



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

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

March 29, 1990

My brother Oblates,

There are but two weeks of Lent remaining. May it be a time of growth and grace for all of us. I have found that the Way of the Cross in the OMI Prayer Book is an excellent way to relate the Suffering of Christ to our Oblate life. "Lord Jesus, Christ and Savoir, we have enriched our Oblate Charism through contemplating your Paschal Ministry; we thank you for having united us so closely to yourself." These words are from the Concluding Prayer.

During these weeks the contemplation of the Cross can unite us closely with Blessed Eugene. He experienced his personal conversion at the foot of the Cross on Good Friday, March 27, 1807 when God effected in him the soul rending realization the Jesus loved him personally and died for him as an individual.

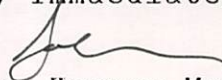
In this same experience Eugene realized that Jesus loves all men and every man in this same way and died for each individual. The fact that the people did not know this moved Blessed Eugene to sacrifice everything in order to teach all men of the love of Jesus.

It is men with this same spirit he wanted as Oblates. "Men filled with zeal, ready to sacrifice goods, talents, ease, self, even their life, for the love of Jesus Christ, the service of the Church and the sanctification of their brethen." (Preface)

As we contemplate Jesus on the Cross during these day may He fill each one of us with the experience of His love and also this same zeal for the salvation of all; especially the weak, the suffering, the abandonedd.

Just as we share with Christ in his suffering during these last days of Lent may each one of us experience with Him the joy of Easter and the glory of His Resurrection.

Fraternally in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,


Fr. John Kenney Mahoney, O. M. I.

REPORT ON MARCH COUNCIL MEETING

The Council met in Itami on March 26. The first item on the agenda was the answers to the questionnaire in preparation of the InterCapitular Meeting. After a few corrections the final draft was approved. I am including this report in the Newsletter. Thank you for your contributions and help in preparing this report.

The Council then read the answers to the questionnaire that you filled out at the end of our Spring Meeting. Our main interest was your comments on the dates of the meeting. The Congress on the Kindergarden Apostolate will be held in 1991. We want to have it at a time when all can attend. In order to do this Bert Silver who is Chairman of the Kindergarten Director's Committee will be sending you a list of possible dates.

You will note in the Report for the InterCapitular Meeting that it was felt that a better method for considering the document Missionaries in Today's World is needed. This was discussed at the Council Meeting and a study program approved. The District Coordinators will be informed of this and be in contact with you.

I will be leaving for the InterCapitular Meeting on April 24th in my absence Michael Yamasaki will be Acting Provincial.

INTERCAPITULAR MEETING REPORT

Questionnaire:

1. What concrete Steps have been taken in your Province to increase AWARENESS AND REFLECTION on the document "Missionaries in Today's World"?

We have been discussing Missionaries in Today's World at our District Meetings using the questions prepared by Fr. Des O'Donnell.

In the Provincial Newsletter and other letters and in talks to the Fathers and Brothers MTW was often mentioned as a means to develop awareness and encourage interest.

At several of our annual meetings we have had Justice and Peace as the theme. Bishop Soma, Chairman of the Department for Justice and Peace of the Bishops' Committee was the speaker in 1987. Fr. Honda, OFM was the speaker or input person in 1990. In March of 1989 Bishop Mori was the input person for a meeting on Inculturation into Japanese Society.

2. Have any NEW INITIATIVES been taken in your Province

as a result of MTW.

In order to foster a better understanding of Oblate Community we had the Oblate Charism Retreat in September of 1989.

For the same reason the Districts were realigned and fuller participation was encouraged. The schedule of the day was also improved to give more time for community prayer, sharing and recreation.

The structure and membership of the Formation Team was changed in order to have fuller participation of the members of the Team in the Formation Program.

There was also a greater emphasis on On-going Formation. In the past two years two of the members of the Formation Team have had a sabbatical year for special study in the field of Formation. Another Father has been given financial support in order to make studies concerning the problem of Chemical Dependency.

Special support has also been given to Fr. Laguidao who was appointed National Chaplain for the Filipino Migrant Workers and to Fr. Novotny who is involved in the Right to Life Movement. Fr. Simons asked and received encouragement and cooperation from the Province for his newest project, a home for battered women.

The Province is now in the midst of meetings of the men in the Pastoral Apostolate to discern an Oblate Pastoral for Japan. In the same way those involved in the Kindergarden Apostolate are meeting to discern the role of this Apostolate in present day Japan.

Whether these things can be called NEW INITIATIVES TAKEN AS A RESULT OF MTW is problematical but I do feel that the awareness created by MTW has had some influence.

