



THE MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

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Jan 1993

UPDATE ON OUR MISSION IN KOREA

The newest member to the Korean mission, Fr. Maurizio Giorgianni, arrived January 6th bringing the number of Oblates there to four. Vincenzo and Mauro have just finished their language studies and Giovanni is due to finish his studies in June. The three of them will be then ready to begin full time ministry.

They have been discussing the possibility of beginning ministry in the diocese of Suwon, in an area close to the parishes where they have been helping out and close enough to Seoul so they could continue their involvement in the slum areas and among the Filipino migrant workers. It would also be about a thirty minute subway ride to a new town presently being built for one million people.

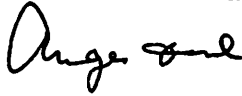
Their plans are to rent a house in the Suwon area that would serve for both their lodgings and also as a center for apostolic works: (retreats, days of recollection, a place to invite youth in view of attracting vocations etc.). A two story house would seem best for these plans, the first floor being for apostolic activities and the second for living quarters.

It is estimated that we will need \$300,000 for this project. The Oblates in Korea have about \$100,000 in hand obtained from a number of sources (a grant from Rome and donations from their friends and relatives). When the contract for their present apartment in Seoul expires about another \$100,000 will be returned to them. That leaves another \$100,000 lacking to finance the project.

The Council in its last meeting (Jan. 18th) felt that the Vice-Province should try to raise as much of this amount as possible before asking for loans from external sources. This past year (1992) the surplus from the houses was excellent (¥16,133,900). In addition to the surplus sent to the Provincial Treasurer, several houses and individual Oblates were able to make substantial contributions for the church in Anan as well as to the formation house in Nagoya. This shows our ability to raise funds locally. It is also an indication of true sharing and solidarity. That is why I do not feel it is too much to ask for your cooperation in raising as much as we can for the growth of our mission in Korea. The target amount of \$100,000 is ¥12,500,000.

From February 14 - 17 Bert Silver and myself will be going to Korea to get this project moving. The date and final arrangements for the house will depend on the availability of a suitable house and finances. I am sure the Oblates in Japan can make a sizeable contribution to the realization of this project. I would ask you to send your contributions to Bert Silver since he handles all the finances for the Korean mission.

Your Brother in Jesus and Mary,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Angelo Siani".

Angelo Siani, O.M.I. Provincial



February 9, 1993

Dear Oblate Brothers,

The Ordination of Bro. Leo Satoshi KAWAGUCHI, OMI will take place at our Lady of Peace in Koga on March 29th. at 2:00 PM. I look forward to celebrating this day of joy with you and Leo's family. I also thank you for all of your prayers and help which contributed so much to make this day a reality. Together let us thank God for this gift to the Oblates and the Church.

On March 30 we will begin our provincial meeting on the Parish Apostolate. In the evening of March 30, Fr. KAWAGUCHI will celebrate his first Mass with us as a community. At that Mass we will also celebrate with our Jubilarians: forty years of ordination for Frs. Leonard SIMONS, OMI, Xave Yoshikazu Tosa, OMI twenty-five years of ordination for Ronald LAFRAMBOISE, OMI and Jerome NOVOTNY, OMI.

Our meeting will be held at the Passionist Retreat House. Rooms will be available from the night of March 29th. Bring your alb and stole.

Please send this enclosed postcard as to whether you will be attending the ordination and spring meeting to Fran Hahn by March 1.

Dates to remember

<u>March 29</u>	Ordination to Priesthood Bro. Satoshi KAWAGUCHI, OMI
<u>March 30</u>	Fr. Kawaguchi - First Mass with Community Celebration for Jubilarians
<u>March 30 - April 1</u>	Provincial Spring Meeting Passionist Retreat House

Fraternally in JC & MI

Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

Vice Province of Japan

Nagoya

March 6, 1993

UPDATE



Dear Brother Oblates,

The ordination of Bro. Leo Kawaguchi will take place on March 29, 1993. It is a time we have all been looking forward to and a time of grace for the province.

It reminds us that "We believe in our missionary and religious vocation; and confident in the generosity of the young people of today, we declare that they have the right to hear the call to be Oblate missionaries." (Witnessing as Apostolic Community No 29).

Vocations has long been a priority in our province and if we are to survive as a Province, vocation recruitment must become a priority in our lives and in our ministry. The recent General Chapter stresses clearly, "The Vocation ministry is not optional" and goes on to offer some practical lines of action

- make youth a priority in all our ministries; without the young we have no future;

- stress vocations in public celebrations of the liturgy; not limit ourselves to mentioning vocations only once a year;

- let communities write young men to "come and see" our way of life;

- present our Oblate family as a Congregation that is international in character and made up of priests and brothers;

- accompany possible future candidates and begin an initial discernment;

- examine ourselves as individuals and as a community with regard to what we are doing concretely to foster vocations;

- alert our Christian communities to call forth candidates from their ranks.

Vocation recruitment is the work of every Oblate. The director of vocation in the Northern Province of the USA wrote, "I do not believe that there are 'techniques' for promoting vocations. We simply have to believe in ourselves and in our charism and in today's youth, and its ability to respond to a challenge. Failure to believe might be the reason we do not have

vocations" Fr. Paul Ouellette, OMI, Northern Province USA

With confidence that the Lord does call men to join us in his mission, let us encourage one another to be those "witnesses" who might attract others to our way of life.

New Obedience in the Province

Fr. John Kenney MAHONEY OMI has been assigned to the mission in Anan. We wish John well in his new apostolate.

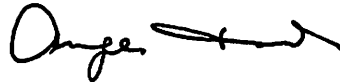
Korea

As I mentioned in a previous letter, we are looking for a house for our Oblate ministry in Korea. The Bishop of Suwon has warmly welcomed us in his diocese. A request for a loan of 200,000 USD has been made and granted from the Oblate Credit Union.

Prayers

Your prayers are requested for Fr. Ron LaFramboise who is recovering from an operation for polyps of the nasal cavity. Ron is doing well and should be home by March 10.

Fraternally in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,



Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

reason we do not have



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

Provincial Newsletter of the OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE
Vice Province of Japan

OMI

レオ 川口敏神父 叙階



新司祭は八人兄弟姉妹の一人として、1960年4月1日熊本県天草に生まれました。
オブレート会入会前には、医療関係の技師として福岡県の病院に勤務していました。
1984年に高知で修練期を始め、初誓願後司祭の為の勉強を開始しました。神学は南山
大学で履修しました。1992年3月に助祭に叙階され、名古屋教区の膳棚教会で説教、
日曜学校の世話、病人の訪問、典礼の準備等の司牧活動に従事しました。司祭叙階式は、
福岡教区長松永司教によって1993年3月29日午後2時に、福岡教区の古賀の教会で
行われました。叙階式には彼の伯父二人を含む40人の司祭と彼の家族、信徒等300人
余りが与りました。

レオ 川口敏 新司祭
オブレート会の私たちは喜んで
あなたを迎えます。



道の第一歩

レオ川口 敏

もし誰かが私に尋ねたとしよう、「レオ、君はどうしてオブレート会に入っ
たのか?」。現在の私は次のように答えます「どうしてか自分でもわかりませ
ん、決定的なきっかけはありません。」実に多くの出来事、思いが一つになっ
て、そうなったのだと思う。きっかけは、おそらの100人いれば100通り
の答えが返ってくるだろう。

私は思います、大事なものは入ることではなく、続けてその道を歩くことだと。
私は今、司祭職の第一歩を歩き始めました。ここまで来たのは、奇蹟だともっ
ています。なぜなら、「もうだめかな」、「やめさせられるのかな」と何回も
おもったからです。又、人から「おまえにはみこみがない」と言われたもので
す。しかし不思議なもので、人から言われると自分の中に闘志みたいなものが
沸いてきます。私にはここしか行くところが無い、という声を自分の中から聞
きました。今日こうして司祭職の道の第一歩を歩きだすことが出来たのは、兄
弟であるオブレート会の人々が情けをかけてくれたからです。手を出して引っ張っ
てくれる兄弟がいたからです。まさに奇蹟です。皆さん、ありがとう。今度は
私が誰かにそれを行なう番です。



Dear Oblate Brothers,

The Season of Easter is a time of opening. Easter begins with the story of a wide open tomb. Beside it stands a messenger of God asking the women to open their inner selves and not to be afraid. "He is not here, for he has risen." Mt. 28:6) Their hearts were opened and they believed. Then Jesus appears to his disciples who refuse to believe until Jesus by his gentle questions gradually opens their minds. Luke tells us that it was after Jesus explained the scriptures and broke the bread that "their eyes were opened and they recognized him" (Lk 24:31). Easter is about openness...openness to receive the abundant life that God constantly offers. This thought is beautifully expressed in the last two stanzas of a poem by Joyce Rupp:

God of the Ressurrection, God of the living,
Untomb and uncover all that needs to live in me.
Take me to people, events, and situations
And stretch me into much greater openness.

Open me, open me , open me
For it only then that I will grow and change.
For it is only then that I will be transformed.
For it is only then that I will know how it is
To be in the moment of rising from the dead.

In our experiences of resurrection, there is the element of surrender and of great vulnerability. We are required to let go of our own agenda. If we listen well we can experience the Lord of life reminding us in so many ways that the fullness of life is in our midst.

Angelo Siani

Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

AS WE BECOME "ONE HEART AND SOUL"
(ACTS 4:32)
OUR COMMUNITIES WILL BECOME MORE AND MORE
APOSTOLIC;
BY THE QUALITY OF THE WITNESS THEY GIVE ,
THEY WILL "BEAR FRUIT THAT LASTS"
(JOHN 15:16)

Birthdays

May 29 Tom Maher, OMI

June 24 Giovanni Zevola, OMI

July 4 Mauro Concardi, OMI

July 31 Lei Simons, OMI

Ordinations

May 30 John K Mahoney, OMI

May 30 Tom Maher, OMI

May 30 Bert N. Silver, OMI

May 31 Angelo Siani, OMI

June 2 Dick Harr, OMI

June 7 Ed Williams OMI

June 14 John Iwo, OMI

June 14 Len Inui, OMI

June 24 Mike Yamasaki, OMI

July 1 Jan Van Hoydonck, OMI

July 5 Lei Simons, OMI

Anan

On May 5, 1993, Bishop Fukahori will bless the new church in Anan. The church will hold 100 people. This church dedicated to Our Lady of Hope is the fruit of many years of hard work of the people in this small parish. The pastor Fr. Richard Harr remarked "it is an occasion for joy for the people".

Provincial's Schedule

April 29 - May 8, The Asia/Oceania Provincials' Meeting in India. There will be a celebration held on May 5 commemorating the 25th. anniversary of the foundation of the mission.

Fr. Leonard SIMONS, OMI will be the acting Provincial during this time.

May 17 - June 21 I will be covering the Tokushima parish while the pastor Bill Maher is on home leave.

Tokyo

Ray Bourgoin has translated the proper for the Office of Readings of the Founder. The page is the same size as the Japanese Prayer of the Church. Copies are available for those who would like one.

Kochi

Thanks to Bro. Nobuhiko Yagi who has prepared some materials for our yearly time of prayer for Oblate vocations May 21-29. He will be sending it to you soon.

The Vocation Summer Camp will be held August 4 - 5. Part of

the camp will be held in Kochi City and part in Kangaeru no
Ie. Bro. Yagi will be sending details shortly.

Annual Retreat

The annual retreat preached by Fr. Phil ESTRELLA, OMI,
Provincial of the Philippines will be held at the Passionist
Retreat House from August 30 - September 3.

Sri Lanka

Some have asked for these addresses.

Fr. Joseph Bradly Rozairo, OMI
Archbishop's House
Borello
Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

Fr. Jude C. Peirisipulle, OMI
Our Lady of Lourdes
Palayuttu
Trincomalee, Sri Lanka

Nagoya

On May 16, the parish in Zendana will celebrate its 30th
anniversary. The pastor Fr. Ron LaFramboise reports that
Bishop Soma will confirm 10 people on this occasion.

