



Martyrs of the Missionary Society of St. Columban



**Missionary Society of St. Columban
Memorial Garden**



Martyrs of the Missionary Society of St. Columban

As Columban Missionaries approach the centennial of our founding in 2018, we look back on our history in order to ponder the mystery of God's plan and guidance along the way. In reflecting on our past, we recognize once more God's providence and care not only in our own lives, but also in the lives of the people we have encountered in various mission lands.

Throughout our history, Columban missionaries have, however, experienced our share of suffering and heartache. Many have witnessed the despair that results from ignorance and indifference, the ravages of hunger and disease, and the desolation caused by conflict and war. Living in their midst, Columban missionaries have felt called to join the local people in carrying such heavy crosses.

The twenty-four missionaries whose memory we honor in the Columban Martyrs' Memorial Garden took up their crosses and followed Christ. Like their Master, they wrestled with temptation and weakness throughout their lives, and earnestly prayed that they might avoid the bitter cup of suffering. However, their faith in God's unfailing kindness, as well as their love for the people entrusted to their care, led them to sacrifice everything for the sake of the Gospel.

The Columban Martyrs Memorial Garden is intended to be a sacred place in which we recall their missionary journeys; give thanks for their lives of dedicated service; and praise God for the example they have left us of unconditional love, manifested in the laying down of their lives for others. In the midst of our broken and bruised world, may their prayers be a source of strength for all who strive to live as faithful witnesses to the victory of the risen Christ.



**Monignor
Patrick T. Brennan**

FR. PATRICK BRENNAN was born in Chicago in 1901. He joined the Columbans in 1936 and went to Korea in 1937. He was taken into custody along with Fr. Tom Cusack and Fr. Jack O'Brien by North Korean troops on July 24, 1950, at Mokpo. They were taken to Taejon prison and are presumed to have perished in the general massacre of prisoners there on the night of September 24, 1950. His body was never found.



Fr. Francis J. Canavan

FR. FRANCIS CANAVAN was born near Headford, Co. Galway, in 1915. He went to Korea in 1949. When the North Korean Army invaded in 1950, Fr. Frank, along with Bishop Thomas Quinlan and Fr. Phil Crosbie, was taken into custody and compelled to take part in the notorious "Death March" to the far north of Korea. He died in a prison camp there. The immediate cause of his death was pneumonia. Fr. Frank is buried where he died.



Fr. Anthony P. Collier

FR. ANTHONY COLLIER was born at Clogherhead, Co. Louth, in 1913. He came to Dalgan in 1931 and was ordained a priest there in 1938. When North Korean forces crossed the 38th Parallel, the dividing line between North and South Korea, on June 25, 1950, Fr. Tony was in charge of a Columban parish in Chunchon. He was taken into custody, briefly interrogated, and then shot dead. Fr. Tony is buried in the cathedral grounds, Chunchon, Korea.



Fr. Martin Dempsey

FR. MARTIN R. DEMPSEY was born at Donnybrook, Dublin, in 1934. He was ordained a priest in 1961 and assigned to the Philippines. Martin was shot and killed by two Muslim students at the Catholic High School in Balabagan, where he was the director. Fr. Martin had verbally corrected one of them for an infringement of the rules earlier in the day. Fr. Martin is buried at Balabagan.



Fr. Thomas Cusack

FR. THOMAS CUSACK was born at Ballycotton, Co. Clare, in 1910. In 1949, he was appointed Vice-Director of the Region of Korea. He was stationed in Mokpo when the North Korean army overran most of South Korea, including Mokpo. He was taken into custody along with Fr. Pat Brennan and Fr. Jack O'Brien. All three are presumed to have perished in the general massacre of prisoners at Taejon on the night of September 24, 1950. Their bodies were never found.



Fr. James J. Donohue

FR. JAMES DONOHUE was born in Bofeenaun, Ballina, Co. Mayo, in 1916. He was ordained a priest at Dalgan Park in 1941. When World War II ended, he was assigned to China where he remained until 1950 when the Communist take-over resulted in the expulsion of all missionaries. He was then assigned to Japan where he was to spend the next 33 years, until an assault by a mentally deranged man cost him his life. Fr. Jim is buried at Fuchu, near Tokyo.



Fr. Francis V. Douglas

FR. FRANCIS DOUGLAS was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1910. He went to the Philippines in 1938. In June 1943, he was taken for questioning by Japanese military police from his parish in Pililla to Paete, a nearby town, where he was tortured. He was left lying in the church in Paete where a Filipino priest attended him. It is believed that he died, as a result of torture, in Longos, Laguna, presumably on July 27, 1943. His body was never found.



