



Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

PROVINCE of JAPAN

宗教法人：カトリック聖母献身宣教会（オブレート会）

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January 12, 1999



Dear Brother Oblates,

Happy New Year! May our Faith, Hope and Love be renewed so that we will be able to serve God and His people more through our different ministries this year.

It was good to meet many of you during the annual Christmas Party in Kochi. Almost everyone was there and it was encouraging to notice that many from distant places made the sacrifice to be present. Our gratitude once again to our enduring host, Jude.

Before the Christmas Party in Kochi, the Provincial Council met for the last time in 1998 and I would like to report to you a few things that are of interest:

1) The creation of: OBLATE CATECHIST ONGOING TRAINING FUND (カテキスタ養成資金). Ray made the financial report on the 50th anniversary (please see separate page). The generosity of the people enabled us to pay all the expenses incurred. After deducting all the expenses we incurred and medical debts we owed the Eastern U.S. Province, there is a total of YEN 1,493,618 remaining.

Dave Barton gave another \$5,000 which he wants to be used for anything that will serve as a memory of the late Mr. Narui. Enokuchi Parish also gave YEN500,000 for the cemetery plot where Mr. Narui is buried since he is buried at the Oblate plot.

The Provincial Council has decided to put all the remaining money that we received as gifts during our 50th anniversary (YEN 1,493,618) including the money received for the memory of the late Mr. Narui and his cemetery plot (YEN 1,000,000) the total of YEN **2,493,618** into the Oblate Catechist Ongoing Training Fund. The money will be invested in the OIP and we will use the interest from this to finance small ongoing formation projects for catechists working with the Oblates.

Aside from the monetary gifts we received, there were also beautiful letters of thanks from those who were invited to come and from those who received a copy of the album. Cardinal Shirayanagi, Bishop Matsunaga of Fukuoka, Bishop Tanaka - former Bishop of Kyoto were very impressed of the anniversary album. B. Quintus wrote a beautiful letter of thanks along with R. LaFramboise, A. Obin, D. Ullrich, H. Mattimore, B. McLaughlin, etc.

2) REMISSION OF DEBT OF POOR NATIONS. During the 33rd General Chapter, the delegates from both the rich and poor nations have unanimously agreed to make a concerted effort in the whole congregation to actively participate in various movements working for the remission of debts of poor nations. Here in Japan, there is a movement organized by the Protestants, Catholics and NGOs headed by Cardinal Shirayanagi soliciting signatures. Xave has sent out the blank forms for the signature campaign. We ask everyone to participate. Please follow the simple instructions written in the forms so that your efforts will not be wasted. In Kochi, they have invited an expert to give them a talk on the harsh realities that the people in poor nations have to go through because of the debts that have become impossible to pay.

3) COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS We have a Committee On Contracts that is in charge of drawing up written agreements with the Dioceses where we work. Bishop Fukahori called my attention during the 50th celebration regarding our contract with the Diocese of Takamatsu. Our commitment to the Diocese of Takamatsu and all the other dioceses where we are cooperators cannot be measured with a piece of paper (contract) but we have to have some legal instrument to lean on. The General Administration is also encouraging the drawing up of written contracts with the dioceses where Oblates serve.

I think that on the occasion of our 50th anniversary, we should re-commit ourselves to the Japanese Church, starting with the Diocese of Takamatsu where many of us are working. I will meet with Bishop Fukahori on January 18th together with Ange and Bert, members of the Committee On Contracts, mainly to relay to the bishop our commitment as Oblates to the Diocese of Takamatsu. A report will be made on contracts during the Spring Meeting in March.

4) MORE FORMATION NEWS! While writing this letter, a fax came in from Rome confirming the appointment of Brother Nobuhiko YAGI as Novice Master. The rescript from the General Council says:

The Superior General with the unanimous approval of the Council in the Ordinary Session of January 2, 1999, confirm the naming of Brother Nobuhiko Yagi as Novice Master... Since the Novice Master is not the local superior of an established house, no indult is required for this appointment... Also, Brother Yagi must be able to count on the direct support of an Oblate priest to assure the availability of the Sacraments.

We welcome the news with great joy and we have to assure Nobuhiko that he will not be doing the job alone. Incidentally, he will not finish his course at St. Louis until May 20. He hopes to join our two pre-novices in Australia around the first week in June this year. The communication from Rome also included the approval of the reopening of our Novitiate in Aki. I have talked to Dick HARR previously about this and he is very open to the idea of making the Aki rectory the Novitiate House. In fact, he has gone out shopping for new pillows already!

It is a WAITING GAME for Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA as they await the arrival of the necessary papers from Australia that will entitle them to a visa. Once the papers arrive, they can have their passports stamped at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo. Fr. Mark EDWARDS, Master of Novices at St. Mary's Seminary, Australia, is following up on the necessary papers and is in constant contact with us through e-mail. Tentative departure date for Akio and Kenichi has been set for February 14 from Kansai. They want to be there for the Vow Day on the 17th.

6.) AONAMI NO IE: The Provincial Council was unanimous in its decision to assure Lei SIMONS that we will take the responsibility of continuing the *Aonami No Ie* (Home for Battered Women) should he become incapacitated to continue the work. Lei has also transferred to the Oblates the authority to administer the funds for the different works that he is involved in, Volunter Bureau, Kokoro No Dial. These funds will be invested with the OIP and the interests will be used to continue Lei's work. We will hear more from Lei during the Spring Meeting in March.

7.) SPRING MEETING: Jack DEELY and the members of the Ongoing Formation Committee are working hard to make the details of the schedule of our Spring Meeting. Archbishop Orly QUEVEDO who will develop the topic Church and Globalization and Hank MATTIMORE Oblate Lay Associates are all set to come. Again, thanks to e-mail, communicating with them has been less cumbersome.

We have asked some of you to share with us where we stand on certain areas such as, Finances, Formation, Kindergartens, Parishes, etc. This is a continuation of the reflection that we started before our 50th Anniversary: ***Where We Have Been. Where We Are. Where We Want to Go.*** Just be simple and brief in your presentations.

PRAYERS are requested for Ron LaFramboise's step-mother who died on December 21st. Also for the fast recovery of our sick relatives and friends. Bert Silver's brother underwent a major surgery last year and needs our continued prayers.

Faternally in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Wency Laguidao, OMI



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM WENCY

AORC Elects New President

The Asia-Oceania Regional Conference, during its annual meeting held in Bangkok, March 8-11, 1999, elected Wency LAGUIDAO as its new President for the next three years.

Wency succeeds Fr. Pat MORONEY (Provincial - Australia). The conference also chose Melbourne, Australia, as the venue of its meeting in March 2000.

AORC is an organization of some thirteen units of Oblate Provinces, Delegations and Missions in the Asia-Oceania region. Its function is purely consultative and promotes cooperation on different areas within the region.

"Congratulations and Godspeed, Wency!"

-Editor (slug: 'editor') - somebody who can publish and manage posts including the posts of other users.

-Author (slug: 'author') - somebody who can publish and manage their own posts.

-Contributor (slug: 'contributor') - somebody who can write and manage their own posts but cannot publish them.

-Subscriber (slug: 'subscriber') - somebody who can only manage their profile.

f. notify Rome of our new website and delete the old one

-would you ask Robinson to cancel the domain to the old site

g. send continual news to rome (requested) for PR purposes

2. History: OMI archives

a. my system using PDF system

-demonstrate once and explain ScanSnap

-Advantage: PDF files cannot be destroyed, fire, tsunami, age

-give pamphlet to brad

-¥50,000

b. how is rome setup?



OMI INFORMATION

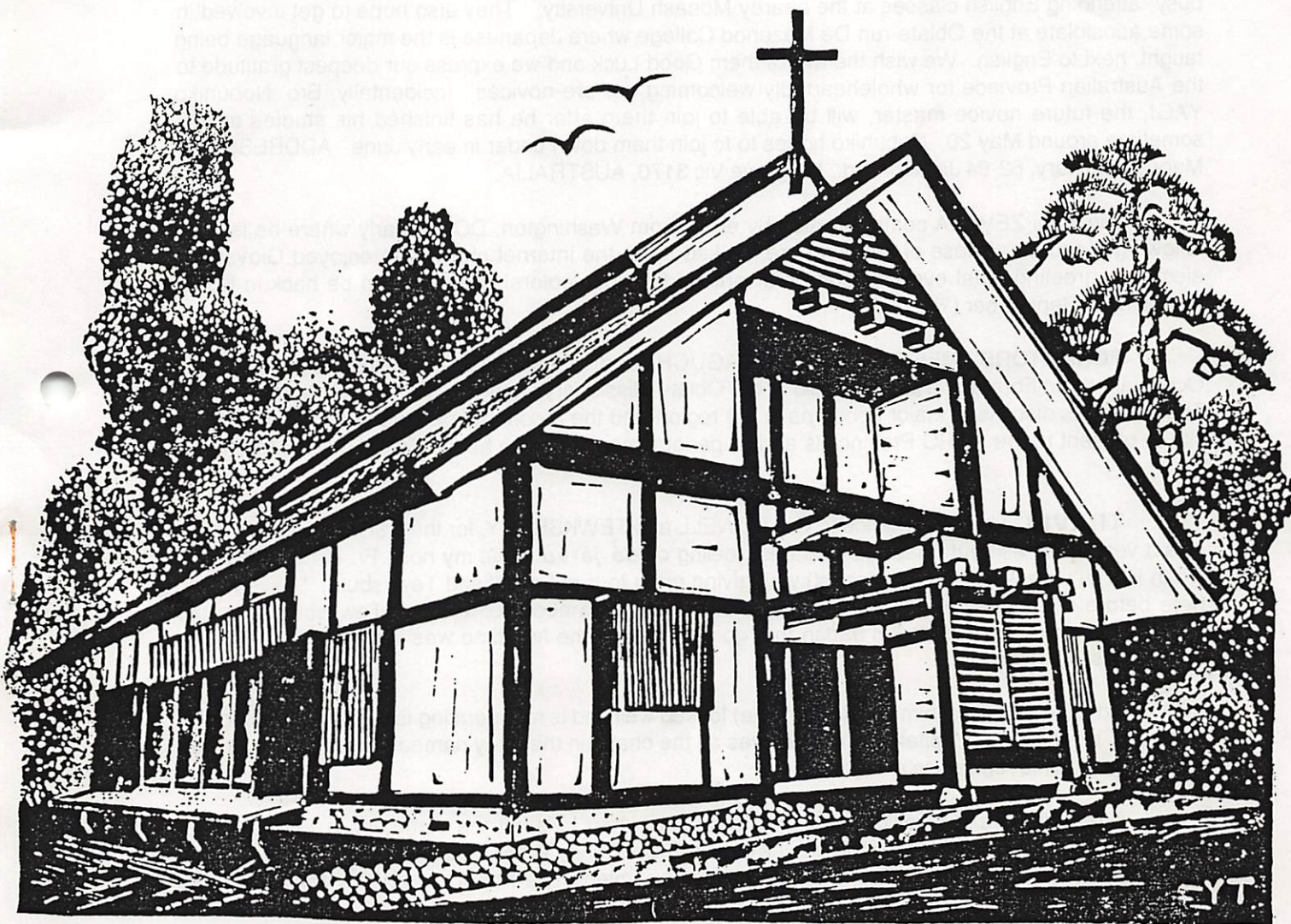
JAPAN

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

SPRING 1999



H A P P Y E A S T E R



From the Provincial's Desk:

WELCOME, Archbishop Orlando QUEVEDO, OMI, Archbishop of Cotabato, Philippines and Hank MATTIMORE, input speakers for our **1999 Spring Meeting**. We thank both of them for making the sacrifice to come and lead us to some discussion and reflection on two timely topics: **Church and Globalization** and **Oblate Lay Associates**. Both of them need no lengthy introduction. Hank Mattimore was here for our 50th celebration last November and Archbishop Quevedo is known to many of you from Washington days. He taught me Psychology in college, before I entered the seminary. He took over from Archbishop Phil SMITH, OMI as Archbishop of Cotabato last September 8th. Incidentally, for those of you who might have known him, Bishop George DION, OMI, one of the pioneers of the Oblate mission in the Philippines died of lingering illness last February 12th. Along with the legendary Oblate, the late Archbishop Gerard MONGEAU, OMI, Bishop Dion built schools, radio stations, parishes and even co-founded a religious congregation of sisters. Another Oblate who used to be in the Philippines who died recently is Fr. Joe MILFORD. I remember him as the priest who came to our home at 4 in the morning to give my mother the last rites.

Sometime during the Spring Meeting, we will honor our jubilarian this year, John Kenney MAHONEY who is celebrating the **50th Anniversary of Vows**. Congratulations, John!

OFF TO AUSTRALIA are our two pre-novices, Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA. They left last February 14th from Kansai after a series of farewell parties in Nagoya and Itami. They have called up twice to say that they are slowly getting settled and their novice master, Fr. Mark EDWARDS communicates by email regularly. They have joined the community at St. Mary's Seminary and are now busy attending English classes at the nearby Monash University. They also hope to get involved in some apostolate at the Oblate-run De Mazenod College where Japanese is the major language being taught, next to English. We wish the two of them Good Luck and we express our deepest gratitude to the Australian Province for wholeheartedly welcoming our pre-novices. Incidentally, Bro. Nobuhiko YAGI, the future novice master, will be able to join them after he has finished his studies at IRF sometime around May 20. Nobuhiko hopes to join them down under in early June. ADDRESS: St. Mary's Seminary, 62-94 Jackson Rd., Mulgrave Vic 3170, AUSTRALIA.

Giovanni ZEVOLA communicates by email from Washington, DC regularly where he is busy following a course. Those of you who are hooked up to the internet must have enjoyed Giovanni's electronic greetings that even included fireworks in fabulous colors! He hopes to be back in Korea sometime in September (?).

FORMATORS' MEETING: Leo KAWAGUCHI and Mauro CONCARDI attended the Asia-Oceania Region Formator's Meeting held at the Oblate Missionary Center in Manila last January 25-30. The formators discussed major concerns in the region and the recommendations that the body would like to present to the AORC Provincials and Superiors' meeting to be held in Bangkok on March 8 to 11.

TRAVEL: I had the chance to visit LOWELL and TEWKSBURY, for the first time, last month. It was a very short visit but I had the strangest feeling of *déjà vu* while my host, Fr. Bill O'DONNELL (Fran HAHN's classmate in highschool) was giving me a tour of Lowell and Tewksbury. "Have I been here before?" I think it was because I have heard so much about Lowell and Tewksbury from the Oblates in the Philippines and in Japan that going there for the first time was like having been there many times in the past.

Ed LOWNEY (met him for the first time) looked well and is recuperating fast and is able to drive. He is well-loved in the hospital where he serves as the chaplain that they named one of the parks after him. He sends his regards to everyone.

There was fresh layer of snow on the ground when I visited the cemetery in Tewksbury. I wanted to make sure that I visited the graves of Bob GILL, Danny WARD, etc. I found all of them, fallen Oblates who were once in Japan and the Philippines, even if we had to scrape off the snow from

tombstone to tombstone, to find the names of great Oblate missionaries (and I say this without fear of exaggeration since I am a very product of the missionary zeal of Oblates in the Philippines).... I said to myself, what prayers can I offer for them who made great sacrifices to the once very poor missions of Japan and the Philippines? Instead, I found myself asking them to send us some of the "very traditional zeal for the salvation of souls" of the past, hard to come by these days. Compared to the massive structures that some of them built in their lifetime, their resting place is a simple open space dotted with identical stones that a weary traveller like me might stumble and be reminded of how God used them as His instruments in proclaiming His Word and building His kingdom here on earth. Rest in God's Peace, great missionaries!!!

Lowell is definitely an Oblate town built by Irish immigrants. There is an Oblate church (with the upper church and the lower church, to cope with the numbers in the past, I was told) or an Oblate residence anywhere you turn. "Are there no other congregations in town?" I asked my host. "They don't dare!" was the quick answer that came back! Fr. Jim SULLIVAN who is in the retirement home sends his regards to everyone. Also met Fr. John SAVAGE who fondly recalls his Oblate friends in Japan, and Frs. Tom REDDY of Oblate World and Pat HOLLYWOOD, the bursar of the former Eastern U.S. Province.

We send our **PRAYERS** and **CONGRATULATIONS** to the newly inaugurated U.S.A. Province under the leadership of Fr. David KALERT, Provincial. The new Province is a product of years of restructuring. The new Provincial Administration will be based in Washington and Area Superiors have been named to administer newly defined areas.

AORC MEETING: The annual meeting of Provincials and Superiors of Delegations and Missions in the Asia-Oceania Region was held in Bangkok, March 8-11. The Superior General and the Asia-Oceania Councillor attended the meeting. The meeting this year was previously scheduled to be held in Indonesia but the very unstable political and economic situation in that country called for the change of venue. Our prayers go to the Oblates in Indonesia who are in the midst of the very serious turmoil that has continued for months in that populous and culturally diverse nation.

The proposed **FINANCIAL DIRECTORY** (Administration of Temporal Goods) will be explained by Ray BOURGOIN during the Spring Meeting. Ray has worked on it for quite sometime now taking the financial directories of Provinces in Canada as models. We hope that the financial directory will help us draft our Provincial Directory which is very much encouraged by the General Administration.

