

January 17 2001



1) Animation Committee

Ray has accepted to be the Animator. Thank you Ray.
Animation Committee has been formed with the ff members:

Ray (chair), Fran Hahn, Bradly, Nobu Yagi and Giovanni.

2) Vow Day of Novices

A few changes were necessary, hence, the place will be at the House Chapel in Nakajimacho, Feb. 17, 3:30 pm.

3) Answers to Questionnaire

I have finished compiling the answers (with a slight addition which came after I made the provisional copies). I will send you a copy of the provisional copy for you to look at before I run the final copies (exc to Ray and Leo who already have them). Around mid February I will send out the final copies so that everyone will have the chance to look through them before the congress.

wency

January 18, 2001

Dear Brother Oblates,

RE: Animation Committee, Formation News, Provincial Congress, etc.

I have a few important announcements that cannot wait for the next issue of the newsletter.

1) ANIMATION COMMITTEE

As it was announced in the Christmas issue of the Newsletter, the whole congregation is starting a renewal process. *"We believe that the moment is right to take a deeper look at ourselves - where we are today; where it is today; and see if 'we are in step with the reality of today's world and God's specific call to us through the charism.'"* (from the "Immense Hope" document)

The first task in the whole process is to choose an animator and form an animation committee who will lead our group through the process of renewal. I am glad to announce that

RAY BOURGOIN

has accepted to be our Animator. The members of the Animation Committee are:

FRAN HAHN
NOBUHIKO YAGI
GIOVANNI ZEVOLA
BRADLY ROZAIRO

I would like to personally thank the above Oblates for accepting the challenging task. I was impressed at how all of them accepted to give their service without hesitation.

2) PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

As I mentioned in my Christmas greetings, the responses to the Questionnaire were in early or on time. 26 of the possible 28 responses were received and have been compiled into booklet form. They will be sent to you sometime in February so that you can browse through them before the Congress.

3) RESTRUCTURING

The General Council is also asking for our opinion about our future as a "Vice Province." The Superior General said in his letter dated Sept. 21, 2000: "I therefore invite the Provincials of the Vice Provinces to let me know the result of their consultation and their eventual negotiations, as well as their concrete recommendations, at the latest before the Plenary Session of the General Council to be held in May 2001." I am asking the District Superiors to take up the topic during the remaining meetings before the Congress and come up with recommendations that we hope we can put together during the congress.



1964 JAN 10

Letter of the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 10, 1964, regarding the Vietnam War.

President John F. Kennedy

Dear Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. Justices of the Supreme Court, Mr. Members of the Congress:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to address you today on the Vietnam War.

THE VIETNAM WAR

The Vietnam War is a conflict that has been going on for over two years. It is a war that has cost the lives of many young men and women. It is a war that has caused the suffering of millions of people. It is a war that has brought shame to our country.

I believe that the time has come when we should stop this war. I believe that we should bring our troops home. I believe that we should seek peace.

Thank you very much.

John F. Kennedy

JOHN F. KENNEDY
1000 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

Very truly yours,
John F. Kennedy

JOHN F. KENNEDY

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4) VOW DAY

Novices Kenichi FURUKAWA and Akio HORIUCHI have been passed for first (temporary) vows. A simple vow-taking and habit-taking ceremony will be held at the House Chapel in Nakajimacho, Kochi on February 17, 2001 at 3:30 in the afternoon.

The House of Studies in Nagoya has been elevated into a status of "scholasticate" and Leo KAWAGUCHI will be the Superior of Scholastics from April. Brother Nobu YAGI has been assigned to the Nagoya scholasticate starting April.

5) SCHOLASTIC FROM BRAZIL

Brazilian scholastic Bro. Antonio Genivaldo Cordeiro De OLIVEIRA, OMI (already a deacon) is preparing to come to Japan for an immersion program. He is waiting for the approval of his visa and should be arriving in 2-3 months. He belongs to the Belem Delegation (of the French Province) in Brazil.

6) CONSULTATION

Aside from being our Facilitator during the Congress, Fr. Eugene KING, Vicar General will also conduct a consultation on whether you want the present Provincial to serve a second term or not. He hopes to go around the different places, perhaps, after the Congress.

Looking forward to seeing some of you during the Vow Ceremony in Kochi on February 17th and those who cannot make it, on the Congress itself, March 26 to 30.

Geney, M.



O.M.I. JAPAN/KOREA

OMI Information

Newsletter of the Vice Province of Japan

MARCH
2001

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Vice Province Convenes for Congress

This year's Spring Meeting of the Vice Province will be in a form of a congress, from March 27 to 30, at the Passionist Retreat House in Fukuoka. The purpose of the congress is to search for a vision for the Vice Province as we start a new millennium.

The three and a half days of conferences, discussions and deliberations will revolve around three major themes, namely: Day 1 Immense Hope; Day 2 Community; and Day 3 Mission. The last day will be for wrapping up and for other business matters.



Fr. Eugene King - Facilitator. Picture taken during the 23rd General Chapter immediately after he was chosen Vicar General.

Fr. Eugene KING, Vicar General, has generously accepted the task of being the facilitator. He obliged to tell us a little about himself, though he considers the task a "lenten mortification." He confides that he's 60 years old, "a grace I share with six others in the General House. When all six have made it through another birthday, we treat ourselves to pizza and beer."

"Forty-one of my years I have been an Oblate,

joining right out of Secondary School, as was the fashion in Ireland in the late 1950s. I was born in Ireland, just south of the Northern Ireland border, close enough most people would say to know a think or two about smuggling. I heard of the Oblates when Father David Hennessy, an Irish Oblate, gave a vocations' conference to the senior classes. What caught my imagination was his claim, complete with photographs, that one could catch trout, fifty pounds and more, in Northern Canada. I have been fishing ever since."

"I reached Canada on the day Vatican II began, October 11th 1962, to study theology where I was ordained ten days after the Council ended in December 1965. For three years I taught various fields of theology at our scholasticate in Piltown, Ireland, before spending a further three years at the Biblicum in Rome where I was also a member of the staff of the International Scholasticate. Once finished with my studies I was on the pilgrim trail again, back to Canada and Ottawa, to teach at Saint Paul University and be a member of the staff of Saint Paul University Seminary. A whole twenty-six years; it seemed I took a vow of stability! I never taught Scripture full-time but moved into Pastoral Theology, becoming Director of the Institute of Pastoral Studies, and eventually Rector of St. Paul University Seminary. My academic dreams foundered on the shores of administration."

"My twenty-six years were interrupted by doing a doctorate at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana. Of interest to one or other American, I was there for the Joe Montana years! Returning from Notre Dame I stumbled on another great grace in my life - formation work for the life and rituals of the Adult Catechumenate as it caught on across the United States and Canada. So, through ministry formation and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults I came to know the North American Church from coast to coast."

"I was beginning a sabbatical when the grace of the last Chapter, in 1998, fell upon me and I have been overshadowed by it ever since. This past two years also brought the grace of discovering Aix, the cradle of our Congregation, into my life."

"And how has it been as Vicar General? I will take up the story when I see you."

Fr. King arrived in Kansai on March 23rd and will travel to Kochi, Tokushima and Nagoya prefectures after the congress. He is going back to Rome on April 8th.

From the Provincial's Desk:

The Provincial Congress will be in full-swing when this newsletter comes out. Thank you, once again, for the cooperation in answering the questionnaire. The questions did not cover as much as they should but hopefully, the questionnaire and the congress itself, will be our stepping stones towards a clarification of our mission as a Vice Province now (or whatever name we will assume as a unit) and for the coming years.

I welcome and thank our Vicar General, Fr. Gene KING for accepting the task of being our facilitator. He is also here to do consultation as I finish my first term as Provincial. Please have a pleasant stay, Father Gene!

Going back to the questionnaire and our answers: Even if the questions (and answers) did not cover as much as we would like them to, they gave me, personally, an idea of how we think collectively. I personally put together the answers seeing to it that I did not miss a period or punctuation. It was a painstaking job, to say the least.

As I finish three years of animating our small Vice Province, I can just compare myself with other Provincials of units with hundreds of members. Oftentimes, I say a prayer of thanks for being spared of the big problems and "occupational hazards" that come along being a leader of a large group, such as, law suits, financial crisis, violent death of members in troubled areas, major illnesses of members, having to deal with many dysfunctional or recalcitrant members, etc., etc. Most of our problems as a group stem from the fact that we are small in number: we tend to magnify each other's faults more because we rub shoulders more than members of bigger groups. We tend to worry more about ageing and lack of vocations because of our small number. But there are benefits, too, in being small: we have financial stability; we should have more interaction among ourselves, etc.

If I may quote some answers from the questionnaire booklet:

Because we have **only very small pool of human resources** from which to select our leaders, I think the responsibility for the Province must be shared and shouldered by each member of the Province to a much greater degree than in a numerically larger Province.

Are we each other's cheerleader? We should be each other's cheerleader in the most overt ways--- to be a support, to provide psychological and physical support to another OMI in his service of others.

What do we intend to accomplish in this year's congress? If we can just take an honest look at ourselves as a band of missionaries and individually as Oblates and start talking where do we go from here for the next few years, then we will have accomplished a lot.

My schedule: I will be attending the annual

Asia-Oceania Regional Conference (AORC) meeting which this year will be held at the cradle of the congregation, at our foundation house in Aix, April 18-28. I will avoid the Golden Week traffic and be back on May 8th.

Wishing you all the bountiful blessing of Easter!

Wency Laguidao

On the Death of Archbishop Marcello ZAGO (1932-2001)

by Mauro Concardi

(The following are excerpts from several emails received from Mauro, on, among other things, the death of Arch. M. Zago. The Vice Province of Japan pays tribute to the man, a true Oblate missionary who spent many years in Asia and is the founder of the Korean Mission.)

I write to inform you that our two postulants, Paolo and Anselmo have received their visa and tickets to Australia where they will spend their two years novitiate formation... Last Saturday, they returned from their vacation and with them two new candidates (Andrea and Thomas).

We had a simple ceremony and Mass at 6:00 PM when Mons. Zago's funeral mass was about to start at the Vatican. I saw it as a sign. New life is springing from the Korean soil, and we all know that Fr. Zago wanted the Korean mission (established) in a very special way. I don't think it is simple coincidence: it's God's work. I believe that we have a new protector in heaven.

I have received a short note (in Italian) that I translate for you:

"My life has been surrounded by the merciful love of God and enriched by His abundant graces". These are words from the Spiritual Testament of Mons. Marcello Zago, OMI who died in Rome on March 1st, 2001. The funeral Mass took place in the Vatican Basilica on March 3 and was a clear witness of how many people felt linked to Mons. Zago: Cardinal Tomko - who presided the Mass- and all the collaborators of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (Propaganda Fide) where Mons. Zago has been the Secretary for three years; then many Oblates with the Fr. W. Steckling, Superior General; family members and friends from his native village Villorba (near Treviso in the Northern part of Italy) arrived in buses and mini-vans; students and professors from Missionary Colleges in Rome and from the Urban and Lateran University where Fr. Zago taught for many years. Innumerable religious and sisters, priests and lay people came to pay their last respect to a man they all loved. They all filled the space in front of St. Peter's Chair and farther beyond. It was a simple celebration, with an atmosphere of Joy and Faith. There were more than 300 priests, 30 Bishops and 7 Cardinals. Andrea Riccardi, founder of

the International Movement "St. Egidio's Community", has written on the largest Catholic Newspaper in Italy (Avvenire) the following tribute to Mons. Zago: "The life of Marcello Zago has been always on the frontier between Christianity and the World of Non-Christian Religions. Whoever has met him during Congresses on Inter-religious Dialogue for sure has noticed the fundamental aspect of his life: he was a missionary (...) he was an Oblate of Mary Immaculate." His "profound spirituality", his "exemplar religious life" and his "pastoral zeal" as priest and bishop were recalled in a message from Pope John Paul II, read at the beginning of the Mass. The Pope also remembered "with sentiments of admiration the serene acceptance of his sickness (Leukemia), borne with confident resignation to the divine providence until the last moment". Fr. Zago has written in his Spiritual Testament the following words: "For me only three things are important: Jesus Christ, the Church and the mission." In his Homily Cardinal Tomko quoted from the same Spiritual Testament these words: "I entrust you to the Lord, and I hope to continue to be among the intercessors of the missionary work in the world."

Novices Profess First Vows

February 17, 2001 was not only the 175th year of the approval of our Constitutions and Rules but also for Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA, it was the day when they completed their two year novitiate and professed their First Vows as Oblates.



Vowing poverty, chastity and obedience before the Provincial.

The simple vow ceremony was held at the house chapel in Nakajima-cho, Kochi at 3:30 PM. Wency LAGUIDAO, Provincial received the vows of the new Oblates and extolled them on the importance of the vows as a call from Christ for us "to cast our nets on deep waters." The Provincial also encouraged them to try to become good and happy Oblates. The vow ceremony also included the habit-taking of the two new Oblates. Guests and relatives from the parishes of

Itami, Aki, Akaoka and Nakajima-cho filled the house chapel to capacity. A simple reception followed the vow-taking ceremony.

The two started their novitiate under the auspices of the Saint Mary's Seminary of the Australian Province where they spent a year. They then returned to Japan where they spent their full-year of canonical novitiate in Aki under the guidance of Nobuhiko YAGI, novice master.



