Korean Parish 50th Anniversary
Silverwater
Patrick McInerney
8 November 2026

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Congratulations on the 50th anniversary of the Korean parish. It is a significant milestone in your journey as a faith-filled Korean Catholic community.

My name is Patrick McInerney. I am a Columban Missionary Priest, the Director of the Columbans in the Region of Oceania. I am delighted to celebrate this happy occasion with you.

The Columbans have long connections with the Korean community. We first went to Korea in 1933. We were welcomed there and have served the Korean people in war and peace for nearly 100 years. Thank you for the welcome and hospitality that you have shown to the Columbans over the years. Thank you for sharing with us your language and culture. Thank you for receiving and bringing out in us our missionary service.

Father Noel Connolly, one of the Columbans who served in Korea, returned to Sydney in 1976. With the language skills and cultural understanding he had acquired there, he began providing Mass and pastoral care to the newly arriving Korean migrants. This was the beginning of the Korean Catholic community in Sydney.

The community grew and needed its own place of gathering for worship, so the parish was established. Columban **Father Frank Ferrie** served the growing parish community.

He was followed by Columban **Father Peter Kelly**.

The role of the missionary is to sow the seeds and move on. Accordingly, the parish was handed over to priests from dioceses in Korea.

Columban **Father Jim Duggan**, from his retirement in Sydney, continued to assist. I remember and am grateful for the care and devoted service that members of the Korean community provided to him in his later years.

It is appropriate on this 50th anniversary to acknowledge another contribution, this time not of the Columbans to the Koreans, but of the Koreans to the Columbans.

Traditionally, Columbans came from Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, and the United States. After Vatican II internationalised the Church, in the 1980s Columbans began recruiting from other countries. On 23 November 1993, the Feast of St Columban, 60 years after the first Columbans arrived in Korea, the first Korean Columban was ordained in Seoul, **Father Dominic Kim Jong Geun**. Another twenty Koreans have

followed him, and others are currently in formation in Manila. Korean lay people have joined us as Lay Missionaries, and diocesan priests as Priest Associates.

Korean Columbans have served in Chile, Fiji, Hong Kong, Japan, Myanmar, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Taiwan, and the United States. Nearly half of the Columbans in Korea are Korean. They have been pastors, vocation directors, formators, and leaders at local and international levels. My Vice-Director is **Fr Carlo Jung**, currently serving in Fiji. **Fr Young-In Kim** is serving on the General Council in Hong Kong.

The seeds that the pioneer Columban missionaries sowed in Korea and here in Sydney have borne much fruit. In return, the Korean Catholic communities have blessed the Columbans abundantly, for which I express my profound and sincere thanks.

The 50th anniversary of your parish is a great blessing. May you in turn be a blessing for others, in the Korean community here in Sydney, in the wider Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Sydney, in the wider society, and in the world.

Thank you!