The **PROVINCIAL COUNCIL** meets regularly, at an average of one meeting every two months. We never run out of things to talk about and I am happy at the openness, cooperation and the dedication being shown by each member. We also have an efficient secretary who reminds us when we go off the track at times. When we started as a group, the General Administration reminded us that the Provincial Council's task is not only to meet and discuss about the mission. It must also find time to PRAY together and RECREATE together (also for the sake of the mission). I must admit that we still have to learn the interplay between work, prayer and recreation together as a group.

Where We Have been. Where We Are. Where We Want To Go. Are we done with this enormous task yet? Not at all! During the Spring Meeting, we have asked some of you to make presentations about the different ministries that we are involved in. It is an effort to situate ourselves, locate ourselves as to WHERE WE ARE. The purpose is for us to, in the words of St. Paul, "affirm the brethren" in whatever work he is doing.

Evangelizing the Poor at the Dawn of the Third Millennium, Letter of the 1998 General Chapter to the Oblates. I am sure that all of us have received a copy of this document. My suggestion is that we use this document as a material for reflection during our district meetings. Leo Kawaguchi is working on the Japanese translation.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Spring Meeting in Fukuoka, March 22-26.

Wency Laguidao, OMI

Dear Friends,

Spring! This is the end and the beginning of the School Year. In between I should have a quiet time. But that is not so. There are other "gatherings".

In Kochi we organized a study session about the International Debt Relief. The main speaker was Ms Kitazawa Yoko from IMF. We scheduled four sessions in four different places. The attendance was not a success. But we have hopes that our collecting of signatures will influence the Prime Minister of Japan. Japan is the only country in the world not yet showing signs of willingness to consider the problem.

I took a three days trip to Korea. I don't know if our four Oblates enjoyed my stay with them, but I certainly enjoyed them in their Korean environment. It was colder than in Kochi. James walked me through an icy snowstorm...I stayed in both houses. The original house is very well restored. The new apartment is big if you compare it with the size of a Japanese apartment. Personnel observation: four adults might do . but 5 adults might run against each other.

Then, there was the annual meeting of the local persons in charge of the Japan Justice and Peace Committee. This was held in Nagoya and so that was a good occasion to meet the Oblates at the seminary. It just happened that it was the 47th anniversary of my ordination and they had prepared a delicious evening meal. Nagoya is a good place to go when you have an anniversary...

Teaching apostolate for the new school year? The Kochi University hired me again for one more year. The Rehabilitation College is still looking for two teachers to replace me: one for English and one for French. Am I irreplaceable? (That is not what we were told when they tried to make good religious out of us.) But when I am writing these sentences I have no answer yet.

At the Reform School, I had a lino print club. (In Japan they use wood or rubber.) But the inner circumstances at the school have changed so much that I decided to stop it. It gave me too much stress.

My asthma cannot be cured. It can be controlled. Steroids have many more side effects than the doctor told me in the beginning. "Moon face" and "balloon belly" are the minor problems. The skin gets very thin; it doesn't protect the small veins under the skin. The calcium flows away from the bones. I easily get cracks in my ribs. Diabetes too can be a bad effect. Up till now, no signs of that yet.

My last piece of information: Two of my five sisters are coming to Japan, arriving on the 1st of April! And it isn't an April fool. Hoping the floor can bear the weight!

Xave Y. TOSA omi

Editor's note: The front cover represents the Kochi Shinhonmachi Catholic Church.

From John IWO

YOSHIZUKA CHURCH

The Catholic Church at Yoshizuka is about 2 kilometers North of Hakata Station in Fukuoka City. The location of the church can not be called a nice area, but the property is quite large. From what I heard, the original foundation was in the fields, from where the airplanes could be seen coming in and going out, and where on a rainy day the water rose knee-high. It was an area of laborers and Koreans, of endless strife and fighting. The head of the district, who had graduated from a Catholic school, implored the bishop to open a Catholic day nursery in the area. And so the Yoshizuka Catholic Day Nursery and a church were built. The Day Nursery was entrusted to the Eucharistic Missionaries of the Most Holy Trinity (Mexican), and the Scarborough Fathers (Canadian) were charged with the construction of the church. Over the years the aspect of the area has completely changed: apartment buildings, high class mansions flooded the place. Near the church also a 10 floor mansion was erected, giving you a feeling of being crushed; the church got completely lost. Some years ago the Scarborough priest died; after him several priests have served the church, until in February 1998 the Oblates took charge.

- 1) Area The parish comprises: Hakata-ku, with Hakata Station, part of Higashi-ku, and Kasuya-gun, all together a large territory.
Its population: Hakata City 1,322,648 , Hakata Ward 174,981 , Higashi Ward 266,091 inhabitants. In Kasuya-gun there is a Mission Station in Shime Town, dependent on Yoshizuka Church, going by the name of South Kasuya Church and comprising the territories of Shime Town and Umi Town. Being at the other side of the airport it is about 8 kilometers away. Yoshizuka has many printing shops. Kasuya is largely a town of coal mines, and has many immigrants from the Goto Islands.
- 2) People The faithful of the church are largely composed of laborers, small income earners, business failures, free-traders, families with a dissolute member, and a small number of salaried workers. The atmosphere of the church has changed from what it was before. The faithful who have come from the Goto Islands are descendants of the Kirishtan and strongly hold on to their faith and keep aloof from the others.
- 3) Church life At Yoshizuka: Mass on Saturday (7:30 p.m.) and Sunday (10 a.m.) On 2nd and 4th Sundays at 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for Grammar School and Middle School children, led by the Sisters and two parishioners. Has about 40 attendants. On the second Sunday the Mass is a children's Mass with Bible talk. On Tuesday there is Church History, on Thursday the 100 weeks Bible Study, on Saturday afternoon Saturday school for non-baptized children.

Parishioners activities: Church finances, upkeep, credit union, celebrations, after-Mass udon (noodles). This is mainly in the hands of the elderly.

Mass attendance, Saturday and Sunday together, around 150.

South Kasuya Church: Mass on Sunday at 8 a.m., attendance \pm 60.

On 3rd Sundays Children's Mass and Bible talk. On 2nd and 4th Sundays after Mass Sunday School. Plans for the same for Junior and Senior High School Students on the 1st Sunday. Wednesday afternoon Church History and Catechism.

Parishioners activities: Church finances, upkeep, celebrations. There is a ladies' organization. There is positive cooperation with the activities of the diocese.

硫黄神文

吉塚教会は博多駅の北、約2キロメートルにあり、教会のロケーションは良い所にあるとは言えないが、敷地は十分ある。聞くところによると、創立当初は田畑のなかで、飛行機の発着が見られたとのこと、又、雨の日は膝まで水が溜まるような所であったとのこと。労働者と韓国人の多い地区で、喧嘩や争いが絶えない所で、地区長がカトリック学校を出ていたので、司教様にカトリックの保育所を作ってくれるように懇願し、カトリック吉塚保育園と教会が建てられることになった。保育園は三位一体の聖体宣教修道女会が引き受け、スカボロ会が教会建設にあたった。時は経て、近年区画整理も無く、アパートや高層マンションが乱立するところとなり、教会の隣にも10階建てのマンションが建てられ、圧迫されるような感じを受け、全く目立たないものとなった。数年前スカボロ会の司祭が死に、その後は、幾人もの司祭が交代で教会奉仕をしてきた。そして、1998年2月からオブレート会が受け持つことになった。

- 1) 地域 博多駅を含む博多区と東区の一部と粕屋郡の広い範囲である。博多市の全人口は1322648人、博多区は174981人、東区は266091人である。粕屋郡には巡回教会として、南粕屋教会が志免町と宇美町の境にある。飛行場の反対側で約8キロメートルある。吉塚は印刷工場が多い。粕屋はもともと、炭坑の町であり、五島から来ている人が多い。
- 2) 人々 労働者、低所得者が多く、事業に失敗した人、自由業者、放蕩者を持つ家族などと、サラリーマンの少ない労働者の教会である。今までの教会と雰囲気が違う。五島からの信者はキリシタンの子孫であり、堅く信仰を守る人と離れている人がある。
- 3) 宗教活動 吉塚教会・土曜日 19時30分、日曜日 10時ミサ
第二、第四日曜日 9時15分、小中学生の日曜学校
シスターと二人の信徒が指導。約40人。第二日曜日
子供のミサと聖書の話。火曜日、教会史、木曜日、
聖書百週間。土曜日午後、土曜学校、未受洗者の子供
信徒の活動 教会会計、営繕、共助組合、お祝い行事、ミサ後の
うどん。高齢者が主体でやっている。
ミサ出席者 土、日で約150人
南粕屋・日曜日 8時・ミサ 約60名出席
第三日曜日、子供のミサと聖書の話。第二、第四
日曜日ミサ後日曜学校。第一日曜日中高生予定。
水曜日午後、教会史と教理の勉強。
信徒の活動 教会会計、営繕、お祝い行事、婦人会組織があり、
教区の行事や活動に積極的に参加。

From Australia Akio and Kenichi sent us their first communication in English.
Thank you, men!

I have been in Australia for three weeks. But I cannot understand spoken English yet. My vocabulary is still limited and Australians speak quickly. I am studying English at Monash University. I expected that there would be few Japanese students there. But there are lots of Japanese. One half of the students are Japanese.

There are three Fathers and six brothers at St Mary's Seminary. Everyone is very cheerful and funny. Thanks to them I am getting along pleasantly. But I remember Japan sometimes, so I suddenly feel lonely.

Please pray for me, and I pray for you too, thank you.

Akio Horiuchi

Still I cannot get used to studying English. English is difficult for me as I was weak in English from the old days. I have a hard time in English study. Every night I do three hours of homework. But I can hold out because Oblate community gives me friendship and encouragement.

Yesterday I went to Philip Island with Peter's family. (Peter is an Oblate student from Sweden). This place is beautiful. I could see the southern Cross and a lot of stars. I saw many penguins walking. It was exciting.

Thanks God. That's all. Kenichi

From John K. Mahoney:

GROW OLD ALONG WITH ME!

THE BEST IS YET TO BE,

THE LAST OF LIFE FOR WHICH THE

FIRST WAS MADE.

OUR TIMES ARE IN HIS HAND

WHO SAITH, 'A WHOLE I PLANNED;

YOUTH BUT SHOWS THE HALF.

TRUST GOD; SEE ALL, NOR BE AFRAID."

ROBERT BROWNING.

From Jan:

DISPOSED FOR CONVERSION

With his Bull "Incarnationis Mysterium", given in Rome on November 29, 1998, the Holy Father gives the opening and closing dates of the Jubilee Year and an elaborate description of the history and the meaning of the Jubilee Year. In the course of his explanation the Pope says (c.9): "Another distinctive sign, and one familiar to the faithful, is the *indulgence*, which is one of the constitutive elements of the Jubilee."

In the weekly of the Flemish dioceses, nr.3 of January 20, 1999 I found an interview of Peter Vande Vyvere, one of its reporters, with Fr. Jean Kockerols, professor at the francophone major seminary of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels, on Indulgences. I thought it enlightening and useful, and wish to share it, in a translation from the Dutch original.

- *What is the real meaning of indulgences?*

The meaning of indulgence cannot be detached from the sacrament of reconciliation. Confession provides the forgiveness of sins and the remission of guilt. But the wound that has been caused by sin, that which has been touched in yourself and in your relations, remains. The cure of this brokenness takes time. And it is not in the first place due to your own efforts. It is not mainly the result of the act of love or of faith you made yourself in order to gain that indulgence. The complete healing, so the Church teaches, is in first instance the result of Christ's own love and faith, and that of the saints, who walked in His footsteps. Indeed, an indulgence puts a Christian in touch with this "treasure of grace" of the Church.

- *What is the origin of the doctrine on indulgences?*

That also is connected with the history of the sacrament of reconciliation. During a first period, in the first centuries of the Church, the sinner who asks to be reconciled is for some time separated from the community. After that period of conversion he is again accepted into the community and reconciled. From the seventh century on the reconciliation takes place at the moment itself when the penitent asks forgiveness: the time of conversion follows. The 'penalty' that is attached to that period of conversion is 'tariffed': for every sin a specified penalty. In a third phase of the Church's history that specified penalty can be replaced by something 'strong', but within a limited time: make a pilgrimage, perform one or other act of charity. This way of doing becomes theologically justified by stating that: all the love that has been realized by Christ and the saints compensates for the limitation of your 'penalty'. This then is the theological background of the indulgence doctrine.

- *Why does the question of the indulgences create so many misunderstandings?*

In the first place because in the course of time the indulgences have been detached from love and faith. In the fifteenth century they even were for sale. Luther protested against that. In the nineteenth and still in the twentieth century 'figured indulgences' became the practice. For instance an indulgence of '300 days' could be gained. But the awareness was no longer present that this period of time looked back to the old custom of doing something for some time as a 'penalty'. Indulgences were in danger of becoming a kind of automatism or bookkeeping. In 1968 Pope Paul VI did away with that practice of 'figured indulgences'. But the principle of indulgences is still alive.

- *And so are the misconceptions...*

In his bull the Pope (John Paul II) rightly states that indulgences are not per se tied to a pilgrimage: e.g. by not smoking or drinking for a day you can gain an indulgence. Of course, picking that little sentence out of the bull makes it sound ridiculous. The purpose fits in with the whole - and that must be kept in mind - viz. the Jubilee as a common awakening to our past, as a time of working at reconciliation and conversion, and the pilgrimage as a physical expression of that spirit. Feast together: for Christians that means celebrating the Eucharist. We receive the sacrament of reconciliation by which our debt is forgiven. And we perform acts of love... to which the indulgence presents us the possibility. But we must stress that this healing does not

happens in the first place by performing mechanically the things proposed here by the Pope, but rather by partaking in all that Christ, and the saints in His tracks, have done and still do as acts of love and faith.

- *What, then, is the actuality of that question of indulgences?*

It can make us conscious that in the Church (and in the whole world) we are very solidary, primarily solidary with the faults of our brothers and sisters. Therefore, we must, as Church, ask forgiveness for what our forebears have done wrong. But we are also solidary in a positive sense: we also 'profit' from what our forebears and our fellow men and women have done and still do. The 'community of saints' (not only St Francis e.a...) is the theological base of the indulgences. In that we are embedded.

Secondly: the word *indulgence* points at tolerance, obligingness, at the forbearance and obligingness of God. We do not buy forgiveness. But the indulgences show that God takes our desire for conversion serious and that everything we do has a place in God's heart. God freely commits himself to involve man in the salvation of the world.

Thirdly: the question of indulgences together with all the rest of that bull is an invitation to make something of it, of that Jubilee year. I think that the celebration of such a Jubilee is a forceful inspiration, that, if it were not celebrated together, as Church, much would be missed.

Finally: The most important aspect is not what is "indulged", but what is left: the good you do for your own conversion and the love you show to your brothers and sisters. The key question is not whether you are for or against indulgences, but whether you are willing to become converted.

PETER VANDE VYVERE

INDULGENCES IN PRACTICE

Joined to the papal bull 'Incarnationis Mysterium', there is a decree from the Apostolic Penitentiary outlining the concrete conditions to obtain an indulgence. Without forgetting the deepest meaning of the indulgence (reconciliation and conversion, solidarity with the 'community of saints' and the conviction that God takes seriously our craving for forgiveness) we here give a summary.

The first requirement is the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation (after which for a certain length of time ONE indulgence per day can be obtained) and the assistance at the Holy Eucharist (which assistance must take place on the day itself of the indulgence practice). At both those moments the Christian faithful demonstrates his oneness with the Church in the form of a prayer for the intentions of the Pope. Some further acts of charity and penance serve as the expression of an authentic conversion of the heart, the result of the encounter with Christ in the sacraments.

The faithful can obtain a Jubilee indulgence by making a pilgrimage to one of the great basilicas of Rome (St Peter, St Paul-outside-the-walls, St John-in-Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore), when they assist at a liturgical celebration, an adoration of the Holy Eucharist or make a meditation, and close with an Our Father, a Creed and a Hail Mary. At some four other locations in Rome an indulgence can be gained at the same conditions. In the Holy Land the same can be done in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Nativity and the Basilica of the Annunciation. In the dioceses around the world also an indulgence can be obtained at the same conditions by a pilgrimage to the cathedral or some other churches appointed by the local bishop.

The decree remarks that an indulgence can be gained as well by acts that express the spirit of penance of the Jubilee. E.g. abstain for a whole day of all superfluous consumption, such as smoking or drinking alcoholic beverages, by a donation to the poor, sustaining religious or social works, take a serious engagement for society in one's free time, etc. P.V.V.