Newly - professed Oblates with the Novice Master and Provincial

Akio and Kenichi will return to the House of Studies in Nagoya in mid-March to prepare for their re-entry into the theological program at Nanzan University. We wish the two a warm welcome as they start anew as Oblates.

Formation News: Korea

The Korean mission takes pride in sending its two postulants (Paolo and Anselmo) to Saint Mary's Seminary in Australia for the pre-novitiate and (canonical) novitiate programs. The two left for Australia last March 8th and will be there until January 2003. They will join other candidates, on different stages of formation, from other countries like China, Thailand, Laos, Sweden and Australia.

Two new Korean students (Andrea and Thomas) have shown interest in the Oblates and will enter the formation house in Anyang. They are both 30 years of age, one (Andrea) is from the nearby city of Seong Nam and has been helping Vincenzo in the soup kitchen for many years. Thomas is from Chongju a city that is an hour and a half away from Seoul. The two will attend classes at the Center for Religious Studies run by the Franciscans. They will also attend intensive English course while helping out at Vincenzo's soup kitchen and Giovanni's center for migrant workers (Emmaus) and also help out at a nearby parish.

Restructuring

The word 「リストラ」 ("Risutora") has become a

byword in the Japanese corporate world in recent times. It is a word feared especially by many middle-aged salaried workers. The word is actually a Japanized equivalent of the word "Restructure." It can mean reorganizing the company, cutting down on costs, mergers of small companies to survive and down-sizing or forcing middle-aged workers to early retirement with promises of pseudo-benefits. Many suicides have been attributed to "Risutora."

Many small units in the congregation like ours will have to go through the painful process of restructuring. It will call for sacrifices from us for the interest of the whole congregation. (I don't think there will be suicides along the process!)

In a letter from the Superior General dated Sept. 21, 2000, the existing Vice Provinces are invited "to reflect upon their future, involving both individual Oblates and local communities." The matter will be taken up during the Plenary Session of the General Council in May, 2001. Whatever decisions are made will always be done in consultation with all the parties involved, the Superior general assures everyone in the same letter.

The districts have been asked to discuss the different scenarios and come out with proposals to be submitted to the General Council.

Immense Hope Project: Animation Committee

As announced earlier, the Animation Committee for the Immense Hope project has been formed, composed of: Ray BOURGOIN (leader), Giovanni ZEVOLA, Nobu YAGI, Fran HAHN, and Bradly ROZAIRO (members). The group has accepted the difficult task of leading the Vice Province through the process of evaluation and animation for the next four years. The group had their initial meeting in Tokushima last February 22.

Letter from Brazil

Antonio Genivaldo CORDEIRO DE OLIVEIRA is a Brazilian scholastic on his final stages of preparation for ordination to the priesthood. He belongs to the Belem Delegation (French Province) in Brazil. He has expressed his interest in Asia and asked to come to Japan for an exposure for about two years. He has obtained his Japanese visa but delayed his trip until after his sacerdotal ordination in May 5th. He is expected to arrive in Japan sometime around May 14th. WELCOME!

Jubilarians

Jan VAN HOYDONCK and Wency LAGUIDAO are celebrating the Golden and Silver Jubilee of their ordinations (respectively) this year. Jan was ordained in

Belgium on July 1, 1951 and Wency was ordained in the Philippines on March 27, 1976. A simple celebration will be held during the Provincial Congress on March 29th.



■ Birthday:

April 01 1960	Leo KAWAGUCHI
17 1941	Jack DEELY
22 1949	Wency LAGUIDAO
May 29 1931	Tom MAHER
June 24 1962	Giovanni ZEVOLA

■ Ordination / Final Vows:

April 04 1968	Jerry NOVOTNY
11 1970	Jack DEELY
25 1987	Vincenzo BORDO
26 1966	Bill MAHER
29 1972	Fran HAHN
May 30 1954	John MAHONEY
30 1954	Bert SILVER
30 1957	Tom MAHER
31 1965	Ange SIANI
June 2 1952	Dick HARR
7 1957	Ed WILLIAMS
14 1964	Len INUI
14 1964	John IWO
24 1962	Mike YAMASAKI

■ Death:

April 12 1982	Robert GILL
May 10 1996	Gerard STEVENS

From the editor

The next issue is scheduled for June 15. Please send in your contributions by June 5.

Nobuhiko



Family Portrait. Oblates and Honorary Oblates with the newly-professed.

主の平安

オブレート会の Newsletter、日本国内の会員の一覧表（役に立てばと思い、作ってみました）を同封しました。



2001 年 6 月
Bro. 八木 信彦

P.S.

Newsletter の PAGE 6、Anniversaries: Birthday で
August

14 1973 Antonio Genivaldo Cordeiro de Oliveira
がぬけております。失礼しました。

- Blogs
- Communication
- Links
- Photos

Apostolates: what do you want here? dead page or live page with articles or both for Social Projects

Social Projects

- Migrants
- Right to Life
- Young People

Education - what should we do here?

Mission Parishes (dead page? Active Page with Bulleting boards, etc)

b. I promised to build site, prepare someone to take over - steve showed interest

- i could visit him or he come to kochi

- problem, he might need a computer
- reason: I'd like to start on a Japanese site, the koreans already have one
- suggestion: find a Japanese to handle the Japanese site
- what menu for navigational bar, overall outline on paper required first

c. New User Default Role

- administrator
- Editor
- author
- contributor
- subscriber

Summary of Roles:

-Administrator (slug: 'administrator') - somebody who has access to all the administration features within a single site.



O.M.I. JAPAN/KOREA

OMI Information

Newsletter of the Vice Province of Japan

JUNE
2001



Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Looking Back At the Last Congress

There was perfect attendance. Well, almost. Twenty-eight of the possible thirty attended the Provincial Congress which started on March 27th and ended 29th. The theme of the congress was **Towards An Immense Hope**. Fr. Eugene KING, who served as facilitator, led the group to three and a half days of input, personal reflection, group discussions and plenary sessions. The whole group was divided into five smaller groups for discussions and sharing.

The congress opened with a fitting liturgy prepared by the Liturgical Committee headed by Fran.

After the simple welcoming words from the Provincial, the facilitator took over to lay down the tasks for three and a half days.

The congress was conducted in a retreat-like atmosphere, with ample time for personal reflection and group sharing. The Provincial Council together with the facilitator acted as the steering committee. Bert, Jack and Nobu helped out as members of the secretariat.

The unofficial "night sessions" (food and drinks are always through the courtesy of Koga community led by Bill) were held as usual and they served as time to relax and unwind after a day of hard work. There was even a night to watch a movie, complete with popcorn and pizza!

The congress was also time to celebrate the Golden and Silver Jubilee of ordinations of Jan VAN HOYDONCK (ordained July 1, 1951) and Wency LAGUIDAO (ordained March 27, 1976) respectively with a liturgy and dinner.



Provincial Congress on Immense Hope

Welcome, Gen!

Latin Americans usually have long names and he is not an exemption: Antonio Genivaldo Cordeiro de Oliveira. The first thing he did when he arrived was to shorten his name for all of us to remember: please

call him "Gen" (pronounced *jen*).

Gen was just ordained last May 5th in his native Belem, in the region of Para, northern Brazil. (Sorry Mauro, he does not play soccer!)

Although exhausted from his long flight which took almost 30 hours, he felt relieved to be met by four Oblates (more than 10% of the Vice Province) at the airport. He arrived last May 14th in Itami.

Gen comes from a family of eleven children and he is the eldest of the brood. He is a member of the Belem Delegation of the French Province and finished his studies in San Paolo where the Oblates run a

seminary for all the Oblate units in Brazil. Although Gen has received his obedience to his delegation, he will be here for a couple of years of exposure and study of Japanese culture and language.

After spending sometime in Kochi, he will join the scholasticate community in Nagoya and start his studies in September. *Bemvindo!*

Let me introduce myself

Antonio Genivaldo Cordeiro de Oliveira

I am Antonio Genivaldo Cordeiro de Oliveira, but you can call me Gen. I was born on August 14, 1973 in the state of Para, in the northern part of Brazil. That state is in the Amazon region. I am the eldest of a family of 11 children.

My region was unpopulated till 50 years ago, so it became a mission region. My home parish was staffed by Italian Barnabite priests. I always participated in youth groups in my home parish, but it was the uncompromising attitude of the vicar that raised the decisive question: "How can I help the people of God."

At that time I was finishing High School and I was a teacher there too. Finally I decided to make an experience in the religious life and I joined the Barnabite Congregation since it was the only one I knew. With them I studied Philosophy but I didn't feel well with their style of life and in my life the words of God to Abraham rang strongly: "Leave your country, family and your father's house, for the land I will show you." I decided to leave that congregation even though I had been approved to go to the novitiate.

In the seminary where I studied Philosophy there



was an Oblate who was teaching Holy Scripture and I heard something about his congregation. I decided to look for this father who was the Mission Superior of the Belém Delegation, Father François Rubeaux. After the first contacts he invited me to make an experience in Maraba, south of Para. It was so difficult, it was really another style of religious life and I had to go back to square one.

I began teaching in a public school again, accompanying the youth groups and one of the basic ecclesial communities (BEC's). I needed to work so hard but at the end of that year I felt I had found my way.

The Oblates invited me to go to the novitiate in Paraguay and I would have to leave everything again, but I accepted. In Paraguay I made a rich experience that confirmed my missionary vocation. I came back to Sao Paulo, Brazil, where I studied Theology. During this time I always spoke with my superiors about the mission "Ad Gentes", especially in Asia. I wanted to make an experience in a small church with



Fr. F. Rubeaux, then Superior of Belem Delegation, imposes hands on the new Oblate priest.

inter-religious dialogue and I wanted to go to Indonesia, I don't know why.

In the beginning of the year 2000 I met the Superior General in Uruguay during a meeting of CIAL (Interprovincial Conference of Latin America) and the Formation Committee of Latin America. He said to me that it would be impossible to go to Indonesia in that moment, but there were other options the Philippines, Thailand and Japan, but the last one would be the most difficult to adapt to.

After that I wrote to the provincials of these provinces and father Wency answered me quickly, and interestingly after that things were on their way. I was ordained on May 5th and on May 12th I left Brazil to come here. I am happy to meet here the same Oblate spirit of welcome and fraternity. I really feel at home.

Now remain the challenges of the Japanese language and culture. I need to be born again but this can be a privileged opportunity to live the words of the Gospel: "Unless a man is born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God".

From the Provincial's Desk

Wency Laguidao

First, I would like to thank everyone for the show of unity and cooperation that made the last congress successful and individually enriching. I also personally thank Fr. Eugene KING, our facilitator. During and after the congress, he took the time to talk

to each one of us to listen to our concerns and to do the consultation for the nomination of the next Provincial.

Thank you also for putting your trust in me by giving me a second term. The concerns that you personally expressed to the Vicar General have been communicated directly to me and I will see to it that they are acted upon by me together with the next provincial council. Surely, there are lots of things to do during the next couple of years!

Jan VAN HOYDONCK and I would also like to thank all of you for the warm gesture of celebrating our 50th and 25th anniversary of ordination together through a beautiful liturgy and sumptuous dinner.

I also welcome the newest and youngest addition to the Vice Province, Gen. I hope that after a few years in Japan, he will decide to join the mission.

AORC Meeting in Aix en Provence: The Provincials and Delegation and Mission superiors of the Asia-Oceania region had their annual meeting at the foundation house in Aix en Provence from April 18-28. The annual meeting is usually held in the region but the group decided to make an exemption this year and meet at the very place where the Founder and his "Missionaries of Provence" started. The purpose of meeting at the cradle of the congregation was quite obvious, we wanted to go back to the roots and trace back, as it were, the early stages of the congregation. Fr. Ernest Ruch, outgoing director of the Centre International De Mazenod gave the input and accompanied the group to the various places that were significant to the early mission of the congregation.

I served as President of the group for two years and during this year's meeting, a new President was elected, Fr. Federico Labaglay who was a classmate at the scholasticate and present Provincial of Philippine Province.

Among the most important topics discussed during the meeting were:

Formation: This year, a two-month course for formators (psycho-spiritual) will be offered in Manila, October through December. Bro. Nobu YAGI will attend. Other formation-related topics that were discussed were: common programs on formation, exchange of formation personnel, overseas exposure before ordination, etc.

Opening of a mission in Vietnam: The bishop of the northern part of Vietnam has officially asked the Oblates to help in the formation of lay leaders and in teaching at the seminary. The French Province is looking at the different angles of the offer and member units of the AORC may be asked to cooperate in the project. The Provincial of France, Fr. Maxime Chaigne came to enlighten the group on the project.

Restructuring: Units affected by the restructuring process were asked about the progress of the consultations initiated by the General Council.

Since the meeting was being held in Europe, we had the privilege of inviting some members of the

General Council: Fr. P. Jesunesan, General Councilor of the region gave a report on the region and what the General Council expects from the units. Fr. Eugene KING who is in charge of the Centre International De Mazenod came to explain the importance of the center for the congregation and the animation in the congregation now known to us as the "Immense Hope Project." Fr. Rufus WHITLEY, the new Treasurer General made himself available to explain how he sees the financial situation of the whole congregation now and in the coming years. Fr. Camillus FERNANDO, AORC representative to the General Finance Committee also attended. The next AORC meeting will be held in Manila in February next year.

Provincial Gets Second Term

Wency LAGUIDAO was appointed for a second term by the General Council during its plenary session in Buffalo, Minnesota last May. His second term will start after the consultation and nomination of a new Provincial Council.

