really matters? Responding to these questions will lead us to the realm of meaningful.

We are also asked to reflect on what is limiting us and to let go of the stories that are limiting in order for something new to emerge.

What are our Limiting Stories?

- Health and age limit our involvement in our mission priorities
- Role in the structure (both facilitative and involvement)
- Projects are already “established” – incoming personnel who will fill-in may not be inspired/challenged and feels lost as he/she fills in
 - Challenge: How do we live out the Columban mission from where we are?
- As a Society, the balance of structures and needs of the Region
- Difficult to name the limits sometimes
- Unwillingness to take on something new (leadership) as a means of responding to the needs of the Society
 - Challenge: How do we respond creatively?
- We're not good enough
- Compared to others within the Society
- The question from the survey that feels limiting to the Society: “Is it immoral and unethical to accept new members as we are decreasing in numbers? (this is a big and heavy virus that is seeping through the Society now)
- Less personnel (how to face it?, how to work on it?)
- Lack of partnership (continue trusting the lay people—taking on key roles)
- Lack of collaboration
- Change of mindset
- Feeling insecure, feeling now equipped to do certain roles
- Polarizations (Vocation is a ministry that matters for us as Columbans)
- We failed to connect

Afternoon Session

“Letting go is Letting come”

Fr. Dennis Cagantas encouraged the assembly to look at things with a different set of lens, to be more open to let the Spirit flow. He proceeded to emphasize that our old way of only looking

at ‘what works’ is secondary to ‘what matters’—what is meaningful, of value, and our truth. If we keep focusing on ‘what works, then death is right in front of us. The 6 questions used in the morning small group sharing enabled the assembly to articulate what is possible. Our limiting stories could lead us to an abundance. Looking back at our one hundred years of history showed us an abundant emergence. If we let go of our limiting stories, the grace of abundance will surely come. The facilitator further reminded the assembly that ‘as missionaries, we are not effects, instead we are the cause!’

The mechanical framework that we used to operate is the framework of the West. However, as we go through transitions in the process, we miss seeing the innovators which could show us many ways and reasons to thrive. As we let go of our limiting stories, we open ourselves to new possibilities.

As we momentarily set on maintenance framework and in transition, we must not forget to acknowledge that innovators at the grassroots level are beginning to emerge. As they emerge, we also, in ways nurturing, acknowledge that they will illuminate our ways so we can transcend.

“We are not moved by numbers; we are moved by encounters” was the line for the day.

September 21, 2023 – Day 4

Morning Prayer led by Aungli

- The prayer was an invitation to reflect on the experience of Martial Law. Martial was proclaimed on September 21, 1972.
- Brian shared his experience.
 - This is also the time of building up the Small Christian Communities. It is a time of great movement of the church. The Christian communities meeting violence with non-violence.
 - There was a minute of silence in remembrance of those who have suffered martial law.

First Morning Session

After the very moving and profound morning prayer, Fr. Dennis continued to expound his facilitation by elaborating the theory U. The origin of the theory U is from the author’s (Otto Scharmer) experience of his house burning. He said that instead of dwelling on the tragedy, something from that tragic event has emerged. It is this emergence that we need to pay attention. Fr. Dennis invited the assembly to a deep listening. It is in this deep listening that we get in touch how God convoke and gather us through the Holy Spirit. He invites us to go back to our own giftedness as a person and as a community.

Second Morning Session

The second session in the morning was dedicated to updating of our Columban Safeguarding policy. The invited speakers were **Robert Samson and Mercy Cabrillas**

Atty. Robert Samson gave us a review on Safeguarding

Some notes from his lecture. The PowerPoint is also available.

Constitutional – 18 is the legal age, below that is considered a child

Best Practice in Child Protection:

In Loco Parentis, basically means that in the absence of a parent or caregiver. Therefore, youth workers dealing with young people and children are active in place of a parent/caregiver and must give due consideration to the child's welfare

Paramourncy Principle: in our work with children and young people, we should always be guided by the principle of paramourncy, which requires that: the welfare of the child should be the paramount consideration.