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

March

23 Bill MAHER

April

1 Satoshi Leo KAWAGUCHI
17 John DEELY
22 Wency LAGUIDAO

May

29 Thomas MAHER

June

24 Giovanni ZEVOLA

ORDINATIONS

March

19 Ray Bourgoin
27 Wency LAGUIDAO
29 Satoshi Leo KAWAGUCHI

April

4 Jerome NOVOTNY
11 John DEELY
25 Vincenzo BORDO
26 William MAHER
29 Francis HAHN

May

26 Thomas MAHER
30 John MAHONEY
30 Bertram SILVER
31 Angelo SIANI

June

2 Richard HARR
7 Edward WILLIAMS
14 John IWO
14 Leonard INUI
24 Mike YAMAZAKI

ANNIVERSARY of the DEATH of our MISSION's FOUNDING FATHERS

12 April Robert GILL

PRAYERS

are always in order for a wide variety of intentions. This time special prayers are requested for

- Bishop George DION, OMI, who died in Cotabato on February 12 this year (see Wency's letter in this issue). Also mentioned by Wency is
- Joe MILFORD, OMI, who died in ~~the~~ West Palm Beach, Florida. Joe has been a missionary in the Philippines and while there he came to preach our retreat in 1957. In my history notes I find this entry: July 6, 1957: Arrival of Fr. Joseph MILFORD, OMI, pastor of the Oblate parish at Grace Park Manila, to preach the retreat of the Oblates in Japan. From July 8-15 at Koga, from July 18-25 at Aki.
- Gerard STEVENS, OMI at the third anniversary of his death (May 10).
- deceased relatives and friends.

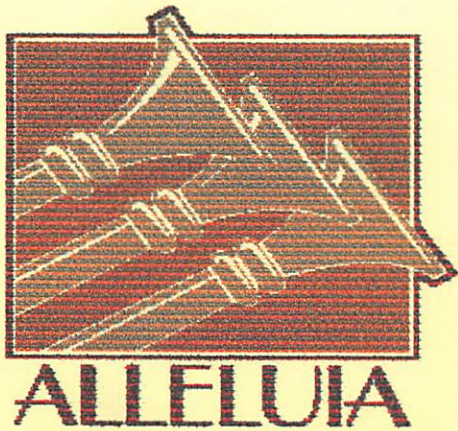
Also for all those dear to us who for reason of age or illness or other needs count on our prayers.

And, in closing:

JOYFUL AND HAPPY EASTER TO ALL!

Counting on your contributions for the Summer edition, by June 10, and many thanks for your kind cooperation.

Jan



*Tell us Mary, "What did you see on the way?"
"I saw the tomb of the now living Christ. I saw the glory of Christ now risen."
"Christ my hope has risen. He will go before his own in Galilee."
From the Sequence of Easter*



Easter 1999

Dear Brother Oblates,

I hope that everyone had a meaningful celebration of Easter. I was on the road during most part of the Holy Week and I was happy to have joined the celebrations at different places. I was in Naruto on Good Friday. Then in Kochi for the Easter Vigil where I joined Jude and Ray in welcoming TEN new members of the community. I drove to Nakamura on Easter Sunday to celebrate with Tom and his small community. Nakamura had three baptisms and thanks to the Filipina brides, the community is growing. Then the Easter parties.... from Nakamura, I drove back to Kochi to join the group for Easter dinner. The following day, I was able to join the Tokushima district for their Easter dinner. As you can see, Holy Week was spent mostly on the road and attending Easter dinners, of course, aside from participating in the beautiful liturgy at different places.

WELCOME to Xave's two sisters, Monique and Ann, who are here for a visit. They have been going around seeing places in the Shikoku area. Jude's mother and brother are also scheduled to arrive. We hope that they too will have a pleasant visit.

REMINDERS: During the last Spring Meeting, we voted unanimously in favor of the two following resolutions:

- 1) **In view of instituting a system of "district treasurers," that the matter be discussed on the district level and that a report of the conclusions be presented to the Provincial Council and Finance Committee who will work on the structure and details of such a set up.**
- 2) **That we accept the concept of a finance directory and specifically the one proposed dealing with the general principles and temporal administration of goods on the provincial, local and individual levels.**

We also agreed:

To discuss on the district level the topics that we want to be discussed during the Spring Meeting in the year 2000 and send our suggestions to the Provincial Council in time for its next meeting on June 26th.

We pray for and wish JIMMY DEL ROSARIO good luck as he goes back to the Philippines for an indefinite period to think about his presence in the Japanese mission. Jimmy remains a member of the Japanese mission until the time when he finally requests for a transfer. He has decided to leave for Manila on April 10th.

MIKE YAMASAKI will visit our two pre-novices in Australia, April 11-14. I will be in Seoul, April 9-13. I hope to see many of you during the 50th Celebration in ITAMI on the 28th and 29th! (Enclosed pictures are courtesy of Len Inui. Many Thanks, Len.).

Wency Laguidao, OMI



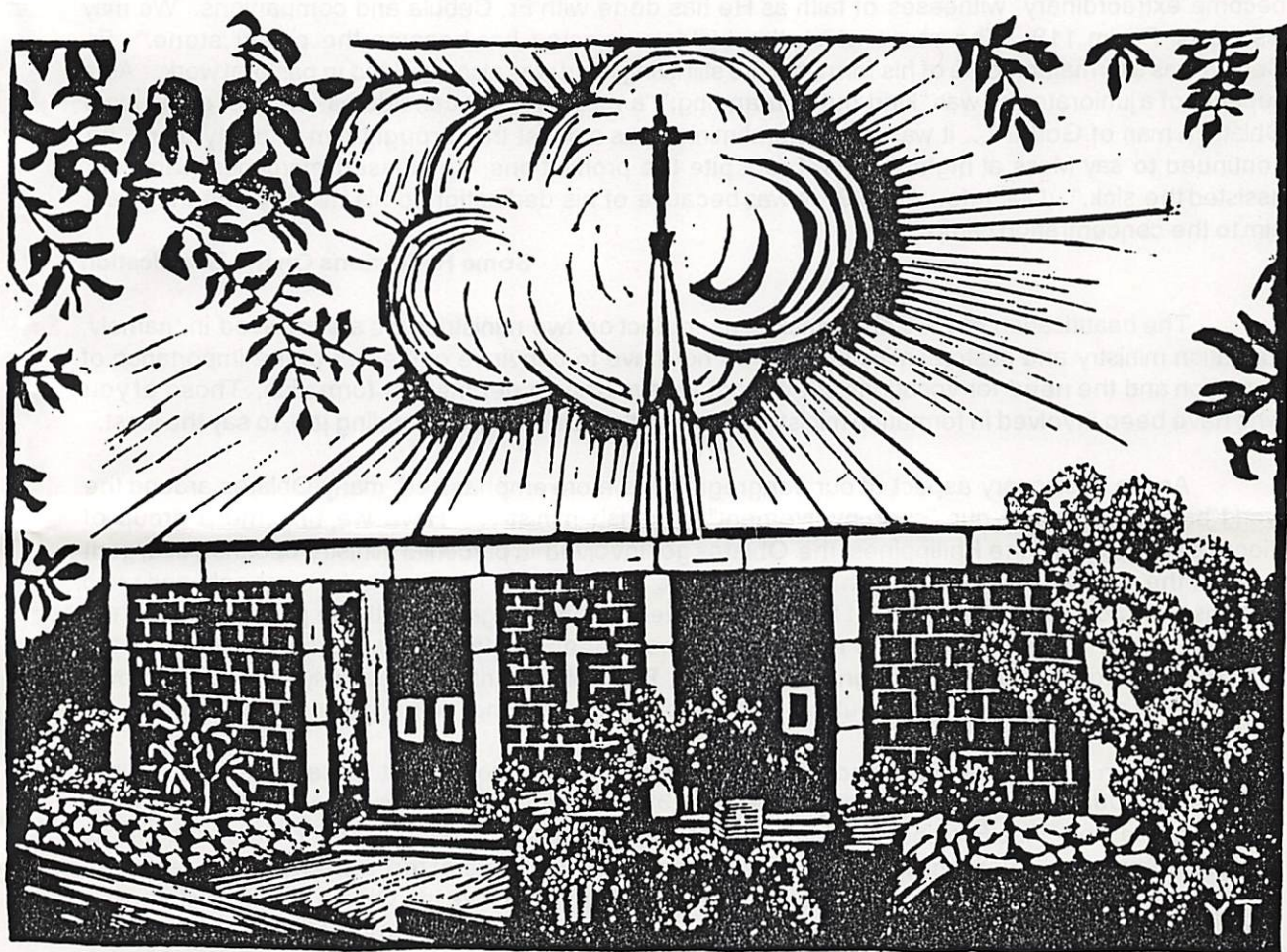
OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

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



SUMMER 1999



From the Provincial's Desk:

The 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Japanese mission has touched off similar celebrations in places founded after the first Oblates arrived in Japan. Itami Parish celebrated its 50th last April 29th, a national holiday (cf article by Jan VAN HOYDONCK). Bradly ROSAIRO, who is the present pastor, led the parishioners through the long and tedious preparations, and to use a trite expression, "they did not leave any stone unturned." Congratulations! The Itami kindergarten, too, will celebrate its 50th year in November according to Mike YAMASAKI, director. Simple celebration is being planned.

THE BEATIFICATION OF FATHER JOSEF CEBULA

In his letter to the whole congregation (OMI Information, April 1999), the Superior General, Fr. Guillermo STECKLING has invited all of us to reflect on the martyrdom of one of our own, a polish Oblate, Father Josef CEBULA, who will be beatified by Pope John Paul II with 106 other Polish martyrs on June 12. "This is another moment of celebration for the Congregation!" Father General exclaims as he shares his joy with every Oblate.

While thousands upon thousands of refugees continue to flee from ethnic cleansing and the NATO bombings in Kosovo, not very far from there, similar tragedy has happened more than 50 years ago when the Nazis herded off men, women and children to die in concentration camps. Fr. Cebula was one of them.

Father Cebula led an ordinary life. Sometimes, God takes the "ordinary" and elevates them to become "extraordinary" witnesses of faith as He has done with Fr. Cebula and companions. We may also recall Psalm 118: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone." Fr. Cebula was a formator (some of his formandi are still living) and was also involved in pastoral work. As a superior of a juniorate, he was "kind but demanding;" "a model for the candidates, a model of the ideal Oblate, a man of God." "... it was his pastoral ministry as a priest that brought him to martyrdom... he continued to say Mass at night in secret, despite the prohibitions, he blessed marriages, baptized, assisted the sick." (OMI Info., Apr.'99) It was because of his dedication to his ministry that they sent him to the concentration camp.

Some Reflections On the Beatification

The beatification of Fr. Cebula makes us reflect on two ministries we are involved in, namely, formation ministry and pastoral ministry. We do not have to convince ourselves of the importance of formation and the need for vocations but it is not always easy to get men for formation. Those of you who have been involved in formation ministry will agree that it is a very demanding job, to say the least.

As the missionary aspect of our congregation is more emphasized, many Oblates around the world have questioned our "over-involvement" in parish ministry. "Have we become a group of diocesan priests?" In the Philippines, the Oblates got involved in parochial ministry because of urgent need of the time when the first batch of missionaries arrived in the islands. In fact, schools and radio stations (also not original ministries of the Oblates) were opened together with the parishes. Now, the younger Oblates would like to go to ministries that have been neglected for years like ministry to the tribal Filipinos, to the Muslims, foreign missions, etc. Big Oblate parishes are slowly being turned over to the diocesan clergy and not without the pain and confusion among the people involved.

Here in Japan, we have had some evaluation of our involvement in parish ministry, albeit superficially. During our Spring Meeting in March 1998, we affirmed that parishes **still has a place** in the ministry of the Vice Province and in many of the parishes entrusted to the Oblates where the christian community is very small, we cannot underestimate the value of the **ministry of presence** by the Oblates assigned there. In Korea, our men are struggling to live the Oblate charism without the benefits of an established parish. There are advantages and disadvantages in not having parishes as in the case of Korea and the challenges are great.

Blessed Josef Cebula was involved in both formation ministry and pastoral ministry. It was not the numbers of the people he ministered to that matter. It was the **quality of his presence** that mattered most. We can learn a lot from him.

SPRING MEETING OF 1999 (March 21-26)

Mr. Hank MATTIMORE and Archbishop Orly QUEVEDO, OMI guided us through discussions on two vast topics: Oblate Lay Associates and Church and Globalization. Hank Mattimore who is actually involved in the formation of Oblate Lay associates in the U.S. presented different modules that can be adapted in Japan. Archbishop Quevedo familiarized us with the complexities of globalization, how we ourselves have been "globalized" in our thinking, etc.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN, WHERE WE ARE...

Also, during the meeting, we were able to look at ourselves through the different reports by people who were asked to make them. We have heard the reports from the different ministries and committees: Parish ministry was reported by Bradly ROSAIRO and Jude Peirisulle; the Korean Mission was reported by Mauro CONCARDI, Vincenzo BORDO and James JEYANCHANDRAN; the Kochi Volunteer Bureau by Lei SIMONS; Formation Committee by Leo KAWAGUCHI; Committee on CONTRACTS by Ange SIANI; Kindergartens by Bert SILVER and Finance Committee by Ray BOURGOIN. Time constraints did not allow us to look at all of the Oblate works such as: Justice and Peace ministry, ministry to the deaf and hard of hearing, education, prison ministry, Pro Life and Right of the Unborn, ministry to migrants, substance and drug dependency ministry, Choice and Family Life, healing ministry, ministry with the youth, preaching retreats, etc. (I am sure it is not possible to enumerate all the works that we are involved in.)

Our purpose in asking people to make the reports was to **AFFIRM** our support for what the men are doing in the various fields of involvement. At this point in time, in the history of the Japanese Church, this is **WHERE WE ARE** as Oblates.

ON ZENDANA PARISH

The Provincial Council, during its emergency meeting last April 29th, has agreed in principle to accept Zendana Parish, IF it is entrusted to the care of the Oblates. Zendana Parish still officially belongs to the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). However, the SVD Provincial has expressed that they will no longer be able to take care of the place and will hand over the parish back to the bishop after the approval of their General Administration has been sought.

There is a need for us to draw up guidelines for accepting parishes and the Provincial Council is well aware of this. Zendana was an "abandoned" parish without a resident priest until the Oblates found it. Eddie Williams, pastor of Zendana Parish, is putting up a new decorative fence, not to keep the people out, but to make the place inviting for people in the neighborhood.

FORMATION NEWS

We welcome back Bro. Nobuhiko YAGI from the U.S. Bro. Yagi is very satisfied with the course that he took at IRF (Institute for Religious Formation) in Saint Louis. He came back last May 15 to be at the side of his dying grandmother. He is now preparing to leave again for Melbourne, Australia to join the staff at Saint Mary's Seminary where our two pre-novices, Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA are spending their pre-novitiate year. Nobbie hopes to be able to leave for Australia in early June. Incidentally, Jerry VILLAS and Howard TATEL renewed their vows at private ceremony last May 5th. They are presently having the firsthand experience of Japanese family life through a homestay program. Both of them seem to be enjoying their homestay.

Preparation for this year's **SUMMER CAMP** is underway. It will be held in Koga from August 9 to 11. The theme of this year's camp is: **Thanks for Life**. The preparation committee has come up with this theme because it is observed that there is disregard for the gift of life among young people these days as manifested in the various problems involving young people that we see in the news everyday. It is hoped that participants of the camp will have the chance to reflect on the important theme despite the summer heat!

AN AUXILLIARY BISHOP FOR OSAKA ARCHDIOCESE

The Archdiocese of Osaka will get its first auxilliary bishop in the person of Fr. Michael MATSUURA Goro (46 years old). He will be consecrated bishop on July 17th, 2PM at the Tamatsukuri Cathedral with Archbishop Leo IKENAGA Jun as ordaining prelate. Bishop-elect Matsuura is a diocesan priest who has been very active in the spiritual rebuilding of the archdiocese after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. He is also actively involved in helping needy foreign migrant workers. I have worked with him on a number of cases involving Filipinos in Japan. We welcome the news with great joy.

FEAST OF ST. EUGENE DE MAZENOD

The Itami District gathered in Zendana Parish to celebrate the Feast of the Founder last May 21st. The bishop of Nagoya, Bishop Augustine NOMURA Junichi graced the affair together with a few parishioners. It is our task now to let people know about the feast of our Founder starting in the different dioceses where we work and hopefully see the name of De Mazenod being included in the Japanese Ordo in the future.

FROM THE REGION

Philippine Province has a new Provincial in the person of Fr. Federico LABAGLAY, my classmate at the scholasticate. "Peding," as he is called, takes over from Phil ESTRELLA who has been Provincial since 1992. The new Provincial was installed last May 21st.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Only God knows how many people have asked us to pray for them or for certain intentions. Sometimes, I am tempted to tell them: "Why don't you make the prayer yourselves. Perhaps God will listen to your prayers better than He would listen to mine." Let us remember in our prayers our sick or aging relatives. There are many of them that come to mind! We particularly remember Ed and Pat ZIMMERMAN, Bill and Tom Maher's sister and brother-in-law. Ed suffered a stroke a few years ago that left him paralyzed and Pat has cared for him since then.

REMINDER TO THE DISTRICTS

Please remember to give your suggestions as to what topic you want to be discussed during our Spring Meeting in March 2000. If you can come up with a name for the input speaker, so much the better. Please submit your suggestions to the Provincial before the next Provincial Council Meeting on June 26th in Itami.

WELCOME BACK..... HAVE A PLEASANT TRIP!