Website of the Vice Province

Visit us! Thanks to Jerry NOVOTNY for working on our website which is temporarily located at: www.lifeissues.net/omi Jerry is looking for a "webmaster" who will edit and update the site periodically, any volunteers? Meanwhile, Itami Parish has also made its own website on the following address: www.itami.net/

Summer is Coming!

With summer just a breath away, people are starting to make plans to escape the heat. Not so for scholastics Kenichi FURUKAWA and Akio HORIUCHI who are scheduled to spend a month of overseas exposure to places where there is perpetual summer! Negotiations are still being made for Kenichi to go to the Philippines and Akio to India right after they have folded up the tents of the next vocation camp. Don't get over-exposed guys!

Meanwhile, Leo KAWAGUCHI and his **Mission for Youth** group are also Manila-bound in late August for a week of immersion. The group will visit Oblate run places in Manila and a farm run by a Japanese sister outside of Manila.

Provincial Archives

In between doing his work as bursar and animator, Ray BOURGOIN has been rummaging through the provincial files in Kochi, sifting through what should be saved as documents for the provincial archives. The search is on for any document lying around in the houses that may be of value.

REQUEST: Provincial newsletters dating back from 1962 have already been compiled and neatly bound by Ray. Some copies are still missing. If anyone is in possession of old newsletters of the mission and any other document, *codex historicus*,

pictures, etc. that may be of value, will you kindly donate them to the archives?

VARIA

The English translation of the letter from the Japanese Bishops (いのちへのまなざし) **Reverence for Life** is now available on the internet: <http://www02.so-net.ne.jp/~catholic/EDOC/01life.htm>

From Xave to Everybody,

Yoshikazu TOSA

Since April, very ordinary days have glided away into the past.

School life is as usual. I only lost my temper once at the All Girls College.

While Jan is on vacation, I go to Ikeda on the second Sunday of the month. That day the Philippine ladies gather at 2:00 PM for Mass, too. Father Romeo comes from Takamatsu, but Jan wants someone around.

My asthma doesn't give me much trouble.

You should congratulate me, because recently I didn't send any "letters" around. That doesn't mean I don't have ideas I would like to share with you. For instance, We started the 'Immense Hope' operation, but if that is only a structural reform, I am afraid it won't arouse much enthusiasm in me. On what change of spirituality are the new structures based?

Only one example: In the last Spring meeting we exchanged opinions about poverty and sharing our 'money' with others. We opted for a status quo. In my eyes, we opted for conservatism. However, if we are persons (not only an individual) then we are human beings with a fundamental and creative freedom. We can freely and autonomously think and act. However, I know that such a freedom is connected with the freedom of others. We have our roots in others. We receive our freedom from others. And so, our freedom is the essence of solidarity. That is at the same time a call to accept our responsibility. Conservatism in the Church and the Congregation maybe provides stability (customs and habits). There is no need for personal thinking and responsibility (no need to worry). However responsible religious give form and substance to our mission vision. By so doing he creates human relations inside the community.

Past religious education was directed to a complete dependency, obedience without questions, and poverty by permission. We learned to leave responsibility to others.

On what spirituality is the Immense Hope revolution based, that I would like to know.

News from Nishi-Tokyo-shi

Jack DEELY

Months ago I tried emailing info about the change in the Tokyo address, but computer illiterate that I am, I failed to send the info simultaneously to all on the OMI list. The new snail mail address now is: Tokyo-to Nishi-Tokyo-shi Hoya-cho 6-8-17. My apologies.

As for news, some faculty and staff helped me to

celebrate my 60th back in April. I didn't think much about turning 60 until the Japanese referred to it as Kanreki --- with that, I felt more like 70...

On a more serious note, I've got another retreat for the deaf scheduled on the 20th and 21st of July in Nagoya. I've been trying to come up with something, but --- the well's dry! Any and all suggestions or ideas are most welcome. I hope to somehow develop something around that Sunday's Gospel on Mary and Martha. We shall see. Being in Nagoya and not being able to stop by the House there is a real shame, but I'll have to rush back for a Bible Class on the 22nd.

Am sorry to report that I will have to miss the OMI retreat again because I'll be traveling for the university. Along with the Section Chief of the Overseas Liaison Office, I'll be visiting some of our partner universities in the States.

Lastly, there is a major event in September that will keep me hopping. The National Catholic Deaf Association will be holding a convention from the 22nd to the 24th. Fr. Tom Coughlin, the first deaf priest in the world, will be joining us from New York. I'm happy to report that the bishops and priests have gradually showed a keener interest in a **signed mass** for the deaf and have expressed a desire to participate in Fr. Tom's liturgies. Fr. Tom, by the way, is presently involved in the training of **6 deaf seminarians** from around world. From my recent association with deaf Protestants, one thing is patently clear and that is the enthusiasm with which they live their faith. I'm sure there are many factors involved, but one major factor that is obvious to me is they have **Deaf Ministers** serving them. Maybe someday in the not too distant future there will be a deaf priest to serve deaf Japanese Catholics!

Good health and God bless,

西東京市便り

数ヶ月前、自宅の住所変更をOMI 会員全員に同時にメールでお知らせしようと思ったのですが、コンピュータ音痴の僕はそれに失敗しました。申し訳ありません。大変遅くなりましたが新住所をお知らせします:

〒202-0015

東京都西東京市保谷町 6-8-17

ニュースとしては、60 歳を学校の近くにできたばかりのアイリッシュパブで大勢の教職員に祝ってもらったことです。60 歳はたいしたことないと思っていたのに、日本の人たちは「還暦」と言うて聞かされて、急に 70 歳ぐらいになったような気分です。

まじめな話です。7月20日(金)、21日(土)、名古屋で聾者のための黙想会を行います。色々考えてはいるのですが、アイディアが枯渇してよい案が浮かびません。皆さんにお知恵を拝借したいのですが・・・マルタとマリアの話を中心にするつもりですので、ぜひ良い案をお教えてください。せっかく名古屋へ行くのですから、名古屋の皆さんにお目にかかりたかったのですが、翌 22 日(日)はいつもの聖書研究会があつて、東京へ飛んで帰らなければなりません。

ところで、今年の夏もまた上智の依頼で国際交流課の吉野課長と留学協定校を訪問してくる予定ですので、残念ながら OMI の黙想会には参加できそうにありません。

最後に、大きな行事として、9 月に全国カトリック聾信者大会があります。3 年に一度の大会です。アメリカから、世界ではじめての聾神父であるコフリン神父が来日してくださる予定です。この大会で初めて日本の健常の神父が聾信者のためのミサに関心を示して、参加してくれることになったのはうれしいことです。コフリン神父は聾神父の養成の必要性を感じ、世界中から 6 人の聾の神学生を集めて教育しています。僕がプロテスタントの聾信者と交流していて感じることは、プロテスタントの聾信者は積極的に教会に参加しようという意欲が見えることです。きっと、聾牧師さんの指導のせいだろうと思うのです。日本のカトリック教会にも聾神父が誕生してくれることを願っています。

Greetings from Itami!

Bradly ROZAIRO

It is going to be three years since I came to Itami. Life has been good for me so far.

Work in the parish is going on as usual. The parish of Itami is blessed with some young and active people. They are a big help to me. On the 10th of this month we will have the HANSHIN CHIKU TAIKAI(district gathering) here in Itami. At the moment we are getting ready for this event.

This april I joined a group of fifteen from Itami on a pilgrimage to Europe. We went to Rome, Assisi, Marseille(Aix), Lourdes and Fatima. We visited the OMI General House in Rome. Ron Laframboise was very happy to meet some of his old friends. Going to Aix, the "Cradle of our Congregation" was something very special to me. I was happy to say mass at the tomb of our Founder. Lourdes impressed me very much. I really felt that it is a place for prayer. I think, the devotion to our Lady grows specially, because of Lourdes. On the whole, it was a very good pilgrimage.

I am happy to let you know that Itami church has it's home page!: www.itami.net/ It is only in Japanese(sorry for those who can not read Japanese).

"I was in prison and you visited me"

Giovanni ZEVOLA

Everything started with some letters sent by a Nigerian from Taejon city. He used to visit our office every once an a while and due to some regrettable circumstances he is now confined to the prison. After receiving so many letters I decided to go once there and visit him, that was just the beginning of what can be considered a further expression of the apostolate with the migrant workers. By now the visit to the prison are regular and we just started to visit the new probation center in Hwasongkun

To live in a different country has already its difficulties (language, food and above all cultural differences), so how much more to be confined in a prison where is not possible to enjoy the minimum of possibilities in terms of relationship? If it this difficult for a Korean imagine how much more for a foreign who will have nobody to visit him/her, simply because the friends are undocumented? For a migrant worker to be in prison is the experience of being isolated and left alone.

Why do we do this ministry?

Because we do believe that human dignity can never be removed whatever we do and in spite of our possible negative experiences in life. The gospel is telling us that the prodigal son while leaving far away from home came to his sense and decided to go back to the father's house "He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity and he ran threw his arms around his son and kissed him" (Lk 15,20) There is always a Father waiting for us to embrace us and telling once again : "you are my beloved" (Mk 1,11). I have seen people in Taejon prison who are now better persons because they have learned from their experiences, regretting their past and ready to start with new spirit as new persons. One of them is Sanjit, a small Indian from Calcutta who is now back with his old parents being their joy and strength.

What do we do when we meet in the prison?

I follow a group of people coming from different countries (Nigeria, Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and South America) and thanks to the generosity and good will of the prison personnel and officials we can meet freely in one room for about two hours. We start always with a moment of prayer where in spite of the fact that we have different religions (Christians, Muslim and Indus) we do acknowledge the importance of faith in our lives particularly in time of need. A second moment is represented by a sharing regarding a particular topic (human relationship, advent, Ramadan a parable from the gospels), the aim is to come to know ourselves in a deeper way so that we can start to relate to others in a trusting way.

Without a dimension of faith is not easy to persevere in this ministry, too many are the difficulties (people asking always all kind of small favors, embassies reluctant to help out their nationals, bureaucratic impediments and sense of inadequacy). There is a need to always refresh the reason that motivates our action; "I was a prisoner and you came to visit me"(Mt 25)

Few things I learned that I'd like to share with you:

to the people in prison: remember that we are always God's children no matter what our past is, so do not give up your personal dignity:

to the migrant workers and the people who are supporting our apostolate: there are walls that we build within ourselves (coworkers and family members) due to conflicts and misunderstanding; those are our prisons from where we need to come out following St Paul words " never get tired of doing good".

"God raised Jesus from death setting him free from its power because it was impossible that death should hold him prisoner" (acts 2,24). The risen Lord might give to all of us the necessary strength to overcome evil by good and to come out from darkness into light.

From Yoshizuka

John Iwo

Last May 3rd, Len INUI, Leo KAWAGUCHI and

myself visited the historical churches of Tachi-Arai, Imamura and Hongo in the Fukuoka Diocese. We took the Kyushu expressway and reached Imamura in less than an hour which was fast enough considering that it was a holiday and the roads were crowded. We traversed the plains of Chikugo which looked carpeted with fields of wheat! It has been a long time that I have not seen this kind of rural scenery. As we went farther, the sight of a red-brick church could be seen from a distance. This was the Imamura Church. It was strange however that as we entered the village, the red-brick church building seemed to have disappeared from sight! We drove through narrow roads and finally Imamura Church, famous for its red-brick outside walls, again reappeared.

History says that the building plans of Imamura Church was first drafted in the 4th year of Meiji (1908) and construction was completed in 2nd year of Taisho (1913). There is a feeling of awe as one enters the church building and observe the way it was constructed in the olden days. The communion rail, a reminder of an age gone-by, is still there. Huge stone columns line the middle part of the building. The ceiling is representative of the method of construction common in Nagasaki in those days. The parish hall is adorned with ten different statues of the Blessed Virgin made of wood or ceramic.

It is believed that in 1560 the Christians settled on these plains to escape persecution. It took them until the Meiji Restoration to be reunited with the Christians in Urakami (Nagasaki).

The relics of Saint Peter and Saint Anthony also adorn the historical church of Hongo.

5月3日、乾神父様、川口神父様と三人で大刀洗の二つの教会、今村教会と本郷教会に行った。九州道を走ったが、連休とあって道はいくらかこんでいた。しかし一時間あまりで今村教会についた。筑後平野は珍しく麦畑であった。長年このような麦畑は見たことがなかった。その畑の中にこつ然とレンガ造りの大聖堂が浮かび上がってきた。今村教会である。それが不思議なことに村に入っていくと全然姿を消し、どこにあるのかわからなくなった。そして狭い入り口の道路を通して、レンガ造りの大聖堂についた。

明治4年(1908年)に計画され、大正2年(1913年)に完成した。まず内に入って圧倒された。昔の大聖堂の内部構造である。それに聖体拝領台も残っていた。褐色に輝く太い柱は親石の上に立っている。天井の梁は当時の長崎建築のものである。そして信徒会館には木製と陶器のマリア観音が十体ほど置かれていた。

1560年頃からこの地方にキリシタン集団が生まれ、迫害の時代をこの様な平野の中で過ごし、明治になって浦上の信徒たちと連絡が取れたのである。

本郷教会には聖ペトロの骨と聖アントニオの骨が飾られていた。

Summer Vocation Camp

The 16th Summer Vocation Camp this year is scheduled for August 1-4 at Geisei Mura, Aki, Kochi.

