



# OMI INFORMATION

## JAPAN

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

1986

### *A Blessed Christmas and A Prosperous New Year*

While in Rome I wrote to you about some of the events of the Chapter. I am now back in Kochi and my work as your delegate to the Chapter is in a sense just beginning. These words from Fr. Zago's sermon at the Chapter's closing Mass express most clearly why I say this. *We must pass on and make known our Chapter experience to our Oblate brothers; even more, we must be the ones who carry out the Chapter's directives, we must be animators for a missionary commitment that is ever more dynamic and according to the scope of our charism.*

The Chapter was an experience that I wish that each one could have had. I am most grateful that I had the experience. I am grateful to Mike who looked after the Provincial office while I was away. I am grateful to Wency for deciphering and sending out my letters. I am extremely grateful to Tom who took care of the parish in my absence. Finally I am, of course, grateful to each one of you for your prayers for me and for the Chapter. If the Chapter was a success and if my contributions to it have any value I am sure it is because of those prayers.

In my letters from Rome I told you about the first purpose of the Chapter that is the election of the new Father General and his Council. The second half of the Chapter was devoted to the second purpose of the Chapter. The discussion and study of the theme of the Chapter. *The Oblate Mission in the World of Today.*

As a first step to addressing the issue the capitulars were broken into about ten small groups in order to surface the major challenges that we face in the world today. Of course there were many but after discussion and discernment the Capitulars in general assemble surfaced the following six as major challenges:

- a mission to the Poor integrating Ministry of Justice;
- a mission in a world that is largely secularized;
- a mission requiring inculturation;
- a mission in collaboration with the laity;
- a mission realized within the Church;
- a mission in apostolic community.

As we realized that all these challenges would have consequences for our formation and vocation ministry we decided to make this a seventh issue.

Seven Commissions were formed to study these challenges and to discern how the Oblate missionary could best meet them today. We were able to choose the Commission that we desired to join. I chose to be on the Commission of Secularization. Each Commission produced a paper or document on its challenge. The format of these is generally in four parts. 1. Introduction of the challenge. 2. Gospel and Oblate values. 3. Stands of the General Chapter. 4. Recommendations.

Each document was discussed, prayed over and rewritten many times in the Commissions. Each document was also presented to the entire capitular body for open discussion, recommendation and amendment. On the last days the final texts were voted on by the Chapter. This final text will be edited by the editing committee and then after it is translated into French and English and printed it will be sent to us.

Perhaps you are wondering about the length of the text. As I mentioned above there are seven documents in the final draft approved by the chapter plus an introduction and conclusion. The documents vary in length from 3 to 6 typewritten A4 pages.

In the final paragraph of Father General's Homily at Chapter's closing Mass Fr. Zago sent us all a message of hope. Now let us forth! We have to take up our mission with humility and with confidence. Indeed, it is the Risen Christ who sends us out: All power is given to me...I am with you until the end of the world. Christ's presence and activity continues: he goes before us, he walks with us. We are called to be the Saviour's co-workers, the co-redeemers of the human man race (1818 Rules) just like the Apostles, like Mary and with the protection of the same.

I think it would not be a mistake to call this 31 General Chapter a Chapter of Hope. During the triduum of prayer at the beginning of the Chapter the message of hope was very strong. In the conversation at meals, and in the rec hall as well at that the meetings of the groups there was for me always a feeling of hope among the Oblates gathered in Chapter. A feeling of hope that they brought with them to the Chapter from their Provinces and Missions.

Fr Jette in his report on the State of the Congregation said it all perfectly. We have not yet come out of the difficult era, even though the tangible signs of recovery are clearly evident. The six years that lie ahead will probably be the hardest in terms of missionary commitments. Everything indicates, however, that they will be filled with a new spirit that is more optimistic. An attitude of hope, the will to live and legitimate pride in being an Oblate have become active forces in most Provinces. This more optimistic outlook is clearly manifest in the whole collection of reports sent in by the Provinces: things are moving and something is being done, there is a new thrust in nearly every domain--in missionary commitment, community life, prayer, vocations...It is, indeed only a beginning but it does exist and bears all the beauty of hope.



Let us remember each other when we celebrate Mass on Christmas. May we share with each other the joy of God becoming man in Jesus. *A Blessed Christmas and A Prosperous 1987 to all.*

John K. Mahoney, OMI  
Provincial

VARIA:

I have received a word from Rome that Jose DE FRUYT has received an obedience to the Belgium North Province. Jose received his obedience from Father General on October 10.

While I was in Rome Jose sent a letter to Fr. Vervust, the Provincial of Belgium North and myself. In the letter, he informed of us that after prayer and consultation he felt that he could best fulfill his Oblate vocation by working in Belgium. In his letter, Jose also expressed his gratitude to the Oblates in Japan and also assured me of his continued interest and prayers for the men and the mission in Japan.

I hope and pray that Jose will have a most fruitful and happy ministry in Belgium. I am sure that he will be remembered by us in our prayers. As he is still and always will be part of us I will send him our Newsletter so he can keep informed. We also look forward to hearing from him whenever he wants to share his work with us.