Nanzan University will celebrate its 50th anniversary of
foundation in 1999. To prepare for it they have decided to
establish a "Collection of material on Catholics in Japan".
The collection aims to prevent valuable material on history,
culture and activities of Japanese Catholics from being lost
and to make it available to researchers. They are interested
in obtaining:

1. History of the Church and Religious Orders
2. Publications on Christianity issued during Meiji
and Taisho Era, and early years of Showa Era, i.e. Bible,
Liturgical books, Hymnbooks, Catechisms, newspapers etc.
3. Publications printed and issued within churches
and Dioceses.
4. Publications in foreign languages on missionary
work in Japan.

If you have any material to donate please contact
the University by phone, fax or letter.

REGIONAL NEWS

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW PROVINCIAL

It is with the spirit of Easter Joy that I inform you of the appointment of Fr. Mario Bertoli, OMI, as the first Provincial of the new Indonesian Vice-Province which will be cononically erected on May 21, 1993. Fr. Basir Karimanto, OMI, has also been appointed as a member of the Provincial Council with Fr. Kevin Casey, Fr. Bernard Keradec and Fr. Natalino Belingheri, Delegation Superiors of Java, Singtang and Kalimantan respectively as Ex-Officio members of the Provincial Council.

We thank Fr. Mario Bertoli, Fr. Basir Karimanto and the three Delegation Superiors for accepting the leadership and animation in the new Vice-Province. The next three years will be a crucial transition period in the life of the new Vice-Province. The consolidation of the three Delegations into a unified Vice-Province will be a big challenge to all. A STRUCTURE has to be evolved that would promote UNITY and COOPERATION while at the same time respect the plurality of missionary and pastoral approaches. This will demand a certain ATTITUDINAL change; a new perspective. But it is very reassuring to note that everybody in the Vice-Province supports the move towards the unification of the three Delegations into a Vice-Province.

We take this opportunity to thank most sincerely the MOTHER PROVINCES of the three Delegations: the AUSTRALIAN, ITALIAN, and the FRANCE-EAST PROVINCES while there is a certain pain in separation, there is abundant joy in ushering in a new and independent life. We hope that the erection of the new Vice-Province of Indonesia, far from severance of ties with the mother Province, will serve to strengthen the bond, a bond no longer of dependence but a fraternal bond between equals. The promotion of local vocations both to the Oblates and the Diocesan Clergy, has always been the hallmark of the Oblate foreign missionary activity. Your labor of love and sacrifice has come to fruition in the erection of the new Vice-Province of Indonesia.

With our Indonesian Oblates we thank the risen Lord for this historic event. Indonesia holds a great promise of hope for the future not only of the Asia-Oceania Region but also for the Congregation as a whole. So with courage and hope let us together take on the challenge of the new beginnings in Indonesia.

Yours Sincerely in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Lito Lampon, OMI
Asia-Oceania General Councillor

O.M.I. - FORMATION

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I T A L I A

Circular letter to the Major Superiors and Vocation Directors

Dear friends,

A missionary is somebody who strongly feels the world's need for salvation as described at the beginning of our Chapter document. He feels compelled to give an effective response. But this will remain only a dream if there are no communities to support our missionary concerns and no "laborers though the harvest is plentiful".

Reading through many of the Oblate Newsletters throughout the world - one of the jobs of my new office - one becomes aware of the numerous initiatives that are being done to promote vocations. *PRAYER* is always considered as one of the most important dimensions of Vocation Recruitment Ministry. It is accessible to all.

This Circular letter simply wants to be a reminder of our *YEARLY PRAYER DAYS FOR OBLATE VOCATIONS (MAY, 21st TO 29th)* which has already become a tradition. In this year 1993, it coincides exactly with the Pentecost novena. On the second page of this letter you will find suggestions and samples of the feedback we have received over the last couple of years.

What more can we do in the area of vocation prayer, to make the "call of Jesus heard" as "an integral part of an apostolic community's mission" (W.A.C.30)? It's always relevant to draw up a *PROGRAM OF PRAYER* for new missionaries, not only for the Vocation Week in May but also for the whole year. The Elderly and the Sick Oblates can offer their sufferings. Youth can be encouraged to discern to what the Lord is calling them and parents can pray for the gift of religious vocation for their children. We can ask our lay people in our missions and parishes for a "spiritual bouquet" (as it was done in Japan) for the increase of vocations. All these endeavors have as their goal not only to provide "laborers for the vineyard" but also to be part of the Gospel: the "Gospel of vocation" (PDV 39).

Thank you for your kind attention! - The General Council Formation Committee and I would be grateful to receive any information about the initiatives you promote in this regard in order to share them with others in our Congregation.

With best wishes I am

your's in Christ and Mary Immaculate

Guillermo Steckling
Guillermo Steckling OMI
Ass't. Gen. for Formation

Rome, February 17, 1993

Oblate Days of Prayer for Vocations

A Proposal for 1993

Theme: THE CENTRALITY OF JESUS CHRIST

(according to Fr. General's letter to the Oblates in First Formation)

Slogan: "YOUTH FOR CHRIST" or
"THE GOSPEL OF VOCATION" ... etc.

Some practical suggestions:

- * Pray for vocations at every Mass; insert at the Prayers of the Faithful or after Communion Vocation Prayer (printed in bookmark form or projected on a screen)
- * Use the Oblate Cross to involve families in prayer. The Cross is given to a family at Sunday Mass. The family brings it home and prays for vocations that week while leaving the Cross prominently displayed in the home.
- * Involve the laity in our efforts. Sometimes they have fresh energy, enthusiasm, ideas, and contacts that we need.
- * Send names for the Vocation prayer team - shut-ins, elderly, prayerful people who will commit themselves to daily prayer for vocations.
- * Do not limit this kind of prayer to one occasion a year.

Vocation Novena Schema: Sample

1. Hymn
2. Opening Prayer
3. Reading
4. Short Reflection
(Background Music)
5. Homily
6. Intercession Prayers
7. Novena Prayer for
Vocations
8. Our Father
9. Thanksgiving Prayer
10. (Marian) Hymn

Vocation Prayer:

Lord Jesus, Eternal Priest, you chose your apostles and sent them to preach the gospel of salvation.

Having heard the cry for salvation, we ask you now to inspire more young people to follow the footsteps of Blessed Eugene de Mazenod "to preach the Gospel to the poor" under the banner of Mary Immaculate.

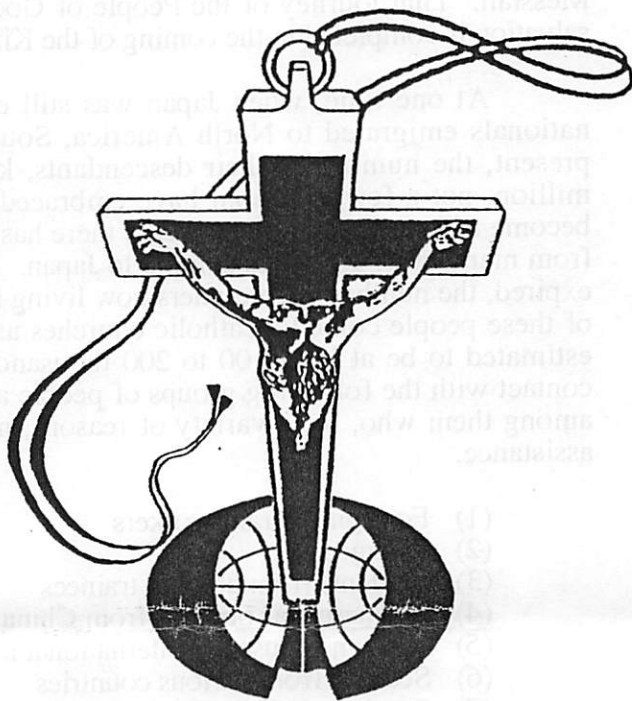
May they remain faithful to this call as witnesses in an Apostolic Community, and thus serve the promise of hope.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, our Mother. Amen.

Suggested Themes for the Novena:

(can be used throughout the year especially during *Oblate Vocation Week*, May 21 - 29)

- 1) The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to announce Good News to the poor (Lc 4,18).
- 2) Christ, seeing the multitudes, felt compassion with them. (cf. Mt 9,36; WAC 1); "achieve solidarity of compassion" (WAC 6).
- 3) "Like the Founder before us, we seek to gather around the person of Jesus Christ" (WAC 6).
- 4) "Jesus never ceases to call people to follow him and to proclaim the Kingdom." (C.52)
- 5) "While we share with every Christian the same baptismal vocation, we are also convinced that God calls us to the specific vocation that is ours..." (WAC 28)
- 6) "The creature who more than any other has lived the full truth of vocation is Mary the Virgin Mother, and she did so in intimate communion with Christ: no one has responded with a love grater than hers to the immense love of God" (PDV 36)
- 7) "Mary Immaculate ... constantly invites us to deepen our personal intimacy with Jesus ... she challenges us ... to love the people to whom we are sent to proclaim the Good News." (WAC 45)
- 8) "Deeds and witness speak louder than words" (WAC 31); present some witnesses of Oblate missionaries.
- 9) "I can picture an Oblate of Mary Immaculate in his mission: he wants to see everything with his eyes, know with his heart, give joy to everyone by his presence, be all things to all people to win them over to JESUS CHRIST." (Joseph Gerard) (May, 29 = his feastday)



Alternative themes for the prayer week:

1. Mass in honor of Bl. E. de Mazenod (May, 21)
2. The Call to Service
3. Our Response to God's Call
4. Christ Crucified
5. The Mission
6. The Gift
7. Building the Kingdom
8. The Challenge
9. Mass in honor of Bl. J. Gerard (May, 29)

*Materials recieved from
several Provinces were
used in this proposal.
Thank you!*

Rome, February 17, 1993

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF GOD WHICH TRANSCENDS DIFFERENCES IN NATIONALITY

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

The Church warmly welcomes people who move into its midst from other places, recognizing that it is the Church's mission to be of service to them. We, the bishops, would like to reaffirm this responsibility through the following message:

MIGRATION - A JOURNEY OF ENCOUNTER

1 Migration is a social phenomenon deeply related to the unfolding of the history of salvation and the development of the Kingdom of God. Under God's direction the patriarch Abraham left his ancestral land to head for the land of Canaan. This was to enable the Israelites to settle in that land, which was to be the place where they would prepare for the coming of the Messiah. That journey of the People of God is continuing today and will continue on until salvation is completed in the coming of the Kingdom of God.

At one time, when Japan was still economically poor, some one million Japanese nationals emigrated to North America, South America and various countries in Asia. At present, the number of their descendants, known as *nikkeijin*, has reached more than 1.3 million, not a few of whom have embraced the Catholic faith. Now, however, Japan has become affluent and in recent years there has been a sudden increase in the number of people from many other countries coming to Japan. Including persons whose legal period of stay has expired, the number of foreigners now living in Japan is estimated to be about 500,000. Many of these people come to Catholic churches and the total number of Catholics among them is estimated to be at least 100 to 200 thousand. At present the Japanese church has ongoing contact with the following groups of people and has become particularly involved with those among them who, for a variety of reasons, need support, protection, or some other form of assistance.

- (1) Foreign migrant workers
- (2) Refugees
- (3) Students from abroad, trainees
- (4) Japanese war orphans from China and their families
- (5) Foreign spouses of international marriages and their families
- (6) Seamen from various countries
- (7) South and North Koreans, Taiwanese and Chinese who either came to work before or during WWII, or were forcibly brought to Japan to work, as well as their descendants
- (8) Foreign women who have become victims of sexual violence and various forms of exploitation
- (9) Foreigners serving prison terms or being detained for questioning

We believe that, in seeking to be a church and a society that can learn to live and work and pray with these people through our encounters with them, we are bringing the transforming power of the Gospel to bear on the Church and society alike.

We hope that all who come to the Church or in one way or another associate with the Church, will be able to discover there the joy of encountering Christ.