Retreat

The Retreat this year will be preached by Fr. David POWER of the U.S.A. Province. Fr. David is presently teaching in Tahiti. The retreat will be from September 3rd, Monday (arrivals on Sept 2) to 7th, Friday, noon.

Visitors

Fr. Kajol Gomes from Bangladesh (early June).
Fr. Raymond Crowe, from USA, a classmate of Bert Silver and JK Mahoney (September).
Jack Quinn and daughter Jennifer (August)

Prayers

For the Sick: Tom MAHER was in the hospital during the Holy Week for an infection on his leg. Ray BOURGOIN and Xave TOSA took turns in taking care of the Holy Week and Easter liturgies in Nakamura.

James JEYACHANDRAN had a knee operation after a bad fall while playing soccer.

Prayers are requested for the brother of Jan VAN HOYDONCK who has been diagnosed with a brain tumor. Also for the eldest son of Eddie QUIOCHO, Masaya, who figured in a serious traffic accident in Fukuoka. Eddie's son was in coma for days but have started to come out of it. Eddie thanks everyone for their prayers and expression of support.

Your prayers are also requested for our sick relatives: Ray's mother, Jerry's father, Bradley's father and other relatives whom we fail to mention here.

FLASH! Just when we were about print out this issue, news about Bill MAHER'S traffic accident in Chicago came in. Tom and Wency were able to talk to Bill by phone from his room at the Loyola Univ. Medical Center. Bill have broken ribs and knee caps.

Ordinations in the Region: Scholastic brothers Jerry Villas and Howard Tatel, Filipino scholastics who spent two years with us are on the final months of their studies. Jerry and Howard are scheduled to be ordained to the diaconate on August 15th. The Delegation of Thailand has two newly ordained priests: Fr. Matthew B. Rachakit, OMI and

Fr. Peter W. Phuthasa, OMI. They were ordained last June 3rd. In Australia, Bro. Christian Fini, OMI will be ordained a priest on June 30. Congratulations!

For the Dead: Fr. John Savage of the former Eastern American Province and a good friend, mentor and spiritual guide to many of us died last April 24 at the age of 91. He came to preach our retreat some years ago.

From the editor

Nobuhiko

The next issue is scheduled for September 15. Please send in your contributions by September 5.

Anniversaries

■ Birthday:

July 04 1962 Mauro CONCARDI
31 1925 Lei SIMONS

August

04 1960 Nobu YAGI
23 1936 Ange SIANI
31 1928 Bert SILVER

September

06 1930 John IWO
17 1964 Jude PEIRISPULLE
17 1967 James JEYACHANDRAN
20 1925 John MAHONEY
22 1943 Fran HAHN

■ Ordination / Final Vows:

July 01 1951 Jan VAN HOYDONCK
05 1953 Lei SIMONS
21 1998 Varam ANTHONYSAMY

August

04 1991 Nobu YAGI (Final Vows)
22 1992 Jude PEIRISPULLE
22 1992 Bradley ROZAIRO

September

08 1990 Giovanni ZEVOLA

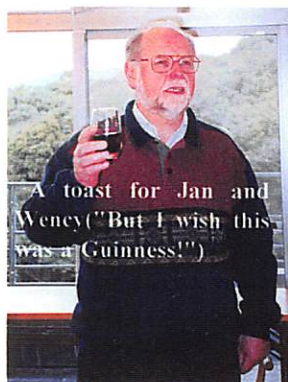
■ Death:

July 03 1982 Timothy MULVEY
23 1981 Sueho TSUDA

September

04 1975 Daniel WARD

Glimpses from the Provincial Congress 2001



A toast for Jan and Wency ("But I wish this was a Guinness!")

"Does your PC speak Italian?" Members of the Secretariat at work. ↓



↑ Jubilarians slice their Jubilee cakes.

Group work. Working hard on the Vision-Mission Statement? Or is it something else? ↓





June 19, 2001

Dear Brother Oblates,

Although Bro. Yagi has just put out the most recent newsletter (which, by the way, has an impressive layout), I decided to send out this short letter for a couple of important announcements:

1. RESTRUCTURATION in the congregation. If you remember, the General Council has asked for our opinion as to how we foresee the future of our unit (the Vice Province of Japan) now that the category of "Vice Province" has already been scrapped.

Please read the enclosed letter from the General Council which emphasizes its decision, to wit, **"... the General Council does not favor Japan becoming a Province at this juncture."** The letter, signed by Fr. Ryszard Szmydki, Assistant General is self-explanatory. I don't think it brings joy to anyone of us, but at the same time, we are asked to see the decision of the General Council in the context of the mission of the whole congregation. You are free to send your reactions to the decision straight to the Superior General.

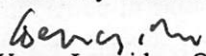
2. TRAVEL INSURANCE and Update on Bill MAHER: Bill has been discharged from the Loyola University Medical Center where he and his friend were rushed after the vehicular accident and is recuperating at the house of his brother Jack in Chicago (Tel. 1-773-631-7598).

Bill's accident is a timely reminder to all of us to take a travel insurance policy EVERYTIME we go out of the country. I know of the temptation to skip it, with the hope that nothing will happen. Accidents oftentimes happen when are least prepared for it. There are different ways of buying insurance: In my case, I don't want a package deal because it can be very expensive so I usually have it customized to my needs and for a much cheaper price but with the basic coverage, such as sudden illness while traveling, accident, death, transportation of relatives incase of death, etc. All of these are for an average of three thousand yen if traveling within two weeks, etc.

3. OTHERS. District Superiors: The following have been confirmed during the Provincial Council Meeting last June 15th, in Itami: John IWO for Fukuoka District; Xave TOSA for Kochi District; Bert SILVER (reappointed) for Tokushima District. Itami District is being asked to select a Superior other than the current District Treasurer as the two assignments may not be held by one person.

I would like to thank Ray BOURGOIN for completing the financial reports of the past fiscal year for both Rome and the Japanese government on time and with every yen accounted for!

Fraternally in Saint Eugene,


Wency Laguidao, OMI
Provincial



OBLATI DI MARIA IMMACOLATA

Curia Generalizia

C.P. 9061 00100 Roma - Aurelio Italia

Very Rev. Fr. Wenceslao Laguidao OMI
Provincial,
5-3-21 Umenoki,
Itami City 664-0856,
Japan

June 7, 2001

Dear Father Wency,

On behalf of Father General I thank you for your letter dated March 22, 2001, with the enclosed results of the discussions conducted on the district level, regarding the future status of your Vice Province.

During the last plenary session in Buffalo MN, the General Council was informed about the results of your consultation, namely about the overall desire of the Vice Province of Japan *"to be allowed to remain as a Province"*. Your suggestion to put your unit *"on a period of probation"* was also taken into consideration. At the same time, the Council members underlined your openness for an eventual restructuring. We thank you for your attitude of keeping the options open, having in perspective the greater interest of the entire Congregation.

In the light of the last Chapter's decision to discontinue the category of "Vice Province", and the introduction of new criteria for the constitution of Provinces (among others "about 40 members"), the General Council interprets it as a mandate to reduce the number of small autonomous units and to enhance the structure of a Province for the sake of our mission. Thus, the General Council feels that we should reflect more about the possibilities of augmenting the present structure of your unit.

Consequently, I would like to inform you that the General Council does not favour Japan becoming a Province at this juncture. We would need another exchange of views on this matter, and the next Inter Chapter meeting in Mexico (October 2001) will offer such an excellent occasion.

Wency, I take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership in the Region and for your service to the Oblates in Japan and in Korea.

Fraternally yours in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Ryszard Szmydki, OMI
Assistant General



O.M.I. JAPAN/KOREA

OMI Information

Newsletter of the Vice Province of Japan

SEPTEMBER
2001

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate



16th OBLATE VOCATION SUMMER CAMP

Fourty nine participants of the 16th Oblate Summer Vocation Camp gathered at the Ikoigaoka Undo Koen (憩ヶ丘運動公園) last August 1 to 4. The campers were from the seven Oblate parishes of Zendana, Itami, Tokushima, Naruto, Nakajimacho, Aki, Koga and Yoshizuka. Students ranging from university to elementary levels were joined by some adults, including eight Oblates. Br. Nobu YAGI was the head camp organizer assisted by scholastics, Brs. Kenichi FURUKAWA and Akio HORIUCHI. Parishioners from the nearby parish of Aki were also around to help the organizers.



Irreplaceable Participants

That Irreplaceable YOU! (かけがえのないきみへ)

Japanese young people are usually part of a faceless crowd, in school or in the community where they belong. Importance is placed on group behavior and conformity and individuality is oftentimes lost. During the camp, an effort was made to appreciate the fact that God has called each one of us by name. God knows us as individuals and not as mere members of a faceless crowd. We are unique and irreplaceable. Each participant was made to realize and appreciate this fact.

Discussions revolved around the fact that God calls us to plan the course of our own life and our own future. We can make a difference in school and in the society where we live, if we want to. Discussions were lively though the age of the members of the groups ranged from elementary school age to a number of young and not-so-young Oblates and parishioners joining the discussions. The topics were difficult which might have left more questions than answers in the tender mind and heart of the young participants. The Eucharist was the center of the activities of the day. There were sports activities, parlor games at night, or just time to spend

together away from home and school homework and the pressures of daily life.

"The Young People Who Came to Love the Philippines"

Mission for Youth Educational Exposure Program: August 21-27

Leo KAWAGUCHI

Not even the typhoon that was threatening to cancel all flights from Kansai last August 21 could stop the group of 13 young people from departing for Manila for an exposure program. The members of the group were young people from the different Oblate parishes. In Manila, scholastic Kenichi FURUKAWA who was spending his summer break there and Provincial Wency LAGUIDAO were at the airport to welcome us when we arrived.

The group stayed at the Institute for Social Order at the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City. The first day was spent visiting Oblate places around Manila. First destination was the parish of Bagong Baryo where they were welcomed by the parish priest Fr. Oscar LUCAS and some parishioners. Next stop was Notre Dame of Greater Manila where the senior students and their teachers, led by the school director Fr. Jun JACOBÉ prepared a grand welcome for our group, complete with dances, songs and a sumptuous meal. There was time for our group and the students of ND Manila to forget about language barrier and exchange pleasantries, gifts, email addresses, souvenirs, and what-have-you, only known to young people of their age.

The next three days were spent on a small island called "Talim" (meaning: sharp, since the shape of the small island is like a pointed sword.) on Laguna de Bay about an hour away from Metro Manila. To go to the island, we took a small wooden boat that could carry about 20 people. A storm was bringing in heavy rains. We were fetched by "Nick" a young man from the island who was to be our guide the next 3 days. Nick belongs to a prayer group that lives a life in imitation of the disciples of St. Francis of Assisi. The island could only be visited by a priest several times a year and this situation has encouraged lay people like Nick to take the leadership in the community's prayer life, catechetical instruction, youth leadership, etc. The community is reminiscent of rural Japan 40 years ago. The group immediately got a first-hand training in making handicrafts out of bamboo. Several families played hosts to the members of our group for nights' lodging.

The experience in Talim Island has left an oasis in the hearts of the young people in the group and will for sure reverberate for sometime. The warmth of



the families that gave us lodging, the welcome reception that made us feel at home, the smile on their faces, the cultural exchange with the young people of the island who were coming home for the weekend all done through songs, dances and even some Japanese games, etc. were gifts that we received from the people of Talim. The welcome party went on beyond midnight, everyone was tired but, surely, our group have experienced something that it cannot experience here in Japan.

From Talim Island, we went back to our quarters at the Ateneo University. The group had the scare of its life when one member fell ill, with high fever, shortness of breath, etc. We called up a Japanese sister who lives nearby for help. The sick member was brought to an emergency hospital on a stretcher while the rest prayed the rosary ... after three hours, the sick member came home by taxi, looking nonchalant, as if nothing had happened at all. Everyone believed it was the power of prayer that cured her.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who helped make our exposure program successful: to Fr. Jun JACOB and his students and teachers at Notre Dame of Greater Manila, to the people of Talim led by Nick, to Sr. Miriam YAMASHITA of the Visitation Sisters in Manila and her community, to the seminarians of the Oblate formation houses in Quezon City, to the Oblates of the Manila district. We want to go back in the near future. Perhaps in the months of March and April when there is less threat of rain and when the magoes are even sweeter, we were told. *Maraming salamat po!*



Mission for Youth. Educational Exposure Program, Philippines, Aug. 21-27.

From the Provincial's Desk:

Dear Brother Oblates,

First and foremost, on behalf of the Vice Province, I would like to thank once again Fr. David POWER for the spiritually invigorating retreat. His talks were like fresh water on parched land, bringing life to weary souls. Thank you very much Fr. David!

Below are items 1 to 6 from the Provincial's Desk.

Fraternally in Christ,

Wency LAGUIDAO

1. Interchapter Meeting in Cuautla, Mexico:

As I already have announced earlier, I will be attending the Interchapter Meeting in Cuautla, Mexico from October 6 to 20. (I will be away from Sept. 25 to October 30 or 31.) About 80 participants are expected to attend. Before the Interchapter Meeting, participants usually visit the Oblate missions in the region for a period of exposure. I have asked go to Brazil, particularly to Belem (where Genivaldo comes from), which is another six hours from Sao Paulo. I will spend two nights in Sao Paulo and four nights in Belem. The feeling of awe due to the overwhelming vastness of the region of Latin America is starting to precede my first visit.