Many will be on the road during the summer months and some are already away when this newsletter comes out. Welcome back to those coming back and to those who will be going... "Enjoy your trip!"

God bless!

Wency Laguidao, OMI

From the J & P Committee Desk
Debt Relief-Jubilee 2000

After having put time and energy in an effort to collect signatures for the International Debt Relief campaign, one might wonder where we stand.

Japan collected more than 200,000 signatures. I think that is below the expected number. I don't know the numbers of the OMI parishes and kindergartens, but the Kochi district got over 2500 signatures.

The aim of Jubilee 2000 is the cancellation of unpayable debts, no later than the year 2000. Officials of the G8(7) don't seem to take the year 2000 seriously. However the debt has been an unpayable burden on the poorest countries for more than 20 years now. For instance, Africans are now poorer than they were 30 years ago.

According to an e-mail from the Jubilee 2000 Coalition United Kingdom, it looks increasingly likely that the Cologne G8 (June 20) will provide very little in terms of new debt relief.

Happier news comes from Canada. The Canadian government has promised to cancel debts unilaterally, should the G8 fail to come to an agreement. They are already discussing a post-Cologne strategy. Japan (like France) is worried about (theoretical) cost, and will veto anything that will increase the cost.

From the G8 leaders there is a lot of rhetoric, but they offer very little to the poor. Almost all of the additional debt to be cancelled is debt that poor countries are already not paying. The G8 will provide little new money for health and education. Few additional children will go to school because of what the G8 does at Cologne. Proposals of new debt relief have proved to be hot air; few people will gain clean water or better sanitation because of the G8.

The unpayable debt of the poorest countries must be cancelled in the Jubilee year. Better to put things right, in time. Better for justice to be done, now. The Pope, too, prays for that intention.

May 30, 1999

Xave Y. Tbsa omi



Note: On the day after this report was sent the e-mail message from the Jubilee 2000 Campaign gave the number of received signatures in Japan as 450,000. Shortly thereafter the number was upped to 492,720, and the hope was expressed of reaching 500,000 which by now must have been surpassed. Xave.

Dear Friends.

The last OMI Spring Meeting is history. I didn't hear many reactions about either of the two topics. Maybe some of us are still trying to digest the talks. Others might just have put the ideas in their files together with the printed notes. When the OMI Newsletter gets on your desk, the rainy season will have colored the skies gray. I am not looking forward to wet days. I breathe much better when skies are blue and dry.

The visit of my two younger sisters ended with a little accident. Monika slipped on a wet pavement in Nara. And her 90 kilos went to the ground like a sack of sand. An ambulance had to bring her to a hospital. Photos showed a shoulder fraction. Next day in Kochi we went to an orthopedist. No operation was immediately needed, so she returned to Belgium via Canada as scheduled. However in Toronto, Air France refused to take her to Paris. KLM took her to Amsterdam. Finally after waiting one month, I received a letter from her, written by a friend's hand. She moves around but the arm still needs rehabilitation. She has also what we call "a family help", who cooks, cleans, irons etc. I like to thank all Oblates who helped to make their visit a "happy" one.

Lately I have been making a few Sunday sermons. While Tom Maher was absent I went to Nakamura for the Sunday services. Nakamura is a multicultural church. I wouldn't say that Shikoku Island has become a multicultural society. Where there are foreigners in the church, the priests try to help their foreign flock, so they feel at home in the church. As an onlooker I admire the Oblates trying to attend to the needs of the foreign Catholics. However reflecting about a multicultural church, I can't help having some doubts. Liturgy is something that grows out of the local culture. African liturgy is a good example of it (and so are some churches in India). According to the nature of the soil, the same plants have different colors ... In Japan the liturgy never took Japanese forms or colors. (Even now, most of the prayers are translations from the Latin, although of late there is a positive effort to update some prayers.) Only the ancestor cult was taken into consideration when building chancel houses in or around the churches. We didn't promote devotions except the rosary. But our attitude towards foreign Christians, especially Philippines, is different. I have witnessed very devotional and popular parishes in Sri Lanka. It made me reflect on my views about devotions in the church. But liturgy and devotions are two different things.

In Japan there exists one culture: the Japanese culture. To think that it is possible to integrate another culture while keeping one's own, is utopian. The problem is not that there are foreigners in Japan, the problem is that there are minorities in Japan and in some churches big(?) majorities. Christianity couldn't make a breakthrough in the Japanese society. According to my experience, one of the reasons is that we presented Christ and his message wrapped in foreign "clothes". Trying to please all Catholic foreigners might result in discrimination of the "original" Japanese. They have their rights, too. I have witnessed that the scripture readings of the Mass are read in Japanese and in English. A very good try. But then again, why not in Tagalog when the foreigners are all from the Philippines?

I could go on and try to express some of my thoughts about the children of those international marriages. They grow up and are educated in a completely Japanese cultural environment. They don't pray in their mother's tongue... Thinking of the future church, we are preparing a big problem. One possible suggestion is of not baptizing the babies of those marriages... ("Oh Xave! How do you dare say such a thing!") or to organize religious education in remote mountainous villages. Maybe this is a possibility to engage lay apostles for one or two years. We tried to reflect on that point in the last Spring Meeting.

As a member of the ongoing education committee, I suggest reading the book "Born of a Woman", by John S. Spong. Eddy Williams lent it to me, warning me for some of the conclusions. However, I don't know what conclusions he had in mind. It is certainly a good book to become aware of midrash in the bible.

This letter is only a means of communication, so if someone would like to continue exchanging ideas about the foreigners in the Japanese church, it might be fruitful... And the paper of the News letter would be put to good use.

I have no plans for trips outside Japan this year. If you need a replacement for the Sunday services, I would gladly help. No difficult sermons, I promise. However I promised Jan already to take some Sundays in August and September.

Xave Yoshikazu Tosa omi

FIRST OBLATE-FOUNDED PARISH IN JAPAN CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

In the Codex Historicus of the early days of the Oblates in Japan, written and kept by the first Superior, Fr. Robert J. Gill, OMI, there is an entry in the middle of 1949, that reads:

Parish accepted in Itami. Ground breaking on last Sunday of July 1949. Present were: Frs. George Donellan, Aloysius Bertrand, Joseph Dunne -- U.S. Army Chaplains, -- and Frs. Fennell and Dundan, Australian missionaries, and others.

Mass every Sunday at Mr. Okada's house (former mayor of Itami).

A later entry relates:

Jan. 25, 1950. Dedication of buildings in Itami by Bp. Taguchi. Sermon for the occasion by Fr. Kobayashi, Vic. gen. of Osaka diocese.

So, April 29 of this year 1999 was chosen as the day to celebrate the 50th anniversary of this parish. As a national holiday in Japan, and the onset of a "week" of holidays, it was the best day possible for getting the most people possible to join in the festivities.

From all over the country the Oblates gathered on the previous day for a happy get-together, around a festive dinner table.

On the 29th the festivities started with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration. It was presided by the Archbishop, Jun Leo Ikenaga, who was assisted by all the Oblates and by a large number of priests, religious and diocesan, of the surrounding parishes, and by a packed church of faithful, most, of course, of the Itami Parish, but many also of parishes around and of other Oblate parishes, even far away. The large contingent of Sisters from several Congregations in and outside of Itami should be mentioned.

After Mass a function followed, in the church, opened by the Archbishop who spoke a few words of congratulation and appreciation for the work done during the past 50 years, and gave an exhortation for the years to come. This was followed by a musical intermezzo, mainly on recorder, with violin or guitar or organ accompaniment. The performers were members of the parish. It got a warm applause. Then came a historical retrospective of the events around the foundation of the parish, by Ms. Akiko Okada. She is the daughter of the Mr. Okada at whose house the Sunday Masses were held before the Oblate place was built. Having been in the middle of it, even from before the start, she knows all the details. I found it quite interesting to hear her tell about the other homes where Mass had been celebrated, and the priest(s) who had been in charge of it. With so many things to recall it took her quite some time to get through her story; interesting though it was, people became somewhat restive after such a long time sitting at the same place.

There was a short interval for allowing those in charge to get the place ready for the festive meal. Because of the large number of people present there was no other place large enough, and so, with permission, the sanctuary of the church was screened off, and the nave used as the dining room. Again, because of the large crowd, instead of place settings the food was served self-service style. That gave everyone also a chance to move around and meet acquaintances, e.g. priests that got re-assigned, or friends that had moved to other areas.

It was a beautiful day, perfectly prepared, performed without a hitch, thanks also to the beautiful weather that day and, of course, to the organizers. A day that will happily be remembered for a long time.

Jan Van Hoydonck, O.M.I.

The illustration on the front page represents the church of Itami, built in 1966... The linocut is made by Fr. Yoshikazu TOSA, O.M.I.

Bro. Nobuhiko Yagi, OMI

I was able to safely return to Japan from the Institute of Religious Formation course in St. Louis on May 15.

Two days after my return my grandmother passed away. I was therefore able to participate in the wake and funeral services for my favorite grandmother.

Among the many graces I received during the IRF program I would mention the following. First of all, the courses on formation were out of this world, especially the ones dealing with leadership. Besides courses on formation we also had some on scripture. I really appreciated the one on the Beatitudes. As part of community building where both men and women participate we had a weekly dance session which I enjoyed very much. However the most important grace of all was that I had time to reflect on myself and was able to discover new dimensions of my personality which also help me to encounter and evaluate others.

I am now on my way to Australia to join our two novices who will start their canonical noviciate in Aki early next year. At that time the cooperation of the other members of the province will greatly be appreciated, especially when called upon to share in their fields of expertise. Of course I expect your support through prayer also.

Union in prayer

BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to:

June

24 Giovanni ZEVOLA

July

4 Mauro CONCARDI
23 Jimmy DEL ROSARIO
31 Lei SIMONS

August

4 Nobuhiko YAGI
23 Ange SIANI
31 Bert SILVER

September

6 John IWO
17 Jude PEIRISPULLE
17 James JEYACHANDRAN
20 John MAHONEY
22 Fran HAHN

ORDINATIONS

Happy Anniversary to:

June

24 Mike YAMASAKI

July

1 Jan VAN HOYDONCK
5 Lei SIMONS

August

22 Jude PEIRISPULLE
22 Bradly ROZAIRO

September

8 Giovanni ZEVOLA

23 Jimmy DEL ROSARIO

Perpetual Vows

August

4 Nobuhiko YAGI

GOLDEN JUBILEE of Religious Vows

September 8 Richard HARR and John K. MAHONEY

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

July

3 Timothy MULVEY
23 Sueho TSUDA

September

4 Daniel WARD

PRAYER INTENTIONS

See the Provincial's recommendations. Prayers are also requested for the repose of the soul of Tom and Bill Maher's brother-in-law, Edwin Zimmerman, the husband of Pat(ricia) Maher, 71 years of age, who died on June 10 after a long illness; the Lord's support is also requested for the family.

With our sincere Christian sympathy to Tom and Bill and the family.

CLOSING WORD

Many thanks to all for your cooperation, in writing or otherwise; with my best wishes for a pleasant Summer. Since I will not be around in September there will be no issue of this Newsletter then. The next issue I plan to be the one for Christmas and New Year.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Jan, O.M.I.



Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

PROVINCE of JAPAN

宗教法人：カトリック聖母献身宣教会（オブレート会）

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From the Provincial's Desk:

August, 1999



Dear Brother Oblates:

Since Jan is not coming out with the newsletter until late this year, I intend to fill the gap with a letter or two. I started writing this letter in late July but the intense heat convinced me to wait till it cools down a bit before I put something on the mail. By the time this letter reaches you, the doldrums of summer should be on the wane. Everyone must have looked forward to spend a few relaxing days with Fr. Robert MICHEL of Saint Joseph's Province, Canada, who kindly obliged to be our retreat master this year. Welcome, Bob, and thank you for accepting to be our spiritual navigator for a few days.

Below are a few news items, announcements and what-have-you that I have culled together from my personal notes (hence, the first-person report), Provincial Council minutes, or simply from the grapevine, etc.

Wency Laguidao, OMI

◇ A VISIT TO INDIA

Chennai (formerly Madras), is nestled along the eastern coast of South India, serving as capital of the vast region of Tamil Nadu. Needless to say, the region is home to the Tamil people or Tamilians, just one of the many ethnic groups that comprise the multi-cultural nation of India, with a staggering population that has reached 1 billion recently.

I paid my first visit to India upon the invitation of Fr. Bernard QUINTUS, Provincial of Sri Lanka. My visit coincided with the ordination of three new Indian Oblate priests last July 9th. The main purpose of my visit however was to meet with Fr. Varaprasatham ANTHONYSAMY, OMI (Fr. Varam for short, his name appropriately means "blessing."), a young Indian Oblate of the Indian Delegation who has volunteered to join the Korean Mission. We welcome the news with great joy! Fr. Varam has started applying for a visa to join the mission in Korea. It will be recalled that the members of the Korean mission have requested the Provincial Administration to help them shore up their personnel. I have been negotiating with the Provincial of Sri Lanka and later with the Superior of the Indian delegation to send us two men for the Korean mission. A couple of months ago, Fr. Quintus wrote with some good news.

The Indian Delegation of the Oblates was started by the Province of Sri Lanka in 1968 and it has always maintained its close links with Sri Lanka as a provincial delegation. Fr. Anthony JEEVARATNAM is the delegation superior. It is a delegation that is still small in number but rapidly growing with lots of vocation in its three houses of formation. I was able to visit the Juniorate in Perambakkam, the Philosophate in Bangalore and the scholasticate in Poonamalee where the delegation office is also housed. Each of the three houses of formation has a good number of seminarians.

India fascinated me as a country of contrasts, for example, while internet services are of world-class level, telephone connections still need to be improved. The legendary Indian-made car, Ambassador, dominate the streets. Many of them look as if they have been plying the

streets for the past 50 years! Although it was a colony of Britain for many years, signs of resistance against westernization is reflected in the scarcity of western icons like the golden arches of Mac Donald's, etc. India is very protective of its economy. Traffic is chaotic and the heat, very oppressive. Thanks to Fr. Varam who was at my side all the time, I did not have to haggle for fares with drivers of the three-wheeler "autos," (most common public ride) nor worry about being pestered by professional beggars. I came to think that the "conveniences" in life that we enjoy in a place like Japan are actually man-made, while the "inconveniences" that are hard to tolerate by us who live in convenience-obsessed societies are actually the natural realities of life in places like India. Except for the concrete buildings that they have, the Oblates there live rather abstemious life.

The country is teeming with peoples of different religious persuasions and cultures, all living in harmony alongside each other. At round 5 every morning, expect to be awakened by the loud speakers of Islam, catholics, etc., all of them calling people to prayer. What may be construed as nuisance in an a-religious setting like Japan is actually a religiosity that is deeply imbedded in the culture of a place like India. "Wake up! Arise! Come to your God, sing Him your songs of rejoicing," as the psalm invites us. Also, legend has it that Thomas the Apostle (the one who doubted the Resurrection) was martyred on a hill in Madras and his body is believed to be buried at the cathedral. St. Francis Xavier is also buried in Goa, another religious center on the eastern shore.

My visit was very short and it is presumptuous of me to make conclusions but, it is also said that, first impressions are lasting. I was impressed by the generosity of the Oblates of the Indian Delegation. Although it is still a fledgling mission with members of about 25, it is willing to share one member to another mission that is in need of members. I can only pray that may the Lord of the Harvest repay the Indian Delegation and the Province of Sri Lanka a hundredfold for their generosity.

Blessings can come in three's, so the saying goes! In my case, I had two of them during that trip to India. Stopping over in Manila on my way back, the new scholastic superior, Fr. Ruben GOMEZ told me that one more Filipino scholastic has expressed his wish to continue his theological studies in Japan. A brave young man! I personally talked to the scholastic and encouraged him to pursue his dream. He confided to me that his father has cancer and the whole family has to take turns in taking care of him. I told him to take care of his father first and when he is ready, I would just be willing to start the process for him to come and experience for himself the Japanese mission like our two young men in Nagoya, Jerry VILLAS and Howard TATEL.

Incidentally, Jerry and Howard will complete their one-year study of Japanese in September and are ready for some apostolic involvement. There are plans on what they would do for the remaining time of the their two-year exposure program. I also heard about the speech contest that Jerry participated and won the second place. Congratulations! However, curious attention was on the young lady who eventually won the first place and the topic she has chosen for her speech which was: "The Guy named Howard!". I am still trying to get a copy of the speech and to find out what made the young lady chose "Howard" for her topic.

◇ NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA and WASHINGTON, DC

Our two novices in Australia, Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA and their novice master, Bro. Nobuhiko YAGI are all doing fine. They hope to be back in Japan before Christmas this year. Bro. Yagi has lined up the courses for the novitiate year and will be asking the cooperation of some of us.

Giovanni ZEVOLA communicates by e-mail regularly. He says that he is working on his thesis and should be back in Korea around mid-November, after spending some time with his family in Italy.

◇ SUMMER CAMP OF 1999

This year's summer camp was held in Koga. Bill MAHER, Len INUI and the Koga parishioners were hosts to a group of 25 youngsters from different Oblate parishes. Organizers of the camp were Leo KAWAGUCHI and assisted by our two scholastics, Jerry and Howard. Fran HAHN, Jude PEIRISPULLE and Wency LAGUIDAO were also present to help out. John IWO came on the last day and proudly announced that he has the biggest number (seven) of participants from both Yoshizuka and Minami-Kasuya.