THE TASK FACING THE JAPANESE CHURCH

4 The present phenomenon of so many people leaving their families and homelands to settle in a country like Japan, with its different people, religions, language and culture, is certainly a *sign of the times*. For the Japanese Church, which is seeking the Kingdom of God that rises above national differences, this sign of the times offers a new challenge and also points to possibilities for the unfolding of a new evangelization. The efforts of the many lay persons, religious and priests all over Japan who are presently dedicating themselves wholeheartedly to this work must be praised. But the response to the *sign of the times* is a task that must not be limited to the work of a few, but must now involve the whole of the Japanese Church. The major tasks to be done are the following:

a TASKS TO BE DONE IN COOPERATION WITH CIVIC GROUPS -AND THE GOVERNMENT

- (1) To plan orientation meetings or seminars that will be of assistance to those trying to adjust to life in Japan by providing information about laws related to them, the Japanese lifestyle, food, language, etc.
- (2) To take the initiative in working for the protection of human rights so as to counter the proliferation of human rights violations; To cooperate in dealing with problems related to medical care, work-related injuries, unfair dismissal from employment, withholding of wages, the seeking of employment, the search for suitable residences, marriages involving persons who have overstayed their visas or who need an extension of the period of stay, etc.
- (3) To cooperate in setting up emergency shelters that can be used in common with civic groups.
- (4) To devise measures to meet the needs of families involved in international marriages; in consultation with the families to provide education for the spouses and children concerning the situation of the countries involved and on life in Japan.
- (5) To work to "legalize" the status of foreigners who have been branded as "illegals" under current immigration law and whose human rights have been ignored.
- (6) To work to make the Immigration Law a law based on basic human rights.
- (7) To have Church members study the provisions of the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* passed by the United Nations on December 18, 1990 and to collaborate with civic groups to press Japan to ratify the treaty.
- (8) To work together to deepen mutual understanding of the political-economic background and other relationships affecting the immigrants' home country, the receiving country and the countries through which they pass in transit.

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN THESE ENCOUNTERS

2 In contemporary Japanese society differences in race, gender, language, culture, customs, laws and religion tend to be threatening to the Japanese and deepen tendencies toward discrimination and exclusivism. Unfortunately these tendencies can also be found even within the Church. Meanwhile, both those who have come from abroad to work in Japan and their families tend to feel alienated in their workplaces and places of residence, because of their lack of a base in society and the instability of their living conditions. Furthermore, because many of them are not protected by the Japanese legal system, they are often placed in a vulnerable position and experience inhumane treatment. Women in particular suffer continually from exploitation and sexual violence.

At present, Japan's *Immigration-Control and Refugee-Recognition Act* (Immigration Law) recognizes 28 types of residential status through which a foreigner may legally reside in Japan, but does not make provision for those who have come to do unskilled labor. Furthermore, the types of activity permitted by each category are very strictly controlled. For this reason, many persons enter the country under the pretext of entertainment, study, training, research or sightseeing. This situation results in many problems. Among these the main ones are overstaying one's original visa and working without a valid visa, the non-payment of wages, work-related injuries, the lack of health and social insurance, the victimizing of women in the flesh-trade, deficiencies in training- programs, problems related to international marriages and education of children, etc.

OVERCOMING DIFFERENCES AS A WAY OF WITNESSING TO THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

3 We Christians are all called to become one in Christ with other people regardless of who they may be. The Japanese Church must not lose sight of the fact that now is the time for us to respond to that call. The Church is to be a community in which people of all generations from many different places, different ways of life and different cultures enter into relationships with one another, mutually accepting the differences that exist among themselves. The friction and pain that go along with the experience of such differences should be looked upon as an occasion to make the radical change of heart called for in the Gospel. Relationships born of such a conversion will bring new riches to the Church. This effort to overcome differences between peoples does not mean trying to assimilate the others by imposing one's own lifestyle on them, but should be seen as bringing to birth a new society and culture within which we can all live together.

For the Church, these immigrants are brothers and sisters in Christ. This means that we do not merely welcome them, but strive to build up a community that respects differences, thereby witnessing to society at large the universality of the Church.

The Japanese Church is by no means a church just for the Japanese. The Church founded by Jesus Christ, in its encounter with people of different nationalities, gives witness that the Kingdom of God is bringing about a new humanity. The message that St. Paul addressed to the faithful in Galatia is indeed a message for our times as well:

All of you are sons and daughters of God through faith in Jesus Christ. All baptized in Christ, you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ.

Galatians 3:26-28

- (9) To inaugurate a program of study to familiarize ourselves with the problems mentioned above and find ways to respond appropriately.

b PARTICULAR TASKS FOR THE CHURCH

(Those to be begun on the diocesan level and carried through on the parochial level)

- (1) To make renewed efforts to ensure that the Japanese Church can give witness that it is truly a Church where foreigners and Japanese can live together.
- (2) To have the diocesan representatives of the *Association for Solidarity With Foreign and Migrant Workers* of the Commission for International Cooperation (set up by the Catholic Bishops' Conference) cooperate with the priests and lay representatives in concrete steps to realize the following:
 - In order that foreigners may fully participate in the Liturgy and the Sacraments, to respect and accept their different ways of expressing their faith; to supply Mass pamphlets and arrange for catechetical instruction in their own languages.
 - To accept foreigners in our parishes as registered members, regardless of nationality, and to find ways to open channels of communication with them. Since one's name expresses one's dignity as a person, as far as possible, names should be written in their original form and not in *katakana*. *Furigana* may be added when necessary.
 - To set up a desk for information and advise in each diocese, with the aim of finding concrete solutions to the problems that arise.
 - To introduce courses into seminaries and on-going formation programs for laity, religious and clergy that will provide the training necessary to enable them to relate more effectively with those from other countries.

We ask all to begin actively to implement whatever is possible at your local level.

May the Almighty Father of all humanity shower bountiful blessings on our efforts to realize the Kingdom of God that transcends and embraces all nations of the world.

November 5, 1992

Episcopal Committee for Social Activities
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF JAPAN

Update Vice-Province of Japan

June 29, 1993



Fr. Ronald LAFRAMBOISE, OMI
General Administration Assistant

Fr. Ronald LaFramboise has been appointed to the position of General Administration Assistant. Ron is expected to assume his new duties in Rome by October at the latest after a few weeks with his family. Our prayers are with you, Ron, and get your butt back here after those three years!

Triduum in Australia

Fr. John Sherman the Provincial of Australia has invited two of our missionaries in Korea to preach a triduum, culminating in a festival and the blessing of a fishing fleet in an Italian parish in the care of the Oblates.

Regional Formators Meeting

Ron LaFramboise will represent the Japanese Vice Province at the Regional Formators Meeting which will be held in Indonesia. Ron departs for Indonesia on July 15. The formators have been asked to prepare a report which will be discussed at the Major Superiors' Meeting (Oct. 3-10, Sri Lanka). He will return in time to direct the retreat of the Ottawa Sisters of Charity.

Dates to Remember

Retreat 1993

The annual retreat will be held at the Passionist Retreat House in Fukuoka Aug. 29-Sept 4. Fr. Phil Estrella, OMI, the Provincial of the Philippines is the retreat director.

Retreat 1994

The Superior General Fr. Marcello Zago, OMI will direct our annual retreat in 1994. As usual it will be held at the Passionist Retreat House from Sept. 5 - 9, 1994

Birthdays

Ordinations

June

24 Giovanni ZEVOLA

2 Dick HARR

7 Ed WILLIAMS

14 John IWO

14 Len INUI

24 Mike YAMASAKI

July

4 Mauro CONCARDI

1 Jan Van HOYDONCK

31 Lei SIMONS

5 Lei SIMONS

August

4 Nobuhiko YAGI

22 Bradly ROZAIRO

23 Ange SIANI

22 Jude PEIRISPULLE

31 Bert SILVER

September

6 John IWO

8 Giovanni ZEVOLA

20 John MAHONEY

22 Fran HAHN

Prayers for the Sick

We should always remember to pray for all our elderly, sick relatives, friends but especially at this time for the following:

Tom and Bill's mother who has recently recovered from pneumonia.

Ray's mother and father.

Ange's father who has suffered a mild stroke.

Deaths

Please remember in your prayers,

Peg SILVER, the sister of Bertram N. SILVER. She passed away on June 23.

Bert's address: 781 Andover Street
 Lowell, MA 01852, USA

Tom and Bill MAHER's uncle.

Ray's aunt.

Both of the above passed away recently.

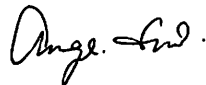
Visiting Oblate

Fr. Paul FACHET, OMI (Alberta, Canada) will be spending some months here in Japan. He will spend part of his visit at a Buddhist Monastery and would also like to spend about a month visiting our missions.

Asia/Oceania Major Superiors' Meeting

At the Asia/Oceania Provincials' meeting (India '93) there was a general feeling that there is a need for each Oblate in the Region to grow in his awareness of the Region. With this in mind I am sending you a copy of the AGENDA and invite you to comment on the matters on it. This sharing of the AGENDA, will also keep Oblates 'in touch' with the meeting.

I will prepare a report of the Province. I welcome your comments on the AGENDA and elements you feel should be in my report. The report must be in Colombo by September 1.



Angelo Siani, OMI

Provincial



THE MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

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TEL 0888-72-3658



MINUTES PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING June 29, 1993

Dear Brother Oblates,

The Provincial Council of the Vice Province held its June meeting in Kochi on June 29.

The meeting opened with a reflection and prayer on Mt.16:13-19 led by John Iwo.

The meeting opened on a note of thanks to Fr. Ron LaFramboise for his generous acceptance of a new and challenging assignment at our General Administration. We also thank Ron for the dedication and talent he brought to all of his assignments, the schools, the parish in Zendana and especially in formation of our young Oblates. I thank Ron for his openness to the needs of the Province and the Congregation.

The Council addressed the question of Oblate presence in Nagoya. There was agreement on the importance of our continued presence in Nagoya, especially in the light of our Formation Program. As the final decision effects all of us we ask you to consider the following.

Zendana Parish History

Reasons OMIs' accepted the parish in Zendana

1. SVD parish without priest. We thought we could be of help.
2. We had intended to make it the place for our pre-novitiate.
3. It serves as a place for pastoral experience for our scholastics and Brothers in first formation and where the Oblate formators would be able to observe their work firsthand.
4. It also provides us with a church where our people in language school could gain experience both in ministry and language.

Present Situation

Ron has been appointed to the position of General Administration Assistant. He is the pastor at present. We have a three year contract with the SVDs' and the Bishop.

Future Action for Zendana

1. Appoint a man to fulfill the contract (just weekends).
2. Take the parish as an Oblate work. Appoint a full time pastor who would live at the parish. Appoint another man for the House of Studies.
3. Just keep the House of Studies. Return parish.
4. Sell the house and move everything to the parish.
5. Leave Nagoya.

What should be kept in mind in our decision is:

First Formation

We have a very good setup for future men in first formation. The parish has been a plus in the program. The house provides the necessary quiet atmosphere for study and the parish has been very good for apostolic work. If this arrangement is discontinued it will prove extremely difficult to restore when in the future we need it.

The Parish

This church would be reduced to a mission station if returned to the SVDs'. We provide the stability of a pastor and provide spiritual care for the people.

Your opinions may be sent to the council as a District or by individual response. Ron will leave for home after the annual retreat. I hope we will be able to make our final decision by early September. Until our decision is made the council has appointed Fr. John K. Mahoney to Zendana as a temporary assignment.

While I am on home leave the acting provincial will be John Iwo from July 16-26. Lei Simons returns from Belgium on July 26. Lei will be acting provincial from July 26-August 19.

Your brother in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,



Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

Vice Province of Japan

UPDATE

September 17, 1993



Dear Brothers,

In April of 1973, Fr. Fernand Jette, wrote in his letter What I expect from Provincials, "Within a number of years, some provinces will disappear for lack of vocations.... Of course, it is God who calls, but if nobody among men makes himself God's echo, there won't be any vocations."

In Witnessing as Apostolic Community we read "The vocations ministry is not optional" (NO 28). "We believe in our ministry and religious vocation; and confident in the generosity of the young people of today, we declare that they have the right to hear the call to be Oblate missionaries " (NO 29).

In this province great efforts have been made to encourage and support vocations. Recently, we have seen the fruits of this work in the Ordination of one priest and the Perpetual Oblation of one Brother. Thank you for your work and prayers and do remain active in your concern for vocations.

Ed Williams relates that the vocation camps conducted by Bro. Nobuhiko Yagi are very popular and that Nobuhiko intends to expand his contacts by visiting possible candidates

For some time to come, we will need missionaries from abroad. Fr. General, at the General Chapter, assigned two Oblates from Sri Lanka to the Japanese mission. A young Oblate in the Eastern Province recently wrote to me of his interest in Japan and Phil Estrella has invited me to give some talks to the Fillipino seminarians. I will spend two days in Manila at the seminary on my way to Sri Lanka for the Major Superiors' Meeting.

