



**COLUMBAN**  
INTERNATIONAL

*Youth*

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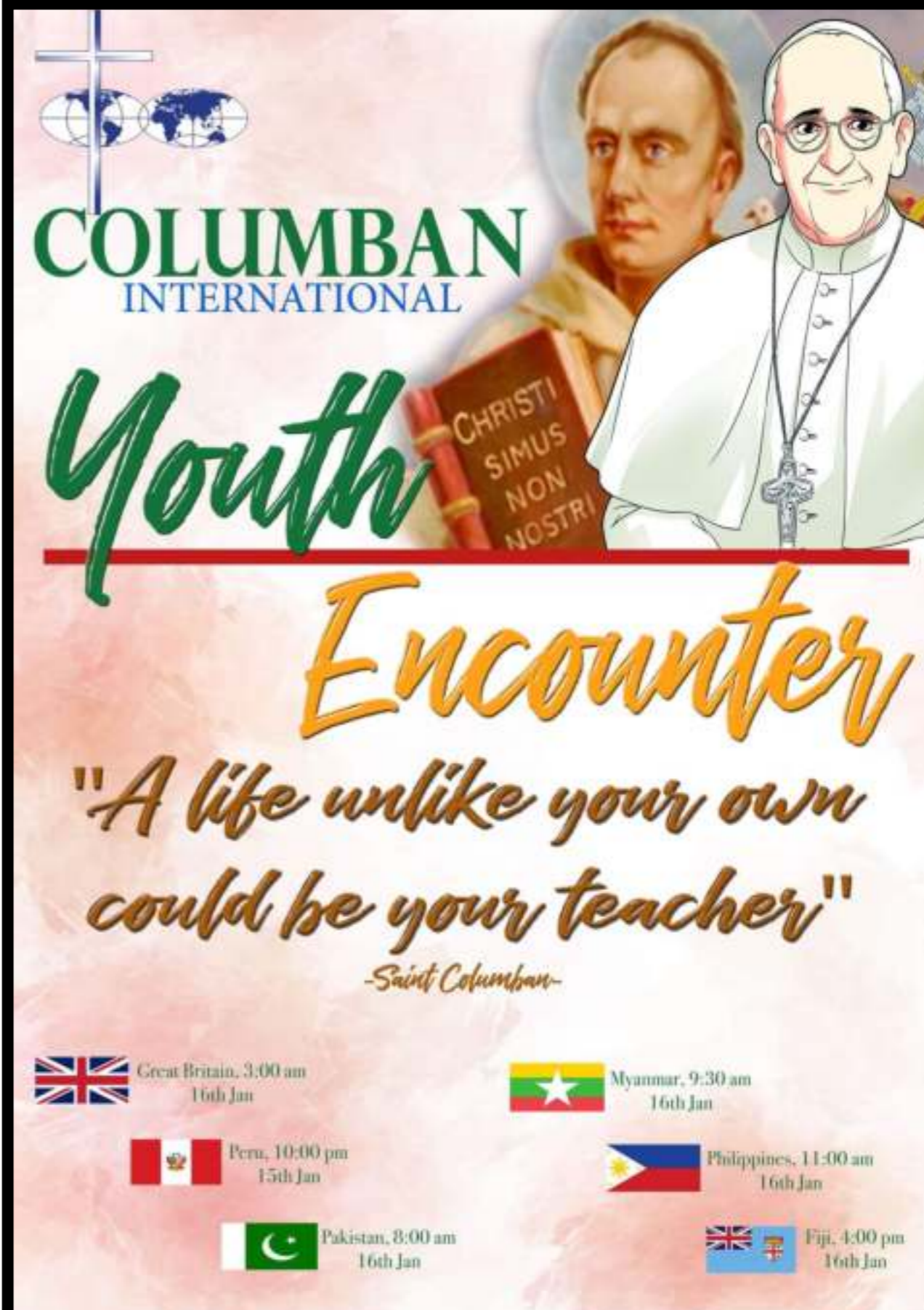
*Encounter*

*"A life unlike your own  
could be your teacher"*

*-Saint Columban-*

# Participants

- Britain
- Fiji
- Myanmar
- Pakistan
- Peru
- Philippines



The poster features the Columban International logo at the top left, which includes a cross and two globes. To the right is a portrait of Saint Columban, a man with a halo, and a cartoon illustration of a priest in white vestments holding a book. The book has the Latin text "CHRISTI SIMUS NON NOSTRI" on its cover. The word "Youth" is written in a large, green, cursive font, and "Encounter" is written in a large, orange, cursive font below it. A red horizontal line separates the two words. Below the title is a quote in brown cursive: "A life unlike your own could be your teacher". At the bottom, there are six entries, each with a national flag, the country name, and the time and date of the encounter.







