

JAPAN VICE PROVINCE

MISSION CONGRESS

Moderator

John King, OMI



Naruto

July 20-24, 1968

RESOLUTIONS: Meeting in Marate School Hall: July 24, 3:30 P.M.

COMMUNITY LIFE:

- I. Whereas our new Constitutions and Rules have given us a new style of life,
Whereas the mission in general feels it has not been sufficiently affected by this,
Whereas as in this period of transition it is premature to decide upon specific changes,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That all be convinced of the need to change our style of life.
2. That study of the Constitutions and Rules be continued by individual study and through community dialogue.
3. That prudent experimentation be done under the guidance of the proper authorities.

(Vote: Inanimously accepted.)

- II. Whereas the new Constitutions and Rules have given us a new spirit of Government

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the superior be recognized as a member of the community and not an individual placed over it. (Vote: accepted 18 to 2)
2. That all members share in a responsibility for the life and works of the community. (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)
3. That whenever possible, decisions should be taken within a human context of individual or community dialogue and respect for the views of all. (Vote: Unanimously accepted).
4. That all accept the Superior's duty and obligation to formulate decisions, and also the members duty and obligation to accept these decisions in a spirit of faith and religious obedience. (Vote: Unanimously accepted).

- III. Whereas the absorption of younger men into the community requires special attention in our day,

BE IT RESOLVED: that the intergration of younger Oblates be guided by three principles:

1. On the part of the younger man, a realization that he is entering a community and stands in need of benefitting from the history of the community and the wisdom and experience of elder members.
2. That the younger Oblates not be expected to be completely passive.
3. That the integration should neither deprive the younger man legitimate initiative, nor prevent him from operating as a responsible person within the community.
(Vote: Unanimously accepted.)

RESOLUTIONS: (con't)

-ADAPTATION TO JAPANESE CULTURE

IV. BE IT RESOLVED: that the knowledge of Japanese Culture be accepted as as equally important as the knowledge of the Japanese language. (Vote 19 to 1. , in favor.)

V. Whereas there was not sufficient time to complete the discussion on adaptation to Japanese culture,

BE IT RESOLVED: that further resolutions on cultural adaptation be taken up on the district level. (Vote: Accepted 18 to 2.)

AND BE IT RESOLVED: that this be retained as a topic for future discussion on the district level. (Vote: accepted Unanimously.)

-APOSTOLIC ORIENTATIONS

VII. Whereas innumerable apostolic orientations are available to the Oblates,
Whereas an effective community apostolate requires organization and planning,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE FOLLOWING ORDER OF PRIORITIES BE ACCEPTED BY THE PROVINCE:

1. That preference be given to the city apostolate over the rural/ (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)
2. That for the next three years the cities of Kochi and Tokushima be given top priority. (Vote: accepted 17 to 3.)

VIII. BE IT RESOLVED: that our parishes be developed so that they become true apostolic and missionary communities. (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)

IX. BE IT RESOLVED: that during the next three years At Least a study be made on the desirability of the expansion of Oblate activity in Tokyo. (Vote: accepted 18 to 2.)

X. BE IT RESOLVED: that in addition to the parochial system consideration be given to the development of other forms of apostolic activity. (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)

-APOSTOLIC-RELIGIOUS LIFE

XI. Whereas there is a unity to our apostolic religious life,
Whereas our apostolate is a community apostolate and not an individual one,
Whereas the District is a very important unit within the Vice-Province,
Whereas the spirit of individual and community prayer is of the essence of the apostolate,

RESOLUTIONS: (can't)

- APOSTOLIC-RELIGIOUS LIFE

XI.(can't)

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That every effort be made to form true apostolic religious communities on the District level. (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)
2. That the monthly day of prayer, study and reflection be accepted as an excellent means of developing this apostolic religious community. (Vote: Unanimously accepted.)

End of Resolutions.

APPENDIX

The following is a brief Summation of some of the ideas of the Scholastics on the Future of the Province of Japan.

Due to the fact that we the Scholastics stand at various levels and degrees of experience on this mission, we recognize the fact that such a report has its limitations. Yet these words do express some of the hopes, ideas, and ambitions that we have, and would like to present here.