We are most vulnerable to work and deal with children and vulnerable adults when we are:

Hungry; angry; lonely; tired; stressed

*try not to work with children

*do things in the open

Indicators of Concern/Possible Abuse that Require Attention

- Disclosures of abuse by a young person
- Age-inappropriate or abnormal sexual play or knowledge
- Specific injuries or patterns of injuries
- Signs of injury for which there is no explanation, or which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way
- Absconding from home
- Attempted suicide
- Under-age pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection

Cyberbullying

Spiritual Bullying and Conscience abuse

Mercy Cabrillas

She shared about her work in handling cases of sexual abuse. She gave a detailed information regarding on how to report sexual abuse to government agencies and NGOs. The most important thing is to know who are the responsible agencies that handle sexual abuse cases when it comes to our knowledge and need to be reported. *For details, she provided us documents as references.*

Afternoon Session

Fr. Brian Vale's Talk (Visitation/Observation)

- Affirmed the Region’s Plan of Action as there is clarity of the Columban priorities
- There’s obvious teamwork and collaboration between the ordained members, lay missionaries, and co-workers; they collaborate well at the ministry level
- There are professional people at the vocations committee
- The pandemic experience has a significant effect in the lives of the Columbans in the region
- The region consistently and effectively used the online platform, Zoom, for online meetings.
- The intercultural experience is working well in Northern Mindanao
- Blessed to be part of the recent diaconate ordination of Naio Iowane and Francis Xavier
- Fundraising efforts were also impressive
- Planning for Singalong, Malate and Patag – inclusive discussions
- Impressive partnership

Fr. Brian Vale highlighted some concerning issues that the Society is facing at present, such as: responding to the call to leadership (which presents hesitation in moving forward), decreasing number of incoming vocations, number of qualified people for certain responsibilities in the Society, etc.

But he encouraged the assembly to get involved in the series of discussions, to communicate, and most importantly, to listen. There are dialogue circles organized for all the members of the Society to participate so that we may effectively listen to where the Spirit will lead us in this crucial time of the Society.

In his own words, “the future is here—we only have to communicate, to share, and to dialogue better. God’s divine presence continues to work in all creation. The Holy Spirit also works in facts and figures; therefore, we must go through a deeper reflection. A new mission model is about to come out. I want to be part of it.

Questions/Responses:

- Realism struck me; hopeful realism (CM)
- It must be tough looking from the outside and above. How is it looking at the Society from where you’re at? (JL)
 - Response: 15% is adapting – moving on; 85% is gone;
 - Complete different set of issues: leadership, visa issues, decision-making, communication, etc
 - Governance issues (adjustment)
- The Spirit seem to only enlightens the leader; hoping to hear the Spirit from the grassroot to come forward at the General Assembly 2024 (SM)
- It is good to name the limiting stories from the different dimensions of the Society. This can be considered as a breakthrough. The elements of “letting come” –healthy way and life-giving space to express ‘what matters’ from all our encounters. The process is grounding before doing ‘business as usual’. We must also acknowledge and celebrate as there is something precious from this new process we just went through. (LD)

- The survey was not encouraging; no drive. But in coming together, I feel inspired and encouraged of the encounter and the process. It might be painful but might give more life. (AV)

After Brian Vale’s Presentation, Fr, Dennis wrapped his input and facilitation.

Fr. Dennis gave the assembly the image of a burning house. With the house being burned, it enabled something new to come forth. We were encouraged to look at the image of synodality – of us walking/journeying together in communion and in mission. As we journey, we’re reminded of the levels of listening. Instead of getting stuck in the usual story, we’re challenged to transcend, to go deeper, so that we may see the value of the invitation of dying and resurrecting. We’re asked to let go our limiting stories so that the doors of abundance will open—our invitation to reach our full potential, at the same time, our highest value/possibility.

Last Afternoon Session of the Plenary

The written ministry reports were submitted prior to the Assembly. These are the bullet points.