**COLUMBAN INTERNATIONAL**

*Youth*

*Encounter*

*"A life unlike your own could be your teacher"*

*-Saint Columban-*

	Great Britain, 3:00 am 16th Jan		Myanmar, 9:30 am 16th Jan
	Peru, 10:00 pm 15th Jan		Philippines, 11:00 am 16th Jan
	Pakistan, 8:00 am 16th Jan		Fiji, 4:00 pm 16th Jan

# CIYE 2021 Report

## **PARTICIPANTS**

### **Britain**

- 1.Catherine
- 2.Jack
- 3.Julia
- 4.Aisling

### **Fiji**

- 5.Bruce
- 6.Christopher
- 7.Katherine
- 8.Michael

### **Pakistan**

- 9.Charmine Muhktar
- 10.Nancy Younas
- 11.Sharoon Shamoan
- 12.Cynthia Javeed

### **Myanmar**

- 13.Michael Ning Jar Lawn
- 14.Elizabeth Seng Ra
- 15.Ambrose Zau Aung Kham
- 16.Maureen Maran Hka Mai
- 17.Philip Naw Seng
- 18.Columban Zau Htoi Naw

### **Peru**

- 19.Aaron Jesus Herrera Gamarra
- 20.Sandra Huacachi Suazo
- 21.Melina Huacachi Suazo
- 22.Angela Huacachi Suazo
- 23.Diego Andre

### **Philippines**

- 24.Francis
- 25.Evan Dave Perejan

# Brief Report

- To use an online platform to provide a safe space for young people to meet each other and us during this time of the pandemic recognizing the challenges we faced as we continue to minister to young people in our mission areas and the challenges of many young people.
- Different countries and youth will have different challenges and opportunities. But hearing from each other we can learn from each other.
- “Life, for all its confrontations, is the art of encounter.”
- Need to promote a culture of encounter “we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone” (FT 215, 216).
- Presentations by country and sharing session.
- The greatest challenge for the session was the huge time differences.

# Comments/Suggestions from Participants

- Would be interesting to talk more in small groups about social issues affecting us all but in different ways in our different cultures. it would be interesting to go more into depth with other people about social issues that affect us. It would be good to learn about different ways that we deal with them. Maybe next meeting I would like to suggest common issues we face in our country and how the mission work help address these.
- Small groups is super fun as it is good to get to know people. And ample time for group sharing because it's very engaging.
- shorter session next time but with more small group time?
- avoid having a group at 3am (I know it might not be possible)
- The session was a great way to learn about many different cultures and countries!
- Next time it would be nice to have some questions to prepare our presentations that our cultural sharing deeper.