Fr. Thomas S. Flynn

FR. THOMAS FLYNN was born at Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare, in 1908. In 1935, he was ordained priest for the archdiocese of Dublin. He joined the Columbans in 1948 and was appointed to the Philippines. He ministered in Labrador, near a communist guerrilla stronghold. His rectory was raided, and Fr. Tom was taken away and murdered on the night of October 30, 1950. In 2003, his remains were exhumed and interred in the family plot at Ballysheen, Co Clare.



Fr. Peter Fallon

FR. PETER FALLON was born at Dunmore, Co. Galway, in 1895. In 1923, he went to China, but requested to leave there in 1929, and went to work in the diocese of Birmingham in England. Three years later, he was assigned to the Philippines. He was killed, presumably by Japanese troops, on February 10, 1945, along with Frs. Henaghan, Monaghan, and Kelly. Their bodies were never found.



Fr. M. Rufus Halley

FR. MICHAEL (RUFUS) HALLEY came from Killotteran, Waterford, where he was born in 1944. He was appointed to the Philippines and, with the exception of two years in Britain (1991-93), he spent his mission life working to bringing peace to a troubled Christian-Muslim community in Mindanao in the southern Philippines. When returning from a meeting with Muslims, his life was violently ended by a Muslim on August 28, 2001. Fr. Rufus is buried at Cagayan de Oro.



Fr. John Henaghan

FR. JOHN HENAGHAN was born at Louisburg, Co. Mayo, in 1881. He joined the Columbans at its foundation in October of 1916. In 1931, he went to the Philippines when he was 49 years of age. He was killed in February 1945 during the U.S.–Japanese battle for Manila. Japanese Navy personnel surrounded Malate church and took every male they found there, including Frs. Kelly, Fallon, and Monaghan. The four were never seen alive again.



Fr. John D. Lalor

FR. JOHN LALOR was born in Cork city in 1897. He was assigned to China in 1925. After a period in captivity by Chinese bandits in 1928, he was assigned to the Philippines in 1930. Fr. John was attached to Malate parish and, during the battle for Manila (1945), worked under an assumed name, and dressed as a doctor in Malate school (which had been converted into a hospital). He was killed along with many helpers when a shell exploded in their air-raid shelter. Fr. John is buried in Manila.



Fr. Patrick Kelly

FR. PATRICK KELLY was born at Tullamore, Co. Offaly, in 1891. He served as a curate in the parish of Dunboyne until 1921 when he joined the Columbans. He was parish priest in Malate, Manila, when, in February 1945 he was taken away by Japanese Navy personnel along with Frs. Henaghan, Monaghan and Fallon. The four were never seen alive again. The exact date of his death and place of burial are uncertain.



Fr. Timothy P. Leonard

FR. TIMOTHY LEONARD was born at Ballysimon, Co. Limerick, in 1893. He was a member of the first band of Columbans to go to China in 1920. In 1928, he was a member of the first group to go to Nancheng. While celebrating Mass he was taken away by Chinese bandits and killed shortly afterwards. His head was partially severed from his body. Fr. Tim is buried at San Gang, near Nanfeng, China.



Fr. Patrick McMahon

FR. PATRICK McMAHON was born at Dundalk, Co. Louth, in 1916. He was ordained a priest in 1940 and joined the British Army as a chaplain. During a fierce battle in Normandy following the invasion of France by the Allies, Fr. Paddy went out under fire in an ambulance to rescue a Canadian soldier. On the return journey, a shell hit the ambulance and all were killed. Fr. Paddy is buried in the churchyard at Ussy, Normandy, France.



Fr. Joseph P. Monaghan

FR. JOSEPH MONAGHAN was born at Banbridge, Co. Down, in 1907. He went to the Philippines in 1932. Fr. Joe was engaged in humanitarian work for American civilian internees and prisoners of war interned in the area. Japanese Navy personnel surrounded Malate church and took every male they found there, including four priests – Frs. John Henaghan, Pat Kelly, Peter Fallon, and Joe. The four were never seen alive again. Their bodies were never recovered. It is presumed that he died in February 1945.



Fr. James P. Maginn

FR. JAMES MAGINN was born at Butte, Montana, in 1911. He went to Korea in 1936. He was pastor in Samchok when North Korean Communist forces invaded the territory in 1950. For a few months there was no news of his whereabouts until his body was located about two miles from his presbytery, having been buried by a Korean Christian. His remains were re-interred alongside the graves of Frs. Tony Collier and Paddy Reilly at Chunchon Cathedral.



Fr. Thomas J. Murphy

FR. THOMAS MURPHY was born at Naas, Co. Kildare, in 1906. He was ordained a priest in 1935. Assigned to Burma, he was working in the Bhamo area when he was interned by the Japanese in a Mandalay leprosarium with fellow Columbans during WWII. He was fatally injured by a shell explosion while saying Mass on the morning of March 16, 1945. Fr. Tom is buried at the General Cemetery, Mandalay.



