



*PART III*

OTHER OBLATES  
WHO WORKED  
IN JAPAN / KOREA



# OBLATES IN TOKYO

Patrick HEALY, OMI, Catholic Chaplain

Upon graduation from High School, I was offered a scholarship to St. John's Seminary in Massachusetts to study for the Boston Archdiocese. I felt the Lord calling me to be a missionary, so I applied for and was accepted by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. My first superior in the Oblates was Father Robert Gill, OMI. In my last year in the major seminary in Washington, my superior was Father Robert Gill, OMI. Upon Ordination I had volunteered for the missions in Brazil. The Provincial thought otherwise and I returned to Catholic University for graduate studies and a career of teaching. My ardor for the missions had never waned but the discipline of the seminary emphasized the virtue and vow of obedience. Fortified with my graduate degree, I presided in the classroom for the next twelve years. In 1959, I received word from the Provincial, Fr. Raymond Hunt, OMI, that I was assigned to the Japanese Mission. Once again, my superior in Japan was Father Robert Gill, OMI, Provincial.

The highlight of my sojourn in Japan was the erection of the Oblate Seminary building in Nerima Ku. Father Gill lovingly oversaw every brick and board that went into the building. Father General was on hand for the dedication, also Father Aruppe, SJ, Provincial of the Jesuits in Japan, Father Jake Burke, OMI, Provincial of the Philippines, and Father Emmett Walsh, OMI, an Army Chaplain from Texas and Okinawa and a great benefactor of the Seminary, all gathered with the Oblates of the Mission to celebrate this great event.

The great plan for the Oblate Seminary in Japan was to have seminarians in Perpetual Vows come to the mission from other countries. They would study the language for two years and then study Theology in the Diocesan Seminary run by the Jesuits. The first seminarians came from the Eastern Province Dick BONANG and from Rome Herb NELSON and Ray BOURGOIN. Father Gene Prendeville, Father Jan Van Hoydonck rounded out the first Community with myself as the Superior.

The language students spent long hours driving to the Franciscan Language School on the other side of Tokyo at Roppongi. By the time they returned in the evening they were too exhausted to properly pursue religious exercises. If this were to continue, they would indeed be proficient in the language but lacking in spiritual formation. With the

approval of Father Gill, I set about to organize an Oblate Language School. I visited International Christian Institute. Spoke with the head of the linguistics department and set up a deal whereby they would supply us with qualified language teachers. I then contacted Dr. Roy Defarrari, Secretary General of the Catholic University of America and we were able to become affiliated with that prestigious institute. They would recognize and endorse credits and certificates issued by the Oblate Language School, Tokyo.

The basement of the seminary was divided into classrooms. There was a language lab set up by the Sony People. Soon we had nuns from Kichijoji, Notre Dame, enrolled along with part time students from Yokota and Tachikawa Air bases. We expanded the curriculum to include Japanese History, Japanese Culture, Ethics and Pastoral Theology. The school was a great success. More than a few of the military personnel who enrolled were able to use their credits for degrees in several Stateside colleges.

My six year term was up in 1965. I left Japan in the Fall for six months leave in the States. It was not too long after my arrival in the States that I was involved in a Mid-air collision at 12,000 feet. I was flying to New Jersey from Boston to preach on the Missions. We collided with a TWA Jet and crashed in a farm close to Danbury, Connecticut. The pilot and several people died at the scene. After several

months of recuperation, I was about to return to Japan when I was requested by the Military Archdiocese to enter the Military. Father Pat BRADY was now the Provincial and he graciously gave permission. After thirteen years in the Army with tours in Vietnam, Germany, Korea, Okinawa, and Camp Zama, Japan, I became pastor of St. Timothy's Parish in Miami. At this time, I returned to the Eastern American Province. My recollections of Japan are memories of the total dedication of Father Gill and Father Robitaille, as the founding fathers. I will always cherish the warmth, the caring, the gentility of my Japanese friends, Chieko san and her sister Teruko san. They made life easier for all of us in the seminary. My years in Japan are among the happiest and most pleasant of my fifty plus years of Priesthood. Oh yes, Father Gill died in my parish in Miami, Florida, in 1982.