# REFLECTIONS

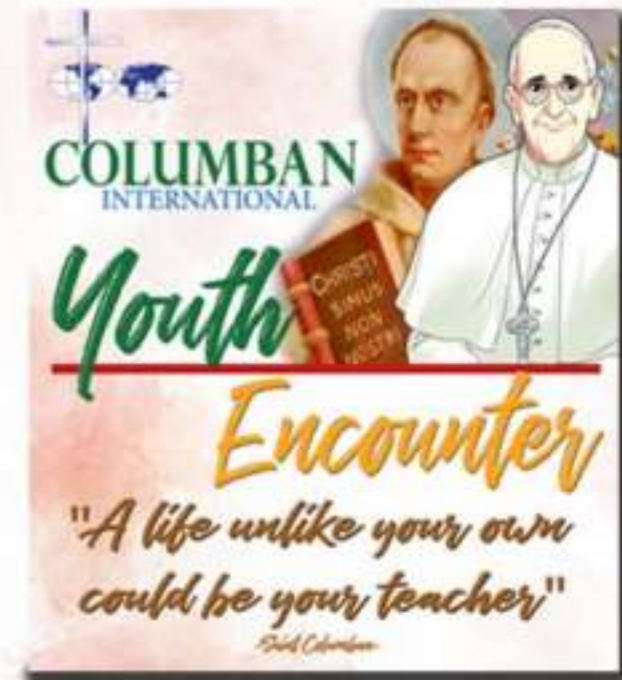
## Participants



The Youth Encounter spearheaded by the Columban Missionaries taught me to be open in embracing the diverse culture of every country. It was a fun yet informative virtual gathering wherein everyone is proud to share their respective cultural background. I was able to also share my thoughts and life experience in regarding this present pandemic during the breakout session. In return, I was also blessed to listen to other youths of other nationalities what they also had learned and realized during these trying times. Everyone was willing to learn and share their faith, culture, and experiences.

It was an amazing conference indeed. I would also like to thank the Columban Missionaries for the invitation to such an engaging youth formation. I hope to see again the faces of the CIYE (Columban International Youth Encounter) participants in the next event we will have.

Mabuhay ka, Columbano!



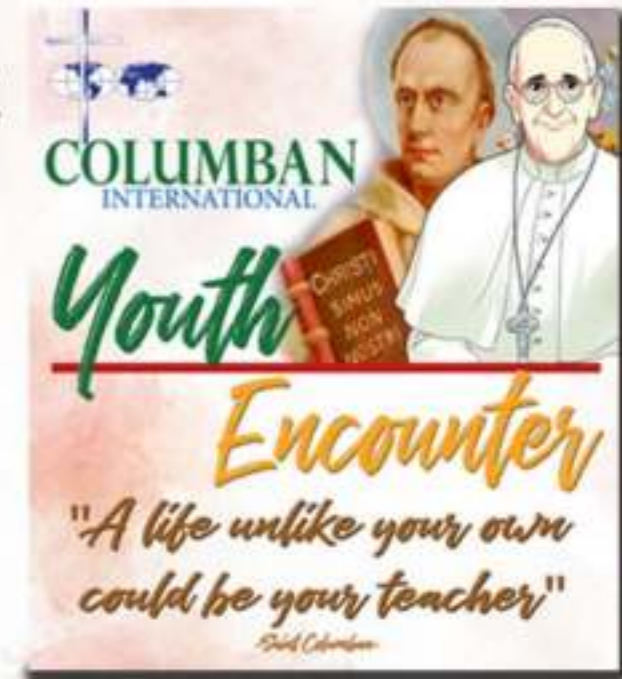
-Evan Dave C. Perejan, Philippines Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



On the 16th January, the Columbans had arranged an online international encounter. It started with a brief introduction of our countries and a bit of insight on what makes our countries unique. It was really good to hear about their unique features like their special dishes, which made a lot of us comment that we were getting a bit hungry.

We were then put into breakout rooms to share something on what we've learnt from the pandemic. It was tough to hear and imagine that most of those participating members have been and still are going through like constant lockdowns and inability to be at work or with family. We in Fiji are so fortunate to not have suffered as much as the rest of the world. While I felt restless for being at home and away from work, I realised that I'd spent so much time away from my family. I was always caught up with work and other activities. I am now appreciative of my time with my parents and brothers; and I will make the most of it every chance I get.

It was an amazing experience--to be a part of something like this gathering. Here's to more opportunities like this! God bless us all.