*Congratulations!* to Jack DEELY for having been elevated as Assistant Professor at Sophia University. With this promotion, Jack becomes a fulltime member of the faculty of the university. He teaches Translation and Educational Reform.

Jack is still very much involved with the ministry to the hard of hearing. He will be in Hong Kong for the *Asian-Pacific Conference on Deaf Education*, December 4-13.

The ministry with the *Japayuki-san* (mostly migrant Filipino workers in Japan) keeps Wency LAGUIDAO busy. Wency is working for the *Commission for International Cooperation* an arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Japan which handles problems related to foreigners living in Japan. He has promised to share with us in the near future his views about his new involvement. In the meantime, he has written a 5-page report on *The Problems Concerning the Filipino Migrant Workers in Japan* in connection with the recent visit of the Philippine president. You can ask him for a copy of the said report.

Our 3 seminarians will spend their Christmas at different parishes (Anan, Nakamura and Hikarigaoka). I am also happy to announce that another young man will start his postulancy in January. He is Mr. Yagi who has been working

with Lee SIMONS at the Volunteer Bureau. Hopefully, Mr. Yagi and another postulant, Mr. Hashimoto will start their novitiate year in March.

Ray BOURGOIN would like to thank the members of the Province for their prayers on the occasion of his parents Golden Wedding Anniversary. Ray says the family and friends had a meaningful celebration, with the Eucharist and buffet.

Copies of a new book *Indian Bishop of the West*, the life of Vital Justin Grandin, OMI by Frank J. Dolphin are available at the Provincial Office. If you want a copy, please let me know.

December birthday celebrant: Mike YAMAZAKI (Dec. 24th).  
*Happy Christmas Birthday Mike!*



Cartoon through the courtesy of  
Fr. Des O'Donnell, OMI



# The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

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August 12, 1986

My dear fellow Oblates,

In April of 1985 you received a letter from the the Follow - Through committee outlining a three step Discernment Process which was to terminate in a Discernment of the Province at the Congress in March of 1986. For various reasons the timetable set up by the Committee was not met. As a result in 1986 we had a Congress on Justice and Peace with Bishop Sooma. During that Congress on the evening of April 1 we spent some time discussing the next step. There seemed to be two desires expressed. One that we have another input meeting and two that we continue the evaluation or discernment process.

On July 15 the F-T Committee met in Itami. At that meeting it recommended that we have another input meeting at our Congress in March of 1987. Fr. Keizo Yamada S.J. was invited to be the speaker at the Congress. He was requested to speak about the problem of the Poor in Japan. He accepted the invitation. The dates scheduled for the 1987 Congress are from March 24 to 26.

On July 8 I wrote to Jim Sullivan and sent him a copy of *Personal Discernment Regarding My Work In Relation to Criteria #2, #4 and #6*. I told him we were meeting in Itami on July 15 and asked his advise and comments. My letter reached Jim on July 15. He called and made some recommendations for improving the Personal Discernment. The F-T Committee discussed these recommendation and decided to include them in a new guideline for Personal Discernment. Jim wrote these recommendations in a letter to me and also suggested that we include discernment on Criteria #5. He wrote that he thinks it important the the laity also be involved as Catholics in the Oblate living of Criteria #2, #4 and #6. I typed up the enclosed *Personal Discernment -- preparation for Province Discernment Congress of March 22-24 1988*. At a meeting of the Council on August 11 this new guideline for Personal Discernment was approved as well as a timetable to enable us to be ready for the 1988 Congress.

If you will look at the enclosed *Personal Discernment Preparation for the Province Discernment Congress of March 22-24 1988* you will notice that there are numbers from 1 to 5 on the left. Number 1 asks you to write a brief history. We would like to have this sent to the Provincial office by

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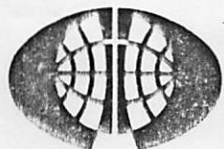
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December 1 1986. As these histories will be compiled and sent to each one it is requested you use A4 size paper. Numbers 2-5 are the matter for your personal discernment. We would appreciate your sending this material to the Provincial Office by March 1, 1987. This material will be sent to the members of the team who will discern with you in the Team Discernment Step. The Team will consist of the Provincial, a man of your choice, and a man chosen by the Provincial. The Team Discernment Step would be done from April 1 1987 till the end of that year.

At the meeting in Itami the members of the F-T committee decided to invite Fr. Jim Sullivan to be with us at the Congress in 1988. Jim in his letter to me accepted that invitation.

I am sorry that you have had to read through this long letter but I thought it was necessary that everyone know where we are going. I feel that this Discernment -Personal, Team and Province is extremely important for each one of us and for our Oblate Mission in Japan not only for today but for the future.

A number of the men coming to the end of their second term and are due to be changed. Others have been in places for rather long periods of time would like a change. However I feel that the Discernment of our works can best be done by men who have had some years of experience in the work, parish or ministry. Therefore after consulting with the Council have decided not to make changes until after the Congress in 1988.

When you receive this letter I shall be on my way to the Chapter. I ask each of you to prayer for the success of this Chapter. Especially that we will be able to find the best man to lead the Congregation in the coming years.

Fraternally yours in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

*John Kenney Mahoney, O.M.I.*  
John Kenney Mahoney, O. M. I.  
Provincial