## JOHN BARRETT

Jack hails from Watertown, Massachusetts, was ordained in 1952, and soon after entered the Japan Oblate missions. He can be labeled an "idea man" for during his years in this country, he was continually at work to form and execute ideas to promote the faith. After returning to the United States, he was assigned to the TV/Radio/Newspaper media branch of the Worcester, Massachusetts Diocese in which he found vent for his built-up energies. Jack was also a good community man with song and stories to entertain his fellow missionaries. He is now living in semi-retirement in his home state as a diocesan priest.



John BARRETT (right) with Dave BARTON (left)

## DANIEL WARD



Father Dan, after serving sometime in the US Navy, was discharged for health reasons, joined the US Eastern Province and was ordained in 1954. He arrived in Japan the following year. His assignments took him to Koga, Aki, Nakajimacho, and back to Koga with some time in Tokushima and Tokyo. Dan was an artist, a person of many talents. His manner with people drew several to study and be baptized by him. A popular person, he was much missed when he passed away following heart surgery in 1975. His mark has been left in Japan with the art work and statuary he left behind.



## TIMOTHY MULVEY

Tim hailed from New York and was ordained in 1940 in Washington, DC and volunteered for Japan, arriving here in the second group of arrivals in 1949. Tim was an exceptionally talented person, writing for the Congressional Record upon President Roosevelt's death, composing plays for the National Catholic Hour, and for the Family Rosary program under Fr. Peyton who was with the Maryknoll. While in Japan he was asked to go to Korea where US Troops were to write the book "These are your Sons". This book missed the Book of the Month Club by one vote. Tim never did learn Japanese well, but despite this he was most popular among the parishioners in Itami and Koga. He was instrumental in getting the funds to build the whole plant in Koga from Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York for whom he was a ghost writer. His 6 years in this country left many happy memories.

## NICHOLAS NEVILLE



Father Nick hailed from Newfoundland, moved to Boston and entered the Oblate Seminary. In 1950 he was ordained and volunteered for Japan, arriving here in 1951. Nick was a hard worker at everything he undertook. His assignments took him to Itami, Shinhonmachi and finally to Hikarigaoka in Fukuoka. In 1965 for some unknown reason, he transferred to the US Western Province. He passed away in his late 60's. He was a good community man and he was sorely missed.





## Tribute to Fr. JOHN O. MEYER, R.I.P.

I have a very important picture of Leonard Kunio Yamamoto. He was adopted by a Tenrikyo missionary when he was a child. At the age of 6 he came to our orphanage Hakuaien and was with us 2 full years. He had been afflicted with polio right after birth and had difficulty in walking. For that reason he was transferred to another institution. Then in 1963 he showed up suddenly at Hakuaien. After graduating from Middle School he had found work with a tailor and was living there. During his 2 years in Hakuaien, every Sunday he would accompany the group for Mass at Enokuchi Parish where the Oblates ministered. He had remembered the kindness of the foreign missionary and in his own way he had felt a warmth in his heart. Even now he couldn't forget that experience and came to relate this to us.

In April 1964 on being told that because of stomach cancer he didn't have too long to live I hurried over to his bedside. Those around him were keeping his sickness a secret from him but I told him frankly. At first he received a big shock but after a little period of silence he told me in a very loud voice "I'd like to go to Christ's heaven." Soon after Frs. Stevens and Meyer came to visit him and he was eventually baptized. With the visits of these two Oblates and Ms. Tuchiya from the Legion of Mary his faith deepened as his body wasted away.

Since he had life insurance his adoptive father came to receive the money and talk about the funeral. This had become a hideous battle even while the patient was still alive. It had been suggested by the

## Tribute to Fr. GERARD STEVENS, R.I.P.

As I look at the picture of the young Fr. Stevens with Leonard Kunio Yamamoto, I look at it with fond memories.

Fr. Stevens I appreciated your various kindnesses. Every week you came all the way from Awa-Ikeda and eventually you baptized Kunio. He was just 22 years of age when all this happened, but they were days of thanksgiving for God's love which put him on the road to his heavenly home. This is thanks to the Oblates. You not only helped Kunio, but taking time out from your busy schedule, you helped so many Hakuaien children who were destined to go to South America to have a head start by teaching them Spanish. Because of you many of the children of those days are now living independently, are married and have families with whom they live a very happy life. You showed great interest in the well-being and growth of Christina who now lives in Argentina. She and her family with the rest of us were shocked by your intemely death.