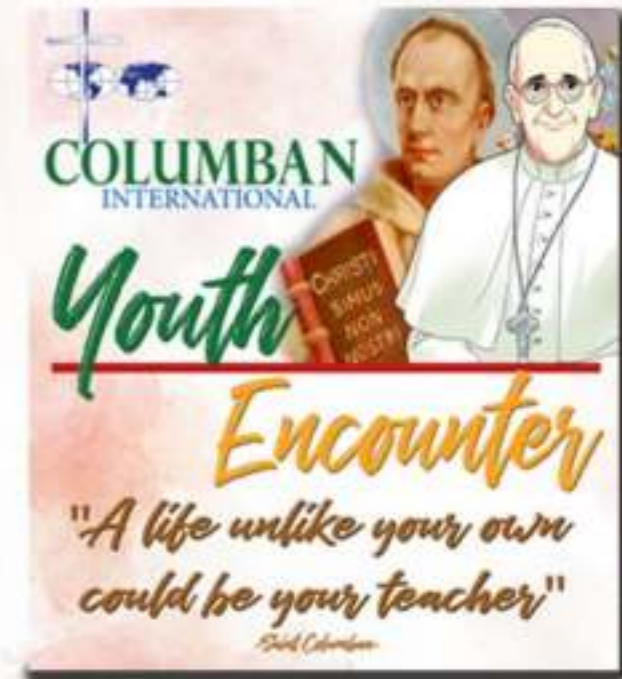
**-Katherine Maria Powell**, Fiji Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



The Youth Encounter facilitated by the Columbans for the youths from six other countries did not only make us realize that we have a lot of things in common--such as our rich culture and traditions--but it also highlighted our unique differences. Our similarities helped us to strengthen our bond and connection as human beings and as children of God.

One of the striking points during the youth encounter was when we were asked to share our personal struggles with the group. During the sharing, we were able to reflect on how COVID-19 pandemic affected our community and ourselves in a personal level. Although we faced different challenges, it did not hinder us to appreciate and find meaning in our struggles. Within my small group, I shared that the greatest lesson I have learned from this trying time is that amidst the pains and sorrows we face every day, I should not forget to be grateful, to give to those who have less in life, and to pray for those who have restless hearts.

I wish for more of this kind of platform where young people like are encouraged to participate in a health conversation.



-Francis Rafil Gascon, Philippines Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021

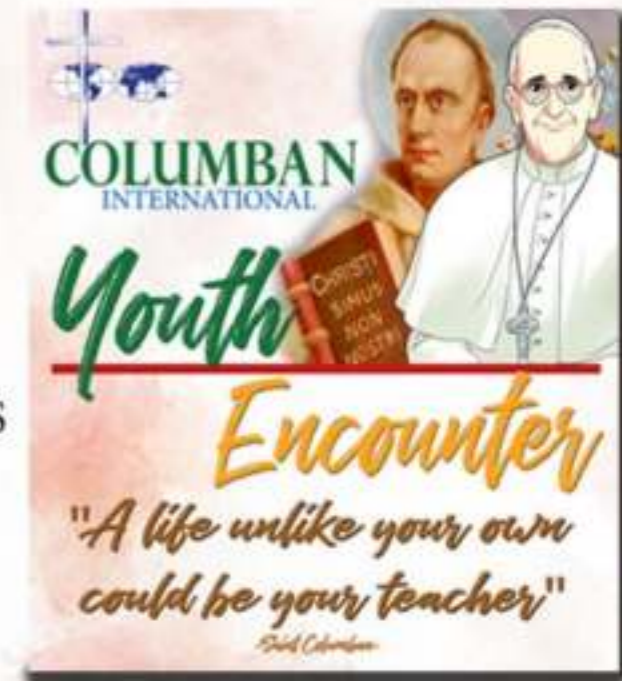




I enjoyed the Columban International Youth Encounter very much. I learned about traditions of other youths from other countries. Before this event, I did not know anything about countries like Fiji and Peru. But now, I know something about these beautiful countries. I feel that this encounter is effective for me; it has been an eye-opener for me. All countries have beautiful places, respectable traditions, and delicious food.