The camp gave me an experience on how it is to communicate with the so-called Generation- X. Baby-boomers like myself need special skills to understand what Japanese youngsters of 14-16 years of age are talking about. They are the future that even ourselves have to reckon with. During the camp, we talked about "Life" and how young people take it for granted. But the generation-gap was obvious. Youngsters want concrete facts while adults tend to preach to the young in abstract terms and beat around the bush. Just observing.

◇ CCRR and ACTS OF THE 33rd GENERAL CHAPTER

The "Acts of the 33rd General Chapter (1998)," Evangelizing the Poor At the Dawn Of the Third Millenium, (yellow booklet) has been sent to you by mail. This is the product of the deliberations during the General Chapter in September, 1998. Another important document, Constitutions and Rules, Part Three: Organization (Revised text approved by the 1998 General Chapter and by the Holy See on May 3, 1999) has also been distributed to everyone. Please make sure that you have your personal copies of these two documents.

District Superiors are requested to lead their districts in reading through and reflecting on the two documents during their district meetings. Please pay particular attention to Chapter II - The Local Community. Please note that the revised Constitutions become law on February 17th of the year 2000.

◇ OUR STATUS AS "VICE-PROVINCE"

The General Administration has also decided during its Plenary Session last April 27 to May 25 that: "The status of Provinces, Vice Provinces and Delegations will remain unchanged until each is examined and a formal decision of modification is made." (cf Communiqué - OMI, June, 1999). Therefore, we will continue to refer to ourselves as the "Vice Province of Japan" until formal decision has been made regarding our status.

◇ SPRING MEETING 2000

Thank you for the suggestions that you submitted as districts or individually regarding next year's Spring Meeting topic and resource person. From the suggestions, we can surmise that the group would like some "spiritual input." We have invited Fr. Dudley PERERA, a Sri Lankan Oblate and biblical scholar to lead us in some serious reflection on the Word of God.

◇ PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

We pray and sympathize with the family of the late Mr. Peter SIANI (father of Ange SIANI) who died last July 29th after a stroke. He was 91 years old. Ange was home on vacation when his father died. Eddie WILLIAMS, who was also vacationing in Boston at the time, flew to Buffalo, NY, to represent the Vice Province at the funeral.

We also pray for the family of the late Mr. Ed ZIMMERMAN, brother in law of Bill and Tom MAHER who died in early July. Bill was able to attend the funeral.

Death came like "a thief in the night" to Sr. Kiyoko FUKAHORI (Notre Dame of

Namur sister). We all knew Sr. Fukahori from her days as Principal of the kindergarten in Kochi and later in Tokushima. I am personally indebted to her since she was my private tutor in Japanese when I was a young curate in Nakajimacho, Kochi after language school, some 20 years ago. Sr. Fukahori had been working in Zimbabwe until she died of serious internal injuries from a car crash. There will be a memorial mass for her at the Okayama Catholic Church on September 26 at 1PM. All those who have known Sr. Fukahori are being invited by Sr. Suzuki, Provincial of Sisters of Notre Dame, to the memorial mass.

◇ PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

We also pray for Jack DEELY's mother who underwent a major surgery. Jack was home fulfilling his task as assistant to one of the Vice Presidents, incharge of Faculty and Students Exchange Program of Sophia U, when his mother was brought to the hospital. Asked how his mother was doing after the surgery, Jack would like to thank everyone for their prayers and added: "...the doc says that she is in better shape than most of her sons and lives up to the name we gave her years ago: Amazing Grace!"

◇ DIFFERENT COMMITTEES, DISTRICT TREASURERS, ETC.

On a separate a list of the different committees and names of people who have been asked to serve for another term.

◇ VISITOR

We welcome Fr. Frank JOBST, Provincial of the Scandinavian Province who will be here from September 9-13. He is on his way to Australia to visit their scholastic who is studying at St. Mary's. Welcome!

BIRTHDAYS

August	31	Bert SILVER
September	6	John IWO
	17	Jude PEIRISPULLE
	17	James JEYACHANDRAN
	20	John MAHONEY
	22	Fran HAHN
October	5	Kenichi FURUKAWA
	7	Ron LAFRAMBOISE
	10	Jan VAN HOYDONCK
	13	Akio HORIUCHI
	27	Xave TOSA
	30	Bradly ROZAIRO
November	16	Howard TATEL
December	24	Mike YAMASAKI

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

September	8	Giovanni ZEVOLA
	23	Jimmy DEL ROSARIO
October	1	Mauro CONCARDI
	19	Maurizio GIORGIANNI

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

September	4	Danny WARD
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PROVINCIAL'S SCHEDULE

September	14	-	October 1	(Australia: To visit novices and attend to AORC matters)
November	10	-	27	(Rome: Provincial's Session. Dates of departure and return are unscheduled.)

STANDING COMMITTEES, DISTRICT SUPERIORS, TREASURERS, Others
Vice-Province of Japan

FORMATION COMMITTEE

Chair Leo KAWAGUCHI
 Members Len INUI, Mauro CONCARDI, Ange SIANI, Nobuhiko YAGI, Bill MAHER

 Consultants Jack DEELY, Xave TOSA, Ray BOURGOIN

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Secretary (Ex Officio) Ray BOURGOIN
 Members Len INUI, Mauro CONCARDI, Jude PEIRISPULLE, Nobuhiko YAGI

ONGOING FORMATION COMMITTEE

Chair Jack DEELY
 Members Vincenzo BORDO, Xave TOSA, Bradly ROZAIRO

COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS

Chair Ange SIANI
 Members Ed WILLIAMS, Bert SILVER, John IWO

 Consultants On Finances: Ray BOURGOIN
 Translation: Nobuhiko YAGI

DISTRICT SUPERIORS

Tokyo-Itami	Bradly ROZAIRO	Tokushima	Bert SILVER
Kochi	Jude PEIRISPULLE	Fukuoka	Bill MAHER
Korea (Superior)	Maurizio GIORGIANNI		

DISTRICT TREASURERS

Tokyo-Itami	Bradly ROZAIRO	Tokushima	Ange SIANI
Kochi	Jude PEIRISPULLE	Fukuoka	Len INUI
Korea	Mauro CONCARDI		

OTHERS:

MAMI

Director and Editor	Leo KAWAGUCHI	Assistant:	Ray BOURGOIN
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VOCATION RECRUITMENT

Director	Nobuhiko YAGI	Assistant:	Jude PEIRISPULLE
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CONTACT PERSONS/ LIAISON:

Justice and Peace	Xave TOSA
OMI Communication	Wency LAGUIDAO
Lay Association	Ray BOURGOIN
Historical Dictionary Project - Rome	Ray Bourgoin



Provincial Newsletter

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Vice Province of Japan



October 25, 1999

Dear Brother Oblates,

I am sending out this letter before I leave for Rome to attend the "charm school." It is a course for new Provincials (and not-so-new ones, like myself) organized this time by Fr. Eugene KING, Vicar General and assisted by Frs. Ron ROLHEISER and Tom SINGER. The course runs from November 10 to 27 (I'll be away from Nov. 2nd to Dec. 5th.). Giovanni ZEVOLA is picking me up from the airport to take me straight to Zungoli (he calls the center of the world) to visit his family and Vincenzo's family on the way back. (I am still trying to negotiate to be given a few hours to catch up on sleep before we hit the road.)

It will be December when I come back and we will be all be very busy with many things including the preparations for the visit of our Superior General.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the traditional Christmas Party in Nakajimacho on the 27th of December.

Wency Laguidao, O.M.I.
Provincial

SCHEDULE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL, FATHER WILHELM STECKLING'S VISIT TO THE VICE PROVINCE

ARRIVAL	December 21	from Korea 10:10 AM, Itami
	December 22	Visit to Nagoya
	December 23	Itami
	December 24	to Naruto for Christmas Eve Mass
	December 25	Christmas Mass in Tokushima
	December 26	Sunday Mass in Itami, to Kochi
	December 27	Morning: Free to meet Oblates individually, etc.
		Afternoon:
		3PM: Perpetual Vows of Jerry and Howard (Mass)
		Informal meeting with the General
		Gaudeamus
		Christmas Dinner (Nakajimacho)
	December 28	Morning: Council Meeting
DEPARTURE		Afternoon: Visit cemetery
		Short visit to Aki and Akaoka
		Back to Itami
	December 29	To Rome 18:55

The above schedule has been drawn up by the Provincial Council during its meeting last October 16. It was not easy to make a schedule that will be convenient for everybody and would satisfy everyone. Please take note that the venue for the dinner with the Superior General has been changed from Itami to Kochi. The Superior General has expressed his wish



to be able to meet everyone and visit as many places where Oblates work as time would permit. The one extra day that he is giving us allows for him to travel to Kochi.

The schedule above is the best we can come up with. Obviously, the big place of Fukuoka and smaller places like Anan and Nakamura are left out. We beg for your understanding on this matter and also if we have to make some sudden changes along the way. If there is time in between, we might take him to Ikeda, too. Father General will be coming from the Philippines and Korea. By the time he arrives in Japan, it is possible that he will be quite exhausted. We are indeed honored that he is spending Christmas with us and let us help to make his short visit with us a meaningful one.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION OF JERRY VILLAS AND HOWARD TATEL

The Philippine Province has agreed to allow Jerry and Howard take their perpetual vows here after they themselves opted for Japan to be the venue of their vow day. The Provincial of the Philippine Province, Fr. Federico LABAGLAY has informed us that Rome approved the recommendation made by the Philippine Province to accept Jerry and Howard for perpetual vows. Approval was given last October 15 during the ordinary council meeting of the General Council.

Jerry and Howard will make their perpetual vows during a simple ceremony on December 27th, in Kochi. No less than the Superior General will be present to receive their final profession as Oblates. Congratulations!

A Filipino Oblate, Fr. Manuel MINA (Wency's classmate) will come to preach the retreat of Jerry and Howard from November 26 to December 3rd as an immediate preparation to their final vows.

After finishing their one-year language study in Nagoya, Jerry and Howard are spending a few months of apostolic work before they finally go back to the Philippines to continue their theological studies. Jerry is helping out at the Koga Kindergarten under the supervision of Len INUI and Howard is at the Naruto Kindergarten under the supervision of Ange SIANI.

A VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

Australia! Tourists are drawn to this continent famous for its kangaroos, koalas, penguins and its pristine nature. The vastness of this continent attracts people from very congested places like Japan and no visit to Australia is ever complete without saying hello to the koalas and kangaroos or driving for hours to admire the breathtaking sceneries. The schedule that they made for me included two full days of sightseeing, believe it or not, going around like a tourist is something I haven't done in a long time. But who could resist to watch the penguins as they come home from days or weeks of fishing in the deep ocean? The penguins themselves seemed nonchalant about being watched by tourists who come everyday by the busloads.

A Little By Ourselves

This is the title of a the book (Mazenod Press: Mulgrave, Vic, Australia, 1994) by Fr. Austin COOPER tastefully laid out and beautifully written in 1994 to celebrate the centenary of the arrival of the first Oblates in Australia in 1894. The book chronicles the difficult start for the first Oblates from Inchicore, Dublin. Like many other missions elsewhere, humble beginnings characterized the first years of the mission and the first Oblates were not spared from the trials and tribulations that beset pioneering missionaries. Distance and poor communications were great obstacles at the time such that one pioneer Oblate wrote to his superior to be allowed to make decisions for themselves... "*Can we not do a little by*

ourselves."

Over its hundred years history, the Australian Province has expanded to various parts of the country and later to New Zealand, Indonesia and in more recent time, to China.

Saint Mary's Seminary, Mulgrave

Australian Provincial, Fr. Pat MORONEY had been asking me, "When are you coming to see your lads?" I always told Pat, "Look, our novices are in very good hands so I am not really in a hurry to visit them." Finally, I made my decision to visit our novices Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA who are spending a year at St. Mary's together with their novice master Br. Nobuhiko YAGI (fondly called "Nobbie" at St. Mary's). My arrival coincided with the 40th anniversary of priesthood of Fr. John HANNAH. Our novices with their master led the entrance hymn during the anniversary mass, Kenichi playing the guitar, Akio on the organ and Nobbie playing the flute.

Saint Mary's Seminary has been opening its doors and sharing its resources to other units in the Asia-Oceania region and even beyond. They have seen novices and seminarians from Thailand, Indonesia, China, Scandinavia and Japan join their programs. They are preparing to welcome three candidates from Laos and Vietnam who are expected to arrive early next year. Saint Mary's Seminary has three formation programs, pre-novitiate, novitiate and scholasticate. The staff is composed of Paul GWYNN Superior, John MAHER, master of novices and Mark EDWARDS, in charge of pre-novices.

Akio and Kenichi are completing their 10-month pre-novitiate course and should be back in Japan sometime before mid-December. I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the Australian Province for its generosity.

KOREAN MISSION

During the meeting of the Provincial Council held in Itami last October 16th, Maurizio GIORGIANNI was re-appointed Superior of the Mission of Korea for another three years starting November 1, 1999. On the same meeting, and in keeping with the revised CCRR which states: "(The Mission) has a Superior, assisted by a Council of at least two members.", two councillors were named. They are: Giovanni ZEVOLA, 1st councillor and James JEYACHANDRAN, 2nd councillor. We pray for the Korean mission as it enters a new phase of life under a newly constituted leadership.

Incidentally, the mission is awaiting the arrival of its new member, Varam ANTHONYSAMY of the Indian Delegation who is still waiting for the approval of his visa to enter Korea.

MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS

The different committees of the Vice Province have been busy meeting to define their roles and think about how the committees could be of service to the community:

The FINANCIAL COMMITTEE met in Naruto September 13 to deal mainly with the role of the newly appointed district treasurers. You should be hearing from your district treasurers about the new way of turning in financial reports, making a budget as a district community, communal responsibility as regards financial matters, etc. District treasurers are: Bradly ROZAIRO for the Itami District, Ange SIANI for the Tokushima District, Jude PEIRISPULLE for the Kochi District and Len INUI for the Fukuoka district (for the more accurate instructions, please refer to the report on the meeting sent by Ray BOURGOIN). The committee is working hard to compose a viable financial directory for the Vice Province.

The FORMATION COMMITTEE chaired by Leo KAWAGUCHI met last September 1st. Among the things discussed was the evaluation of the last Summer Vocation Camp. The members were unanimous in their opinion that Koga Parish and Kindergarten is the best place to hold the camp. Other matters discussed were: whether to open the camp for girls, follow up of possible candidates for the seminary, leadership skills of organizers, etc.

Matters concerning the opening of the NOVITIATE in Aki was top in the agenda of the Formation Committee Meeting. A curriculum is still being worked out and should be finalized once Br. Nobuhiko YAGI is back from Australia in late November.

ONGOING FORMATION MEETING (Meeting of Young Oblates): Brad ROZAIRO reports that this year's gathering of young Oblates was held at the conference house of the FMA Sisters in Yufuin, Oita Prefecture, famous for its hot springs and summer capital of western Japan whose natural beauty attracts even the members of the Imperial family. The meeting was held last September 3 to 5 with the theme: "Communication and Community" and was facilitated by Fr. Jerry CUSUMANO, SJ of the Sophia University in Tokyo. The meeting consisted of an input talk from the facilitator and sincere sharing among the members of the group.

"Our sharing was mainly based on communication within community and the difficulties we face due to lack of communication."

"The FMA sisters were very nice to us. They did everything possible to make us happy. We enjoyed good food BUT we had to do the dishes! We cannot talk of Yufuin without hot springs. In the evenings we went to the springs to relax. We made a trip to Beppu (a neighboring city also known for hot springs) and visited the place of St. Francis Xavier."

"This year, too, our gathering gave us moments for sharing, praying and recreation. Our next meeting will be held at the Passionist Retreat House in Fukuoka from March 24-26 in the year 2000." Reported by Brad ROZAIRO.

LITURGICAL COMMITTEE: Oblates involved in parish ministry are getting together to think about ways to help each other especially in matters concerning parish liturgy. Fran HAHN is organizing the core group which is composed of Brad ROZAIRO, Ed WILLIAMS, Bill MAHER, and Jude PEIRISPULLE. We expect to hear from the group after their initial meeting in Itami on the 25th of October. Incidentally, Fr. FRANCO of Seimeikan in Kumamoto has accepted to give us a day's input on liturgical issues during our Spring Meeting in March 2000. Dudley PERERA of the Sri Lankan Province has accepted to give us input on a few scriptural topics.

SEPTEMBER 2000 RETREAT

We have a retreat master in the person of Fr. Michael HUGHES of the Irish Province. Mike used to be the superior of the International Scholasticate in Rome. Our retreat is scheduled for September 4 to 8.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITAMI KINDERGARTEN

Mike YAMASAKI, director of Christ the King kindergarten of Itami has announced that the school will celebrate its 50th year of foundation on November 23rd. A simple celebration is being planned.

Please remember to send in your contributions for the Christmas issue of the newsletter. Deadline is December 10.