This picture also shows Fr. Meyer and Ms

two priests to have nothing to do with the whole affair. On July 25 the doctor pronounced him dead. The days that led up to this found Fr. Meyer coming every day smiling and full of humor and talking to Kunio about life after death. "Kunio, send us rose petals as rain from heaven, won't you?" "Rose petals raining from heaven? How do you do that?" "OK, in a little while I'll join you and both of us will do it together." "OK, I'm so happy." I remember this conversation very well. At the suggestion of the father it was decided to hold the wake at the hospital. Then we had a big funeral at the Church. Just then something mysterious happened. Those who had been violently against the Catholics came to the funeral. The father with a big group attended the Mass and departed full of peace. The atmosphere of hatred that dominated when the two denominations met, finished up in peace and unity and thanksgiving. It was all so mysterious. Fr. Meyer said that this was the "Rain of rose petals that came from heaven."

Not long after that Fr. Meyer returned to the States. A number of years ago we heard that he passed away also. I was very saddened to hear this. It is impossible to describe the feeling I had at the time. "Rose petals raining from heaven? How do you do that?" "OK, in a little while I'll join you and both of us will do it together." I remember the words so well. Fr. Meyer why did you have to leave us so soon?

When I recall Fr. Meyer I always see him in his black suit, with a roman collar, with peaceful humor and kind bearing. Even now I can't believe he has left us. Please send me your rain of rose petals!!



Kunio Yamamoto, Gerard STEVENS (center),  
John MEYER (right)  
Hanako Tuchiya (in front of Gerry),  
Toshi TAKEDA (in front of John)

Tuchiya, both of whom have now gone to their eternal rest. We still all needed you so much, why did you leave us so suddenly? It was too early. All the Philippine wives throughout Shikoku are so sad and cried at your sudden departure. You had been like a parent to them. There was so much more you could have done for them in this life. Why did you leave us all? We all miss you even after a few years of your departure, you who gave so many years of your life to us. If it were possible we would have you return and be with us again.

# OTHER OBLATES WHO WORKED IN JAPAN

A number of men served for some time in this province who are no longer here. Some of them appear somewhere in this album: John Barrett, David Barton, Richard Bonang, Patrick Brady, Jose DeFruyt, Daniel Duffy, Robert Gill, Patrick Healy, Ronald LaFramboise, Edward Lowney, Charles McBennett, William McLaughlin, John Meyer, Timothy Mulvey, Nicholas Neville, Eugene

Prendiville, Thomas Reilly, Leonard Robitaille, Leonard Scannell, Gerard Stevens, Sueho Tsuda, David Ullrich and Daniel Ward. We add the others in the following collage: Wilfrid Derudder, Robert Fitzpatrick, Josef Hofmans, Nestor Jao, Robert Kellen, Henry Mattimore, Donald O'Brien, Shirantha Perera, Eduardo Quiocho.



Donald O'BRIEN



Wilfrid DERUDDER



Robert FITZPATRICK



Eduardo QUIOCHO (left) Nestor JAO (right)



Henry MATTIMORE



Shirantha PERERA



From left to right: Robert KELLEN, Robert GILL,  
Joseph FITZGERALD (Assistant General),  
Michael YAMASAKI (Itami Rectory in background)



Josef HOFMANS (left), Jan van HOYDONCK (right)

# OTHER OBLATE SEMINARIANS

A number of seminarians in vows studied with us through the years though they were never ordained to the priesthood. Besides the two who have written articles for this album where their pictures appear, Hiroshi Hayashi and Masahito Miyamoto,

there were the following whose pictures appear as a collage on this page: Regis Barber, John Quinn, Masashi Hashimoto, Hiroshi Kumashiro, Herbert Nelson, Haruki Yamashita.



Haruki YAMASHITA



Hiroshi KUMASHIRO



Herbert NELSON



Masashi HAHIMOTO



Regis BARBER



John QUINN