I. PURPOSE OF THE SCHOLASTICATE: To orientate a young man towards a missionary career in Japan.

One who has finished the period of preparation in the scholasticate, should have already achieved certain definite aims:

- a. A workable knowledge of Japan; her people, and of their language.
- b. A well balanced theological training especially geared to the living situation of the mission here in Japan.

With these aims in mind, let us view the present situation. The period for preparation in Japan is presently a six year program. The first two years are devoted mainly to language study, and adaptation. The present situation of study at Waseda seems to provide an excellent opportunity to achieve the above mentioned aims.

The four years of theological training are done at Jochi. Presently there seems to be some serious gaps in the presentation of the matter at this school. The lack of such courses as missiology, catechetical techniques, and Japanese culture and history, are a serious block to a well balanced preparation for our future work. During the period of theology we feel the need to continue our familiarization with the country. However due to the importance of theology, selectivity must be exercised as to the times and types of such activities, during the school year. During theology we would also like to see the continuation of some language studies. As for the ordained scholastic be he priest or deacon, we believe it is extremely important to give them week end work in Japanese parishes. There seems to be enough available if we search for it.

In line with this thinking, we find the summer programs and the vacation periods, of vital importance in achieving the above mentioned aims. We feel that we in Tokyo are somewhat hindered in our language preparation, and in our adjustment to the Japanese way of life, by the fact that our house is almost exclusively composed of non-Japanese. What can be done to offset this natural problem? We strongly feel that a correct use of vacation time can be an excellent way of overcoming this handicap. Recognizing the need to become acquainted with the missions of the Oblates, we still believe that at least half of the vacation time allotted us over the six year preparation period, should and could afford us the time to live in and experience a totally Japanese atmosphere. Here we would speak only Japanese, and we would be able to work alongside Japanese people. There are many fine projects available. Ones wherein both Catholics and Protestants collaborate. Projects arising

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SCHOLASTIC REPORT (con't)

out of university activities, or work in such places as orphanages, hospitals or youth centers, etc. Whatever knowledge or experience we gain here, will be not only to our benefit, but to the benefit of the mission as a whole.

We would like it clearly understood that our desire for such experiences is not to avoid coming to live on the mission, nor do we mean to use them as a lever to avoid working in the present areas of Oblate activity, after we're ordained. We desire such experiences solely to help us gain a more workable knowledge of the people, their language, and their way of thinking. The value of living with Japanese for a period of six to eight weeks is in helping to make us more effective in continuing and extending the work that you the fathers of this mission have already begun.

In general we feel that the preparation should not be exactly the same for each ann. Superiors must take into account the needs, talents, and differences of each individual scholastic.

II. TOWARDS THE FUTURE: OUR HOPES AND AMBITIONS.

We believe in the need to develop a National outlook toward the Japanese mission as a whole. It is our sincere hope that we will continue to establish a policy of expansion and elasticity on this mission. A policy of cooperation with the other religious groups (Ex.-Jesuit) in staffing a parish or social center together. Or of teaching at, or working in, secular schools in some sort of Newman club center, or student center. The possibility of working with some other priests in a well planned priest-worker project, and above all recognition of the need to train men in effective methods of the city apostolate. We would hope for some research on the revamping and developing the present parish structures. Are Oblates to be strictly 'parish priests' in the traditional sense of the word? Is the present parish structure the only form of missionary activity open to a priest?

We feel that we have to begin to establish these policies now, and to make our position on them clear. If these things, some or all, are possible, then the time to begin training for them is right now while we're in the scholasticate. To specialize in a field necessitates training. To carry the chrism of the gospel to the modern world takes or requires many things today. The day of the general practitioner is gone. We no longer live in a Bavarian village or in an Irish village. We now live in a highly specialized society and every priest needs expertise beyond what he gets in the seminary/.

Above all we recognize the need for holiness, community and personal. Our lives must be centered in Christ, in the Mass and in prayer. There are many things in this vain that we would like to mention but our time is limited. We knew and hope that all discussions on the above mentioned aims will be centered in and around Christ, His mission handed to us, and the way we, in our lives together here, can witness to Him here in Japan.