There are many hopeful signs for growth with men coming from abroad and Japan itself. The conditions for this growth are 1) a life of integrity, that is to live (to incarnate) the identity and mission of Jesus in our own personal life, living ever more deeply the mystery of Christ. 2) Our life in community must be Apostolic. And 3) we must pray and pray hard to "the Lord of the harvest".

Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

New Appointments

Rome

Ron LAFRAMBOISE left for his new assignment on September 8. Ron will be working as an assistant of the General Administration.

Nagoya

Ray BOURGOIN appointed as superior of the House of Studies for a first term of three years.

John Kenney MAHONEY named pastor of the Zendana Church.

Formation Committee

Len INUI, Ray BOURGOIN, Satoshi KAWAGUCHI and Nobuhiko YAGI.

Financial Committee

The appointment to this committee is for one year. The members are Bert SILVER (ex officio), Mike YAMASAKI, Fran HAHN, and Nobuhiko YAGI.

Follow Through Committee

Ange SIANI, Mike YAMASAKI and Ray BOURGOIN

Director of MAMI

Satoshi KAWAGUCHI and Ray BOURGOIN (assistant)

International Oblate Communication Network

Wency LAGUIDAO

Laison with Rome for Lay Associations

Ray BOURGOIN

From the Provincial Treasurer

Beginning on September 27 the exchange rate will be 105 yen to the American dollar.

Formation

The policy in the province has been to seek for vocations at the high school and college levels. During the retreat Ed Williams and Nobuhiko Yagi approached me about making some definite policy for candidates at the middle school level. They suggested three possibilities: 1) to open a juniorate, 2) to rent a small house and have the candidates attend existing minor seminaries or 3) to have the candidates live at home where they would be visited frequently by the pastor and vocations director who would assist them in the discernment of their vocation.

These suggestions were presented to the new Formation Committee and they suggested that we adopt No. 3 as a working policy for the province. If you have any possible candidates please contact Bro. Yagi.

Japanese OMI Personnel

Ray BOURGOIN is working on a new personnel for the province. It is a comprehensive work. At times it is difficult to get correct information. Your help in this area will be greatly appreciated.

Korea

As you know, Bert and I will be in Korea from September 19-22. We hope to definitely rent a house which will best suit the needs of the community.

Guest

Welcome to Fr. Paul FACHET, OMI. Paul comes from St. Albert, Canada where he is on the seminary staff. He teaches a course on comparative religions. Paul is here to study and experience Zen Buddhism as well as the Japanese culture.

Prayers

Remember in your prayers Clara MAHER the mother of Tom and Bill Maher. She died in Chicago on August 31.

Acting Provincial

Lei SIMONS will be acting provincial while I am in Sri Lanka for the Major Superior's Meeting. As you know the meeting will be

held from Oct. 3 - 10.

The superiors of delegations and missions have also been invited to the meeting. Mauro CONCARDI will represent Korea at the meeting.

While in Sri Lanka I will meet with Jude PEIRISPULLE and Joseph Bradly ROZAIRO, the two Oblates who have received obediences to this province. I will also meet their families. Since they live a great distance from Colombo the provincial asked me to spend an extra five days to allow time for the visits.

Lei will be acting provincial from September 28 - October 18.



1993. 9. 1.

オブレート会は毎年召命キャンプを行っているが、その参加者のうちの中高生から入会志望があってもそれを助ける手だてを作っていなかった。それに必要な対策を今回話し合いました。 先ず次の三案が考えられます。

1. 小神学校を作る；
2. 所属する小教区の司祭館に住み、学校に通う；
3. 今まで通り自分の家で生活し、定期的に会員が訪問したり、ある期間を設けて会員と共同生活を体験する。

話し合いの結果、案3. が最も現実的で実施可能なものと思われた。そしてここで考慮すべきこととして、つぎのことが話された。

1. 中高年生と言えども自己選択能力には個人差があるので、受入れの年齢枠を一律に決めないこと。
2. オブレート会員が訪問や共同生活を通してなすべきことは、若い人が自分の召命に必要な選択ができるように援助すること。

以上



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

Provincial Newsletter of the OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE
Vice Province of Japan

November 1993



Dear Brothers,

In this letter, I would like to reflect on WITNESSING AS APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY #11.

"We are called to the accountability of mature adults. Such accountability is more than mere reporting our activities to a Superior; it commits us to live in a spirit of cooperation and initiative' (C.26) and calls us to genuine dialogue within community; it requires, moreover, that we mutually support each other, share with one another, and care for each other." WAC # 11.

When I visited the Novitiate in Godfrey IL. in 1991, Fr. Bill Sheehan (then the director of novices), introduced me to a book by Scott PECK entitled A DIFFERENT DRUM. It is about community. The process described in this book, I believe, is able to contribute positively to the quality of our lives as Missionary Oblates.

Scott Peck describes his community building process in these terms:

1. Community is not simply a geographical aggregate of people. Rather, community has to do with communication involving an aggregate of people who have made a commitment to learn how to communicate with each other at an ever more deep and authentic level.

2. Community involves a group of people who deal with their own issues. Most people, Peck indicates, do not deal with their own issues, they avoid them. They ignore them by pretending they do not exist, project them onto other groups or possibly vote on them, but they don't deal with them.

In the community building process, Peck has gleaned his techniques from Quaker meetings, Christian Monasticism, AA, sensitivity group movements, the Travelstock model and even from Jungian dream analysis. Only two things were distinctly "new": the integration of these techniques, and the purpose of the workshops was solely to build community.

In the community building process, there are predictable stages of community growth. The common initial stage is described as pseudo community, a stage of pretense. The group

pretends that it is already community and that the participants have only superficial differences and no cause for conflict. Communication is filled with generalizations. It is polite, un-taxing, boring, sterile and unproductive.

Without leadership profound individual differences may begin to emerge over time, and the group may enter into what Peck identifies as the second stage of community development, the stage of chaos and not infrequently they self destruct. The job of community building leader is not to prevent chaos but to actually encourage the group into it. Chaos is more authentic than pretense and a necessary stage of group evolution.

Emptiness is the third stage in community development envisioned by Peck. This is a time in which those seeking to build community, work to empty themselves of everything which stands between them and community. And that is a lot, for example, prejudice, snap judgements, fixed expectations, the desire to be correct, the fear of looking like a fool, the need to control. Other things that need to be emptied may be more personal: hidden griefs, hatreds or terrors which must be confessed and made public before individuals can be fully present to the group. It is a time of risk and courage. While it often feels relieving, it may also be like dying.

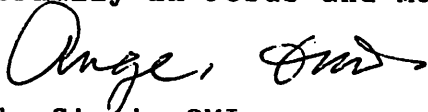
At a point, after the group moves through pseudo community, chaos, and emptiness, a member will speak something particularly poignant and authentic. Instead of retreating from it, the group now sits in silence, absorbing it. Then a second member quietly says something equally authentic. The miracle happens and community is born in the silence of emptiness. The leaders job is not to lead the group into community but rather to lead the group into emptiness.

Peck reminds us that a group in community will always perform better than a group which is not community. Community building is an ongoing process. There is an invitation to rebuild community as long as you have reason to be together. For a group to function well there is a need to work, not only on a task (mission) but on themselves as a group. The integration of task and process is the challenge. [The place for this "integration of task and process" is our monthly District Meetings.]

In 1986 Fr. DROUART directed a study on the spirit of the Founder. He told us the story of his visitation to Laos when he was Assistant General. Most of the missionaries were living alone and he fully intended to insist on them living together in community or else! However, while he was there he attended some of their community meetings. At these meetings, he discovered, there was deep sharing on life, mission and prayer. In addition they wanted to be together. Fr. Drouart changed his original intention. He saw a community with a deep prayer life and community sharing even though they could meet only once a month. It was a community of sharing and prayer and it showed in their lives.

Here in Japan most of us live alone. Our monthly meetings! How important! For some a joy. For some a burden! However, our monthly meetings are indispensable. They provide the opportunity for us to grow and become a group of Missionary Oblates WITNESSING AS APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY.

Fraternally in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,


Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

AORC MEETING, Oct., 1993, SRI LANKA

The meeting of the Asia/Oceania Regional Major Superiors was held from October 3-9 in Sri Lanka. The Superiors of Delegations and Missions were also present.

In his opening statement, the President of the Region, FR, John Sherman remarked:

that "the AORC has been from its very inception a forum and an instrument to foster and build Friendship and mutual support and cooperation within the Region among various administrative units. He pointed out that unlike and more than any other Region, Asia Oceania is marked with a variety and diversity in every sense of the word - religious, ethnic, ideological, linguistic etc. and that 56% of the world's population finds its home in Asia."

-that "the Region develop a greater sensitivity and love for the Region...we are a reasonably strong Region and that there is a working unity in the Region. We should work towards its greater strength, through inter-linkings of concerns, help and support."

Fr. Sherman called us to a "working meeting". There were no lectures from experts or theoretical input, instead the participants were to provide the matter for discussion.

There were reports from each province and mission, but I will report on the areas which were of concern for the Region.

In the Open Forum the following features emerged:

1. The need to understand the different models of Mission Theology.
2. The need for all AORC members and the units of the Region to have an over-all vision of the Region: prayer for the Region and encouragement offered to each other.
3. The need for an Oblate Spirituality, Oblate values priorities, assimilation of MTW & WAC.
4. The need to face and accept the challenges that come from ecclesiastical, hierarchical and social structures.
5. Emphasize our role as Religious in the Church-prophetic.
6. Accountability.

When asked to discern or see as significant challenges common to the Region or significant enough to warrant Regional attention, the following emerged:

- A. Formation- need for formators- cooperation in the Region is desirable.
Models of mission theology
Study of social and cultural issues
- B. Formators - formators with a deep spirituality-local difficulties of planting the Oblate Charism in a ,multi-cultural context and in places of conflicting diocesan policies.
- C. Finance/Oblate identity as missionaries/community life.

Formation seemed to emerge as the common area of concern. Formators as models for the candidates was stressed; by way of Oblate Charism, community life and accompanying the candidate on his spiritual journey.

A report from Fr. Edmund Murugupillai, OMI included the following elements:

A vocation is a personal call from God and must be sensed from within.

It calls for a personal experience of Jesus Christ at the core of the person.

Preparation for Final Vows is a continuous process and calls for intense and serious remote preparation.

Preparation entails adequate exposure in the field . Pastoral exposure is not an appendix to the process but an essential major factor.

Immediate preparation before final vows be done is two stages:

1. an experience like the Aix program and 2. a 20 or 30 day retreat. The program be 3 months long and take place on the Regional level.

As for FORMATORS:

- a. their numbers are inadequate
- b. preparation for the work is essential as 'formators' not 'academics'. Often the formator comes with good will but is too young, inexperienced in the art of life and lack the tools for formation; spiritual direction, discernment, guidance suffer as a result.
- c. It has been observed that formators do not have adequate knowledge of the candidate, and are unable to accompany the candidate in his spiritual journey. Today's candidates come from broken and wounded backgrounds and need healing and integration.
- d. Formators need to challenge the candidate with "Oblateness", Oblate values, hospitality, the experience of Jesus Christ, prayer, devotion, community life preferential love for the poor, concern for the marginalized, availability and accountability etc. The life style of formators is to be a living witness and challenge to the candidate - they serve as models/paradigms, which help the candidate to confirm his call. Candidates need to know the traditions and the way of life of the Oblates.

IMPLEMENTATION

The South Asian Sub-Region:

1. The Ignation discernment be done locally
2. The preparation for final vows at the sub-regional level could be organized for a period of one year, after the completion of all academic studies.

The members of the Eastern Sub-Region decided to convene a meeting for the formators of that Region before Christmas '93 and decide on a course of action.

It was also suggested:

1. Formation to be given special priority.
2. Students be sent to other houses of formation during holidays as an experience.
3. Select candidates to be trained for formation.
4. The Aix Program be made available for formators at International, Regional and local levels
5. The possibility of studies of formation at Melbourne.
6. Provinces/delegations to share information on institutes of ongoing formation in their own unit.