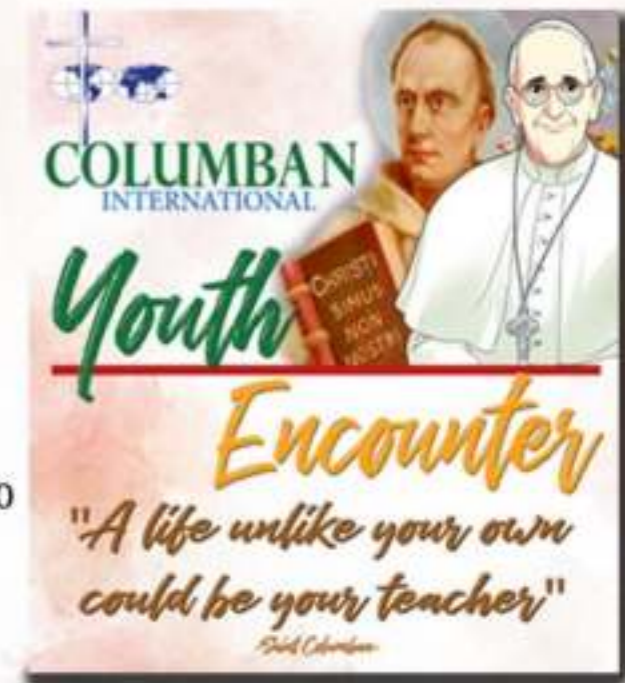
The sharing time was a bit short for me; I felt comfortable in connecting with the youths in my small group. I hope to nurture this friendship we have begun.

Thank you very much!





As a young person, connecting with young people from around the world amidst the pandemic was just a great feeling of excitement, joy, and above all the best experience so far. Curfew being implemented, border closures and restrictions on gatherings did not dampen our spirits and faith in connecting with our Columban brothers and sisters from Peru, Pakistan, Philippines, Myanmar, and the UK via the Zoom platform. Being able to have a chat and see fellow youths from overseas was truly a great experience. Not only did I have a great time 'zooming' but got I also got to learn about their culture, their way of life, even some of their delicacies that made me very hungry, and some aspects of their diverse societies respectively. Thus, empowering our young people during this time of uncertainty is very crucial in getting youths back up on their two feet and combating social issues affecting us.

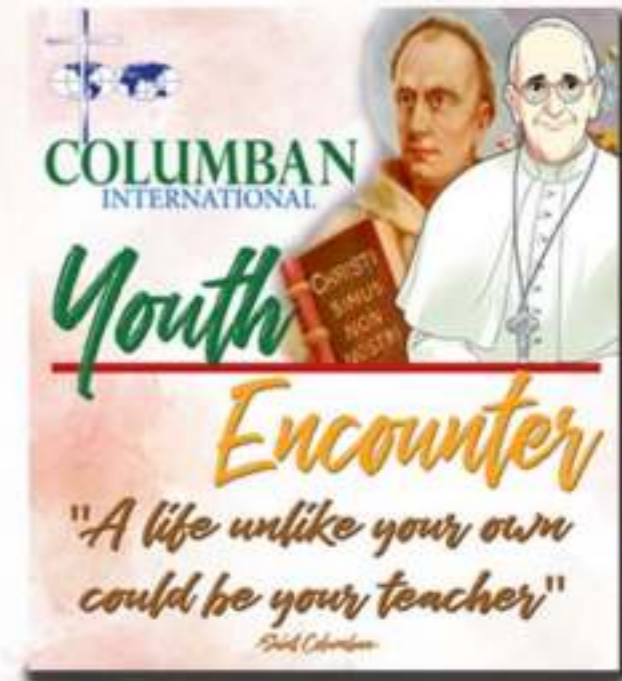




This encounter is such a great thing for me. I learned about countries' nature, traditions, and many other things. This is my first time to join a Zoom meeting as well. What I like about the encounter is that it helped me to meet and speak with youths from other countries. We were able to share many things about our own land.

Overall, I am happy to be able to take part of the Columban International Youth Encounter.

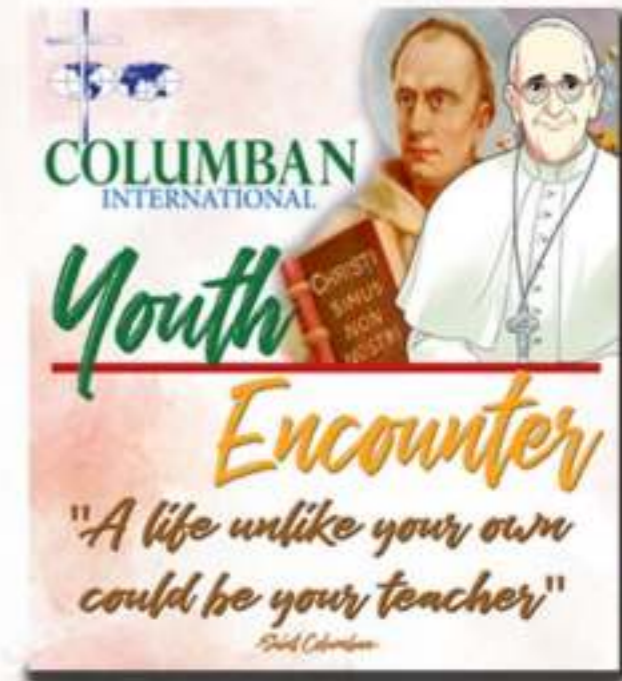
Thank you for inviting me to this online gathering.