3. What remains to be done regarding MTW in your Province? awareness? initiative?

There is the need for continued reading and discussion. But a discussion or sharing which looks more concretely at ways the recommendations can be actualized in our various ministries and our Oblate life. In order to achieve this the future discussions on MTW should have a connection with our Mission Statement, our Criteria, the recommendations of the 1988 Mission Congress as well as the directives of the Bishops Committee of Japan and the local hierarchy.

There is a need to reassess our approach to the method in which we have studied and discussed the MTW. A very concrete study plan should be prepared. It should provide

an overview of the entire text as well as a step by step guidelines for study and discussion to be used at our monthly district meetings during a one year period. In order to have a Province wide sharing notes of the discussions in each district should be made and distributed to the other districts.

For example, perhaps, the basic approach should be: What does MTW on Mission, Justice and Peace say to us Missionaries in Japan? What recommendations can we make for our Province to act upon?

Rather than looking only for new initiatives we could also ask ourselves how can we make present apostolates (old initiatives ?) more in keeping with the spirit of MTW.

4. What has been the OVERALL IMPACT of the General Chapter event and its final Document, "MTW", on the life and mission of your Province?

The General Chapter Event of course includes the election of a new Superior General and General Consultors as well as the Chapter Document. I do not think you can speak of impact accurately unless the two are kept in mind. If there is impact in the Region and the Province (and I believe there is) I feel that it is because of the visits of Father General and other Consultors to the Regions and Provinces. Another contributing factor to this impact is Father General's letters to the Congregation which have as it were put life into the document and animated the men to make the Green Book a sort of guide for Apostolic action for today's Japan, or Sri Lanka or the Asia/Oceania Region.

In the words of some of the Fathers MTW has had the following impact. MTW helped them realize that Oblates want to live and work in the present world. The Oblates are alive. There is a new vitality more connected with society. In Japan the sense of Community awareness has grown. Before we were not really one but now we are helping each other and joining each other.

5. How could the Congregation benefit more from MTW in the two pre-Chapter years? What should be done?

When a group of the Fathers considered this question they all agreed two years is not enough time. By this I think they meant that it will take a number of years for the action that has taken place as well as future actions taken on the basis of MTW to bear measurable fruit. There was also the thought that too many meeting, too much discussion can interfere with our doing our assigned work. More than discussion and study(although they are necessary) the most important thing is to help each individual Oblate become more aware that MTW is for him and for his apostolic ministry and life. It is meant to

be a help and a guideline for Oblate action and life.

Perhaps a report drawn up from the Inter capitular Reports that would show the concrete results that have already been achieved in the various Provinces and Delegations as the result of the Chapter document as well as the initiatives taken to achieve these results could inspire and challenge all to carry on in this important renewal.

6. Have you any suggestions on how we might reflect together on "MTW" during the Inter capitular Meeting?

To reflect in small groups on the reports of each Province. This sharing of the successes and failures should give us many indications for action in the Provinces in the future. It might also surface some important point that should be considered at the next chapter. This will also assure continuity between the Chapters. One topic that should certainly be reflected upon is Mission and Community.

The dynamics of this reflection should be determined by the team appointed by the General. Mutual area, mutual problems and language should determine the grouping. Otherwise those attending may be at a loss as to how to implement decisions.

7. What other matters would you like to have discussed at this meeting?

We should review the roll of animation on the part of the General Administration. The most important thing that happened in Japan during the past year was the visit of Father General and some other members of the General Council. I am sure there are other Oblates in the world that could be "roving" animators. Asia is off the beaten path and we need this type of animation. The Provincials, I am sure are doing an excellent job but the Provincial is only one Oblate. Others should be given the opportunity of coming to Japan and other Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Delegations in Asia/Oceania Region.

Another question that should be discussed is the need to consider MTW in the context of the Diocese and the local church. This could be done by consideration of Chapter V Mission within the Church of MTW.

PROVINCE MEETING 1990 REPORT BY ANGELO SIANI, O.M.I.

March 12-14 the members of the Japanese Province met in Kochi for an input meeting on Justice and Peace. Tosa Yoshikazu, O.M.I. was the chairperson. Our guest speaker was Fr. Tetsurou Honda, OFM.

The call of the Vatican Council to renewal has generated

the development of many movements in the Church. Among them is the renewed thrust in the ministry for Justice and Peace. The growing number of priests and religious participating in this ministry have in varying degrees, undergone a "conversion experience" and this has contributed greatly to the increase and very conscious interest for Justice and Peace in the Church's life and particularly in Religious life.

Fr. Honda is an outstanding figure in this ministry for Justice and Peace. I found his talks not only of great interest but very challenging.

Fr. Honda stressed three points in his talks: metanoia, option for the poor and Justice and Peace.