Inter-Captiular Meeting - Thailand

In preparation for the Inter-Capitular Meeting in Thailand 1995, each province, delegation and mission in the Asian Region will provide a program for the provincials of other regions. The program is to include an experience of mission and culture. The purpose is to give an in-depth experience of mission and cultures in the region in order to give a deeper understanding of our region.

Finances

Fr. Sherman: "Within the Congregation, there is a need to sensitize each other about the material resources placed in out trust. The need to genuinely share with each other in view of the larger mission and carry within ourselves a deep spirituality that enables us to receive and use finances and material resources in an evangelical way. With this objective in view, the congregation has instituted the following: a. the Clearing House, b. the Oblate Investment Pool, and c. the Oblate Sharing Fund.

In order to make every mission financially independent in regard to ordinary expenses, those who are able would move some of their capital to poorer ones. This would free some units from undue dependence.

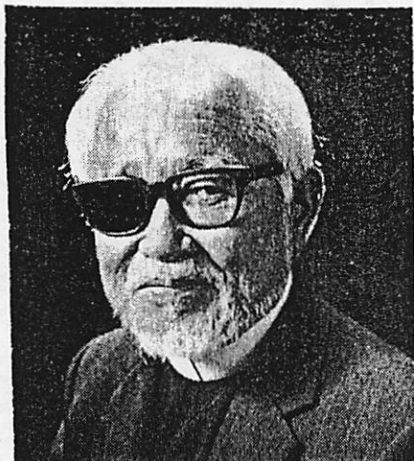
Each mission was encouraged to build up MAMI.

ELECTIONS

Fr. John Camillus FERNANDO was elected President of the AORC. The Vice-presidents for the two Sub-Regions are: Fr. Angelo SIANI (Japan) for the Eastern Sub-region Region and

Fr. AMBROSE (India) for the South Asian Sub-Region.

THANK YOU, Fr. John SHERMAN for your four years of leadership as President of the AORC. The Asia/Oceania Region is a closer working unit because of your clear love and dedication to the Region. We enjoyed your friendship.



1899 - 19981

Bro. Joseph TSUDA, OMI Art Exhibit

From the first of October until the tenth of November an art exhibit of Brother's pictures was held at the Ataka Art Gallery in Naruto. Along with the pictures Brother painted were pictures done by his disciples - Mr. Takasago, Mr. Saika and Mr. Imai. The exhibit was arranged by Mr. Saika's brother. An interview with Mrs. Takasago and Miss Mihara (Brother's associate for the Beniuzu Art Group) appeared on a local TV program.

Beniuzu Art Exhibit

The Beniuzu Group (started by Bro. Tsuda and which continues its activities) held its 46th. Art Exhibit at the Naruto Public Library from the 17th. of November until the 21st. of November. Nine members participated in this exhibit. Eight of the members are parishioners of the Naruto parish.

Hayashi (Furumoto) Hiroshi-Indigo Art at Tokushima Art Exhibit

(Formerly with the Oblates) Hiroshi's Indigo Art design panels were accepted for the third year in a row to be exhibited at the Tokushima Prefectural Art Exhibit. More of his designs have been on display at other art shows in the prefecture. He is gradually making a name for himself in the world of indigo art. At present he is a Eucharistic Minister and volunteer catechist at the Naruto Parish.

National Sport Festival, Naruto

The upper class of the Naruto Kindergarten participated in the opening ceremony of the National Sport Festival. The fifty-seven kindergarten children were part of one thousand six hundred children that performed in the presence of the Emperor on the 24th. of October. They also did the same performance at the closing of the Games for the Physically Handicapped Athletes on the 7th. of November.

Naruto Lion's and Lioness Club visit Seoul Korea

Fr. Bert Silver was part of the group that visited Seoul to attend the 10th. anniversary of the Naruto Lion's Brother Club of Aoyama. From the 11th. to the 13th. of November the members participated in various gatherings with their Korean Brothers. They hope that through youth exchange and

cooperation in local Korean charity programs they will be able to achieve greater understanding of Japan and Korea. Fr. Silver remained in Seoul to meet with Fr. Alfons Keuter, OMI General Treasurer to discuss the financing of the Oblate Korean project.

On Monday and Tuesday Fr. Keuter joined Fr. Siani to look at various options for buying a house for the Oblate Community.

KOREA

The Fathers in Korea began looking for a house to rent last year. Their present facilities, on the thirteenth floor of a huge apartment house is not big enough for four men nor is there any room for them to do any kind of apostolate. They were anxious to find a more suitable place. Vincenzo BORDO after consulting with the Maryknoll and the Colomaban Fathers hired a real estate agent and looked at 41 possible places.

The community was in favor of renting a house. By mid October it became evident this was not possible. I invited the Treasurer of the Korean Mission, Mauro CONCADI to meet with the Provincial Council to discuss the possibility of buying a house. Fran HAHN and Mike YAMASAKI, members of the Financial Committee were also invited. It was decided that if we could not rent, we would buy a house. In early November they found a house for rent. It had everything we were looking for.

Fr. Alfons KEUTER, the General Treasurer visited the mission on November 14. I went to meet him and Bert Silver. By this time the owner of the house decided she didn't want to rent but sell. We decided to buy. The price was increased. It was more than we could afford.

The kind of house we need in Seoul costs over \$700,000. We needed more than \$400,000 in addition to what we had on hand to make the purchase. After viewing the situation, Fr. Keuter was very supportive of buying a house. He immediately began to look for the funds, to loan to the Japanese Province, in order to make this project a reality. We sincerely thank Fr. KEUTER for his great assistance on behalf of the Korean Mission.

On November 23rd, the Korean Mission made their first payment on a house of nine rooms. The house in Seoul was registered in the name of the Bishop of Suwan, since foreigners cannot own property in Korea. Before the end of the year, after they have made the second and final payment of the house, they will move into their new house. At that time I will notify you of their new address.

Congratulations to the community in Korea.

Financial requests

On November 29, the financial committee will meet to prepare the Provincial Budget for 1994. All requests must be in to the Provincial Treasurer, Fr. Bertram Silver, by that date.

New District

Tokyo, Nagoya, Itami and Tokushima have been designated as one district. The new District Superior will be chosen at the next Provincial Council Meeting.

Published, 1994 YEARBOOK By Fr. Raymond BOURGOIN, OMI

By now you have all received a copy of our new Personnel produced by Ray. After several months of research Ray was finally able to publish this work. I have heard much praise for this book. Thank you very much Ray for all you have done for the mission.

Provincial meets new men from Sri Lanka

At the close of the AORC, I met Bradly Rozairo in Colombo. Brad is a chaplain at the General Hospital in Colombo. The hospital has 70 wards! There are three full time Oblate Chaplains working at this hospital. Brad has been doing this work since he was a scholastic and is the senior member of the team.

Early on the morning of Oct. 12, Brad and I took an express bus to Trincomalee, a seven hour trip. Brad had a million questions about Japan, the Oblates and our works. He has already begun to study Japanese and finds it very interesting. He thinks he might like to pick up Korean on the side! Brad speaks Tamil, Singalese and Portuguese and English.

There were several military check points along the way, and Brad kept assuring me there were no problems. We arrived in Trincomalee at noon. There were signs of the recent war everywhere burned out houses and a depleted population. I began to feel uneasy.

I met Brad's family. They live a three minute walk from our parish, Our Lady of Lourdes. I had a pleasant visit with his mother, father, his married sister, brother-in-law and their three children.

I met Jude at the church. He is an associate pastor, very well loved by the children who gave me a reserved welcome. They heard I was going to take Jude away!

Jude has a very active apostolate with the youth. He has begun classes for poor children scared by the war. He has also been instrumental in relocating a Hindu community, displaced by prejudice and war.

The morning of the 14th. I heard some gun shots and some bombs exploding. I was told they were a good distance from us and nothing to worry about!

Brad, Jude and I returned to Colombo on the 14th. I met Brad's sister, a member of the FMM congregation. In the

evening, we had a traditional Sri Lankan supper with Jude's family. Jude has four brothers. It was a very enjoyable and lively evening.

Jude speaks Tamil, Singalese and English. He has not had the opportunity to study Japanese as there are no Japanese teachers in the former war zone.

Both Brad's and Jude's parents were sad that their sons were leaving for a foreign country but they gladly gave their blessings to the new missionaries.

Birthdays

December 24

Mike YAMASAKI

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 22 - 24, 1994

Oblate Spring Meeting

September 5 - 9, 1994
Retreat Master

Annual Retreat
Fr. Macello Zago, OMI
Superior General

The theme

A confrontation of the Missionary
Encyclical and the Oblate Charism

Provincial Council Meeting

Itami on December 7.

Christmas Newsletter

The Christmas Letter has become a special time of sharing for us. I will be going to Kochi to print the letter. Please send your Christmas message to me in Kochi by December 8. Thank you.

Angelo Siani, OMI



"ONLY GOD KNOWS"

(Phil Estrella on the OMI Japan Province's Annual Retreat)

REFLECTIONS

At the invitation of Fr. Angelo Lani, OMI, the Provincial of Japan Province, I accepted to preach the Oblates' annual retreat.

Trying to get a visa was a story in itself. I almost gave up after two attempts. I found myself a victim of the bureaucracy of both the Japanese Embassy and the Department of Foreign Affairs. But in the end I was issued a visa... on the day I was scheduled to leave.

I flew to Osaka where Fr. Wency Laguidao met me. I stayed with him and Fr. Michael Yamazaki, the parish priest of Itami. The following day I flew to Fukuoka and Fr. Leonard Inui was there to meet me. We drove to his place

Koga and stayed there until Sunday. The two Italian Oblates from Korea, Frs. Mauro and Maurizio, were already in the convento, having arrived the day before. Later we were joined by Fr. Raymund Bourgoïn, a professor in Tokyo.

Late Sunday evening we proceeded to the Retreat House owned and administered by the Passionist Fathers. I can only describe the place as perfect. Every detail of the house has been well thought out.

I guess the retreat went on well. My schedule was light. I gave one conference in the morning and the homily during the eucharistic celebration. As all retreatmasters will say, we need to invoke the Holy Spirit because there are many things we do not know and one of

them is how to make a good retreat.

At the end of the retreat a strong typhoon was nearing the south of Japan. Everybody rushed home to beat the typhoon. Angelo and myself, together with Fr. Bertram Silver and Richard Harr, took the train to go to Naruto. From there Angelo and myself proceeded to Takushima to temporarily take over the parish of Bill Maher who had to leave for home at the middle of the retreat upon learning of the death of his mother.

I spent the weekend in Tokushima and visited the place of Richard Harr in Anan. For Sunday mass, I celebrated with Angelo. A number of Filipinas were present and I had an enjoyable time talking with them in Tagalog after the mass. From Tokushima, Angelo, Bert and myself made our way back to Osaka by car. We stayed a couple of hours in Kobe. We arrived in Itami before six in the evening just about ready to go out for dinner to celebrate the departure of Ron La Framboise, OMI, for Rome.

My last day in Japan was spent in Kyoto, the place of the Ancient Buddhist and Shinto Temples.

Over and above this wonderful trip is the chance to meet Oblates and see them in their mission areas. True to the Oblate spirit, most of them are situated in the distant south and faithfully ministering to the minority Catholics. It takes a lot of patience and strong conviction about one's vocation and mission to be able to last in Japan. As Fr. Bertram Silver remarked: "We are like Peter who, after spending the whole night fishing and not making a single catch, is being asked by the Lord to throw his nets again." The problem of inculturation is so real. I have nothing but admiration for these men who had

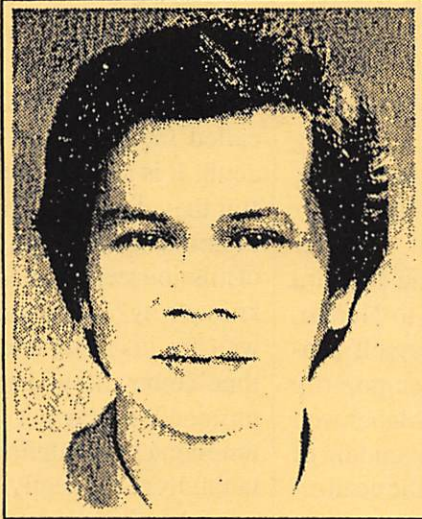
to learn the language that Francis Xavier called the language invented by the devil. It is almost impossible to learn. But they did! Why do these men continue to work in Japan where "success" of mission seems almost nil? "Only God knows why", Angelo says, "but we will wait for his time; and when the right time comes he will tell us why. Our mission is to stay put so that when that time comes, he will find us here waiting faithfully and patiently."