New letterhead is an experimental computer graphic design by Br. N. Yagi.



Provincial Newsletter

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Vice Province of Japan

Welcome to Japan, Father General!



**Message of the Superior General
on the occasion of his visit
to the Vice Province**



Rome, November 15, 1999

Dear Brother Oblates in Japan and Korea,

Fr. Wilhelm Steckling, OMI

Christmas is a feast of amazement; we can never fully realize the great news that God should have descended on earth and in such a way. Christmas is special every year because it is divine. This year, however, it is even more special for another, more earthly reason: for the number of years that have passed since the event of Incarnation took place. On Christmas Eve, here in Rome, Pope John Paul II will open the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica to inaugurate the Great Jubilee. During a whole year we will be celebrating Christ's 2000th birthday!

Though I normally live in Rome, this year I plan to spend the feast of our Savior's birth far from here. My travel schedule conditioned it this way, and I know that being with Oblates anywhere in the world I will still be able to say that I celebrate Christmas at home. I look forward to spending the time from December 18 to 29 with my Brother Oblates in Korea and Japan. Even before arriving I wish you a blessed Christmas. I am sure it will be a very special one for all of us: Jesus' 2000th birthday!

My intention in visiting you is not only to celebrate Christmas. I want to get to know you and to have a greater appreciation of your missionary work. I do not aim to make my trip a formal visitation; besides, the time would be too short. I want to listen to you as you speak about your past achievements and I wish to ask you how you imagine the future will be. As we are about to enter the new millennium, one of the questions I would like to talk over with you is how you see our Oblate mission - in Japan, Korea and everywhere - in the 21st century. The whole congregation has reflected on this during its last general chapter.



Formulating a kind of covenant, the capitulants said toward the end of their letter to us that we "pledge ourselves to refocus on the essentials, namely, on Christ and his Church, and to do this through a renewed community life which is animated by an ever-inventive missionary zeal" (41). What appearance would a refocusing on Christ (and his Church) take on in Korea and Japan, or elsewhere in our Oblate missions? What do you expect from a renewed community life? What could be the targets of our ever-inventive missionary zeal? Perhaps the approaching millennium will fire our imagination and the 2000th birthday of Christ will add some special graces to our conversation.

I also hope that, for myself and for the general council, my journey to the Philippines and your Vice-province will give us some further inspiration on a major project that we want to study during our January/February plenary session. It is called in the same Chapter letter a "re-evaluation of our missionary practices" (19). As I happen to be with you I want to ask you what form this re-evaluation could take, in your view. How could it be done so that everybody is involved and so that it reaches some practical, concrete results? The Chapter suggests: "at every level - personal, community, and congregation - let us take the time needed to evaluate and discern as to whether our evangelization is in step with the reality of today's world and with God's specific call to us through our charism" (ib.). So maybe you can contribute some inspiration to this project.

All of this should provide us with enough material for conversation and we have surely an important birthday to celebrate. See you, then, around Christmas, God willing. May Christ and our Immaculate Mother guide our way into the third millennium!

*Fraternally yours,
Wilhelm Steckling, OMI
Superior General*

GETTING TO KNOW OUR SUPERIOR GENERAL

Birth:	April 23, 1947
Birthplace:	Verl, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
First Vows:	May 1, 1967
Perpetual Oblation:	April 15, 1973
Ordination:	July 20, 1974
First Obedience:	Vice Province of Pilcomayo, Paraguay
Ministry:	Formator in Asuncion until elected Provincial of Vice Province of Pilcomayo in 1986 and 1989. -1992 General Chapter: Worked as translator. -Elected Second Assistant General at 1992 Chapter.

He was born Heinz Wilhelm to a small farming family. He was the only child. "Guillermo" (Spanish for Wilhelm) was the name given to him during his years as a missionary and a formator in Paraguay. He speaks German and Spanish fluently, and also English, French and Guarani. (From OMI Information, Sept. 18, 1998)

From the Provincial's Desk:

Christmas, 1999

Dear Brother Oblates,

On behalf of the Vice Province, I would like to welcome our Superior General, Father Guillermo Steckling. He honestly admits that Asia is the region he knows the least so he is catching up by visiting as many Oblates and places entrusted to the Oblates in the region as he can. In March this year, during the annual meeting of the AORC in Bangkok, he took the opportunity to visit all the Oblate places in Thailand (which is a General Delegation) and went as far as Bangladesh.

This time, he has decided to make an unofficial visit, also his first, to the Province of the Philippines, the Mission of Korea and the Vice Province of Japan.

We have special reasons to be happy and thankful this Christmas: first, our Superior General is spending Christmas with us. Then on the 27th of December we will rejoice with Jerry VILLAS and Howard TATEL as they make their perpetual profession as Oblates in the presence of the Superior General.

As the second millennium comes to a close and as we await the coming of a new one, we renew our hope that **God is with us in Jesus Christ**, a mystery he has manifested in the Incarnation. In his message to the major superiors in Rome, the Superior General challenged everyone to look for a **vision**. It is this vision that should guide all of us in our ministries, big or small, and it is this vision that will attract young people to join us. If we are not attracting young people to join us, it is perhaps because we don't have a vision that would attract them as something they might want to invest their future. We thank the Superior General for giving us this challenge.

To each and everyone, A blessed Christmas and a new millennium full of hope!

Wency Laguidao



*Jerry & Howard with their retreat master
Fr. Manny Mina of the Philippine Province*

MAJOR SUPERIORS' MEETING IN ROME

The centuries-old adage *All roads lead to Rome* will literally come to life next year when the Eternal City becomes the *umbilicus* of the Jubilee celebrations. The General House Community in Via Aurelia was the gracious host to twenty four major superiors from across the Oblate world who came to attend the session organized by the General Administration under the able expertise of Eugene KING, Vicar General, to acquaint them of the different aspects of animation and leadership of their provinces or delegations. Members of the General Administration led by the Superior General, Guillermo STECKLING, gave presentations on various portfolios and services in the congregation.

Trivia: Rome is making its last minute preparations for the turn of the millennium which includes getting rid of graffiti on its monuments. A story is told about how more recent graffiti were scraped off only to find older ones dating back to Rome's glory and grandeur, one of them read "*Caesar is a pig!*"

290 Via Aurelia is also getting ready for the influx of Oblate guests next year. Hubert Lagace, Superior of the General House, has one unbending rule for the turn of the millennium fever, namely: that Oblates will have the supreme right to occupancy at their General House but are requested to inquire about simple rules that must be followed. (N.B. Those who wish to be accommodated at the General House anytime during the year 2000, please inquire about reservation procedures from your provincial.)

The State of the Congregation

The Superior General opened the session with an informal report on the state of the congregation. He started his presentation with the question *Do we have a vision?* He said that he finds this question both challenging and refreshing. He invited every major superior to reflect on the same question for his province or delegation because it is our vision that gives us our *identity* and *direction*. He went on to assure everyone that the **Oblate charism is alive!** This is a conclusion that he has drawn from his visits of Oblate communities after he was elected Superior General.

In his address to the major superiors he highlighted the following as the significant tendencies in the congregation especially after the 33rd General Chapter (the following is a crude summary of his presentation):

- The congregation is becoming more **missionary**: this is evidenced by the opening of new missions in many parts of the world.
- The search for a meaningful **community life** and **Oblate spirituality** continues. Though there is lack of formators in many places the number of candidates who are in the **first formation** is increasing congregation-wide.
- There is an openness for the **lay associates** and their presence is increasing in many places. The congregation has become more **international** as expressed in first obediences and exchange of personnel. There is an interest in **restructuring** whereby provinces are consolidating into one Oblate unit. This was successfully achieved by the former Provinces of the U.S. and is being followed by the Canadian provinces. It was also a welcome comment from the Superior General when he said that the congregation as a whole is **financially sound**.

The Superior General also identified the areas in the provinces that need ANIMATION:
a. **mission**: We need to develop a pastoral vision in communion with the local church but distinct from the immediate needs as expressed by the bishops. Media has become an integral part of mission and there is a need to support "missionaries ad extra," (Oblates who

have given their lives to the foreign mission). There is a need for us to evaluate our ministries.

b. personnel and community: Prayer is always a necessary ingredient to community life. Oblates in crisis need the support of other Oblates around them. Living under one roof is an issue that the community has to continue to talk about. Consultation before new assignments are given also remains indispensable to the smooth running of a province.

c. administration and finance: shared responsibility with the council, local superiors and formators is a requirement in administration. The Provincial is the main financial officer of the province and he should have a good grasp of the financial situation of the province together with the council. Financial sharing is an area that should be explored on the local level and beyond. There is a scarcity of people ready to accept or are capable to be a bursar. Sometimes it is easier to find people who are willing to be provincial than finding people who want to be bursars, the Superior General noted.

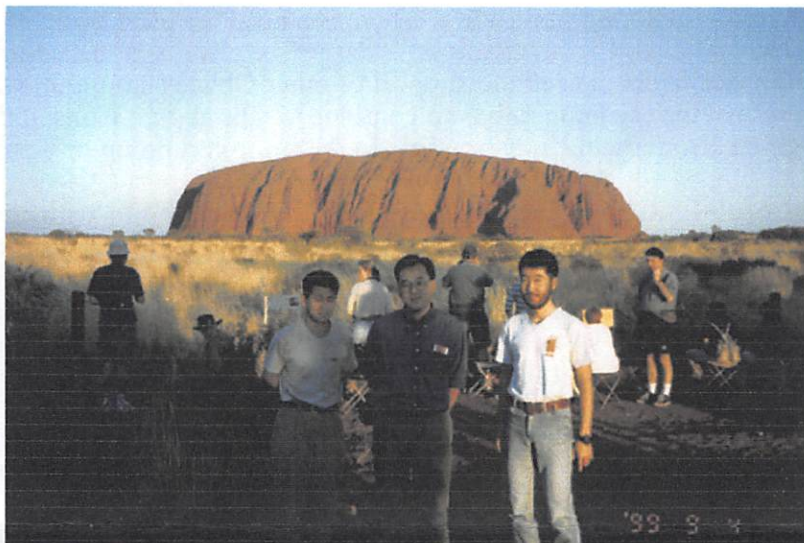
d. first formation: The congregation is in constant need of good and capable formators and there is a need for a continuing program to train formators.

e. ongoing formation: We need systematic planning on ongoing formation for all age groups, from the young priests' group to the "goldies." We are also called to get Oblates interested in the International de Mazenod Center in Aix as an ongoing formation program.

The above is just a gist of the presentation made by the Superior General who was also too humble to admit that the General team is still learning the ropes of administration and asks for everyone's patience.

Other Presentations of Interest:

- **Finances:** Alfons KEUTER who will finish his 12 year term by the end of 2000 and to be succeeded by Rufus WHITLEY, emphasized the need for us to be "wise and compassionate stewards" of the property of the congregation. He noted that units who need money the most are sometimes the ones that waste it through incompetence, etc.
- **General Secretariat:** Tom COUGHLIN keeps a smooth running of this department. (This is an area of work where I wish I had the help of a bilingual secretary who can keep our provincial files and records in order.) Personal files of Oblates have to be updated all the time, this is the request of the Secretary General.
- **Mission Portfolio:** This is handled by Ryszard SZMYDKI, Assistant General. He also handles the portfolio for Lay Oblate Associations. Baudouin MUBESALA, also an Assistant General, handles the Formation Portfolio. Philippiah JESUNESAN and Clyde RAUSCH, Councillors for Asia-Oceania and Europe, respectively, handle the Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation Portfolio.
- **Other timely topics taken up were: dysfunctionality** and how to deal with dysfunctional Oblates; personal ecology; and ongoing formation. These topics were jointly handled by Ron ROLHEISER (Gen.Councillor-Canada), Tom SINGER (USA) and Eugene King. Mass Media is a new portfolio in the General Administration.
- **Other mainstays of the General Administration team and their areas of expertise are:** Michel COURVOISIER (Information), Alexander TACHE (Procurator to the Holy See), Aloysius KEDL (General Archives), Jim FITZPATRICK (General Postulation).
- Frank SANTUCCI, Superior of the International Roman Scholasticate talked about the advantages of having students from all parts of the world come to study in Rome. Hubert LAGACE who is the Superior of the General House community briefed the provincials on the different aspects of the General House.



*Back from Australia. Novices Akio and Ken-ichi
with their novice master Br. N. Yagi at Ayers Rock*

NOVITIATE NEWS

Our two novices, Akio HORIUCHI and Kenichi FURUKAWA, along with their novice master, Br. Nobuhiko YAGI are all back from Australia. The two novices spent about ten months at Saint Mary's Seminary in Mulgrave, Australia. They went straight to Aki when they arrived and in January, they will be engaged in apostolic work until they start their canonical novitiate on February 16, 2000. Akio will spend some time at the *Tabiji No Sato* (Home for day laborers, homeless, etc) in Kamagasaki and Kenichi will be at the Hakuaien (orphanage) in Kochi.

A VISIT TO ZUNGOLI AND PIANSANO

Picture an idyllic little town whose small stone houses crown a tiny mountain in southern Italy and that is Zungoli, turf of the Zevola clan. Giovanni was at the airport when I arrived at 6AM on November 8th and we drove from Rome towards the direction of Naples for about four hours to his hometown. The scenery is always beautiful in that area. It was night time when we arrived and the whole Zevola clan started to gather for the meal. Everything is made in the household or taken from the farm: ham, meat, milk, fruits, etc. Everything is fresh and the air is pollution-free. People in the village all know each other and even the parish priest comes to family parties. Giovanni looks well and is now back in Korea.

On the way back, we visited Piansano which looked like a medieval Italian town not too far from Rome. Vincenzo's parents, brother and sister in law eagerly welcomed us. The mother is an excellent cook. She makes all the pasta herself and also makes great desserts.

It was a great experience to meet the families and get a taste of Italian hospitality. I enjoyed the hospitality, especially the food, but most of all I am thankful to the families for the gift of their sons and brothers as missionaries in a foreign land.

OTHER NEWS ITEMS

Zendana Parish Turned-Over to Oblates

As of October 1, 1999, Zendana Parish in Nagoya has been officially turned over to the care of the Oblates as per agreement signed by the provincial and the Bishop of Nagoya, Bishop Augustine NOMURA. The Oblates have been taking care of the parish since 1991. Present pastor is Eddie WILLIAMS.

Other News Items (cont'd):

The Superior General will have lunch with Bishop Nomura on December 22 in Zendana and on the same day, the Ottawa Sisters in Nagoya have invited the Oblate community with the Superior General for dinner at their novitiate.

Pastoral-Liturgical Committee Meeting

The newly-formed Pastoral-Liturgical Committee met in Itami last October 25 to plan out what it wants to do as a group. Present during the meeting were: Fran HAHN, Wency LAGUIDAO, Bradly ROSAIRO, Bill MAHER, Jude PEIRISPULLE and Ed WILLIAMS.

Wency opened with some remarks about the restarting of the pastoral committee on a somewhat broader scale. Given the fact that our mission parishes are a big and probably permanent part of our work here in Japan we should do whatever we can to ensure they are as well administered as can be. Communication, exchange of ideas, experience, know-how, procurement of documentation through the internet (Fran brought along some things that were obtained from the internet), all will assist us in our work. He also asked that we channel any good things for the entire Vice Province through the provincial council and the newsletter.

It was decided to have three meetings during a year plus a one-hour meeting at the annual retreat. These meetings are for the members of the committee as well as any other Oblate who may be interested in attending.

The date of the next meeting will be February 21, 2000 in Itami and discussion theme is "Eucharist." Fr. Shirahama's articles in the Catholic Weekly will be used. Other meetings will be held in May, September (retreat) and November.

In addition to the above, there was a discussion of a variety of items such as: Jude's pastoral experiences in Nakajimacho parish; *Orate Fratres* (it was decided to get copies of all the changes suggested by the liturgical commission of the bishops' conference); catechesis on liturgy; funeral rite (importance of learning about the deceased as much as possible before the wake and funeral; millennium activities; adoration (*oraison*), Japanese translation of the Founder's Mass; weddings, etc.

Wency asked the committee to prepare the liturgies for the retreat and Spring Meeting. Liturgical books in Japanese: 現代典礼、神の民皆のミサ were suggested by the group as worthy of a read. (Reported by Eddie Williams)

Brother Tsuda's Paintings On Exhibit

To celebrate the 100th year of birth of the late Br. Sueho TSUDA, OMI, his art group known as *Beni Usu* will put on exhibit 80 of his paintings from December 22-26 at the Awagin Plaza in Tokushima. This is a posthumous recognition of the artistic talent of Brother Tsuda who devoted the last years of his life in evangelization through painting. Many members of the art group were baptized after Brother Tsuda taught them catechism.

The Superior General will have the chance to view Brother's paintings when he visits Tokushima district on Dec. 24-25. A meeting with the Bishop of Takamatsu and the Superior General is also scheduled for Christmas Day in Tokushima.