During the Interchapter Meeting, Father General will make a report on the state of the congregation since the last General Chapter. There will be an update on the ongoing project: *Bringing to Life an Immense Hope*.

Something of foremost interest to us will be the discussion on the future the Vice Provinces. As I have said once, let us listen to what the General Administration has to say about the future of the Vice Province of Japan. We would like to take note that we do not fulfill the minimum number of members required for a Vice Province but we also take note and are thankful for the gift of *internationality* in us as a unit. More than numbers, internationality was emphasized more in the last General Chapter.

Other matters to be taken up are: number of regions; report from the host region of Latin America; report from the Treasurer General; remote preparation for the Chapter of 2004; first and ongoing formation - internationality; Communications and Media; Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation.

2. Thank You! As we await the naming of the members of the Provincial Council, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to the members of the outgoing council, Leo KAWAGUCHI, Jack DEELY, Xave TOSA, Maurizio GIORGIANNI and Ray BOURGOIN (Secretary), for their support and service to the Vice Province. Thank you, too, to the outgoing district superiors. Even before the new council is named, we have already scheduled a joint meeting of the outgoing council together with the new council on November 3rd, Saturday, in Itami.

3. Archdiocese of Osaka: The Archdiocese of Osaka has been working on a plan to unify all institutions in the archdiocese (parishes, schools, kindergartens, hospitals, etc.) into the team ministry or the "block" approach to ministry. Under this plan, all institutions in the archdiocese will be under the supervision of the archdiocese and will affect assigning of personnel, planning, etc.

Archbishop Leo IKENAGA has met the Provincials and Superiors of congregations and groups working in the Archdiocese of Osaka to introduce the plan. The second meeting will be held on September 20-21 in Nagoya.

The Oblates are involved in two places in the archdiocese, namely, Itami Parish and Itami Kindergarten. We can expect that these two places will be affected by the plans being made in the archdiocese.

WORKING PLAN

Immense Hope Project: Vice Province of Japan and Mission of Korea

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Within this unit there are two distinct sub-units, Japan and Korea. Since the problems facing each sub-unit are different as regards the Church and Society, each sub-unit will operate independently, though they will keep each other informed of their work.

However the time lines are the same and all reports are to be sent to the Unit Animator. The Animation Committee includes members from both sub-units.

2. The Project will be launched officially during the Oblate Kochi Christmas Party December 27, 2001.

3. A special Liturgy to reinforce the celebration of our history as a unit will be held at our 2002 Spring Meeting which will be held April 2 to April 5, 2002.

4. The facilitator/animator of each district was chosen by the members of that district, with the proviso that this person make sure the minutes of each meeting are recorded and that this report is sent to the Unit Animator within a week of the meeting. He will make the minutes himself or have a secretary do it.

5. The district meetings will be held at the normal monthly gatherings, unless a district opts to do the work at another time. The Study days, however, are on set dates.

6. For the study of Mission, Church and Society, the following will be the norm, but again districts may opt to add to these.

a. In Japan:

1) The Honshu/Kyushu groups will meet in Itami.

2) The Shikoku groups will meet in Awa-Ikeda.

b. In Korea the meetings will be held in Seoul.

7. Four full day meetings will be held in 2002 for the purpose of discussion and discernment on the 4 topics that the project makers have assigned us. The first 3 of those meetings will be held between January 2002 and June 2002. The 4th meeting will be in the fall of 2002.

8. The final draft of the Mission Statement will be drawn up by a team of 15 men, immediately after the end of our Spring Meeting of 2003. This group will consist of the 5 members of the Provincial Council, the 5 members of the Animation Committee, and 5 other members, one from each of the 5 districts, elected by the members of the district.

B. PARTICULAR NORMS.

1. Working Plan

a. The first draft of this Working Plan was completed April 25, 2001.

b. It was in the hands of the unit members before April 30, 2001. They gave their reactions to the Unit Animator before June 10, 2001.

c. The Animation Committee, after hearing the reactions, made its recommendations to the Major Superior and Council. They will finalize the document in time to send to Rome by August 31, 2001.

2. District Meetings The districts will meet a minimum of 10 times over the 3 years, to wit.,

a. Getting started

1) once to elect a facilitator/animator and/or secretary for the district and to consider the first draft of the Working Plan (May 2001)

2) once to elect the representative from the district to participate on the team of 15 (as early as possible after we know the make-up of the new Council in September)

b. Study days

3) once on **Society** [in Japan] with Yagi Nobuhiko, OMI in Itami (Sep 17) / Awa-Ikeda (Sep 24), [in Korea] with Daniel O'Keeffe, SSC (Jun 25, 2001)

4) once on **Mission** [in Japan] with Maurizio Giorgianni, OMI, Itami (Oct 22) / Awa-Ikeda (Oct 29), [in Korea] with Daniel O'Keeffe, SSC (Aug 6, 2001)

5) once on **Church** [in Japan] with Adolfo Nicolas, SJ in Itami (Nov 12) / Awa-Ikeda (Nov 26), [in Korea] with Mons. Dupont, MEP (Nov 19, 2001)

c. Reflection Phase I

6) once on the topic: **Focusing our Vision** (Jan / Feb 2002)

7) once on the topic: **Evaluation of our Current Missionary Practices** (Mar/Apr 2002)

8) once on the topic: **New Millennium, New Perspectives** (May / Jun 2002)

9) once on the topic: **New Millennium, New Calls** (Sep / Oct 2002)

d. Reflection Phase II

10) once to give their representative to the team of 15 **input** for the Mission Statement meeting by reacting to the Working Document. (Dec 2002 / Feb 2003)

3. Working Document

After each district meeting, the facilitator or secretary of the district will send the minutes of the meeting to the Unit Animator within a week so that he can compile them into a Working Document that he must produce before the end of November 2002.

After all the meetings are over, the Unit Animator will show and discuss the document with the Animation Committee and then with the Major Superior for the same purpose. Then the Unit Animator will share with every member of the unit, the results of the meetings in each district (at the latest by the end of January 2003).

At this time, Feb/Mar 2003, the unit members will give their reaction to the document, answering such questions, as:

Which are most important of the common elements;

Which other elements should be stressed;

Which elements should be omitted?

These reactions will be conveyed to the Unit Animator as soon as discussions are over. The Spring Meeting of 2003 will be used for this process, thus assuring that all have sufficient input before the team of 15 works on the Planning Document and the Mission Statement right after this meeting is over.

4. Planning Document and Mission Statement

These documents will be worked on by the team of 15, mentioned above, on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday after the Spring Meeting (Tuesday, March 25 to Friday, March 28, 2003) is over. This means the meeting of the 15 will be Saturday, March 29 to Monday, March 31, 2003. David Ullrich, OMI will be our facilitator.

These documents will be finalized by the Animation Committee and Major Superior before September 30, 2003.

5. Strategizing Phase

a. Detailed plan for implementation and Initial version of the Strategy Document

This will be conducted by the Major Superior and his Council, with the Unit Animator in a consultative role, with due respect to the need for consultation with all the members of the unit. The Unit Animator moderates this meeting. It might take more than one meeting. These will be held sometime between September and November 2003.

b. Peer Visitation

1) Three or four major superiors from outside the unit, named by the General Council, will visit and evaluate our work in all its phases. This evaluation will be finished by the end of March 2004.

2) The Major Superior and Council will then finalize the Strategy Document and send it to Rome before June 30, 2004.

4.Ministry to Young People. They are called by different names: Gen X, Gen Y, etc. Here in Japan, they are sometimes called the "Lost Generation." They are today's Japanese youth, born to the affluence of material wealth but desperately wanting in family life, human values, the very basic love and respect that generations past nurtured around the warmth of the proverbial home.

What can we do for the young people in our midst? Br. Nobu YAGI and Leo KAWAGUCHI have started with small efforts to do something for them through group sessions, individual counseling, home visits, vocation camp, exposure program in foreign countries, participation in the World Youth Day, etc.

The most important, I think, is the precious time that we can spend with them just to listen to their hopes and dreams and to reassure them that, yes, somebody is there willing to listen. Let us give Nobu and Leo our encouragement and support.

5.Computer Virus Attack. Nobody feels safe from computer virus attack. Like terrorism, it is vicious, no one knows when and in what form it will attack. When you receive an email with the name of somebody you know, with an attachment that looks like [wencylaguidao@doc.&%\\$*!#](mailto:wencylaguidao@doc.&%$*!#), DO NOT OPEN the attachment. It is infected with virus. When in doubt, call up the person whose name appears on your incoming mail to verify. Remember: the virus, in most cases, is not coming from the person whose name appears on your screen.

6.Prayers. The terrorist attacks on American landmarks and institutions and on the American people were hard to bear. The images we saw on TV were more for fiction than reality, until September 11, 2001. I had the privilege to have studied in NYC and the places destroyed were very familiar sites. We can only pray for the victims and their families.

One of the hijacked plane's pilot was the uncle of the wife of one of Bert SILVER'S nephews. Let us pray for him. I sent an assurance of prayers from us to Fr. David KALERT, Provincial of the USA Province.

REV. FR. DAVID KALERT, OMI
PROVINCIAL
OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE
PROVINCE OF U.S.A.

DEAR FATHER KALERT,
PLEASE KNOW THAT WE HERE IN JAPAN ARE ALL
PRAYING FOR YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA
DURING THESE MOST TRAGIC MOMENTS. MAY
GOD'S PEACE REIGN OVER AND ABOVE ALL.
FR. WENCY LAGUIDAO, OMI
And THE OBLATES OF THE VICE PROVINCE OF
JAPAN

Dear Wency,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful words and prayers. While these have been difficult times, hopefully we will learn to find more peaceful ways to resolve differences. Things will never be the same after all of this, for sure. Thank you again, and please greet the Oblates for us.
David (Kalert)

IMMENSE HOPE

The Animation Committee (Ray BOURGOIN - Unit Animator, members: Fran HAHN, Nobu YAGI, Brad ROZAIRO and Giovanni ZEVOLA) of the Immense Hope Project has completed the working plan that should steer the Vice Province until the Fall of the year 2004. The working plan will be presented by the Provincial during the Interchapter Meeting in Mexico. The committee has met several times to complete the working plan. Their last meeting was last September 4th.

The project will be launched officially during the annual Christmas Party in Kochi on December 27, this year. Three input meetings on the subjects of "Society," "Mission," and "Church" have been scheduled at different dates and venues in Korea and Japan during the months of September, October and November. (cf. Supplement)

N.B. The following letter was received by email as part of the Update on the Immense Hope Project. The message is from the General Council and was sent by Fr. R. Szmydki, Assistant General. Ed.

And they shall still bear fruit in their old age. Ps 92:15

Dear Veteran Oblates!, our message is simple: **you are missionaries!**

"Mission does not cease with age; it merely changes form. Advanced age is a grace and a responsibility for the elderly themselves. They are called to respond to new calls which are often more demanding because they are mixed with suffering, powerlessness and separation.The aged and the sick remind us that mission is cooperating with Christ and it is accomplished first by the quality of our existence and by our prayers" (Fr. Zago, Chapter 1992).

You are missionaries! Now, you are being invited to give a fresh contribution to the Oblate mission. The occasion is the **Immense Hope** project.

We envisage a double contribution: a) you are invited to share the wisdom of your age and your experience, the memory of your past missionary endeavors, the Oblate values which you lived, the wonders that the Lord worked in you; b) by your prayer, you reinforce the contemplative dimension of our life and our ministry, and thus help the Oblate mission.

You are missionaries! Let us think of our Patriarch Abraham! who, "hoped against all hopes" and without considering his advanced age, trudged along towards the Promised Land. Once more you are cordially invited to accompany the Congregation yet a little further: to take an active role with your Province in discerning its mission, to inspire the young Oblates by your daring, to pray for the Congregation in this crucial moment of its history.

And you, young Oblates, are invited to appreciate in your community and in your Province the presence of Oblates who are advanced in age, or are being tested by infirmities! Ask their prayer. Listen to them. Encourage them to take part in the

celebrations of our past missionary achievements, involve them in the Community discernment of the signs-of-times, and in the re-founding of our commitments. All the Oblates are missionaries!

Regardless of our age let us give birth in us, to an Immense Hope!

Rome, September 8, 2001

ANNA'S HOUSE - Bringing Hope to People in the Streets



Papal Nuncio visits the Anna's House, February 2001.

It has been known to us as "Vincenzo's Soup Kitchen." Vincenzo BORDO disagrees with the name given. "Soup kitchen" is a generic name given to ministries that provide hot meal to the homeless and for Vincenzo, it falls short of describing what they are actually doing. The correct name of the center is "Anna's House."



Volunteers prepare kimchi from a mountain of donated vegetables

The center started in 1997 and the key money that started the project came from a generous Korean man whose mother was named "Anna," hence the name of the center. Although feeding the hungry has been the major activity of the center from the time it was started, the services offered have branched out to medical, counseling, referrals, etc., even providing much needed haircut to people who cannot afford to have one. In general, the center gives some rays of hope to people who otherwise would not see them at all.

The center offers a three-step care of: 1. Getting to know the person by talking to him or her and knowing about his or her life; 2. Offering basic assistance such as food, clothing and shelter. This is followed by introduction to a self-support program through cultivation of self-esteem, introduction to job

opportunities, teaching basic skills to find a job, etc. 3. Follow-up programs.