1) Metanoia or compassion - "...it is compassion, this "suffering with" those who are harassed and helpless in society which is the motive force, the power behind evangelization. This personally felt compassion alone is what gives rise to the decision to share in the Work of the Lord. No longer is it merely a professional duty, or obedience to a command, or idle lip-service. It is, too, a sharing in the pain of Jesus, of God. Looked at in this way, sharing pain is also a gift from God. But it is a gift from God which can hardly be enjoyed by those who do not experience the pain and suffering of ordinary people, and who do not take their side. ...Cooperating in this work of salvation, is the inner heart of evangelization."

2) Option for the Poor - "God began His work of salvation because of His Compassion for the suffering and pain of humankind. The work of salvation continues by His being together with, His walking with, the oppressed. We see this pattern quite clearly in the life of Jesus. Jesus walked with the sick, those troubled by evil spirits, tax collectors and prostitutes who were looked upon as sinners, with the poor. And he sent His disciples as co-workers in His work of salvation to the lost sheep, the harassed and the helpless".

Fr. Honda went on to explain the passage in Leviticus 19: 9-18, in which he tells us that, "This passage tells us in concrete terms what holiness is, what it is to be like God. The central point is to be in solidarity with the poor, with those who are in a weak position in society. It is all summed up in the phrase Love your neighbor as yourself."

3) Justice and Peace - "The usual viewpoint that justice and judgement are best left to God as no human being can truly be objective and neutral is contrary to the value system of the Good News. Neither justice nor judgement can be achieved if there is no compassion for the suffering and pain of the oppressed."

"We should learn from the Lord who was together with the poor, the oppressed and the victimized people in society. God himself is calling us to take the same stand, and to cooperate with Him in His work of salvation."

The half day break with Lunch at "Te" Beach and a quiet hour at "Kangaeru no Ie" was a new addition. In this informal atmosphere the Brothers gave short reports about their Apostolic experiences working with the poor during the Spring break. This experience was good not only because it brought them in contact with the poor but also because it provided a challenge to their own values and ways of thinking.

The finest part of Fr. Honda's talks was his explanation of the scriptures which opened our hearts and minds to the issues of peace and justice in salvation history.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Birthdays

April 1 Leo Kawaguchi
17 Gerard Stevens
17 Jack Deely
22 Wency Laguidao

May 29 Tom Maher

Ordinations

April 4 Jerry Novotny
11 John Deely
26 Bill Maher
29 Fran Hahn

June 2 Dick Harr
7 Ed Williams
14 Len Inui
John Iwo
24 Mike Yamasaki

May 30 Tom Maher
John Mahoney
Bert Silver
31 Ange Siani

Ange Siani celebrates his 25 Anniversary this year. He will participate in the Jubilee Celebration at the Oblate College in Washington, D.C. on June 1 and 2. There will be a Mass of Thanksgiving in his home parish on June 10.

He will return in time to attend A/O Region Formation Meeting in Manila, June 25-30.

Xave Tosa will be going to the A/O Region Justice and Peace Meeting in Kandy, Sri Lanka, June 18-23.

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR OBLATE VOCATIONS BETWEEN MAY 21 THE FEAST OF BLESSED EUGENE DEMAZENOD AND MAY 29 THE FEAST OF BLESSED JOSEPH GERARD.

GENERAL REPORT ON THE HOYA HOUSE

We moved to HOYA in April 1972.

At the time it was home to the scholastics who were going to the Theology Department of Sophia University in Shakuji. Part of their formation included involvement in the local parish, as well as running a little "juku" for English, Science and Mathematics, (a carry over from Sekimachi days). One Oblate was in charge of their formation. Three scholastics went through in this way.

It also served as a base community to return to on weekends and holidays for those Oblates who studied the Japanese language in the Tokyo area (Roppongi/Kamakura) at that time, with daily lodging at their language school.

Besides the formation of the younger Oblates (which naturally included monthly meetings with other formators of other societies) the men stationed there through the years were involved in various ministries.

The men were involved mostly with Youth Apostolate which many times took the form of teaching languages but not only that.

For example:

- Dick Bonang, a number of years at Jochi: English, Japanese History and Japanese Culture / bible group in nearby parish

- Ray Bourgois, 4 years Shirayuri university: French/English

Conv. / advisor to the French and English Drama Clubs

4 years Junshin High School: English Conv. and Comp. / advisor and moderator to the English, Braille and Drama Clubs.

1 year Junshin Middle School: English Conv.

1 year Junshin Junior College: Pre-catechetics.

This school work includes presiding at liturgical functions and activities a few times a year, the gamut of school activities as well as contact with many former students through the years, for counselling, for weddings and other get-togethers.

Otherwise teaching French and English to kids thru adults at the above-mentioned JUKU and elsewhere over the years / editing manuscripts of translation.