Mass of Saint Eugene Translated into Japanese

Ray BOURGOIN, with the help of Mrs. Keiko Maki of Zendana Parish, has translated the Mass of Saint Eugene De Mazenod into Japanese and printed booklets have been made available to all Oblate parishes and bishops all over the country. For the Japanese version,

pink color was chosen to symbolize cherry blossoms. Let us hope that the feastday of our Founder will find its way in the Japanese liturgical calendar. Translating the Mass of the Founder into Japanese is the first step of having the life and charism of our Founder be known in the Church of Japan. We will start doing this in the parishes entrusted to the Oblates.

Ray has also made unofficial translations of the revised parts of the CCRR and the letter of the 33rd General Chapter to the congregation.

Prayers and Good Luck

Jaime DEL ROSARIO who used to belong to this Vice Province has received his obedience to the Philippine Province as of December 8, 1999. He is now involved in campus ministry in an Oblate run school in southern Philippines. We wish Jimmy Good Luck in his new assignment.



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

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

CHRISTMAS 1999



BLESSED CHRISTMAS



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2000

From Jack Deely:

NEWS FROM HOYA

My apologies for the long absence from the Newsletter! Poor planning on my part! And so, I've decided to reserve a space on my computer desktop for a file entitled OMI NEWSLETTER. In that way, I can add things as they happen. Right now it's only November 6th, but I better start or I'll miss the deadline again!

This Fall, I had two SIGNED retreats with the deaf. One was held in Kanazawa, shortly after our own retreat in Fukuoka, with 25 people in attendance (even had a couple of observers, Fr. Humphries from Nagoya and several Sisters from the local Convent). The other retreat was held at the Retreat House on the grounds of the Seminary in Shakujii...again with about 25 in attendance...in fact, it was for deaf people of three dioceses (Yokohama, Tokyo and Urawa). Again, I experimented with the Mass ... but this time, I felt as though I wasn't alone. You may recall that our Retreat Master in Fukuoka mentioned an Oblate who used no missal at Mass because of the low literacy rate among the people he served. Well, when I heard that, I was tremendously relieved ... it was as if someone had okayed what I had been doing!

In order to make things more visual for the deaf, I had students at Sophia sketch different and well-known Bible Scenes on huge posters which I placed all around the room and chapel. Using the pictures, the deaf retreatants felt free to sign the scripture in sign language that is more natural to them, rather than trying to match each written word with a particular sign. (If you find all of this difficult to understand, you may find the article that I have on the OMI homepage (omiusa.org) easier to follow and more helpful ... because it offers greater details).

Let's see...yes...on the 3rd of November, some of us were feted at Sophia for 15 and 25 years of service to the university. Me, for 15 years (if I hadn't gone to Tsukuba

and had stayed at Sophia, I'd be retired now! It would total 21 years or more). At any rate, I'm grateful to the Jesuits and staff for disregarding the Tsukuba hiatus and crediting me with a total of 15 years.

Another item of importance, as Wency mentioned in a previous Newsletter of his, is that on July 1st I was asked by the President of Sophia to take over as Coordinator of Student Exchanges. The university is contracted with over a hundred universities world wide and this year alone we will be sending 160 students abroad and will be receiving as many as 80 from abroad. I figure as an OMI I should push for contracts with universities in 3rd world countries. We shall see how things go. In the meantime, this new job will be taking me to The Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany during the first week of December (my first time to set foot in countries other than Ireland and England...but with no time to do any sightseeing! A full schedule of meeting my counterparts at 6 different universities in 3 different countries in one week! Should be in great shape after that trip...will probably have to cancel another week of classes on return to Japan just to recoup!)

Lastly, I'd like to take this occasion to thank you all for your prayers for my Mom. Two days after having Eddie, Ange, Giovanni and Jim Gibbons (classmate from Brazil) over to the house in Maryland for dinner, we had to rush Mom to the hospital. She had a gangrenous gall bladder removed, along with a good size gall stone...and surprised the heck out of doctors and nurses and family with her speedy recovery. Out of the hospital in 3 days...at the age of 90...thus, our nickname for her: AMAZING GRACE!

Hope all is well with everyone. Looking forward to seeing all of you at the Christmas Gathering in Kochi!

Merry Christmas Jack

保谷だより

すっかりご無沙汰しています。最近のニューズレターにぜんぜん投稿していないことは反省しています。もうろくしているのか、計画性がないからか・・・だから、毎日ニューズレターのことを思い出すように、コンピュータのデスクトップにニューズレターのファイルのアイコンを作っています。それでも忘れちゃいそうですが・・・

この秋聾者の黙想会を二回行いました。最初は、金沢で9月半ばに25人ぐらい参加して行いました。名古屋からオブザーバーとしてハンフリーズ神父と数名のシスターも参加してくださいました。二回目は、東京の大神学校内の黙想の家で行いました。これは三つの教区の合同黙想会でした。僕はこの二回の黙想会でいろいろなことを試してみました。そのひとつとして、ミサのときに典礼書を使いませんでした。僕は以前から典礼書を使っていなかったのですが、ちょっと後ろめたさを感じていました。けれど、この夏のわれわれの黙想会での指導司祭の話に勇気づけられたのです。皆さん覚えていますが、ある国で文盲の信者の多い教会の司祭が典礼書を使わずにミサを行っているという話です。この話を聞いて僕はほっとしました。自分のしていたことは間違っていなかったと。

聾者は眼で理解します。だから、上智の学生に頼んで聖書の場面を絵に描いてもらい部屋いっぱい張ったり、コピーしたものを配布したりしました。参加者はそれを見て、文章にこだわらず自由に手話で表現しながら信仰の分かち合いや体験談をしました。聾者のことをあまり知らない皆さんにとって、この話は理解しにくいことだと思いますので、もう少し詳しく知りたい方は、下記のホームページを見ていただければ理解を深めていただけたと思います。
omiusa.org です。

さて、11月3日に永年勤続15年の表彰を受けました。もし筑波へ行かなかったら、教員生活21年目になります。イエズス会、または上智大学に感謝します。なぜなら途中6年ブランクがあったのに、合算してくれたからです。

もうひとつのニュースは、Wencyが前回のニューズレターで書いてくれたように、7月1日付で国際交流課の補佐に任命されたことです。上智大学は、世界の100校以上の大学と提携しています。今年は各国から80人の学生を受け入れて、日本から160人送り出す予定です。オブレート会の一員として僕は開発途上国の大学と積極的に提携したいと思っています。この仕事でこの12月第1週オランダ、ベルギー、ドイツの3国へ出張に行く予定です。（アイルランド、イギリスを別として、初めてヨーロッパへ行きます。残念ながら、観光の時間は取れそうにありません。三つの国の六つの大学で、僕と同じ立場の人たちと会う予定です。スケジュールが詰まっていて、帰国後僕はきっとダウンして、学校の授業を休講にしなければならなくなりそうです。）

最後に、紙上を借りて、母のために祈ってくれたことを感謝いたします。Jim Gibbons（ブラジルで働いた僕の同級生）Eddie, Ange, Giovanniたちと妹の家でバーベキューをした2日後に、母は救急車で病院へ運ばれました。結局、母は胆石があり胆嚢を摘出しました。90歳の母はその手術のあと3日間で退院し、医者や看護婦さん、家族たちをびっくりさせました。以前から彼女はAMAZING GRACEと呼ばれていますが・・・

最後の最後に、皆さん元氣でご活躍ください。高知で開かれるクリスマスパーティーでの再開を楽しみにしています。

Merry Christmas

ジャック



May the Christ Child
fill your heart
with
peace and hope
during the coming
JUBILEE YEAR!

What with my trip to Egypt and Israel
plus my brother Ron's three week visit
it was a wonderful year and
I thank God for my many
blessings! Bert, OMI

From Fran Hahn:

Dear Fellow Oblates:

I'm about to embark on an adventure and if all goes well it will bring me back to the States for a total of 18 days from Nov.15th through Dec. 3rd. Doing so will enable me to spend part of the last few days of this century at my roots.

I received some tickets on United Air, and they have to be used before the end of this year so I decided to treat myself to a Thanksgiving at home with the family. While there I've been asked to baptize a couple of the Hahn-side offspring, a cousin's newly born daughter Jenna Baritot and a younger cousin's grandchild! It's scary to know that the 3rd generation since I left home, is being born! But just looking in the mirror should help me realize that the "new millennium" is upon me. The hair that used to be there for the most part is gone, and while I feel, and some say still act, like I'm 18, climbing a mountain or even stairs brings me back to reality!

I'm writing this Christmas greeting in early Nov. to make sure that Jan gets this in time for if I try to do it after I get back, Dec. 3rd, it will never get done.

There is a lot of activity here now. The ladies of the parish are baking 300 cakes for the bazaar Sunday Nov. 7th, and thawing 300 of the 600 pies, baked two weeks ago, to get ready to sell. The others have already been sold.

As we head into a new millennium, I have the feeling that for most of the world, the Y2K problem is the central, and the world is more concerned with solving this and the related problems it may bring, than they are with celebrating the reason for it being "2000". The Babe who appeared wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger someplace in Bethlehem seems to be more and more pushed aside. I hope this new grace filled year will afford the parish and yours truly some "time" to address this fact personally.

The Holy Father has invited us to enter into a "Holy Year of Jubilee", and open our hearts to the message that the "Angels" have been trying to shout to mankind these past 2,000 years. We all need a "Silent Night" of the soul, a time of rest, to step back and ponder the implications of this precious Moment when God made Himself incarnately present to His Creation. A Moment that is eternal and continues to renew itself in our daily lives.

Each of us needs to hear for himself, and repeat to the world, the words of the Risen Christ: "Shalom" "Peace"! I need to respond to these words concretely by freeing "my debtors", "Forgive us our debts AS WE

FORGIVE THOSE WHO HAVE DEBTS AGAINST US, and to reflect on who owes whom "what". For the past three years, the Holy Father has called for a process of reflection, repentance and conversion, and then given us a Jubilee Year to appropriate this into our lives. I'm called to forgive those who have offended me, and seek forgiveness from those I have offended. To those among you I've offended unwittingly I ask pardon; to those whom I'm aware I've offended, I know I'll have to do something more concrete. The Jubilee year invites me to change. It says I can be different! It calls all of us to get away from the many false idols we've been turning to for consolation, in lieu of His seeming procrastination in "COMING AGAIN".

It is my prayer for each of you that this Christmas and the new "era that it ushers in" will be a truly liberating year, full of Grace, Love and Peace. May each of you know that Peace and forgiveness that only Christ brings, and may His "Spirit" empower you, and those you love, to live in a future wherein you see manifestly God's presence to you in a very clear and powerful way! And may all your remaining days be one big JUBILEE!

Merry Christmas and Happy 2,000.

Jan Hahn

From Jan:

A Blessed Christmas, and a Happy Holy New Year!

In contrast with the long list of activities and experiences described in the contributions of my fellow Oblates there is not much out of the ordinary for me to tell, having been out of the country for a couple of months, and while I am here using most of my time being of service in several little ways. One unusual happening is the baptism of a lady of 33 on Pentecost Day. This was the first adult baptism in 16 years, and the "adults" baptized then were two children of seven and eight. Several infants have been baptized since then (1983), all of them of Philippine mothers. A monthly happening since Christmas of last year (1998) is the special Mass on the second Sunday afternoon of the month, celebrated for the Philippine wives of Japanese husbands living within the Ikeda parish boundaries (some as far away as 60 km!). The average attendance is between 10 and 20. At the Christmas celebration (this year on December 19) there is not going to be enough room.

May the Lord abundantly bless all your endeavors throughout the New Year.

Jan, O.M.I.

NEWS FROM NAKAJIMACHO

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The last newsletter having been in June, let us bring you up to date on the goings on in NAKAJIMACHO since the middle of that month.

The biggest event of the month was the departure of our cook, Ms Miyoko Munemoto. She had arrived to the end of her regular contract. We proposed that she stay on, on a part-time basis with a new contract drawn up for that purpose. She preferred to quit at this time and left us July 1. She had served the Oblates in ANAN and Nakajimacho for a 25 year period. May she enjoy her retirement.

Though her decision was made June 1, she had asked us to tell no one about her departure, so it delayed by one month our being able to look for a new cook. Our main disappointment is that we could not give here a going away party as she preferred to go quietly. In September, Ray was able to take her out for a meal in TOKUSHIMA.

In the meantime a number of parishioners volunteered to come and make a meal once in a while and others brought meals they cooked at home. We enjoyed the variety of menus which are found in different families! The rectory was bustling. Toward the end of July we found someone who would be agreeable to come as of August. Ms Kimi Hosoki, a student at a night cooking school, came daily for the month of August but realized it was too much for her to spend the day here and then go to night classes.

After one month, therefore, we had to look around again. This time Ms Toki Okubo, a parishioner, who had just quit her work with an old folks home where she was used to cooking for over 100 people, said she would be willing to come Monday through Friday. She had been baptized by Bill MAHER in NAKAMURA. Another lady Ms Toshi Yano, a former restaurant cook, comes Saturday and Sunday.

The CPA people were here to help Ray BOURGOIN make the annual report for the government and for Rome. What had taken 3 days the last time was completed in 2 days this time around because the CPA people and Ray are getting used to the routine. Later in the month Ray left for Itami and the Provincial Council meeting to get the approval of the aforementioned reports.

Nobuhiko YAGI left for Australia to be with the 2 novices and to learn from the experience of the Australian Novice Master. He returned in late November to pack and move to AKI for his assignment as Novice Master.

In late June, Jude PEIRISPULLE was off to Shimane prefecture where he spends a couple of days each month on a drug smuggling court case. It involves a number of nationalities and Jude contributes by translating for the prosecution as well as for the defense in Singhala. This is also an added income over and above the many weddings in Nakajimacho. At last count, for this year, there had been or would be 67 weddings here besides the 12 or 13 Jude performed at the Dreamer Wedding Center.

In August, Jude went to participate in the Oblate Vocation Camp while Ray stayed back to cover the parish. Jude left with 3 participants. He returned with Jerry VILLAS and Howard TATEL, 2 scholastics from the Philippines who are going through a period of internship in Japan, before completing there theological studies from next June. Jude was surprised when he got back because Ray had painted the whole kitchen while he was gone.

Ray spent the summer months completing his work on the life of the founder in Japanese with the help of a ZENDANA parishioner, Ms Keiko Maki. He also translated the CCRR revisions which had been approved by the last General Chapter. Ms Mumie Nagasaki, of this parish, helped him in this work. The

Mass of St Eugene has also been translated and all printed up in pamphlet form.

In late August Sr Wasa UCHIHARA, who is a novice of the Ottawa Sisters of Charity, came to spend a couple of months of internship here as part of her novitiate training. She left us in late October. Hopefully she will join the staff in April. Her presence here was well appreciated. She adds a different dimension to an all male staff.

In mid-September, Ray went with Xave TOSA to AWA-IKEDA in order to weed the garden there. During Jan van HOYDONCK's vacation the weeds had taken over! It was a satisfying day.

Jude and Ray left for the annual retreat in Fukuoka and then Jude went on to Yufuin to attend the younger Oblates' meeting there. He left there early to attend the Diocesan Day in Kochi with the Bishop in attendance.

To celebrate Jude's ordination anniversary, Ray and Jude went for a long bicycle ride to Tanesaki and environs. It was a delightful day.

In conjunction with the inauguration of District Treasurers, both Ray and Jude found themselves in Naruto to meet with the other treasurers in mid September. Both felt that the Spirit was with us as we tried to define our function. May this ministry help to foster community in our districts as one dimension thereof.

In late September, Jude went to his old Alma Mater, in order to be with Jerry and Howard as they graduated from the YWCA language school. He took advantage of being there to renew his acquaintance and friendship with the teaching staff. The 2 scholastics really appreciated his taking time out to be there. Another way to celebrate community.

October rolled around and Jude went to Itami to attend the Liturgical Committee meeting which was recently inaugurated. From what we've heard, the members were satisfied with this first meeting and hoped to meet again in order to have deeper exchanges on the topic of the Liturgy. There is so much that can be exchanged for the benefit of all and for strengthening our parish communities.

Also, in October, Ray covered in AKAOKA while Lei SIMONS went to visit his brother in Belgium.

October 16 found Ray in Itami for the Provincial Council meeting during which he became ill and had to fight off the flu when he got back. He was able to nip it in the bud because he attacked it early.

The parish picnic on the 3rd of November was a rather big success. Two bus loads of parishioners went to the top of Yutourist Park Mountain. There were some 60 people in all. Last year we had gone mountain climbing and only a handful of people showed up.

In early November, Jude was found preaching a two-day retreat to mostly Sri Lankans in the Yokohama area. There was a smattering of people of other nationalities also. The group, mostly Catholics, included Buddhists and Hindus as well. Needless to say, the Sri Lankan community would like him to stay around as he is one of the very few who could deal with them in their native language.

Jude is also the chaplain for foreigners in Kochi prefecture. After the retreat in Yokohama he went to Tokyo to attend a two-day meeting of chaplains who serve the foreign community in Japan. Jude liked the proceedings very much. It creates a bond with others involved in the same work and gives new courage to continue this apostolate.

In the meantime, Ray is getting acquainted with the Marriage Encounter people of Shikoku. He has attended a meeting in Matsuyama and one in Saijo. It means late hour driving to return to Kochi but well worth the effort.

As of this writing Nobu has recovered from a few days in bed with a cold, Jude and Ray are almost back on their feet with a similar bout.