Korea, as a nation and as a people, might appear rich to those outside since it is among the fastest growing economies in the region. But the number of people, young and old, who have been displaced by progress and are left in the streets to fend for themselves has been increasing dramatically.

The plight of young people who live in the streets and are victims of drug traffickers cannot be over-emphasized. Most of them have resorted to drugs as a result of their traumatic family experience. One young man in his early 20's said: "My mother left us when I was fifth grade in elementary school and my father killed himself from the shock. I have lived in the streets since then." Drugs, unwanted pregnancies, vagrancies, a life without a future are the "daily bread" of the homeless youth of Korea.



Anna's House counsellor, Andrea, (now an OMI aspirant) with some of his wards.

The center has started a counseling service for the homeless youth. With it's meager budget, it hires a professional counselor. One of the counselors, Andrea, who has a degree in counseling and was one of the most active in counseling the youth has decided to join the Oblates! The center's loss and the Oblates' gain!

Vincenzo constantly appears on Korea's popular magazines and TV programs to make appeal for his ministry. He has been recognized by the city of Songnam for his efforts, the only foreigner who has received such award.

FORMATION NEWS



Br. A. Horiuchi with Indian scholastics.

Scholastics Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA came back from their month-long summer exposure program, in India and the Philippines, respectively. Akio was able to visit the different formation houses in the delegation and a few missions in the fast-growing delegation. He was under the supervision of Fr. Francis NALLAPPAN, Superior of scholastics in India. Kenichi had a rich experience with the large seminary communities in Manila (more than 80 juniors and about 12 scholastics). He was asked to teach Japanese language to a group of juniors. He was under the supervision of Fr. Manny MINA, Superior of scholastics in Philippines.



Three new deacons, Brs. Jerry, Howard and Gil, are flanked by Bsp. Lampon (ordaining bishop), Br. K. Furukawa, Fr. F. Labaglay (Phil. Provincial) and Fr. W. Laguidao.

Incidentally, the two Filipino scholastics who were with us for two years, Brs. Jerry VILLAS and Howard TATEL, were ordained to the diaconate last August 18. Congratulations!

Brs. Jerry and Howard distribute Holy Communion.



COURSE FOR FORMATORS

Br. Nobu YAGI will attend a psycho-spiritual course for formators at the Oblate Missionary Center in Manila from October 20 to December 20. The course is a project of the Asia Oceania Conference of Formators. Resource person is Fr. Silvaratnam, OMI of Jaffna Province and the staff of his center which is based in London, England.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2002

Preparations are underway for the World Youth Day 2002 which will be held in Toronto, Canada. An Oblate gathering will be held at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Cape from July 18-21, for youths from Oblate places around the world, before the World Youth Day proper. Leo KAWAGUCHI and Ray BOURGOIN have been asked to lead the delegation of young people from Oblate parishes in Japan.

JAPANESE OBLATE SHARING FUND

During its most recent meeting last September 3rd, the Finance Committee (members: Ray BOURGOIN-secretary, Leo KAWAGUCHI, Ange SIANI and Brad ROZAIRO), made headway in its effort to draft the Vice Province's "finance directory." Among the items discussed was the plan, that will be submitted for approval, to set up a Japanese Oblate Sharing Fund, a humble effort to participate in existing network of sharing funds that help other units in the Asia-Oceania region. During the past years, the Vice Province have been helping small projects in the region.

From Fran

Francis HAHN

After a terribly hot summer things have cooled off somewhat but I doubt that I will last. I always anticipate the worst, and then I'm never disappointed! From Sept and the Retreat things will get hectic here. The Diocesan Day will see the Bishop come to confirm 25 in Naruto. 13 from here. I've spent two Saturdays a month, since April, preparing the 13 from here, and today, Aug. 31st, we have mini retreat, from then on it's up to them and the Holy Spirit, not necessarily in that order! I have a bible class at the NHK Culture center, twice a month and will be teaching weekly at a Junior college 3 hrs of English conversation, to 100 students, 50 per class, and that's as lot of fun, but need the income. Then we have the monthly meetings in Ikeda, they've asked me to be on the Kindergarten Board, as Kanji, so that's another trip to Koga this month, the parish is getting Bazaar fever, and I have been asked to be the head of the Shimin Christmas, this year, which is all honorary and no work, but you have to attend the preparations and smile. Anyway I'm not listing these things to try and impress any one, I can think of 30 of you who have a lot more going than that, but still it's a bit much to think how my life flies, and you want to pull the break cord but there is none. Besides all that there's the animation committee, a truly important service, I've started a parish visitation, and there are about 8 to 10 people who are preparing for baptism. Thank God the flower watering and grass cutting will end soon. (o~o). Dave Ullrich will be in Japan next month (Oct.) and I hope he'll be down for a few days, and my cousin who lived in Hiroshima may be over for the Bazaar. Life marches on so I'd better get in line and go with the flow. Haven't written for the newsletter in so long that I'm feeling guilty, but now that I've gotten that off my chest, I can relax probably and sit back and read your contributions. I like doing that more.

キリシタンの島訪問記

Takaji IWO

7月16日(月)朝10時過ぎ、吉塚教会出発。川口神父様の運転で乾神父様と三人で上五島訪問に出発した。上五島訪問を思い付いたのは、吉塚教会で結婚する青年たちは、ほとんどが上五島出身者なので、是非一度見ておきたかった。正午前、佐世保に到着。午後2時のフェリーで上五島に向

かった。梅雨の晴れ間で海はおだやかであった。午後4時45分、有川港に着く。これから丸尾教会、青砂ヶ浦教会、曾根教会を訪問。午後7時、ホテル新魚の目に着く。翌17日(火)朝9時出発、絵袋教会に10時頃着き、これより再び南下して、桐教会に行き、次いで奈良尾港で昼食をする。帰り浜串教会を経て、鯛ノ浦教会訪問。旧天主堂は信徒会館になっていた。ルルドは非常に美しく、水が今ここんと湧いていた。上五島には30の教会があり、各漁村に教会があった。神の島、キリシタンの島である。

7月15日(日)午後から川口神父様の実家訪問にお供をして天草に行った。崎津教会に着いたのは午後6時であった。7時頃、川口神父様の家に行き夕食の後、民宿に行った。翌朝、大江教会で御ミサをし、昼食の後本渡教会を訪問し、キリシタン資料館に行った。天草四郎の像と聖体とカリスの画かれた旗を見た。鬼頭港からフェリーで長崎の口津港に渡り、島原を経て午後8時30分、吉塚に帰った。天草の地からヨーロッパ文化が入ってきたことに驚いた旅だった。

From Bert

Bertram N. SILVER

"Would you be kind enough to come here...."



Mass at Grotto of apparition of Blessed Mother

Lourdes, France



From the 23rd of July until the 4th of August in Italy, we were able to visit the General House, Orvieto, Assisi, Siena, Florence.



Those in the group were from Kochi, Ariari, and Neruto

Then in France to Lisieux. After saying Mass at the Carmel convent where the remains of St. Therese are, we then went on to Lourdes. The morning Eucharist at the Grotto was a moving experience for me. We also attended the International Eucharist.

Before the International Mass I met two of the Oblates working at the Shrine. At the Mass I was able to distribute Communion to the sick.



All in all an excellent Pilgrimage Bert, OMI



From Xave to All,

Yoshikazu TOSA

The oldest brother of the family Delporte became a Jesuit missionary in India. After working there for a 55 years and more, the doctors decided on a heart bypass operation. That would be better done in Europe, they thought. However the doctors in Europe

where not of the same opinion. Instead they operated him on the left eye and his prostate. When he left India, it looked like his superiors would keep him in Belgium. In spite of that he decided to leave his sweet birthplace and travel back eastward. If there would be no room anymore in the Jesuit house, he would find a place in a Trappist convent.

The youngest of the family Delporte who lives in Canada, got a cancer operation on the breast. The doctor seems to be satisfied with her work. I proposed to take a few days vacation after the trouble is over and cross the oceans, but she refused: "... a waste of money. Come when I can dance again ..."

The middle one of the family Delporte is going to be a volunteer in the second 'National Athletic Meeting for Handicapped People' to be held in Kochi next year. The prefecture is recruiting 430 volunteers. I signed up for the deaf and dumb people. Every week there is a special training in sign language for two hours. I can already sign my name and "thank you"...

Anniversaries

■ Birthday:

October

05 1973 Ken-ichi FURUKAWA
10 1923 Jan VAN HOYDONCK
13 1963 Akio HORIUCHI
27 1927 Xave TOSA
30 1964 Brad ROZAIRO

December

20 1970 Varam ANTHONYSAMY
24 1934 Mike YAMASAKI

■ Ordination / Final Vows:

October

01 1988 Mauro CONCARDI
19 1991 Maurizio GIORGIANNI

From the editor

Nobuhiko YAGI

Christmas Issue Deadline: Dec. 1st. Please send your contributions to wencylag@ta2.so-net.ne.jp (by email) or by fax to Itami since I will be in Manila from Oct. 18 to Dec. 26. Thanks.



Retreat 2001. Retreatants with Fr. David Power, OMI, retreat master.



OMI Information

Newsletter of the Vice Province of Japan

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate



2001
Christmas



*May the Birth of Jesus Christ Dispel
Darkness and Bring Us Lasting Peace!*

It's that time of the year again ... and this year, the world will celebrate the Birth of Christ under the shadow cast by the September 11 events. As the war against terrorism rages on, we Oblates can only go back to the document of the last General Chapter **Evangelizing the Poor at the Dawn of the Third Millennium**, which affirms the faith that despite the imperfections of the world we live in, it is a world loved by God (EPM 1). During the recent months and weeks, we have witnessed the great chasm that divides peoples of different cultures and religion. We live in a fragmented world. The same chapter document says: "We can no longer celebrate the dignity of the human person without being conscious of a deep tear within our communal fabric; we can no longer offer incense to the unlimited progress of science without thinking about the sub-human conditions within which the majority of the world's people lives ..." (EPM 5) The chapter document carries us farther as it says "... we want to be men of hope, reflecting the attitude of a God who never abandons his people ... This Chapter, even as it asks us to take stock of both the real pain that so often marks humanity today and of our limits, also brings to life in us an immense hope." It is in this spirit of Hope that we celebrate the Birth of Christ and greet the New Year.

Wency Laguidao, OMI
Provincial

Oblate Receives Honorary Citizenship

In recognition of the work he has been doing for the poor people in Korea, Vincenzo BORDO was awarded with an honorary citizenship by the City of Seoul, Korea. The following are excerpts from an English daily in Seoul with the headline: Italian Priest Heads List of Those to Receive Honorary Citizenship.



Well wishers greet the awardee.

"On Saturday October 20th the eighth 'Citizens' Day' will be celebrated. As a part of the event the Seoul

Metropolitan Government is planning to confer Honorary Citizenship of Seoul to certain foreign residents in Seoul."

"Padre Vincenzo arrived in Korea in 1990 after studying the Korean language at the university where he worked as vicar assistant in the parish in Seongnam city. With a Korean sister(nun) he visited the poor families of the city, dedicating to them all his attention and help In

1991, he started Urban Poor Apostolate in a slum area of Seongnam called "Village of Magnolia "

"In 1993, he was entrusted by the City Hall with a soup kitchen, "House of Peace," where daily meals, medical assistance and cultural activities were offered for poor and elderly people. With the help of one hundred volunteers, home delivery of meals was also provided for handicapped persons. This project was financed 80 percent by the City Hall and 20 percent by the Missionari Oblati."

"In 1994 Padre Vincenzo started an after-school program for 'street children' with cultural' and recreational activities. The following year, he launched the "Association of Volunteers for Urban Poor" that aimed to train volunteers of 25 different groups and to coordinate their activities."

"In 1998 he founded the House of Anna to help people that had lost their jobs due to the economic crisis. This center guarantees daily meals, free medical attention and counseling, help with psychological



Oblates greet Vincenzo after the Awarding Ceremony in Seoul

nd alcohol-related problems, and assistance with finding jobs. Its aim is thus to assist poor people not only in their basic necessities but also in starting a new life. At the moment this is the main activity that Padre Vincenzo is carrying out, with the help of four hundred volunteers. Letters of commendation were granted to him by the mayor of Seongnam in the years 1995, 1996 and 2000."

Congratulations, Vincenzo!

From the Provincial's Desk

Wency Laguidao

Latin American Experience

What remained of the World Trade Center in NYC was still smoldering when I left for the US and Brazil last September 25th. Before the Inter Chapter started in Mexico, the Oblate Provincials were distributed to the different units in the Latin America for a first-hand experience of the realities in the region. I chose to visit the French Delegation of Belem in northern Brazil. Almost all the flights from the U.S. go to the capital city of Sao Paulo where I stayed for three days and from there proceeded to Belem, another six and a half hours flight. I was impressed at how the Oblates in Belem live very simply, not so much different from the standard of living of the people they serve. They live in a very modest house in a poor section of the city shared by the delegation superior with two other Oblates and three pre-novices. The aim of formation is clear: to prepare young men to become Oblates who will work among the poorest of the poor. The pre-novices and their superior took me around two huge *favelas* (slum areas) where they try to organize the people towards the building a christian community. "This is our new basilica!" one of the pre-novices ironically says of a make-shift chapel made of rejected lumber that was being readied for the fiesta. The earth itself served as the floor and the very humble altar, also made of rejected wood, reminded me of the mythical "stable" that is said to have received Jesus when he was born.