-Zau Aung Kham, Myanmar Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021

"Estoy muy interesado por esta reunion. No me imagino que algun dia puedo encontrar otros jóvenes afuera de me país."

(I am so excited for this meeting. I never imagine that one day I have the opportunity to meet other young people outside my country.)



-**Aaron Jesus Herrera Gamarra**, Peru, Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



Today, 16th January 2021, I participated in the launch of the first Columban International Youth Encounter. This was organised by young ordained Columbans, Lay Missionaries, and co-workers. Participants were youths from 6 Columban Regions namely Pakistan, Peru, Myanmar, Philippines, Britain, and Fiji.

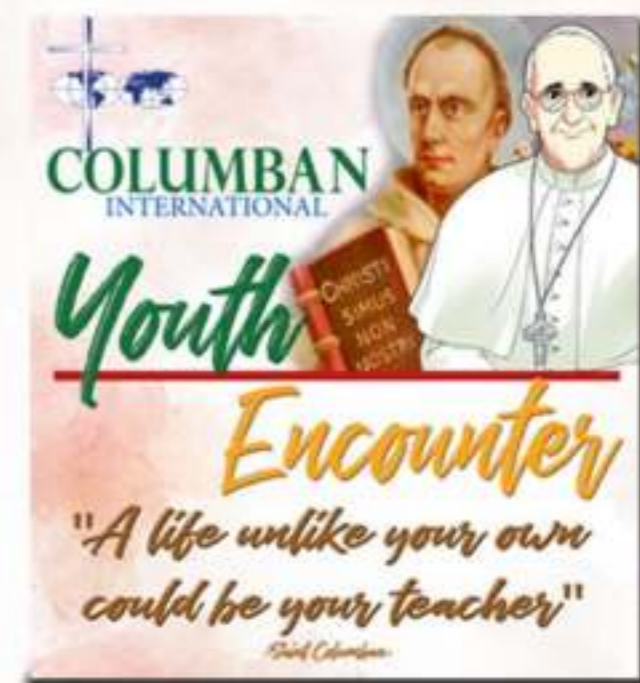
Sharing our culture and learnings as well from their culture was interesting with a few laughs and joikes.

However, hearing their experiences on the pandemic has made us realise how blessed our nation is and to appreciate what we normally take for granted. One of the participant had said that due to the lockdown in their nation, people are not only dying from COVID-19 but are also suffering and dying from hunger.

In another country, the participant said that they still have churches closed, denying them of the community spirit and the reception of the Eucharist.

Truly a reality check for me personally to be more appreciative of our situation and what we have here in Fiji!

Many thanks to the Columbans who organised this wonderful and eye-opening program for us young people.