Ministry Reports:

Ministries	Report/Update
Malate	<p>Parish Guiding Theme 2023: Rejuvenating Ourselves to Promote Our Parish as a Strong Community of Faith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In full swing (with regular daily and Sunday masses, weddings) after the easing of COVID-19 restrictions nationwide - Began incorporating of the deaf members of the parish during 9:30 am Sunday Mass with Erl Dylan handling the ministry. To assure continuity of the new ministry, Erl had trained 8 parish volunteers and sent another volunteer to study Basic ASL at Caritas Manila, to represent the parish of Malate. - Volunteers are also attending formation/modular classes, basic catechism; estimate of 80-100 volunteers regular attendance. - PEAP – facilitated by the youth, formerly handled by SSC students - Unveiling the plaque – - Parish finances has seen improvements as it comes out towards post-pandemic - Balik Dangal program- non-profit organization, registered to SEC secures (nursery program) - Water proofing of the roof deck – problems were identified - Electrical wirings of the church will be checked soon - Season of Creation – busy with activities responding to the cry of the earth and of the poor - Feast of the parish is coming up with activities prepped; - Parish will also celebrate St. Columban feast day in November—highlight of the blessing of bicycles (

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jude is the new addition to Malate Parish, appointed by the Archdiocese of Manila as an attached priest. - Six-year plan of the Archdiocese of Manila- the move for the archdiocese to accountability, responding to the signs of the times, responding more actively: Malate has been set as a model for this vision; Appeal from Fr. Kurt Pala for his ministry program in Myanmar received a generous response from the parishioners of Malate. “The parish community is very appreciative of the Columbans for all they have done in the community.” Seeing the potential of Malate for the evolving and growing mission of the Columbans (Lay, students, LMs); Malate is an important base for training budding Columban missionaries; it is a good support for the newly ordained; cross-cultural awareness is very present in the community. Great Joy!
Formation	<p>Retreat led by Jovito Dales at Novaliches; Aug 8 – practical matters discussed to the new students 12 students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 from the Phils 1 from Fiji 2 from Keribati 3 from Korea 2 from Myanmar <p>1 Korean for one semester – language studies</p> <p>Pastoral work: For 2 years this was postponed due to pandemic. The present pastoral involvement of the students are expanding. These are the following placements</p> <p>3 students – BEC at Acacia Street, Brgy. Mariana</p> <p>Integrity of Creation 3 students – gardening work with women whose partners fell victims to the war on drugs 3 students – Pedro Calungsod ministry</p> <p>3 Students – in Parola. They will also engage in IRD ministry. The IRD ministry that used to be in Quiapo was stopped because of Duterte’s drug war policy. Now we are only resuming this.</p> <p>2nd Thursday – community pastoral reflection</p> <p>2nd Tuesday – students led JPIC mass; carefully thought-out liturgies;</p> <p>Attended the Walk for Creation at the Christ the King Seminary at E. Rod</p>

	<p>This semester beginning 30 min, each student is encouraged to design their prayer. Imaginative liturgy leading to understanding of different ways of praying;</p> <p>Students continue their mission appeal involvement as their LST schedule would allow them; on-going collaboration with the mission promotion team (Rolly and Evelyn)</p> <p>Naio and Francis, became permanent members of the Society and were ordained deacon.</p> <p>Kyaw Zaw has left the formation and has been back in Myanmar Francis is also back in Myanmar Naio has left for Fiji on Sept 18</p> <p>Thankful for the presence of Eamon Sheridan and Brian Vale during the deaconate celebration</p> <p>Review of Formation is being conducted at the moment Interviewing present and former students John Boles, Jinwook and Sr. Elvia is the team doing the review Finbar has arranged schedules with certain personalities to be interviewed as part of the review of the Philippine International Formation – does it serve the students and the Columban Mission</p> <p>The team will arrive on the 8th Oct – Jinwook and John Boles</p>
CLM	<p>Arlenne is back in the region; had her end of term review last week 5 CLM – annual meeting from Aug 15-18, at Patag House, CDO; reflection facilitated by Jovito; ministry Phil Region will host the IM meeting from January 29-Feb 9; around 25 CLM—Courageous conversations Sunny received the rotation request to take leadership role in Korea; accepted; beginning of her term in Korea is still under dialogue between CLT and Korea Region</p>
Parishes	<p>Liloan & Don Vic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the module translated in Cebuano, it helped the parishioners in understanding and putting into action the message of Laudato Si - The parish has been active in planting fruit trees and native trees. - Mass translated and being celebrated in Subaanen has greatly helped <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least densely populated municipality of the province • Mission station with the priest began living their in 2002 • Isolated place; serviced by the Diocese of Pagadian • 12 Barangays—3 brgys still do not have chapels: Duminagat, Liberon, Gandawan • Napangan chapel was recently used as an emergency evacuation during the recent encounter between NPA and the Philippine