Inter Chapter in Mexico

From Brazil, I joined about 80 other Oblates for the Inter Chapter Meeting in



Mexican Fiesta. With V. Louwagie and mothers from a nearby Oblate school.

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in a sleepy, little town of Cuautla, Morelos some 80 miles south of Mexico City.

One big difference between a Chapter and Inter Chapter Meetings is the absence of the tedious process of making decisions in the later. The participants were then able to have ample time to confer with their fellow superiors and with members of the General Council spontaneously and sans time constraints.

There were many topics taken up but I will just make comments on a few of them especially the ones that concern us most:

1. Report of the Superior General: Father General's report was very well received. I am sure all of us have already read the report. **Internationality**, which has taken center-stage in the life of the congregation was among the topics discussed by the Superior General in his report. Oblates in first formation are thinking more about foreign mission. More Oblates are asking for first obedience outside their units of origin. There is a **paradigm shift** in mission. Mission is no longer just "north to south" since more and more Oblates from units which used to receive foreign missionaries are going to countries such as those which for years have been sending missionaries abroad.

2. Restructuring: This was another big topic taken up at the meeting. Another paradigm shift is for smaller units to come together and form a larger unit. It is being done **for the sake of the mission**. As I have explained during my visits to the districts when I came back from the Inter Chapter, our unit will have to join the call for the restructuring of Vice Provinces in the congregation. I already mentioned in detail the options left to us, namely, join another unit or work towards increasing our number to fulfill the minimum requirement of number to constitute a Province. We said that we will try to work at achieving the later option.

3. Foreign Mission: There is a renewed interest in foreign mission. Even Oblates still in first formation are volunteering for the foreign mission. The Superior General also used the word "re-founding" in his report. It is a process of **rebirth** that is dawning in the congregation.

4. Formation and On-going Formation: Internationality is more and more emphasized in our formation houses. Seminarians are crossing borders to attain a holistic formation. Here in Japan, we should make our House of Studies in Nagoya ready to accept seminarians from other units who would like to spend a year or two with us. We also have to rethink our approach on **vocation recruitment**. As far as **on-going formation** is concerned, there is emphasis on concrete programs to address the needs of Oblates during their first five years in the ministry. **Aging** is a reality in many parts of the congregation and we are all being asked to make concrete plans for the aging members of the mission.

1. Financial Situation. The General Treasurer expressed confidence that the market will

rebound from the current crisis but he also presented a bleak financial future for the congregation if it does not find new ways of generating income to finance the restructuring process and the mission.

Varia:

Preparations are being made for Bro. Kenichi FURUKAWA to continue his theological studies at the International Roman Scholasticate. If approved, he will be the first Japanese scholastic to study in Rome. Bro. Akio HORIUCHI will continue his studies at Nanzan University. In the meantime, a young college graduate has shown interest in joining the Oblates. He is a parishioner Hirabari Parish close to our house of studies in Nagoya.

Thank you very much for the keen interest that all of you has shown in my report on the Inter Chapter Meeting in Mexico, particularly, on the new challenges as presented in the report of the Superior General. When I presented the idea about asking for a parish in another place like Nagoya many gave encouraging remarks: "I am ready to go!", "Why not another parish in Fukuoka also?", "Why not Nagasaki where there are vocations and lots of mass intentions, too!", etc. There were other comments, too, such as: "Should we not instead close down some places before we open new ones?" All of these are encouraging signs that the mission is alive.

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Christmas Party

The cooks and waiters assure everyone that food and service will be super at the annual Christmas Party on December 27th in Kochi. Don't miss it!

Immense Hope Project Launching

The study sessions on Society, Mission and Church have all been completed in Japan and Korea. The official launching of the project will be held before the Christmas Party in Kochi on December 27th. Please refer to the "Working Plan" from the Animation Committee for the schedule of activities and tasks of the Immense Hope Project.

Meanwhile, Maurizio GIORGIANNI and Nobu YAGI's presentations on Missiology and Japanese Society respectively as part of the "study days" were well received by everyone. Thank you and congratulations!

Two Koreans to Start Novitiate

The two Korean pre-novices, RYU Hi Gu (Anselm) and LEE Ki Yong (Paolo Ha Sang), who are at present at Saint Mary's Seminary in Australia have formally asked to be accepted as novices. They will start their novitiate early next year under Fr. John MAHER, master of novices.

Provincial and Council Installed in Simple Ceremony; Provincial Bursar Reappointed

Wency LAGUIDAO, who was reappointed for a second term as Provincial, was installed together with the new Provincial Council last November 3rd in Itami. The members of the council are Leo KAWAGUCHI, Fran HAHN, Nobu YAGI and Maurizio GIORGIANNI. The Provincial and Council buckled down to work immediately after the installation. The first council meeting was a joint meeting of the outgoing and incoming council members.

The first task of the council was to appoint the Provincial Bursar. The members were unanimous in a decision to ask Ray BOURGOIN to continue his job as Bursar for another three years. His appointment was confirmed by the General Council during its ordinary session last November 5th. The council also decided to ask Jude PEIRISPULLE and Brad ROZAIRO to learn the ropes of keeping the books. The two have graciously accepted challenge.

Provincial Makes the Rounds

After coming back from the Inter Chapter Meeting in Mexico, the Provincial has been busy visiting the districts, to ensure that everyone has understood what the future is like for the Vice Province since the category of "Vice Province" has already been scrapped. He presented the options that are left to the Vice Province in the process of restructuring which is being undertaken in many parts of the congregation especially among the 24 Vice Provinces.

Calendars for a Cause

Xave TOSA who printed his first calendar in 2001 has printed his second one for the year 2002.

This time, the proceeds of the sale of the single-page calendar will go to the St. Vincent's Home, a center for youth in Magonna, Sri Lanka which is run by the Oblates. The calendar is a beautiful collection of woodblock prints done meticulously by Xave. It is being sold for a thousand yen a piece and proceeds will be used to help in the technical training program for the poor youth at the center.



Team Ministry In Osaka

Archbishop Leo IKENAGA Jun of Osaka and Auxiliary Bishop MATSUURA Goro met with the Provincials of congregations working in the Archdiocese in Nagoya last September 19-20, to give an update on the on-going process of implementing the team-ministry approach in all the parishes in the archdiocese. At present, all parishes in the Archdiocese of Osaka are either a) total-team ministry approach; or b) semi-team

ministry approach. Itami parish is designated as semi-team ministry and Brad ROZAIRO has been asked to head the cluster of parishes around the area as they prepare the way for total-team ministry.

Trivia

A survey conducted by the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (Singapore) said that: "Indonesia, South Korea, and Vietnam are the most stressful Asian countries for expatriates to live in, while Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand offer the least pressure."

Indonesia is the most stressful country to live in because of violent conditions, corruption and red tape. It is followed by Korea and Vietnam but no reason was given why Korea ranked very high among the "most stressful."

"Money does not buy peace of mind," the report said and most rich countries ranked in the middle except Japan. The report place Philippines high among the "less stressful because "although troubled by periodic violence and political upheavals, one thing amazing about the Philippines is the almost indefatigable optimism of the people," according to the report said.

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.

Bill Maher

I hope this finds you enjoying some of the peace that the Lord wants to give to all of us this Christmas. Looking back at this year we see a devastation of our feelings of security and complacency, and a realization that our future lies in the Lord's hands. Our world has been turned upside-down by the events of September 11th, and what's still going on now. I'm praying everyday that we find a just and peaceful solution to the whole situation with as few as possible innocent people being killed. In the end maybe we can come up with a world where our abundance is distributed in a more just way. Let's continue our prayers that the scourge of terrorism is completely done away with.

You may have heard that while I was home in the States last summer my friend from grammar school days, Gerry Lewis and I were involved in a very serious car accident. We were hit from behind on I 290 just coming into Chicago. Gerry suffered spinal injuries and has had to have two operations, one on his back and one on his arm, so please keep him in your prayers. He was in the hospital for over three weeks and is still recovering at home in Madison. I had some fractured ribs, a collapsed lung and a fractured knee cap but was out of the hospital in 4 days with another month and a half recuperating in Chicago with my brother Jack and his wife Roe. The first month of vacation was great but needless to say I don't want to repeat the second half.

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I've been back in Japan for four months now and I think I'm pretty well healed and thank God I'm able to keep up with the work schedule so far. All I can do is thank the Lord every day. I still have my same ups and downs as I had before the accident but I'm a little more thankful for everything in general now. The most meaningful prayer for me now is the morning offering I learned as a kid. I say it with a little more meaning everyday that I wake up.

Again I hope this finds you enjoying the blessings of a deep relationship with the Lord who took the trouble of being born as a babe like the rest of us and after showing us how we should live and die, rose for us to give us the strength to do it like He did it. (My computer grammar check says that last sentence is very clumsy but I'm going to leave it in anyway. So there to you computer San!)

Your in my prayers please keep me in yours. May 2002 be your best year yet. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Dec. 8, 2001

From Xaye Tosa

New York September 11: Everybody has watched the news on TV, read the story in the papers, spoke about it with dismay. Now we all ask ourselves if the war in Afghanistan will bring the solution to terrorism. Certainly we feel very sorry for the ordinary people who suffer from the hostilities. We have sent our donations and collections.

I have been in the countryside of Jordan, Palestine, Egypt and Lebanon. I could not understand why people didn't use modern equipment to work in the fields or install proper irrigation. Why couldn't I take a picture of an Islam woman? To me it seems that Islam turned its back to progress. European history moved through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment to Modernism and democracy. The conclusions of this western evolution are the Rights of men, separation of religion and state. Something like that is not possible in Islam. We can choose a religion as a personal choice of way of life, but we are not forced to accept one well-defined social system. The Koran puts down the principles for politics and social life. In Europe the Muslim immigrants try to adjust to the western society. But this is against the fundamental teaching of the Koran. One day they will "revolt" in Europe, I am afraid.

The Koran is revealed directly by God and so it is an eternal and infallible holy book. (We believed the same about the Holy Bible.) There is no room for interpretation, no room for exegesis, no room for historical study. In the Koran there are no sayings which are tied to time and local customs.

For Muslims Islam is the completion of all systems and ideologies. It's the perfection of all utopias.

The Muslims stand with their back towards

progress and future evolution. This doesn't mean that all Muslims are fundamentalists. Poverty is not the primary cause of terrorism either. Ordinary Muslims with a small income are no fundamentalists. They are just quiet believers without questions.

Fundamentalism is found among the frustrated well-to-do class. (The Catholic Church is no exception; look at the well-to-do cardinals like Mgr Lefevre, bishops and clergy)

We send active missionaries to Muslim states. If it is to be "present" as a witness, I think I can accept that. But to be such a missionary one needs a special character, a special charisma and a special grace, which the superiors in Rome cannot judge about.

The missionary who can bring Christ to people without forcing them to change their culture may stay. All the others, call them back to their homeland.

A small announcement: since I cannot keep PACE with????? I will get a pace-maker. From the beginning of December to half December I am hospitalized.

With all my friendship and love from a troubled heart.

Peace! From Itami!

Brad Rozairo

Once again it's time to celebrate Christmas! So I wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS! Life in Itami is going on as usual. Meetings, cottage masses, X'mas preparations etc. keep me busy.

This parish is blessed with some young and active people. They continue to support me. On the 14th of Dec.(Fri.) there will be an Ecumenical Christmas Event, organized by different denominations for the people of Itami. Some of our parishioners will join other Christians to sing carols. As we prepare for this event we also pray for its success.

As I write this note, my mind goes to Sri Lanka. People in Sri Lanka are getting ready not for Christmas but for Election!

The general election will be held on the 5th of this month. I just hope and pray that there will be no blood shed before X'mas.

The birth of Christ brought peace to people. May those who come to power work for peace in Sri Lanka.

May Jesus, the Son of Man bless you with His Love, keep you in His Care and fill you with His Peace this season and throughout the New Year 2002. See you in Kochi.

Christmas Greetings from Kochi!

Jerry Novotny

To all the Oblates in Japan and Korea, a most blessed and joy-filled Christmas for you, for the people you work with, and for all your friends. United in the tenderness of the Mother of God, may this Holy Season of Life bless you with many graces and peace.

The year is speeding to a 61st Christmas for me and so much work still needs to be done. Pro-Life is doing well both on the Japanese website and the English. Due to the continual increase of daily viewers, we have been forced to rebuild both sites. In January of next year, we will switch over. The URL address will not change. Since we're changing over to database, both websites should be friendlier, faster and better organized. The addresses are: Japanese site <<http://www.japan-lifeissues.net>> and the English site <<http://www.lifeissues.net>>.

In Kochi, I'm searching for three/four volunteers to help in our Pro-Life Internet office, but so far no luck. Last week, I send letters to all Churches in the area: Baptist, Protestant, etc. So far, no replies. Maybe it's time to start looking for help outside of the Prefecture. I don't know. If anyone has any ideas or can introduce me to any volunteers, I'd be grateful. A message from the Holy Father underscores the significance of this joyous season we are celebrating. "It is very alarming to see governments in many countries launching systematic campaigns against birth, contrary not only to the cultural and religious identity of the countries themselves but also contrary to the nature of true development. It often happens that these campaigns are the result of pressure and financing coming from abroad, and in some cases they are made a condition for the granting of financial and economic aid and assistance. In any event, there is an absolute lack of respect for the freedom of choice of the parties involved, men and women often subjected to intolerable pressures, including economic ones, in order to force them to submit to this new form of oppression. It is the poorest populations which suffer such mistreatment, and this sometimes leads to a tendency towards a form of racism, or the promotion of certain equally racist forms of eugenics. This fact too, which deserves the most forceful condemnation, is a sign of an erroneous and perverse idea of true human development." (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, "25)

The "slippery slope" continues in full force during this life-giving Christmas as the Culture of Death list expands: Contraception, the abortifacient Pill, various forms of Birth Control, Abortion, Bioethics, Cloning, Germline Genetic Modification, Embryo Stem Cell Research, IVF and frozen embryos, etc. The latest, announced several days ago, the cloning of a human embryo. A human being was created, which was still in the embryonic stage, and was then destroyed. Very shocking and alarming for unborn children at their beginning stage of life.

