

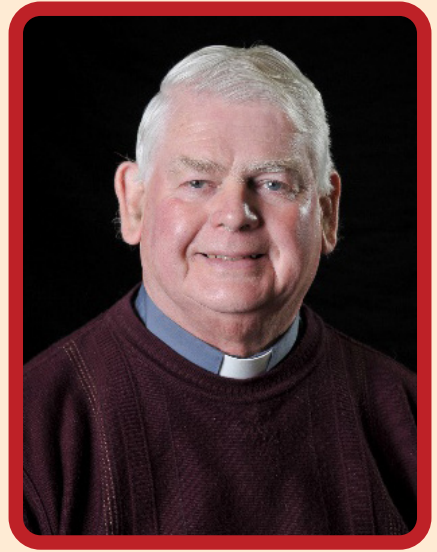
# MISSION *matters*



Fr Tim Galvin, missionary priest, dedicated his life to nurturing communities of faith in South Sudan. He is pictured in the above photo, the third from the left.

**T**he sudden death of Fr Tim Galvin on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023, after a brief illness, was a great shock and a huge loss to St Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan Fathers) and to the people he served in South Sudan. Fr Tim was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1952 at Kilmanihan, Brosna, Co Kerry to John and Bridie Galvin. After completing his secondary education, Fr Tim joined St Patrick's Missionary Society in September 1970 and was ordained on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1978. He remained a great and dedicated missionary until his death.

# Dear Friend,



I am honoured to represent Missio Ireland, an organisation that is driven to promote and support the life giving work of our overseas missionaries.

In this issue, we share with you the missionary life of Fr Tim Galvin. Fr Tim was one of my classmates, who gave four years in Kitui Diocese, Kenya, and the rest of his life in South Sudan. I have worked as a missionary myself in Grenada, West Indies and South Africa, as well as pastoral and faith formation roles in England, Scotland, and in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin here in Ireland.

It is a privilege for me to work with Missio Ireland, the Holy Father's official charity for overseas mission. Having given many years as a missionary, working with the poor and marginalised people of our world, I am only too aware of their needs.

It is very reassuring to know that even today, Ireland continues to stay true to its proud missionary legacy by supporting missionaries overseas. Missio Ireland can only continue to serve those in need, in some of the most inaccessible areas of the world, because of your ongoing support and prayers. You make so much possible and for this, I sincerely thank you.

As we go to print, news reached us of the tragic death of Fr Charles Onomhoale Igehi, of the Archdiocese of Benin City, a Nigerian, who was ordained on 13th August 2022. He was shot on his way back to his place of assignment on the 7th June 2023. We can also read in this issue about the 18 missionaries who were killed in 2022.

I want to sincerely thank you for your generosity and for your prayers in reaching out to the impoverished people through Missio Ireland. You and your families will always be in my prayers.

*Fr. Michael Kelly*

After ordination, Fr Tim was appointed to Kitui Diocese, Kenya, where he ministered in the parishes of Migwani and Kavisuni. In 1983, when St Patrick's Missionary Society opened a new mission in Sudan, in the diocese of Torit, Fr Tim was among the team who went to Sudan on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1983, just as civil war broke out in the country for a second time.

Initially, Torit Diocese was unaffected by the war, so Fr Tim and others immersed themselves in the language and the culture of the people. The war, however, did soon spread to the diocese. Fr Tim was determined to stay on with the people, come what may.



In 1989, the diocese came under the 'Liberated areas' of the SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army). Fr Tim stayed on again, where he was needed. From 1994 – 2009, he moved to the region of Toposa East, working among the nomadic people who were opportune to hear the word of God for the first time. Road travel was always treacherous with mines and ambushes, as well as the bad state of the roads, all of which made it physically very demanding. From 2009 until his death, Fr Tim worked in the Toposa West region.

Fr Tim was a very sincere, prayerful, dedicated and passionate missionary priest. He gave himself totally to the people of South Sudan, whom he served faithfully and generously for almost forty years. The provision of high quality education was an important focus for his mission during his time in South Sudan. He remained close to his family and his home community throughout his missionary life, and got great support and encouragement from them. Fr Tim also had a great interest in spirituality. No doubt this interest sustained him during his time as a missionary priest in very difficult and challenging situations. Wars and rumours of war were constants in his life. His unshakeable faith in Jesus Christ saw him through these difficult times and enabled him to persevere in his mission until the end. He spoke many languages – Irish, Arabic, Kikamba and Toposa. May he rest in peace.