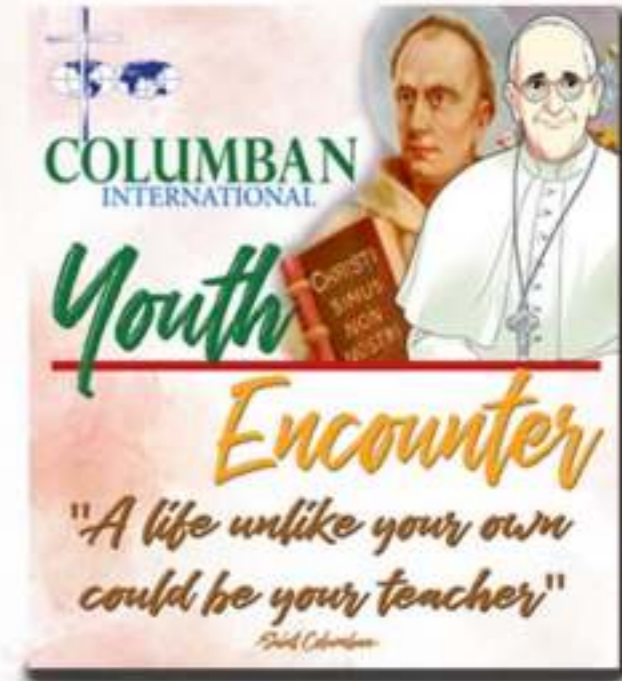


-**Bruce Vute**, Fiji Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



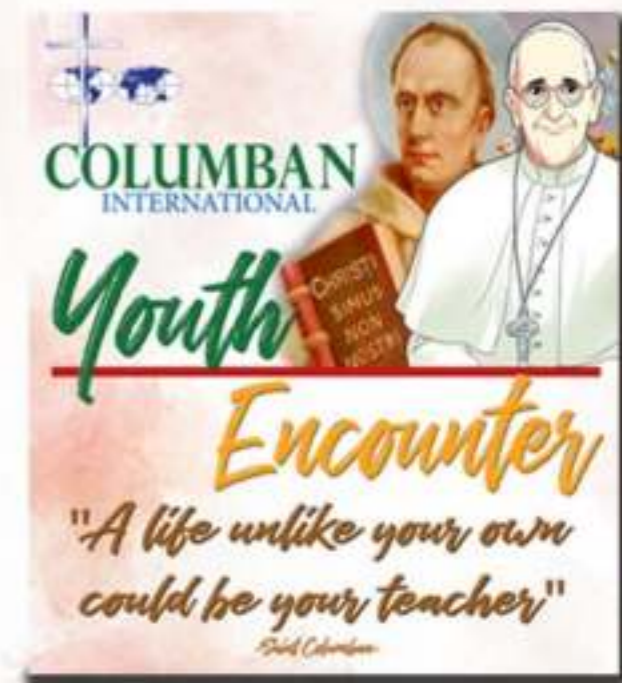
First of all, I want to say that I am very happy to attend this meeting and I also feel glad to meet my fellow youths from other parts of the world. It was my first online meeting and I think it was a great experience for me.

This type of meeting encouraged me to develop my confidence. I had also gained more knowledge about other countries. I think having knowledge about something is very important.



-Nancy Younas, Pakistan Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021

It was great to meet with other young people from across the world. In a time when it's so easy to feel disconnected and void of new experience and encounters, I really enjoyed the chance to feel connected on a global level.



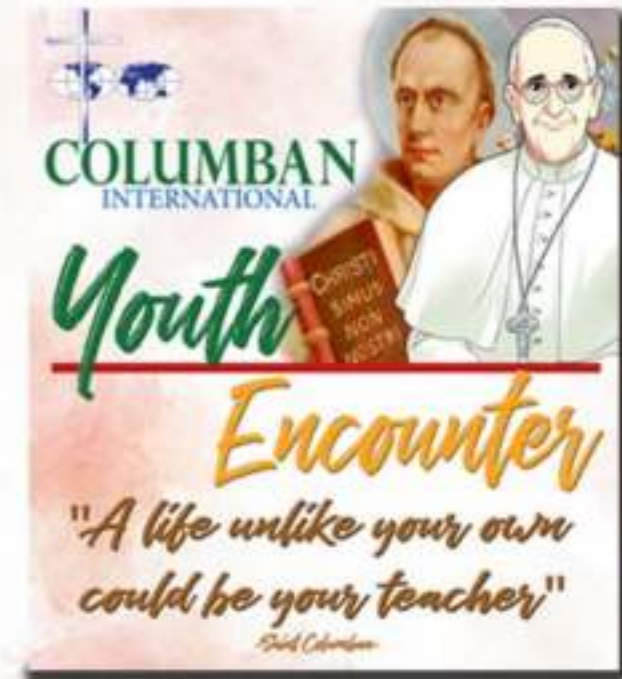
-**Catherine**, Great Britain, Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



Firstly, I was so happy. I met a lot of new friends from many countries. I learned about each country's food and cultures. I also heard about my friends' experience during this pandemic. This encounter is so good for young people because we can make new friends and know about each country's way of life.