Another interesting turn of the mission in Japan is the presence of so many Filipino migrant workers. More and more the Oblate parishes are growing in number with the presence of our "kababayans". For many Oblates there, as well as in Hong Kong, the presence of the Filipinos is changing the face of the Church wherever they are. Fr. Gerry Stevens finds himself learning Tagalog at the age of 63 with the growing number of Filipinas married to Japanese in his parish.

In many ways these Filipinos are missionaries in their own right. Their untold suffering is beyond description. Yet, as Angelo commented, they remain lively, friendly, warm and happy. How do they manage to integrate themselves in this so strange and closed society? I have spoken to a few and they are already fluent in Japanese. But what is most heartening is to see with my own eyes that in this foreign land the Filipinos carry with them their faith expressions and traditions. I believe that the subtle influence of their faith will eventually manifest itself among the people of Japan. Could it be that our poverty, which is driving out people out of the country, has a positive outcome in the end? Do we not often say that God can write straight in crooked lines? ■

Finding roots in rootlessness

Lito Lampon, OMI (Rome)



"Missionary" is a word that has been part of my vocabulary since I entered the OMI Juniorate 26 years ago. However, there are dimensions of being a missionary that I only understood recently when I had "to leave home".

Working in the home Province is very missionary especially when one is assigned in the "mountain areas" or in the remote islands of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. But working "away from home" while not necessarily being more missionary has its uniqueness.

Being in the General Administration does not evoke very much the idea of being "missionary". Nevertheless, my first three months in Rome made me realize and appreciate more fully what "foreign missionaries" have to undergo when they are in a foreign land.

I arrived in Rome last November 26, 1992 when winter was just beginning. I felt "cold" physically as well as "inside". Aside from English, I did not speak either Italian or French. I found myself suddenly holed-in in the four corners of the General House. My network of meaningful relationships are gone. While the food here is good my stomach craved for rice. The daily grind of Plenary Council meetings for a month and later

the crash course in French made me question "why am I here?" The experience drove me to my knees. But looking back now after a period of transition, I can honestly say that that was a grace-filled experience. I believe I am contributing something to the General Administration and the Congregation as a whole.

My visit to Indonesia last May 14-24 for the canonical erection of the Vice-Province was my first official visit as General Councilor for Asia-Oceania. It was a fruitful visit. The structure of the Indonesian Vice-Province is in place and there is an excellent spirit of cooperation and goodwill.

Meetings and traveling will be the rhythm of my life from now on. I was warned that in this kind of a job one experiences a certain "rootlessness", living so to speak from a suitcase. The hours of waiting for connecting flights at the different airports are considered "normal". The travels in the different countries range from planes to trains, to buses and boats and hiking of course. Cultures, climates and food are varied. All these require some flexibility and adaptability.

I see my work primarily as a liaison between the General Administration and the different Provinces and Delegations in the Asia-Oceania Region. To listen, to understand, to affirm and encourage the Provincial and Delegation Administration as well as the men in the field and to bring the thrust and orientation of the General Administration to the Region and vice-versa; these are the important dimensions of my job. To fulfill this kind of a job, I realize that I have to be a deeply prayerful person. I need too the support of my fellow Oblates and friends so that in spite of the "rootlessness" I can be rooted. ■

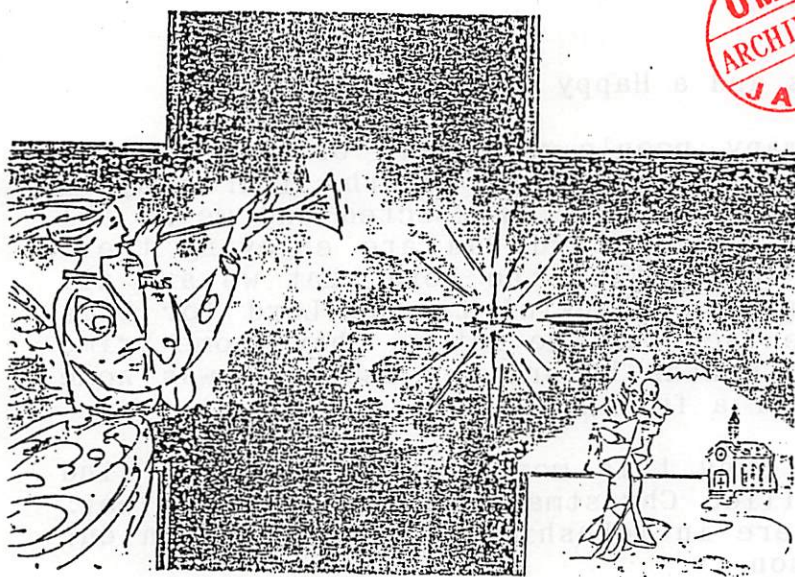


Vice Province of Japan

Christmas Letter

December 1993

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year



Dear Brothers,

In GOD'S CLOWNS, Messengers of the Good News, C. Welton Gaddy writes "Fidelity to the Gospel of Christ produces persons who appear to the world either as mad or foolish - culturally unwise if not clinically insane." Yet 'some fools...have direct responsibility for the well-being of society.' For each one is a labor characterized by cost and filled with love."

In Sri Lanka, Oblates young and old are anxious to remain with their people in war torn Jaffna. In India, the Oblates took over a poor and unwanted parish, a place the clergy considered a place of punishment! Shelton Perera, Superior of the Delegation of Pakistan reminds us that "life in Karachi is becoming more and more dangerous." The seminary was buglarized and Fr. Cement and Bro. Francis were bound and gagged! In Japan, we strive to preach the Gospel in a secular society where Christianity is still looked upon as a foreign religion. In the eyes of the world all of this may look foolish.

Paul's judgement from the past is still true. Divinely inspired action is unintelligible to human reason. God's foolishness is wiser then human wisdom.

At this celebration of the Birth of Christ may his Presence in your life bring you an increase of faith and hope as you continue to be his Witness.

Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

~~Bill Maher OMI~~

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to All

I want to thank the many people who sent or phoned your condolences at the time of my mother's death. Your prayers are appreciated. Her death was very unexpected and we're all very lonely without her but she and dad are enjoying their first real Christmas of peace with the Lord that we are all looking forward to. I'm very thankful to the Lord for this wonderful Mother and the fact that he let me have some prime time with her about two months before her death. I was home with her in the States for a full month.

I'm sure you'll all be busy this month but I hope you find time to have a Grace filled Christmas and a Happy New Year. Your welcome any time here in Tokushima. And your all in our prayers during this season.

Bill Maher, OMI

~~Ron LaFramboise OMI~~

Greetings from Rome. Last Friday, feast of St. Francis Xavier, first missionary to Japan, I was feeling close to all of you. I visited the jesuit church of the Gesu in the afternoon where Francis's arm, that is said to have baptized thousands in the orient, is exposed in a reliquary. I prayed for all of you there.

I am gradually adjusting to a new rhythm of life and a new kind of work. I swear I am getting callouses on my bottom side from so many hours sitting at a desk or in front of a computer! In a few months you should receive some of the fruits of this labor.

Recently I was taken on a tour of the labyrinth of corridors and staircases in the Vatican. With Don Corijin, I visited some of the offices where I will have occasion to go on his behalf. It was quite impressive, though a bit embarrassing, to have the Swiss guards salute and click their heels as we passed each guard post. It is an interesting little city, at once ancient and modern, bustling with activity.

I am looking forward to seeing Ange in February, and Fran later in the year. If you can fit Rome into your itinerary for home leave, I would be delighted to give you a personally guided tour of the city....

Best wishes to each of you for Christmas and in the New Year. You are remembered daily in my prayer. Buon Natale!

Ron LaFramboise, OMI

~~Ray Bourgoan OMI~~

MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
A MOST BLESSED NEW YEAR

I hope all of you find yourselves a year wiser! That's the other side of the coin of growing older!

Everyday is a day of soul-searching for all of us. I found it especially so most days of this past year. My contribution to the apostolate will take a new turn this coming March. Having been away from this specific apostolate for 18 years, makes me approach it with fear and trembling. On the other hand the other members of the Formation Team are a great support, and I also know I can count on all your prayers.

Already we've had 2 meetings of the Formation Committee, where we are struggling to find the best way we can contribute to the finding and nurturing of vocations. When the occasion arises, we will be asking for specific cooperation in order to give any candidates a chance to taste Oblate life and work first hand.

At this time I foresee moving my luggage to Nagoya March 12. Mr Hirano whom many of you know, has offered to use one of his company trucks which are available only on weekends, in order to get my stuff down there.

In the meantime, classes are slowly winding down at school and I'm starting to make my last "aisatsu's".

May God bless you and keep you!

Ray Bourgoan, OMI

~~Bradly Rozairo OMI~~

SHARING CHRISTMAS

with our dear Oblate Confreres, friends and well-wishers,

The true meaning of Christmas was re-captured by our Founder Blessed Eugene de Mazenod in the course of history. He sent his men to reestablish the originally intended order and to put the Incarnation in its right place. The target group of our Founder's mission were the poor, the sick, and the marginalized. Our mission as Oblates gives these unwanted people in society a special preference.

As a Hospital Chaplain in Sri Lanka I feel that I must somehow strive to restore their human dignity that they are also the children of God. Today the sick want someone to visit them, to comfort them, to listen to them and to feel with them their pains and sufferings and also to experience the unknown with them as friends, companion and divine healer. If I can at least do these then I believe that I can restore their dignity to some extent.

Christmas happiness came in to our lives because Jesus chose to share His Divine Life with us. In the same way if we were to give that same happiness to others, then we must share all

that life means to us/also with others so that we can create happiness and fulfillment in our lives as well as in the lives of others. So, let us have a sharing CHRISTMAS.

I look forward to the day when I will be able to join your Mission in Japan to spread the Good News of love and fellowship.

Bradly Rozairo, OMI

~~Leo Satoshi Kawaguchi, OMI~~

イエスよ、早く来て下さい。

Leo KAWAGUCHI Satoshi

論文のために私は毎日アモス書を読んでいる。聖書学もヘブライ語も知らなかった私が今、ヘブライ語聖書を読んでいる。不思議だ。これまで何回も、私もそして先生も無理だと思った。無理と分かっているが今日までやってきたのは次の理由。四年前、大阪の「かまがさき」(日雇い労働者が多くいるところ)に行った。その街で働き、生活して思ったことは、「福音とは何か、イエスのメッセージの中心は何か」であった。私は「神の一番大事な思いは何か」を知りたかった。そしてアモス書を選んだ。アモスの中心メッセージ、それは"justiceとrighteousness"を私たちが行うこと。

イエスこそ、この justiceとrighteousness の実現のために生まれ、そして死んだと私は思う。イエスの内にjusticeとrighteousnessがある。私たちが生きているこの社会は、見せかけの美しさ、気持ちよさを求めている。そしてそのために貧しい者はいつも貧しく、生きる喜びは人々の中から消えつつある。いく人かは justiceとrighteousnessを行っている。しかしそれは弱い。一番よいのは、イエス自身がこの世に再び来ること。なぜならイエスこそ、justiceとrighteousnessだから。主イエスよ、早くこの世に再び来て下さい。あなたによって貧しい者が救われ、圧迫されている者が解放されるために。

JESUS COME QUICKLY

I read the prophet Amos everyday as I work on my MA thesis. What's strange is I neither knew Scripture nor Hebrew but here I am reading the Bible in Hebrew. Until now, both my teacher and I said it was impossible. Yet I have continued to achieve this aim for the following reasons.

Four years ago, I went to a place called "Kamagasaki", a place where there are many day-laborers. Living and working there I thought "What is the Gospel, what is the core of Jesus' message?" I wanted to know "what was dearest to God". Then I chose to read the book of Amos. The heart of Amos is "justice and righteousness". I wanted to do that.

Jesus was born and died precisely for this justice and righteousness. Jesus is justice and righteousness. This world we live in is always looking for beauty and good feelings. That is why the poor remain in their poverty and happiness disappeared from these people. Some people do practice justice and righteousness but it is a weak effort. The best thing would be for Jesus Himself to come again, for the very reason that Jesus Himself is justice and righteousness. Jesus come quickly into this world. For in You the poor find salvation, the oppressed find freedom.