	<p>Army: feared to be a “drama” because of the Governor’s plan to put another tourist destination;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subaanens who are in the age-range of 20s-30s have journeyed to Ozamis, Pagadian, Cebu, Manila—Novaliches • 77 Baptism – largest in record • Tourism is the main problem now for the Subaanens of Don Victoriano (disturbance) • Road to Lake Duminagat – center of the mountain range • Mt. Malindang is the head of 15 rivers within the mountain range • FMM Sisters invited Brendan to give a talk on Season of Creation—they are leaving on June 15 • Coordinating with the Philippine Translators: facilitated bible translations for Subaanen; • Due to health issues, Brendan is preparing to leave Don Victoriano mission station; • Students who have graduated and managed to get master’s degree. Applied to DepEd • Thankful to Dr. Yap: • Visit from: Fr. Robert, a former student; Sr. Mina, SSC; Franciscan sisters; Metrobank Ozamis and Dipolog; Social Action of the Archdiocese of Ozamiz; <p>Barra: (Jovito Dales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the program and projects in the parish • Payment for the land – for the church – they will be able to pay as long as the people keep donating • Laity who generously give their time are impressive; with different ministries, especially the deaf ministry initiated by CLM Lanieta Tamatawale with the well-trained prodigies for the ministry • Parish-based programs are being strengthened • Preparing for the Parish General Assembly • Series of meetings have been going on in the parish shows the dedication of the lay leaders in the parish; • Jovito has been active with celebrating masses, visitations, sick calls, etc.; inspired the assisting priest • Youth movements such the Rights of Nature have been active in the parish
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 39 is already out—Columban newsletter • Comments are welcome • Next issue is scheduled for January 2024 • Assistant Editor has been open for new applicants • Enhanced website is coming on fast amidst the mishaps in the past • Domain website was purchased in 2017 by US but not given access;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amazon blocked our access delaying the migration of files and other materials • Encouraged to write articles for posting on our social media accounts and website • John and Mavic, helped the Society Annual Report 2022 • Mavic is on-site
Mission Promotion	<p>Annual Summary Report of Mission Promotion Activities in Mindanao 2022-2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Appeals on Parishes – 10 • Mission Partners Recollection – 5 Different areas • Visitation of some mission partners • Visitation of schools and establishments for mite boxes and alkansya, newsletters distribution and pick up • Distribution of newsletters to individual mission partners <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanied the FMA Students mission trip • The FMA facilitated 3 mission partners recollection <p>Vocation Promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recollections – 6 • Family visitation of Ruel Bayabos before and after the final interview • 16 aspirants at the moment (most are college students) <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of the Spiritual Year students Exposure in Mindanao (March 11-18, 2023) <p>VISAYAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alkansya and Mite Boxes have been installed in different areas • Mission Appeal in Negros and Cebu • Mission Partners and Recollections: Isabela Parishioners and Binalbagan and Kabankalan Parishioners • Re-launching of Mission Partners in Negros Occidental <p>LUZON: (Year 2022 and Jan to August 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Appeals (Manila-6; Pasig- • Regular Sending prayer messages • MP Launching in Malate—now we have regular encounter with them here in Singalong • Facilitated Recollections in schools • Encounter with the scholars of Fr. Jim Sheehy in Labrador, Pangasinan—promising encounter • 710 Alkansyas to different schools in Luzon area; • Tie up with BCBP Alabang chapter to support in-kind donation items for the prison ministry and the poor area in Malate