The computer is slowly penetrating into our lives as Oblates and the wealth of information available on these topics is mind-boggling. The Internet means the world is now available for evangelization. I wonder whether or not, we as Oblate in the Orient could make this a new work, a new approach, a new priority in the coming new year. As one observer stated: With the advent of Catholic Internet apostolates and Catholic online resources, modern communications are reflecting the timeless mission of a Church without borders,

that operates in a world that is jealous of its borders. Not only do such efforts present the international scope of the Catholic faith, but they are also reaching into places where the Church is not welcome.

Even Pope Paul has taken to the Internet. On November 22nd, the Pope included a call for the defense of the unborn in the first document he has ever personally posted on the Internet. The Pope wrote: "In the more secularized and affluent societies of Oceania, the right to life is the one most under threat. There is a profound contradiction in this, for these are often societies which speak insistently about human rights while denying the most basic right of all." He stressed, "the Church has to defend the right to life from the moment of contraception until natural death, at every stage of its development." "Life must be promoted and its sanctity defended against every threat of violence in its many forms, especially violence against the weakest -- the elderly, the dying, women, children, the disabled and the unborn," he said.

For those who wish to view the complete document see: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20011122_ecclesia-in-oceania_en.html

Have a nice Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in Kochi on the 27th.

A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to all!

John Iwo

皆様、クリスマスと新年のおよこびを申し上げます。2001 年も終わりが近づきました。21 世紀の幕開けは 9 月になって乗っ取り機によるニューヨーク貿易センタービル突入と、炭疽菌の流布ということで始まりました。平和を祈願しながら、一方では良い方向に向かいながら他方では悪に向かっていきます。この世のジレンマでしょうか。信仰と祈りによって、平和が築かれますようにとお祈りします。

皆様の上に神様の豊かなお恵みと平和がありますように。

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Ray Bourgoon

The events of this past year have shown us the pettiness of our own little squabbles. They have also shown us that peace is not just a word that should be on our lips but a way of life in our hearts and amongst ourselves.

Of the number of events which were meaningful to me, I quote but two.

First, in February the simple first vow ceremony for our two new members was for me a joy beyond words. I want to thank the two for offering themselves to the Father of us all through our group and Nobuhiko for helping them along the way. It's a sign that we are still meaningful as a group. It's reassuring.

Second, I'd like to cite my trip to Korea in May. By spending a week there, I was able to spend one full day with each member in the apostolate he is involved in, and in some instances

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participate directly in that apostolate. It was a welcomed respite as well as an opportunity to appreciate the work our men in Korea are doing. For this I am thankful for.

At this writing my mother has been hospitalized again. For over a year now I have had her wear a locket around her neck where she can call emergency from anywhere she happens to be in the house. She had to use it for the first time and it served her well as the ambulance was there right away.

I hope that the Immense Hope Project helps us to come to grips with our *raison d'être* here in Japan and pushes us into reassessing our presence here in order to make it evermore faithful to the Gospel, our CCRR and the needs of the apostolate. If we are self-satisfied with what we are and are doing, then we've started to die. Responding to new challenges keeps us vital and young.

From Korea

Varam Anthony Samy

Sometimes, during the hectic grind of the Christmas season, it's easy to lose sight of what really matters. Christmas is so much more than crowded malls, credit card bills, and wrapping paper as we all know. It is a time for prayer and personal renewal. It is a time to clear our minds and cleanse our soul in preparation for the Lord's birth (and our re-birth too!). Most of all, it is an opportunity to develop a better understanding of Jesus' love and celebrate his life, death, and Resurrection.

Advent and Christmas are for many people the most joyous time of year, a special opportunity for celebration, sharing, and family gatherings. More importantly, however, Christmas is the celebration of his Incarnation, the union of true God and true man in the Christ Child.

The story of the Incarnation of the Son of God -- Isaiah who foretold his coming; John the Baptizer who prepared the way for him when at last he came; St. Joseph who accepted the responsibility for his safety, well-being and upbringing; and Mary, his mother, who remained steadfast in faith to the very end might inspire all of us to celebrate a meaningful Christmas.

Wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2002.

From Manila

Nobu Yagi

Right now I am writing this message at the Oblate Retreat House in the suburbs of Manila. When I arrived here in mid-October, we could already hear Christmas Carols all over and many parts of the city were already decorated. Of late I go for evening walks in the area of the Retreat House and the entrances of all the houses have trees and blinking lights. We can hear Carols coming through the doors into the street. All family members, the whole city, indeed, the whole nation is

celebrating Christmas. Just by observing we can guess to what degree the people here are awaiting Christmas. Seeing this people awaiting the Lord together, in joy and expectation, is a beautiful sight and quite enviable. This is the kind of Christmas I will be celebrating with the Philippine people this year.

From Hoyacho

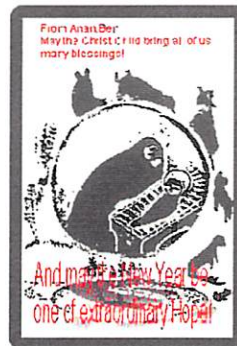
Jack Deely

First off, many thanks for your prayers for my brother-in-law, Dennis English. He amazed everyone with the way he came out of the quadruple bypass with flying colors! Many thanks.

As for news — actually, it's not really a news item anymore. The word is already out that I'll be getting a sabbatical from the university. However, the plans for the sabbatical might be worth mentioning. The sabbatical is from April 1st of 2002 till March 31st of 2003. My aim is to gather as many different sign languages as I reasonably can during that time and make all of that information available, first to Japan in Japanese (if it involves translation of Sign Language books or the captioning of videotapes) and secondly to the World Federation of the Deaf, in English. I have already received favorable replies from Russia, China, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, England, Ireland and am presently waiting for responses from Italy, France, Canada and Mexico. Such plans might change drastically, but — at least, that is what I have in mind. Of more immediate interest is the Mass on Campus for Students, alternating with Jesuits for the lunch hour Mass. Have been asked to Sign the Mass for December 5th. Looking forward to seeing you all in Kochi on the 27th. A Holy and Merry Christmas!

保谷町たより まずはじめに、皆さんにお礼申し上げます。義弟デニス・イングリッシュのために祈りいただきありがとうございます。お蔭様で、四重バイパス形整手術を受けて見事に快復し、周りの人たちをびっくりさせています！本当にありがとうございます。ニュースとしては——来年、私がサバティカルをもらうという話は、もう知れ渡っていますが、サバティカル中の計画をご披露する価値はあると思います。サバティカルは来年4月1日から、2003年3月31日までです。期間中に、できるだけたくさんの手話言語を集め、その教科書を翻訳したり、ビデオテープに字幕をつけたりする作業を、まず日本の聾者のために日本語で、つぎに世界聾連盟のために英語で行ないたいと思っています。すでに、ロシア、中国、香港、台湾、ニュージーランド、オーストラリア、デンマーク、スウェーデン、ベルギー、英国などから好意的な返事をいただいていますし、イタリア、フランス、カナダ、メキシコなどからも返事を待っているところです。これらはあくまで予定ですので、大幅に変わることもあるかもしれませんが、今はこういう心積もりでいます。ごく最近のニュースとしては、「学生ミサ」でしょう。イエズス会と交代で学生のため、昼休みにミサをやります。僕は、12月5日に手話ミサを頼まれています。では、27日に高知で皆さんにお目にかかれるのを楽しみに。

に。 クリスマスおめでとう。



Sketch by the late Br. S. Tsuda

Prayers Requested

1. For Xave TOSA who was fitted with a pace-maker last Dec. 5th. He is doing very well after the surgery.
2. For Fr. "Steve," TAKEDA, OP a good friend of the Oblates and an "unofficial honorary Oblate" (he loves to wear the Oblate cross over his Dominican habit) who has terminal cancer.
3. For all our sick relatives, friends and benefactors.

Anniversaries

■ Birthday:

January

02 1930 Ed WILLIAMS
22 1938 Ray BOURGOIN
29 1926 Dick HARR

February

13 1963 Maurizio GIORGIANNI
15 1935 Len INUI
21 1957 Vincenzo BORDO

March

1 1940 Jerry NOVOTNY
23 1938 Bill MAHER

■ Ordination / Final Vows:

January

15 1994 James JEYACHANDRAN

February

22 1953 Xave TOSA

March

19 1966 Ray BOURGOIN
27 1976 Wency LAGUIDAO
29 1993 Leo KAWAGUCHI

■ Death:

February

1978 Charles MC BENNETT

March

12 1979 Len ROBITAILLE



December 15, 2001

Dear Brother Oblates,

After the Christmas issue of the newsletter was mailed, a few more contributions came in. I admit that there has been a mistake in the address of Br. Akio that I sent you. The correct one is: akiokun2001@hotmail.com. Sorry about that. Below are a few more Christmas messages.

Last December 13, Fran and I went to visit Fr. Steve Takeda, OP in Matsuyama. We had a wonderful time with him although his memory is failing him and he can't hear very well. When I got back to Itami, I found an email from Rome about the request I made to make Fr. Takeda an "official" honorary Oblate. I share with you the letter of Fr. King.

Xave should be home by now from the hospital with his new "pace-maker." He said he feels great with the new gadget. Dick Harr was dispensed from Kaisei Hospital in Kobe after a series of tests to find out the cause for some excruciating back pains. Please pray for the full recovery of Xave and Dick. Yes, they will be there for the Christmas Party!

Have a blessed celebration of the birthday of Jesus!

*Wency Laguidao, OMI
Provincial*

Dear Wency,

Ned Carolan passed on to me your message to Father General concerning an "honorary Oblate", Fr. Stephen Takeda, O.P. Father General is in Africa and will not be back until Christmas.

*Our Administrative Directory, p. 30, # 116, says that "The naming of honorary Oblates is reserved to the Superior General". In this case as presented by you, in the absence of Father General, and in the absence of documentation that it has happened already, I name **Fr. STEPHEN TAKEDA, O.P.** an honorary Oblate and his name will be added to the list.*

So, when you visit with Father you can inform him that he is indeed now an honorary Oblate, thanking God for his collaboration with us and his service to the Congregation in Japan.

Hope this reaches you in time.

Best wishes for a most blessed Advent and Christmas to you and all Oblates in Japan. Peace,

Eugene King, O.M.I.
Vicar General

At the close of a year that has sped by at a breathtaking pace the time has come again to rejoice over the Birth of Christ, our Savior, and to extend our best wishes for a New Year which follows a week later. To all who read this, then, a wish this Christmas to be another occasion of joy and of spiritual enrichment, and the year that opens to be a happy one, with peace for all, in good health, with enjoyment in the work that comes our way, and satisfaction for its bearing much fruit.

At first I was at a loss at what to write, but thinking of the year that is nearing its closure so many things have happened that relating them all would make this note much too long. All I want to say, then, is: Thank you all, for making this year of my golden priest jubilee so memorable. I would have a hard time recalling every single instance of congratulation I received from everyone, not only once but repeatedly. And I think the best way of showing my gratitude towards your kindness is accepting your good wishes with joy and asking Our Lord to bless you in abundance for it, and making, at its proper time, your own celebration of the same happy event equally or even more memorable. Thanks again, and May the Lord bless you, and Our Mother Mary protect you.

JAN.

Hamilton Mabie wrote:

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love". Amen to that, and heartfelt seasons greetings to you all. I thank God for all the good you have experienced this year. I pray that God will shower you with many special graces in the New Year. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Ange

WAITING FOR

This evening I have to meet a dear friend of mine; he called me few days ago and we arranged to meet at Chongno, we will watch a movie together and have a nice pizza with something to drink. It will be great to see each other and talk over about our lives and whatever has happened since we met last time. I'm looking forward to this evening.

While taking a shower I feel like singing (even though I'm not like Pavarotti or Bocelli) and I already see the two of us embracing and laughing, happy to meet after so long; I'm not sure what to wear for the evening in any case I want to show the best of myself, it is going to be great. I arrive at the meeting place well ahead of time and the few minutes left seem to be an eternity, other people are waiting for their friends as well. Everyone seems to be in a good spirit, all very nicely dressed, someone with a bouquet of flowers or a special gift arranged for the occasion. Another look to the watch and there he is, my friend is coming!

How many times did you have a similar experience? Can you recall your first date? Anxiety, trepidation, joy all are mixed together while excited to meet your loved one.

Well something similar is our waiting for Christ in this special season called Advent. As Christians we are waiting for Jesus to come, to meet us and share a special relationship.

While waiting we are preparing ourselves, getting ready for the special occasion. We are waiting with a hope that never fails, because our God is a faithful one, he keeps his promises. Jesus is calling us for a date, did you receive the call? Let's wait together and rejoice while getting ready, it will be a wonderful experience!

Fr. Giovanni omi