Leo Kawaguchi, OMI

~~Fran Hahn, OMI~~

Dear Oblate Brothers,

1993 has been a busy year and included a pilgrimage to Denver to be with the Holy Father as part of a 230 person, Japanese - Korean - Taiwanese party. I also had 3 weeks at home, was able to preside at my first family wedding, celebrated my 50th. birthday (9 times) and made a couple of side visits to dear family and friends in D.C., Chicago, and LA. I was able to visit the Brothers in Korea 3 times, make 5 visits to Kochi, but missed the annual retreat due to my home leave, and have managed to lose a bit of weight, 18 kilo - for me a bit - so it was a busy good year.

I've entered my 6th. year in Koga and have lots of hopes and plans that 1994 will be even better, but that is all really in His Hands in the end. I missed not seeing some of the brothers as often as I would like, didn't get to say goodbye to Ron La Framboise personally, and there are so many other failures one must record as well, but God's grace and mercy will have to be my final resort. It is my sincere prayer that this Christmas before you the most profound experience of Jesus Christ incarnate in your life, ever. And that 1994 be your greatest year ever in all ways.

Fran Hahn, OMI

~~Tosa Yoshikazu, OMI~~

All Christmas blessings and renewed courage for the New Year.

Looking back on the past year, everything seems to be a copy of the year before. Only the trip to old Flanders to visit the houses of the living and the graves of the dead was an intermezzo. It was a happy old year.

My spiritual journey didn't end yet either. I still and feel I'm a son -not a prodical son - of the Church and the Congregation. I don't have any intentions to start my church to replace that of Jesus. And so, I continue to stay in the big, old 'motherhouse', even when for the moment there are unclean rooms in it. Instead of attacking the Church or the Japan OMI community from the outside, from a distance. it seems better and healthier to join a church resistance inside the Church (or a dustcart team...)

Hoping to meet you all from time to time in the New Year.

Xave Yoshikazu Tosa, OMI

クリスマスの祝福がみなさんの上に一年中ありますように。

生き去った1993年を顧みると、1992年のコピーのようです。ただ8月、昔の故郷のフランダースへ帰って、生きている人と昔話をしたり、天にいる人達のお墓参りしたりしたことは「インタメツゾ」のようでした。「ハッピー」年でした。

私の精神的な旅はまだ終わっていません。私はOMIの「息子」で（放蕩息子ではなく）私なりに福音をしばらくの間まだ伝えるつもりです。できるだけあまり邪魔しないように。。来年もみなさんにたびたび逢うことが出来るように。

土佐 義和 Xave

~~Jan Van Hoydonck, OMI~~

Again to all my brother Oblates my best wishes for a Christmas overflowing with the Lord's blessings. May they continue all through the New Year. And may they be just as abundant upon all the ones you wish to see included. And may you yourself during this Christmas Season and the New Year grow closer to the Lord's heart.

Jan Van Hoydonck, OMI

~~Jerry Novotny, OMI~~

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your loved ones during this season of the Holy Child.

How anyone could advocate the slaughter of innocent human lives just because they live in the womb is difficult to understand.

Let us pray for these people and rededicate ourselves to work to save the children.

Enjoy the holidays and I look forward to seeing you when you come to Kochi.

Yours in the Lord of Life,
Jerry Novotny, OMI

~~Edward Williams, OMI~~

Fervent thanks to God for protecting all of us for another year. And equally fervent prayer that He will continue to carry each of us safely in the palm of His hand through the year ahead.

Ed Williams, OMI

Gerard Stevens, OMI

Before you know it, it's Christmas again, and looking back on the past year, I can't help thinking: "What have I done worthwhile mentioning?" Time flies so fast. The most outstanding features are the unusually cool and rainy summer, and the violent typhoons that caused a lot of damage, but somehow the mission house is still standing.

A few more Filipina brides have been found. These brides will probably be the real missionaries in their respective remote villages and families, through their Christian lives, even if they didn't plan on coming to Japan for missionary work. Our task exists in helping them getting adapted to their new surroundings and to encourage them in practicing their faith. However, sometimes we only find out about them after they have been here for quite some time, or when certain difficulties arise requiring translations or other help.

To each and all: a most blessed Christmas and a very Happy 1994.

Gerard Stevens, OMI

Bert Silver, OMI



Christmas Scene by Bro. Joseph Tsuda, OMI

What with our OMIs in Korea looking forward to their new "OMI House" and the coming of two of our Oblates from Sri Lanka - '94 promises to be a year of new beginnings and "hope" for our mission. May the Christ Child send us new young vocations to help us carry on the work of bringing His message of Love and Peace.

To all - my prayers for a blessed Christmas and a New Year of Hope.

Bert Silver, OMI

~~John Kenney Mahoney OMI~~

The Christmas mood is almost forced upon me here in Zendana. There is a used car sales business behind the church. The loud speakers send forth music from morning till night. In keeping with the season the selections I am now hearing are all the standard Christmas songs. At present Perry Coomo is singing "White Christmas". Or is it Bing Crosby?

This has been an interesting year. I spent forty days at Lebh Shomea living the life of a hermit. It was forty days of silence, prayer and reading. We were permitted to have conversation on Sundays at dinner. But the silence was not difficult. On the contrary, it was a blessing that made living close to God easier as God was the only one I had to talk to and to whom to listen. I consider the Desert experience the highlight of the year as well as one of the great experiences of my spiritual journeying.

I returned to Japan in mid-March and was assigned to Anan. The plan was that I would be able to help Dick Harr as well as the other men in Tokushima Prefecture. I also had plans to get some prayer group organized. This would be putting to use some of the experiences I had at the Ministry to Ministers Program last year as well as Lebh Shomea.

In September, after consultation, I received a new assignment. I had just gotten adjusted to life in Anan. Dick and I had a good community life and I was happy to be back in Anan. But there was more need for me in Nagoya.

I am now the pastor of Zendana parish. At present I am also the acting Superior of the House of Studies so I am living at Tenpaku. I come to Zendana every day from 10 until 4 and evenings if there are meetings or other duties that require my presence. I plan to move to the rectory in March when Ray will take over the Superiors job in the House of Studies.

I enjoy being back in parish work and also being part of a parish community. I have always felt that is the best way for me to fulfill my missionary vocation in Japan. The people are friendly and cooperative. The parish council is aware of its role in the parish and most eager to fulfill it. If I can find any fault with them now it is that they try to do everything themselves. I am trying to make them aware of subsidiarity. I think it would be an even more vital parish community if more parishoners were involved. This of course is not a problem particular to Zendana.

I also enjoy being part of the Oblate Community at Tenpaku. We pray together, enjoy our evening meal together, and on Saturday mornings we clean the house. I plan to be part of the Oblate Community in Tenpaku after I move to Zendana. I will go there in the evening for adoration and the evening meal.

I have spent about 35 years of my life in Japan on Shikoku. Neither Anan or Kochi can be classified as big cities. Nogoya

is and I find it a great change. I am still not used to driving in the big city but that will come with time or else I will become a subway user. In fact the station for a new subway line that is to open next year will be about a one minute walk from the rectory.

There will be an extra room available at Zendana after March, come and visit. I'll take you for a ride on the new Subway.

Many blessings at Christmas and in the New Year. You are remembered in my Mass and prayers each day.

John Kenney Mahoney, OMI

~~Wency Laguidao, OMI~~

Thought at Christmas Time

When Bert sent out for pictures to be contributed in the making of an OMI Album I started to rummage through tons of pictures that have accumulated through the years. I couldn't find one which would meet the requirements. I also had a funny feeling at the back of my head. I don't have pictures of myself and the work I'm doing that I will feel proud to share with my brother Oblates. I wish I had a picture of my meeting with the then President of the Philippines, Cory Aquino, especially when she greeted me with the words "Father, I have heard about the work you are doing for our countrymen..." I wish I also had a picture taken when I testified before a committee of the Philippine Senate investigating the abuses committed against Filipino migrant workers. Or, I wish I had pictures of our rescue operations in the night, the emotion-packed court hearings, our fights with abusive employers and so on. They are good for the ego but not recorded in pictures. For how can you take the picture of injustice? Discrimination? Or of how people exploit people? I have my own album somewhere in my heart (Hey, I'm starting to sound corny!) and it includes pictures of the support and understanding shown by many in the Vice Province during the height of the "Filipino Problem". To mention a few: "Wency, I don't want you to get hurt in your new work" JKM; "You can do it, Wency." Ange; "Wency, are you sure you can have enough for your work?" Bert. I have pictures of Mike who used to turn on the heat in my room during those cold wintry nights so that I would be able to have a warm room to come home to and still sees to it even now that I get support from the parish, of Ron who made himself available all the time as driver, translator, etc. of Gerry S. as he relates those never-ending tales about the plight of the Filipina brides in the mountains, etc. etc. By the way, I am not bowing-out yet but the nature of my work has changed a lot from when I started. I now spend more time going to Tokyo to do desk work, doing translation for some bishops, listening to Filipinos as they tell their stories over cheap whisky, conducting seminars for non-Japanese cooperators and, yes, attending meetings that sometimes bore me and others to death.

How do we paint the true picture of Christmas? It is not easy. Department store spruce up for Christmas but if they

paint the real picture of Christmas, they will drive away customers rather than attract them. For how do you paint the darkness of sin into which the Son of God was born?

Merry Christmas and a Bountiful 1994 to all of you!

Wency Laguidao, OMI

~~Nobuhiko Yagi, OMI~~

I'd like to open the door of my heart to Christs coming.

Wishing you a joyous Christmas and happiness for the coming New Year.

Yours truly,
Bro. Nobuhiko Yagi, OMI

~~John Iwo, OMI~~

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I have no special thing to tell you. This year went by smoothly.

I will remember you at Mass on Christmas.

Fr. John Iwo, OMI

~~The OMI Community in Korea~~

Three years ago, the first two Oblates came from Italy to begin a mission in Korea. At that time, everything was new, nothing was familiar and even our relationship with the Oblates in Japan was something to be improved.

Little by little many things have changed, especially our relationships with all of you. Each and everyone of you in Japan is someone tangible and concrete; your names and faces are now familiar. We really think of you all as part of our very community.

We have always been welcome whenever we came to Japan for meetings or retreats and this is more supportive than nice words. We thank you for what you are.

We have been doing our best to make you welcome in Korea, but our apartment was not the ideal place even though we could accommodate... Fran Hahn! But from now on with the new house things will be different. We are open for your reservations!

May Mary, who "received Christ in order to share him with all the world" always be close to each one of us "in the joys and sorrows of our missionary life".

Vincenzo Bordo, OMI
Mauro Concardi, OMI
Giovanni Zevola, OMI
Maurizio Giorgianni, OMI

~~John Deely, OMI~~

News and Greetings from Tsukuba

Hope this finds everyone in good health.

As for the things here in Tsukuba...the situation, unfortunately, hasn't changed much in the 5 years that I've been here. The hearing teachers are still lording it over the deaf students and deaf teachers. That paternalistic attitude still prevails, and I doubt if the direction of the college will change any unless the number of deaf teachers is increased. In the spring, a post will be vacated; this will provide the chance to fill that teaching post with a qualified deaf teacher. I will be in a position to suggest that the vacancy be filled with a deaf teacher. If the faculty decides against the proposal, I will probably quit. In my signed talks in different parts of the country, I have always encouraged deaf people to demand from the college changes that will best serve the needs of the deaf student. Most recently, I've asked the National Association of the Deaf and different PTAs to do the same. As things stand, there seems little hope of changing things from within. And, I don't feel comfortable working in an environment that borders on discriminating against those people it is supposed to be serving. And, not providing the students with the necessary support services (e.g. guaranteed communication through sign language) is tantamount to discrimination. So, I'm actually thinking of packing it in and joining outside forces which, by cooperating with each other, might bring about the desired changes. We shall see. I will probably know for sure in late February.

As for work with the deaf catholics...we had a signed retreat in September in Hino with a group of 10. And then, in December we had another signed retreat in Sapporo... with about 24 people attending (from as far as Okayama, Niigata, Osaka, Nagoya & Tokyo), I'm always impressed and inspired by the fact that deaf catholics will go to great sacrifice (of time and money) to travel great distances to attend a mass or retreat that is signed in their sign language. A real expression of and witness to their faith! That's about it, from here. Enjoy the holidays!