Fr. John O'Brien

FR. JOHN O'BRIEN was born at Donamon, Co. Roscommon, in 1918. He served as a chaplain to the British Army until 1948 when he went to Korea. Fr. Jack stayed on in Mokpo with Frs. Pat Brennan and Tom Cusack when the North Korean Army captured the town. The three were taken to Taejon and imprisoned there. They are presumed to have died in the general massacre of prisoners of war and civilians on September 24, 1950. Fr. Jack's remains were never located.



Fr. Patrick J. Reilly

FR. PATRICK REILLY was born at Drumraney, Co. Westmeath, in 1915. In 1947, he went to Korea. In 1950, he went to hide in a parishioner's house when the North Koreans took Mukho. Some weeks later Fr. Paddy was discovered and taken to the police station in Mukho. The exact details of his death are unknown; his body was found on a mountain path by an old man gathering wood. Fr. Paddy is buried in the cathedral grounds, Chunchon.



Fr. Vincent J. Power

FR. VINCENT J. POWER was born in 1931 at Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. He ministered in Japan in from 1956 to 1984. From 1984 until 1989 he was engaged in seminarian formation in Ireland. In 1990, he went to Jamaica and was pastor of Falmouth when he was hacked to death outside his church in Montego Bay. His keys had been taken and his house ransacked. Fr. Vinny is buried at a plot beside his church in Falmouth, Jamaica.



Sr. Joan Sawyer

SR. JOAN SAWYER joined the Columban Sisters in September 1949 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. She became a naturalized U.S. citizen and moved to her new assignment in Peru in December 1977. On December 13, 1983, ten armed prisoners at Lurigancho Prison took Sr. Sawyer, along with several other women, as hostages. The prisoners surrendered after a brief fight, but Sr. Sawyer was killed in the crossfire. She is buried in Peru.



Fr. Cornelius Tierney

FR. CORNELIUS TIERNEY was born in Clones, Co. Monaghan, in 1872. In 1918, he joined the Columbans and was appointed bursar and Spiritual Director at Dalgan Park until he went to China with the first batch of Columbans in 1920. He died from the hardship of captivity on February 28, 1923, while being held as a prisoner of Communist bandits. Fr. Tierney's remains were exhumed from where his captors buried him and reburied at Nancheng.



Columban Martyrs Memorial Garden

Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.

~ PHILIPPIANS 2:3

The breathtaking Columban Martyrs memorial garden on the grounds of St. Columbans in Bellevue, Nebraska, memorializes the legacy of twenty-four Columban missionaries who gave their lives for our faith. They believed in something more than self and gave their lives in the same fashion. This special and quiet place of reflection honors their sacrifice. The design of the garden speaks to the fullness of resurrection and life everlasting. It also signifies the unity that you have shared with us in our common missionary calling throughout the years.

We joyfully offer you the opportunity to be a part of this lasting place by memorializing or honoring a loved one or special person with the engraving of a paving brick. For a gift of \$150, you can honor or memorialize someone and by doing so, become a part of this beautiful place that honors so much about our faith and calling.

To place an order for your engraved brick, please contact us at 877/299-1920, visit us online at www.columban.org to fill out an online order form, or use the order form on the back page.

For more information, please contact us at 1-877-299-1920 or email us at mission@columban.org. We are forever grateful for the part that you play in our shared missionary journey and we gratefully remember you in our Masses and prayers.



Fr. John Walsh

FR. JOHN WALSH was born at Bandon, Co. Cork, in 1921. He went to Burma in 1952. Fr. John was killed when returning to his parish after a visit to the Columban Center House in Myitkyina. His body was found in a shallow grave a short distance from an army post. There was a bullet through the back of his head, and his rosary beads were in his hand. Fr. John is buried at Myitkyina, Burma.

Columban Martyrs Memorial Garden Bricks

Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.

~ PHILIPPIANS 2:3

Has a special person touched your life? Honor or remember your loved ones with a special gift of a brick in the Columban Martyrs Memorial Garden. The bricks are available for \$150.00 each and are the path to the stunning centerpiece of this garden memorializing the Columban missionary martyrs.

(Please print)

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Please select:

In Honor of

In Memory of

Line 1 (limit 16 characters per line)

Line 2 (limit 16 characters per line)

VISA Master Card Discover American Express

Name on credit card: _____

Acct.# _____

Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Please return the completed form to the address below.



Missionary Society of St. Columban
P.O. Box 10
St. Columbans, NE 68056
877/299-1920 (toll free)
mission@columban.org
www.columban.org