



Missionary Society of St Columban

聖高隆龐傳教會

General Council

In Gratitude and Hope: Honouring the Legacy of Pope Francis

We, the Columban Missionaries, join our voices with people around the world in expressing our deep gratitude for Pope Francis and the Gospel witness he both preached and lived. From the moment he appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica and humbly asked the world to pray for him, he showed us a way of being, serving, and listening that brought him into intimate and tender relationship with each person—and with the Earth itself—especially with those who suffered most.

In many ways, the Columbans found in Pope Francis' vision for the Church and the world a profound affirmation of our way of being on mission. His teachings in *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'*, and *Fratelli Tutti* have stood as triune pillars for mission that have resonated with, guided and inspired the Columbans over the past thirteen years. The Columbans have lived through two General Assemblies under his pontificate, and in each, we drew strength from his leadership and pastoral care.

Under Pope Francis' pontificate, the Columbans have been activated in mission: from being a "field hospital" for our vulnerable sisters and brothers, to bringing *Laudato Si'* to life, and fostering social friendships with people of other faiths, spiritualities, and worldviews. The Columbans accepted both God's call and Pope Francis' invitation to synodal transformation as our way of being.

While we grieve the loss of this great prophet, we rejoice in his enduring legacy of mercy, nonviolence, reconciliation, dialogue, and justice for all people and for the Earth. We feel an even greater urgency to continue our missionary work and witness in his spirit. We take heart in the faith that any earthly suffering Pope Francis may have endured in his lifetime is now fully reconciled in Christ. We pray for the Church as she discerns the way forward in faithfulness to the Holy Spirit.

Hong Kong
23 April 2025

Rev. Andrei O. Paz, SSC
Superior General