A Meaningful and Merry Christmas!

- And -

Good Health in the New Year!

Jack

つくばだより

News from Tsukuba

平成5年12月10日

皆さん、お元気ですか。少し瘦せたので、私も元気もりもりです。

さて、私は上智大学を退職し、聾の学生の為の技術短期大学へ移り、もう5年が過ぎました。短大では、相変わらず、健聴の先生と聾の学生との間のコミュニケーションの問題で悩んでいます。まだ解決されていないので、心苦しいです。健聴の先生たちはまだ聾の学生に対して過保護的な態度・姿勢をとっています。今度、教員のポストがあくので、私は専任講師として耳の聴こえない方を推薦することにしました。もし、この耳の聴こえない方を採用しないなら、私はここをやめるつもりです。資格のある耳の聴こえない方を採用しないかぎり、短大の方針が変わらないと思い、聾の学生に関する情報・コミュニケーション保障がないままでは、差別とみなします。このままでは、良心的に続けられません。前から、自分の講演を通して、日本の聾者連盟や日本の聾・難聴児を持つ親の会に短大へいろいろ要求するように提言・提案をしてきました。例えば、「聾者を中心にするよう」とか「聾の教員を増やせよう」とかを…。ここをやめたら、やっぱりそういう外部の人と力を合わせて、外部からいろいろ要求して活動するかも分からない。とにかく、今の状態では、内部から短大の方針を変えられそうもない状態です。

カトリック聾信者への活動の話ですが…。9月にも12月にも、聾信者の為の黙想会が行なわれました。9月は、東京の日野で開かれ、参加者は10名でした。12月は、札幌で開かれ、参加者は岡山、大阪、名古屋、新潟、東京からもみえて、24名でした。私が、いつも感心するのは、手話でのミサや黙想会の為なら、聾信者は喜んで貴重な時間やお金をかけ、どんなに遠くまででもとんでいくことです。それは深い信仰の表れ。証しだと、いつも感心するのです。

それでは、よいクリスマスを！

A Meaningful and Merry Christmas!

— And —

Good Health in the New Year!

ジャック

~~Richard Harr, OMI~~

A very merry Christmas and a Most blessed New Year to one and all. Finishing up this year, I feel particularly thankful - first, to Our Lord and to each of you. During 1993 so many wonderful gifts were realized. The most outstanding of all, of course, was the successful completion of a parish Church for Anan. The generosity of our Oblate parishes and that of countless others, this Church is all paid for, no debt, in fact, there's money left over. I've been dumbfounded by this - truly a miracle. It's evident Our Lord wanted this for Anan. With much gratitude and pride as an Oblate, I see the end of this year and look forward to a brand new one.

Dick Harr, OMI

~~Paul Eachet, OMI~~

My Japanese Experience Thus Far

AS I write this, on Dec. 11, 1993, I'm aware that it is three months ago that I landed at Itami airport, and as I now review my stay in Japan thus far I'm filled with gratitude, because these have been very grace-filled months for me.

The first three weeks, Sept. 8-30, were spent mainly visiting with some of the OMIs on Honshu and Shikoku: Frs. Ange, Mike, Wency & Bro. Yagi in Itami; Fr. ED, Tom, Lei, Xavier & Bro. Yagi in Kochi and Akaoka; Frs. Bill & Dick in Tokushima and Anan; and Frs. John & Leo in Nagoya. Later, I also briefly met Frs. Bert, Frank and Mauro (Korea) who had come for a meeting, Oct. 25, in Itami. In all of the OMI houses where I stayed, and by all the OMIs I visited, I experienced great hospitality, extraordinary helpfulness and warm generosity. Everywhere, I was made to feel at home and part of the family. For this, I now want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the OMIs in Japan whom I have already met, and am looking forward to the possibility of meeting more and hopefully all of you before I return to Canada next May.

But the main objective in coming to Japan was to get some personal exposure to Japanese Buddhism & Shintoism and especially to experience some Zen Buddhism.

Hence, on Sept. 30, I took the "Shinkansen" from Nagoya via Tokyo to Sendai City and from there went by train to the picturesque, touristy town of Matsushima on the E coast of Honshu. I was there for about 8 weeks, I lived in with 10 Bosans (Buddhist monks) at Zuiganji Soodoo, also called Totokuin.

What was life in a Soodoo like? Here, I will give only a nut-shell overview. In a future New Letter (March?) I hope to give a lengthier report.

There are two phases to life at Totokuin: 1) Sesshin time & 2) In-between Sesshin time. What is a sesshin. It's a week

1-o-n-g period of special intensive practice in Zazen (Zen Meditation/contemplation). In all, there are 7 Sesshins each year: Oct. 15-21, Nov. 15-21, Dec. 1-8; Jan. 15-21, March 15-21, May 1-7 & June 1-7. I was fortunate to be able to experience the first three Sesshins: the whole of Oct 15-21; part of Nov. 15-21, and most of Dec 1-8 which is also the "biggy" of the year. It's singular because it's one day longer than the other 6 Sesshins and also because it's more rigorous due, to a great extent, to the severe Dec. climate/temperature (the final day it dipped to -1c). Moreover, it's the only Sesshin with a name. It's called Roohatsu (meaning "Dec.8"), because it ends on the feast of Buddha's Enlightenment, which is the main feast in the Zen Buddhist calendar. It was an exciting discovery for me to be brought to the peak experience of prayer & celebration in Buddhist style on the very day we Christians & especially Oblates also hold dear: the Immaculate Conception.

And in-between Sesshins? Briefly, life in the Soodoo then was much more relaxed and easy-going. Besides daily, regular chanting of Sutra texts in their Hondo (shrine), the Bosans would, at least once a week, go out on takuhatsu (begging). As well, there was daily sweeping of the paths and grounds of and around the soodoo cleaning the wooden walking ways connecting the buildings and especially the Zendoo (Zen hall), gathering, chopping & stacking fire wood with which their furo & kitchen oyu is heated, working in the garden and preparing the vegetables for cooking.

Although my Japanese is very limited, and only a couple of the Bosans spoke some broken English, a deep bond of friendship gradually developed between a couple of them & myself. Two days after leaving the Soodoo, the Roshi's (head of the Soodoo) wife told me in her faltering German over the phone that all the Bosans of Totokuin had a great admiration & respect for me, especially because - to express it in Christian terms - I had, together with them, endured the "passion & death" of Roohatsu and therefore could now, also together with them, share in the triumphant joy of the "resurrection".

Then, too, -to make more complete my reason for being grateful - there were some people in Sendai City who were most kind to me, of whom I single out the Ottawa Grey Nuns. I lodged at their convent for a week and found in them most generous, loving hosts who have become my friends. So, if you should pass through Sendai, be sure to pay them a visit, because as an Oblate you are more than welcome by them, and you find yourself being spoilt by them as I was.

There obviously is more that I could share. I'll leave that for a future date. For now, I want to close by once again expressing my heart felt thanks to all of you, my brother Oblates in Japan & Korea who have been so kind & brotherly to me. I sincerely wish you all a most grace-filled Xmas, and abundant blessings in the New Year.

Yours brother in Xst. & MI
P. Fachet, OMI

~~Tom Maher, OMI~~

"Look up at the Lord with gladness and smile. Your face will never be ashamed." Ps. 34;6

I read it is a book called "The Way to Love" by Anthony De Millo, SJ and I didn't like it. Being such a "holy person" I didn't want to admit that I really had negative feelings and own them, they were mine. I felt I disliked that person and had good reasons for it. But De Millo said that "that person is making a gift [Christmas gift!] to you that none of your charming, pleasant friends can make you, rich as they are. That person is going to reveal yourself to you and reveal human nature to you - a revelation as precious as any found in Scripture, for what will it profit you to know all the Scriptures if you don't know yourself and so live the life of a robot.

"Now", he continues, "take a look at yourself reacting negatively and ask yourself the following question: Am I in charge of this situation or is this situation in charge of me? That is the first revelation. With it comes the second revelation: The way to be in charge of this situation is to be in charge of yourself, which you are not. [admitting this hurts].

All you have to do is understand that there are people in the world who if they were in your place, would not be negatively affected by this person. Therefore, your negative feelings are caused not by this person, as you mistakenly think, but by your programming.

The listen to this revelation concerning human nature. This behavior, this trait in the other person that causes you to react negatively - do you realize that that person is not responsible for it? You can hold on to your negative feelings only when you mistakenly believe that that person is free and aware and therefore responsible. But who ever did evil in awareness? The ability to do evil or not to be evil is not freedom but a sickness for it implies a lack of consciousness and sensitivity. Those who are truly free can not sin as God can not sin. This poor person here in front of you is crippled, blind, lame, not stubborn and malicious as you so foolishly thought. Understand this truth; look at it steadfastly and deeply; and you will see your negative emotions turn into gentleness and compassion. Suddenly you have room in your heart for someone who was consigned to the streets and alleys by others and by you.

Now you will realize that this beggar came to your home with an alms for you - the widening of your heart in compassion and the release of your spirit in freedom. Where before you used to be controlled (these persons had the power to create negative emotions in you and you went out of your way to avoid them) now you have the gift of freedom to avoid no one, to go nowhere. When you see this you will notice how to the feeling of compassion in your heart has been added the

feeling of gratitude to this begger who is your benefactor.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Tom Maher, OMI

BIRTHDAYS

January

2. Ed WILLIAMS
22. Ray BOURGOIN
29. Dick HARR

February

15 Len INUI
13 Maurizio GIORGIANNI
21. Vincenzo BORDO

March

1 Jerry NOVOTNY
23 Bill MAHER

Ordinations

February

22. Xave Yoshikazu TOSA

March

19 Ray BOURGOIN
27 Wency LAGUIDAO

Prayers for the sick

Pat BRADY has had gall bladder surgery and is recovering at Newburgh.

OMI Spring Meeting

The Spring meeting will begin on March 22 in the morning and end on March 25 with lunch. Please mark your calender. This will be an input meeting. Bishop Hirayama will speak on "The place of the Laity in the Church. And our visiting Oblate from Canada has agreed to give us some in put on Scripture, "place of Jesus in the community". He has has twenty years of experience in this field and says it will be good material for the preacher.

Pastoral Committee

The Follow Through Committee has asked the following Oblates to implement the decisions of the '93 Spring Meeting. They are Bill Maher, Wency Laguidao, Bert Silver, Mike Yamasaki and Ed Williams.

Reminders

Check - expiration date of Visa, drivers license, and alien papers.
When did you have your last medical check up?

Jude C. Peirisipulle, OMI



CHRISTMAS message, the message of love and sharing, to our Oblate conferes and friends in the Vice Province of Japan. Christmas is a message of Peace and Joy because we remember Christ, our Savior, coming among us to share our frail human condition. He entered our world about 2000 years ago for the first time and he will come back a second time at the end of time. But He is also here and now with us by His Mystical presence. sharing our brotherhood, offering peace to men of good will and inviting us all to live as brothers and sisters of one family. Jesus is sharing in our human condition, especially our suffering. He also taught us the way to eliminate them. Thus He becomes our Liberating King.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, let us give a thought to our country Sri Lanka . It is a beautiful country, rich in many ways but unfortunately today it is war-torn with an ethnic conflict, making the country not a place of peace and harmony but war and violence. The separatists, thinking only of racial rights, such as Tamilness and Singalaness, have destroyed the unity of our people who were earlier happily living amisdt a variety of race and languages.

These days all over the world people are prepaing to celebrate Christmas with cōnviviality and in joyous fellowship. In Sri Lanka, embroiled in a civil war, can we truly celebrate Christmas? It appears to be difficult but with the message of Christ, our Liberator, we can try to touch the hearts of those who are fighting and turn thei hatred into love - to understand and compormise with the others and show concern in the needs of others. Then we can truly celebrate Christmas.

May Jesus, from the humility of His crib, touch our hearts and make us one with Him and thereby grow in brotherly love.

As I send this Christmas message, I eargerly look forward to the day when I will be able to join your mission to spread the message of Christ's universal brotherhood.

Jude C. Peirisipulle, OMI