# MISSIONARIES KILLED IN 2022



Last year, 18 missionaries were killed worldwide: 12 priests, one religious brother, three sisters, one seminarian and one lay person. They served the communities living in poverty and children in need, through faith and development projects. These missionaries are accompanied by the sacrifice of other men and women, who shared the same spirit and commitment to proclaiming the Gospel through everyday gestures and actions.

We are all called to witness to Jesus Christ by our words and actions, and in standing up for the truth, we may face suffering, even death. This is our Baptismal calling, and the voices of these martyrs call us forward in faith and support us with their prayers.

**Pablo Isabel Hernández**, lay pastoral worker and leader of the Lenca indigenous group in Western Honduras, was killed on 9<sup>th</sup> January by unknown men, who shot him in the back.

**Fr Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh**, 41, a Vietnamese Dominican, was killed on 29<sup>th</sup> January while listening to confessions in the parish of Dak Mót, a diocese of Kon Tum.

**Fr Richard Masivi Kasereka**, 34, a Congolese religious, was assassinated on 2<sup>nd</sup> February by armed men as he was returning to his parish, having celebrated World Day of Consecrated Life in Kanyaboyonga.

**Fr Enrique Vasquez**, 48, was killed in San Pedro Sula, Honduras on 2<sup>nd</sup> March. He had gone to visit his parents but did not arrive at his destination. He is remembered for his kindness and for his friendship. In his diocese, he held the post of Diocesan Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (Missio).

**Friar Wilberth Daza Rodes OFM**, 42, working in San Antonio, Bolivia, was murdered on 16<sup>th</sup> April by thieves who entered the church after the Easter vigil.

**Fr Joseph Aketeh Bako**, 48, Parish Priest in Kaduna, Nigeria, was kidnapped by armed men who attacked the Rectory on the night of 8<sup>th</sup> March. He died at the hands of his captors, between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Fr Jose Guadalupe Rivas**, 58, of the Archdiocese of Tijuana, Mexico, was killed and his body was found on a ranch in Tecate on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**Fr Javier Campos**, 79 and **Fr Joaquín Mora**, 80, both Jesuit priests, were killed by an armed gang on 20<sup>th</sup> June in the Church of San Francis Xavier in Chihuahua, Mexico.

**Fr Michael Mawelera Samson**, 62, a Missionary of Africa from Malawi, disappeared on 10<sup>th</sup> June from the youth centre of the church where he worked in Mbeya, Tanzania. His body was found on the riverbed of the Meta in Sebasaba on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> June.

**Sr Luisa Dell’Orto** was killed on 25<sup>th</sup> June in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, most likely the victim of an attempted robbery. For 20 years, she had been totally committed to the care of children living on the streets.

**Fr Vitus Borogo**, 50, was killed on 25<sup>th</sup> June at the Prison Farm in Kaduna, Nigeria, during a raid by armed men.

**Fr Christopher Odia Ogedebbe**, 41, was kidnapped and killed on 26<sup>th</sup> June while on his way to celebrate Mass at St Michael’s Catholic Church, Edo State, Nigeria, where he was Parish Priest.

**Fr John Mark Cheitnum** was kidnapped on 15<sup>th</sup> July from the Rectory of Christ the King Church in Kaduna, Nigeria and was brutally killed on the same day of the kidnapping.

**Fr Godefroid Pembele Mandon** was shot and killed by armed bandits on the night of 6<sup>th</sup> August in the parish of St Joseph Mukasa, Republic of the Congo.

**Sr Maria De Coppi**, 84, an Italian Comboni missionary was killed during an attack on the Chipene mission in northern Mozambique, on the night of 6<sup>th</sup> September. The attackers destroyed the church, the hospital and the primary and secondary schools. Sr Maria was shot in the head as she tried to reach the dormitory where the few remaining students were.

**Sr Marie-Sylvie Kavuke Vakatsuraki**, a doctor, was killed as she was preparing to perform surgery. The assault took place during the night of the 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> October in the village of Maboya, located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Br José Dorian Piña Hernández**, 25, a Seminarian of the Diocese of Zacatecas, Mexico, was killed on 27<sup>th</sup> December during an attempted robbery.

**All information is supplied by *Fides*, the Vatican based news agency of Missio, and by Vatican news.**



# Your support makes the work of missionaries possible



Missio Ireland is the Holy Father's official charity for overseas mission and missionaries. Each member of the Church family, regardless of location or background, can do their part in helping and celebrating the impact of missionaries.

The spiritual and financial support you offer plays an enormous part in giving missionaries courage, so that they can keep loving, serving, and sharing God's peace with others.

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