	<p>Liloan Sub-Parish annually and regularly give their donation for the mission and formation</p> <p>Rommel (Accompaniment): working in Payatas, preparing Youth in finding jobs at the moment</p> <p>In need for a vocation promoter in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao</p> <p>September to December we have 10 confirmed parishes who accepted us for mission appeal here Luzon area.</p>
JPIC	<p>Negros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Batang House - Youth ministry - Starting to recover from the effects of the pandemic - Future of Batang - Concluded an MOU – official recognition of the 57 hectares reforestation area now declared a protected area. - John Din is in the Board of the Negros 9 Foundation - Programs: weavers, organic farm/market, - Invitation to explore the mission possibilities in Negros - Membership in an NGO; sits at the city council which reviews programs to be funded; - ‘no idea of the ‘bottom-up’ mindset’ - Using his voice to raise the essential issues - Season of creation in Kabankalan is dead - 47 years of lease left in the property - Prob: we do not have a legal phase; something to be worked out - In good form, good condition—it would be a shame not to explore possibilities there
IRD	<p>Pilgrimage of Peace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Went smoothly’ - Organized the friends of Popong; featuring his life who shared his encounters and stories - Gathered the friends in Claveria which provided healing to some of them - Found the motorbike of Popong - Nat and Amina introduced the Maranao flare and - Venus Guibone introduced friendship
FMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grateful to be at his stage of his formation - Enjoying the experience - Inspired by the encounters brought by the mission trips - Grateful being accommodated by the parish of Barra accompanying them in their BECs - Accompanying and appreciating the space given at this time; learning more from the community; brought me out of my comfort zone - Thankful for the face-to-face opportunity of the regional assembly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immersed into the mission on the grassroots; gave me the real-experience of what mission is - Touching the mission on the ground gave inspiration; learning how the Spirit is working - The mission trip gave opportunity to meet the Columbans on the ground - Pilgrimage of Peace—the message of friendship to allow the spirit of peace to thrive; listening to stories shared by friends of Popong; - We are harvesting the fruits of the Columban missionaries that toiled the ground before us - Tribute to the Pillars of Interreligious Dialogue (which includes Popong, Des Hartford, Chito are being remembered) – Sept 23 - IFPHS will celebrate the International Day of Peace at Payag Kalinaw, Patag CdO - IFPHS and RMCDP circles - Peace at all cost!
Finance	-
Retirement of Filipinos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erl, Jovito, Andrei and Jason-team - Sent to Filipino Columbans <p>Proposed retirement Columban house – N/A (10); (2) – if retirement is in Mindanao, they will retire in their own hometown</p> <p>Way forward: proposed Columban house retirement (Patag House and Singalong House-Annex)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearer policies
Director's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry reports shortened the director's report; reports will be gathered and distributed to everyone - Easing restrictions allowed us to regain our freedom; eased the social interaction; - We remain vigilant of the symptoms; thankful to the vaccination that lessen the impact of the virus when contracted; restrictions/protocol were observed to safeguard us - Staff were provided security measures and they appreciated this; - With the easing of the restrictions, we are now going into the new normal; adapting to the hybrid meetings and encounters; tehc has played an integral role of the many aspects of what we do now - 24 ordained members; No SY this year; 1 Filipino Seminarian joins this year; 2 Students temporary membership; 2 deaconate in Sept 9—a great blessing; and have returned to their mission units; Teakare, appointed in Barra; not in full time language studies; Kwangkyu back in Korea taking up CPE; Arlenne is back to Manila-still in sabbatical until end of this month; - Upcoming: - Looking for a secretary to the regional director - Staff: 19 staff; Co-workers--: JPIC, CLM, Mission Promotion, Bursar; - Intercultural Living—working well

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocations Mass – become a regular with the invite to the Columban sisters - Set up intercultural committees in both Luzon and Mindanao Areas; to ensure interculturality in the mission areas; <p>Properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Singalong House, CLM House, Formation House - Property ownership to be transferred to the Society - This work has began during the term of Paul Glynn <p>Singalong House:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Underused - 3 priests and 2 CLM - residents - Mission Partners are hosted here - Rooms at the 3rd floor is proposed to be rented out to priests who are here in Luzon for studies - Infirmary is working well <p>Patag House:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well-used by the ordained, CLM, and ministries - Payag Kalinaw is being used by the Interfaith Forum <p>Plan of Action in 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lot of the elements in the PoA were not materialized because of the pandemic <p>GA Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications coming from the General Council - Shared to everyone in the Region - Once receive the communication, please signify that you have received it <p>Malate Parish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Still in dialogue - New ministries are coming up - Jude, Andrei and Erl are there to minister

Prepared by:

John Din
Chairperson, Regional Assembly 2023
December 18, 2023