Happy holidays. See you all in late December when Jerry and Howard will be pronouncing their final vows in the presence of the Superior General here in Nakajimacho.

Jude and Ray

From Xave Tosa:

Dear Friends,

I don't think I am exaggerating when I say that Christmas is the most celebrated feast in the world. Christmas is celebrated by all Christians notwithstanding the different explanations of the Bible. It is the occasion to put little angels on the stage in all kindergartens, Christian or pagan alike. Christmas, a feast where even the atheist eats Christmas cake. Shopping centers blow up "Silent Night" over their loudspeakers. Every sing-a-song writer has dedicated a poem to that mystery. There was a time when I felt uneasy or got angry at the "profanation" of Christmas...Not so anymore. I feel rather uneasy with the Pope's address at the closing ceremony of the Asian synod in India. I join the world and send you my friendship and all the old wishes of peace and good health.

We had a wet summer and...my entrance got flooded again. But I have learned from the past, and had removed all my shoes to higher regions. Fall was late, but that gave me the opportunity to enjoy a little bit the autumn colors in Hokkaido. Last October I went to the All Japan Justice & Peace Meeting in Otaru city. I worry a little about the 'All Japan Meetings'. The people attending these gatherings are the same for long years, and they are getting old like me. I wonder why working for world peace and for a more just world order doesn't become an integral part of the Japanese Catholic Church. Why don't the faces change into younger ones?

Since October I started a new missionary work. I am presiding at marriages for non Christians in a Christian liturgy. The place is a photo studio and the ceremony is held after the official pictures are taken. No catechetical instructions to prove the existence of God. I presume that they believe already in an Existence that has a special relation with Life. The fee is 15.000 yen, and is decided by the photographer. In two months I had about six weddings.

I gave my beloved motorbike away. The lucky receiver is Jude. But he has trouble! The police don't want to give him a license to ride a 400 cc. Failing one examination after another, and even he doesn't know what mistakes he makes. Santa Claus has to come to his help. Certainly, the police are making money!

I am looking for a teacher of French. Tosa Joshi Tandai (All Girls College) is the third school asking me to teach French from next April...And me hoping for my pension and some free time!

Xave Yoshikazu Tosa

From Jerry Novotny:

Greetings from Kochi!

One century ends with a Merry Christmas and another opens with a Happy New Year, both of which I hope brings much peace and happiness to each Oblate working in Korea and Japan.

The approaching new 100-year cycle has me excited and is giving me an opportunity to reflect and rethink my work and life here in Japan. For beginners, I turn 60--an entirely new experience. 36 of them will have been spent in Japan: 34 in Kochi City, 31 at Kochi University, 28 in Karate and 20 in Pro Life Ministry, not to mention the 1 year spent as a worker priest at the shipyards as a welder and fish market unloading fish. It's been a full and exciting 36 years and I thank God for each and every day.

Financially, it's going to be a rough year for Pro Life due to the weak economy, increase in prices and a significant drop in donations over the past four months. The salaries will be frozen this coming year at the University with no increases and a large decrease in all bonuses, starting this December and into the unforeseeable future. It doesn't look too good, but against all odds, we've survived the last 20 years and I have no doubt that in God's Goodness and Love, Our Lady will guide us through the next twenty. After that, I retire, go to Canada and spend the rest of my life fishing for those "biggies" in the beautiful Great Northern Lakes.

But before that happens, there's still a lot of work left to be done. We see strong forces in society working to create a pure permissive society controlled solely by man. Values, principles, dignity of life, God, religion--ingredients of the "Culture of Life"--are no longer economically functional or beneficial to society. What started with the Nazis has become the basis for the new society based on the "Culture of Death". There is a drive to eliminate the "unwanted" in society: unwanted elderly, unwanted pregnancies, unwanted deformed unborn, unwanted number 2 in the womb, unwanted sex of child, etc.

A list of few briefs on Catholic World News:

1. Elderly patients left to die in British hospitals.
2. University of Nebraska Med Center Using Aborted Children's Brain Cells for Alzheimer's Research
3. Supreme Court Blocks Partial-Birth Abortion Bans
4. FRENCH SCHOOLS TO GIVE ABORTION PILLS TO GIRLS
5. Westin Hotel Chain Charging Guests for Donation to Pro-Abortion UN Group
6. STUDENT BOOKLET ON HOMOSEXUALITY PROMOTES LIFESTYLE
7. Sex-Selection Abortions in India, Japan
8. BRITAIN EDGES TOWARD "DESIGNER BABIES" (fertility technique which involves spotting "potentially defective" embryos-- and discarding them)
9. SCOTLAND ON THE ROAD TO EUTHANASIA
10. House Approves Resolution Supporting Hearings on Selling Fetal Body Parts
11. Selling Aborted Children's Organs
12. For the first time in the history of the United States, the government is poised to endorse the deliberate destruction of human embryos in the name of scientific and medical gain.

The list continues to grow with each day, stem cell research using aborted babies (the demand is for late term aborted babies now), cloning, fetal experimentation and the latest is gene research. As CNN proudly announced last night on TV, now that scientists have mastered understanding the gene, in the next century we can become WHO we want to be and WHAT we want to be.

What are we to do? The Catholic Church teaches with unmistakable clarity that from the moment a human zygote has formed we owe it the unconditional respect that is morally due to that human being. "From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a new life is begun which is neither that of the father nor of the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already. To this perpetual evidence ... modern genetic science brings valuable confirmation. It has demonstrated that, from the first instant, the program is

fixed as to what this living being will be: a man, this individual man with his characteristic aspects already well determined. Right from fertilization is begun the adventure of a human life, and each of its great capacities requires time ...to find its place and to be in a position to act" (Declaration on procured Abortion, 19/4).

Note the wording that a new human life begins at fertilization. The next sentence states that a human zygote is a human individual: "In the zygote (the cell produced when the nuclei of the two gametes have fused), resulting from fertilization, the biological identity of a new human individual is already constituted."

And the new Catechism declares that a human body is human precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul (364). In other words, a human body does not begin without a human soul.

Unconcerned with decent respect for human life, in vitro fertilization, with its karma of selecting, destroying, and discarding human embryos, is now an established business world wide. Experimentation with human embryos and embryonic stem cells follows in its wake. Ironically for the Church, several notorious dissenting priests attempt to justify such action by alleging that humans are not yet people for some weeks after fertilization. Another rationalization was given by a doctor who said: "Sure, it's a human being, but we don't have to give him or her a visa."

And the fight continues for us here at Pro Life. This Christmas, the birth of a child is proclaimed as joyful news. The source of this great joy is the little child Jesus. This also is seen as the foundation of joy at every child born into the world. Later on in life, Jesus says, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." It is precisely in this "life" that all aspects and stages of human life achieve their full significance. Here at Pro Life we ask for your prayers and support.

Looking forward to seeing everyone down in Kochi on the 27th.

Merry Christmas!
Jerry Novotny, omi

The News from Naruto

We were happy to welcome Bro. Howard Tatel to our community. Brother is here for an experience in our Kindergarten. He sure got it from the very first day. One of our teachers was nursing her extremely sick mother and wham!!! Brother found himself in a class of three year olds! He did very well and is very popular with the children.

By popular demand, Fr. John Mahoney will be the Santa Clause at the kindergarten Christmas show. Last year he "flew in by jet" and tap-danced to the delight of the children. This year his appearance has all the makings of a three dimensional wide screen production!

Next year we will begin the Montessori Method here in Naruto. Miss Hirowatari from our kindergarten in Koga will help us in this endeavor.

George Santayana (philosopher & poet) wrote "To be brief is almost a condition of being inspired". I will be brief:

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Ange, omi

For John, this year has been a year of celebration of his first vows. The actual date was September 8th. 1949. The first celebration was held in March during our spring meeting at the Passionist Retreat house. On the day of celebration, he was the principal celebrant at the community Mass. John was pleased to renew his vows in the presence of the Oblates of Japan and Korea. He was presented with a Memorial Plaque by the Provincial, Fr. Wenceslaus Laguidao. The vow formula which is engraved on the plaque is now standing before his Oblate cross and a statue of St. Eugene. This is for him a powerful reminder of what he is and what he should strive to be.

The second celebration, the official Oblate celebration was held in Hudson New Hampshire. This was a joint celebration of the North East and South East areas of the new American Province. The gathering of Oblates from different provinces involved in many diverse ministries had come together to renew their vows as Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the vows which unite us all in a worldwide community of Mary's Oblates. During his time in the States there were several family celebrations as well. It was a time for him to recall the support of his family through the years. It was also a time to pray that one of his nephews would be called to the Oblates, maybe his young nephew who was baptized John Kenney.

Now John is a member of the Oblate Naruto Community. The parishioners of the Oblate Churches in Naruto, Anan and Tokushima gathered together in the Tokushima Church on December 6th. to celebrate with Fr. John his 50 years of vows. After the parish Mass on Sunday there was a very enjoyable party during which many parishioners who have known Fr. John through the years recalled the many experiences that they enjoyed together during the years he worked in the Tokushima District. He in turn recalled the steps in his life that had brought him to the Oblates and to being an Oblate missionary in Japan.

Merry Christmas and many blessings as we look forward to sharing our Christmas blessings with Fr. General.

JKM

From Tom Maher:

IN TRIBUTE TO OUR MARTHAS

Sad to say it's not too often that I get a good belly laugh, but it happened during the last retreat in the smoking corner. We were talking about aging and its disadvantages and I laughed heartily at myself as some of the senior members of our international community passed by. Work horses, despite aging, would be one way to describe them. I exclude myself as I am 39 forever.

A lot of factors come into play to explain this longevity. God's gift, of course. But from my own experience I know that God works through people. And one factor that has kept us going to a senior age has been our cooks, housekeepers or whatever title of respect you want to give them. Maybe at times they were underpaid or, more seldom, overpaid; but that is not the point. They are and were dedicated unique people, who worked long hours for our health and welfare, whether we thought so or not.

I like the joke about the housekeeper who came over to the church one morning and announced: "Father is sick, and I'm not feeling so well either, so there will be no Mass this morning."

Recently a very dedicated "Good Shepherdess" left our service and I would like to recall a few of the many, many untold things which this hardworking person did for the Oblates.

One of our Fathers would come in late Sunday evening for the monthly retreat on Monday. After working, serving and cleaning up for those who had come on time she would always remain to see that he had a good dinner too. She knew, I felt, that he came the furthest, and cooked for himself at his mission.

One hot summer evening a lady died suddenly from lung cancer in the meeting room for 'self help' groups. There was blood - lots of it - around her. She had come early to open the room and make coffee. The next person to come into the room - a man - ran out when he saw the mess. He called this dedicated person, who helped call the police, inform her son etc. Then, without being asked, she went for a bucket and soap, and cleaned up the mess - a poor expression for human blood -. It was just part - an unexpected part - of an other day's work. To my knowledge she has never mentioned this to anyone.

She had the respect of all the members of the 'self help' groups, who knew she meant business when she would say something to them about smoking, cleaning up etc. The group members are anonymous but she could hardly help knowing them. Many are single, and on welfare. She was thoughtful enough to bring the group chocolate on Valentine's Day - and on the way back to the rectory she fell and hurt herself. Often in pain from the many little illnesses we all suffer she would seldom take a day off. And there was always an envelope for me on a birthday or when leaving for the U.S. on vacation, not to mention the cakes or food she herself bought for the community on a festive occasion.

So, I write this in tribute to her and to the many Marthas who have worked for the Oblates and are still working for us. Thank you; God bless you, and Merry Christmas wherever you are.

And Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the Oblates - wherever you are.

Tom Maher, O.M.I.

From Lei:

1999 December 25. The last Christmas of this millennium and the opening of the Holy Year. I wish and pray that on this special Christmas and during the New Year the blessing of the Lord and the working of the Holy Spirit be upon you in a very special way.

On the first of February 1999 the emergency telephone Kokoro daiaru (the dial of the heart) became Inochi no Denwa (Life Line). 33 applicants started the one year training course.

It all began in Sydney, Australia, in 1963, when Sydney's Life Line was opened with the announcement "Help is as close as the telephone". The first Life Line center in Japan was Tokyo, in 1971. Since then about fifty centers are spread all over Japan.

Next year the Kochi Volunteer Bureau will celebrate its 25th anniversary, the oldest of its kind in Kochi Prefecture.

Last year we became a member of an organisation of Prefectural Police "How to help the victims of a crime".

P.E.T. (Parents Effectiveness Training) exists 20 years next year. During this time more than 55 groups have participated in the program. When I was asked to start the course I wasn't too enthusiastic about the course myself. But seeing the interest and the eagerness of the parents, compared with the general trend in society, I became convinced of the importance of the course. Half of the parents take part more than once. The purpose of the course is to learn how to have a healthy and creative relation with one's children, in other words, how to communicate with the children.

Aonami (Blue Wave) was 10 years young on December 8. Aonami is a place where people come and go. During these years having had the occasion to see and meet different types of people, with different experiences, I have the impression that caring for people can be difficult, but from the other side believing that there are people who care seems to be more difficult still. After hearing what some of those people have gone through it isn't surprising at all that they are hesitant to believe that somebody does care.

I hope that the visit of the Superior General will be an inspiration and an incentive for the coming year.

I wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Holy Year.

Lei Simons, O.M.I.

From John IWO:

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

I wish to give many thanks to God and to all of you for the graces I have received during this year. I was able to go through this year without any problems. In May I could visit our Korean mission, and in October I went to our Australian and New Zealand missions.

I was very much impressed by them, especially at the Massey Church in New Zealand. Sunday Mass was attended by many Oceanians, from Samoa, Tonga a.o. I had expected immigrants from Europe, but there were Indonesians, Vietnamese, Koreans, Africans and Oceanians.

I will pray that the New Year may become a glorious year for God and for all of us.

Welcome to the year 2000!

Fr. John IWO, O.M.I.

From Brad Rozairo:

As 1999 comes to an end I re-call some of the events that took place this year. For me the biggest one was the 50th anniversary of Itami church, which was held on the 29th of april. Thanks to the beautiful weather and, of course for your presence on that day.

My parishioners and I are getting ready to celebrate the birth of our Lord. I think, after more than ten years we will have Mid Night Mass here in Itami and then X'mas party. Our Superior General Rev. Fr. Wilhelm Steckling will join the Eucharistic Celebration on 26th Sunday. We are very happy to have him with us. A very simple Welcome Ceremony is being planned.

May the "Good News" of Christmas fill your heart with JOY and PEACE to share with one another, to give to all you meet and to light the lives of others every day of the New Year. Hope to see you all in Kochi.

Merry Christmas and a Grace-filled New Year.

Brad,
Itami.

From Dick Harr:

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ONE & ALL:

I pray for each and ask God to bless our lives and efforts on His behalf. This Christmas in Aki will see a happy change. Both seminarians, Horiuchi Akio & Furukawa Kenichi will return from Australia on the 13th of December, and will be present for our Christmas celebrations. Their presence will make a big difference, I'm sure. We've been struggling along without music accompaniment and my discordant efforts. Also, as one big plus, we'll have decent liturgy for 2 Christmases and all those celebrations in-between. These 2 will bring many graces to this parish community.

We're facing a brand new century and, for sure, there'll be much new about it. We have a young couple taking instructions now, and all indications point to their joining our community this coming year. It'll be a great joy to welcome new members into the parish. Right now, Sunday attendance at Mass is roughly 4 to 5. I'm looking forward to many graces from Our Lord.

A happy New Year to each of you. Let's keep each other in daily Masses.

Dick Harr, OMI

BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to:

December

24 Mike YAMASAKI

January

2 Ed WILLIAMS
22 Ray BOURGOIN
29 Dick HARR

February

13 Maurizio GIORGANNI
15 Len INUI
21 Vincenzo BORDO

March

1 Jerry NOVOTNY
20 Jerry VILLAS
23 Bill MAHER

ORDINATIONS

Happy Anniversary to:

February

15 James JEYACHANDRAN

22 Xave Yoshikazu TOSA

March

19 Ray BOURGOIN
27 Wency LAGUIDAO
29 Leo KAWAGUCHI

ANNIVERSARY of the DEATH of our MISSION's FOUNDING FATHERS

2 February Charles McBENNETT

12 March Leonard ROBITAILLE

PRAYERS

remain in order for the intentions that have been brought to your attention before, our deceased near of kin, our ailing or/and aging beloved, all those that count on our prayers out of gratitude or of justice.

EVER VALID REMINDERS

Check - expiration date of Visa, Alien Registration, Driver's License, Health Insurance Certificate, Reduction Certificates for the Aged, etc.

Editor's Repeated Request

The next issue is scheduled for March 21. Could I prevail on you to have your texts in by March 10, and may I again implore ALL of you to reread and CORRECT your texts so that I am not obliged to retype AND correct them? May I also ask you to leave a margin of at least one inch from the top and bottom (A4 size pages, please!), and the width of the text no more than 17 cm. (6³/₄ in.)? Please, also avoid wide spaces between lines, or jumping a line between paragraphs. May I once again ask NOT to send articles by Fax, or even to include Thermal paper in an envelope? By being handled in the mail they easily get smudged.