I hope in the next encounter there is more time to speak and listen with our new friends. We can learn a lot from each other.

Lastly, I would like to thank the organizers for giving me this chance to meet other youths from other countries and learn new things.



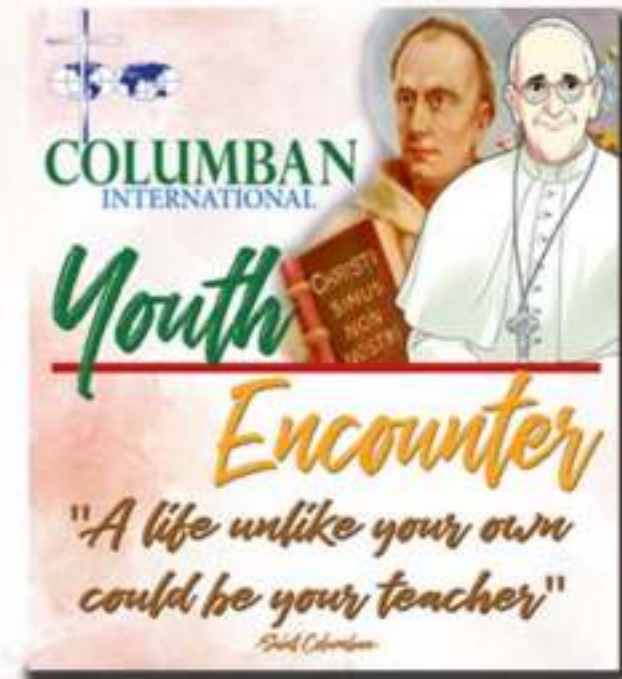
-Philip Naw Seng, Myanmar Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021





I appreciate a lot that I was able to participate in the activity. Firstly, I was nervous. But during the intermission, I was happy that I got a chance to speak with them. I learned and heard many stories about many different food, places from different parts of the world. I felt like we are one in God even though we are separated by land. For the next encounter, I would like to have more time for sharing to become more familiar with each other.

Once again, thank you very much.



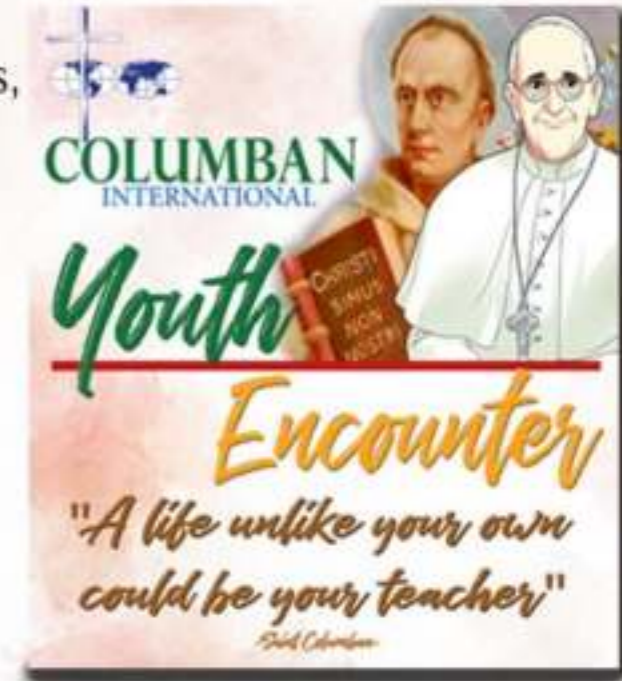
-**Columban Zau Htoi Naw**, Myanmar Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021



I learned about the cultures, food, popular places, a bit of history, the flags, and other things from the six countries that participated the recent online Columban International Youth Encounter. They are all very interesting and lovely. I have got a good experience of speaking and listening to my newly met friends from these countries. They are very friendly, and they have their own beauty.

Hopefully, in the future, when this pandemic is over, I would love to meet them in person and nurture this encounter in the hopes to build good friendship. I would want to learn more through these future Youth Encounters as well.

Thank you!



-Elizabeth Seng Ra, Myanmar Youth Representative  
Columban International Youth Encounter 2021