Another Youth Apostolate was involvement in CHOICE. This is a program for youths of 20-30 which enables them to choose their way in life through marriage, the religious life, the priesthood or simply as a non-married person. Also includes making a conscious choice to be involved in activities in the Church and in Society. It is MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER sponsored. This involvement spans 9 years. Includes follow-up communities.

Another Youth Apostolate was involvement in ST JOSEPH ORPHANAGE. The kids are 2-18. Besides helping with English homework the work included playing with the kids, Catechetical formation, counselling the workers. Contact with this orphanage has been on-going even when we did not directly minister there, in the form of weddings, counselling, after care.

Involvement with married adults in MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER which centers on the couple relationship and its involvement as a couple in Church and Society apostolate for the past 11 years. Includes follow-up communities.

Occasional involvement in local parish and convent.

Finally, since the Fall of 1982 big involvement in translating

OMI material from English/French/Italian into Japanese. Includes among others, the OMI CCRR of 1982, the OMI Mission Vision for Japan, some excerpts of Father Jetté's Letters to the OMI, The General Chapter's Missionaries in Today's World, Over 250 letters of the Founder from Selected Letters, the booklet of Fr Severo on Father Gérard, etc.

- John Deely, 12 years Sophia University: English and Translation / advisor to the students Sign Language Club / member of the Students Affairs Committee.

Teaching English to kids thru adults' classes in the above-mentioned JUKU, in different companies as well as at an Interpreter's Training School / teaching Japanese Sign Language at a local High School.

18 years as a staff member at a Vocational Training Center for the Disabled: teaching English, conducting discussions on values in Japanese Literature, on life, on rehabilitation services, on comparative cultural studies, and discussions on being [disabled but not unabled], etc. / translating literature on rehabilitation services and education of the disabled / joint translation of [Montessori and the Special Child] / committee member of two [Good will Exchange Programs between Japanese and American Disabled Youth] and narrator of the film made of the exchange programs.

12 years involvement in Sign Language Studies and Deaf Education / signed conferences etc.

Has just finished first year at Tsukuba Technical College for the Deaf, a government run institution.

10 years involvement with Deaf Catholics / signed Masses, Retreats etc.



OMI INFORMATION

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

August 1990

My Brother Oblates,

This letter will give you a report on the Oblate Mission in Korea. I visited Vincenzo Bordo and Mauro Concardi last month, from June 20 to 23.

I left Osaka on a beautiful clear summer day. The pilot announced that it was raining in Seoul. It was back into the rainy season for me as it rained almost all the time I was there. It seems Seoul was having an extended rainy season.

Vincenzo and Mauro met me at the airport both looked healthy and happy.

We arrived at the Franciscan Friary where they are staying just in time for lunch. Much to my surprise there were pizza pies at the places where we were to sit. It seems the cooks prepare this or Italian spaghetti now and then as a special kindness to our Fathers. It was apparent from this and many other signs, as well as from conversation with some of the members of the Franciscan Community that Vincenzo and Mauro are well liked.

They in turn feel quite at home with these kind Franciscans. They join them for an occasional soccer match and other recreation. The Brothers and Seminarians are most patient and helpful in explaining the intricacies of the Korean language.

The Fathers have rooms on the fourth floor of the Friary. Three Dominicans, one Benedictine and one Father from Japan who are studying Korean also live there. These form a small community within the large Franciscan Community. The Franciscans have provided a rec hall on the fourth floor for the use of the group. While I was there most gathered for a while at the end of the day. Much of the discussion concern things Korean, especially the Korean language.

The language is most difficult and requires many hours of concentrated study. Our Fathers are attending Yonsei University. It is about 20 minutes by bus from the

Friary. They have four hours of class each morning and then must spend at least four hours a day in private study. The course is arranged in six ten week units. There is a determined amount of material that must be comprehended each week. Thus there is constant pressure. There are two exams during each unit, at the end of the fifth and the tenth week. The Fathers were preparing for their first text the weekend that I was there.

Fortunately Vincenzo and Mauro have made many good friends in Seoul and are able to enjoy rest and recreation with them. They are also careful to devote time to their Oblate prayer life. These things help them to be happy and optimistic despite their struggles with a most difficult language.

They mentioned to me several times how much they enjoy receiving letters from us here in Japan. They are also looking forward to meeting all of the Oblates in Japan at the time of our Retreat or else during the Christmas break.

In the meantime please keep them in your prayers. I am sure that we are in their prayers.

Fraternally in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Fr. John Kenney Mahoney, O.M.I.
Provincial, Japan.

KOREA CARDINAL KIM'S EASTER CALL FOR LOVE FOR THE POOR

In his Easter Sunday message Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou-hwan of Seoul has called on the government and the people of Korea to respond to the plight of the poor. He asked the government to "unfold the politics of hope by giving priority to solving public welfare problems."

"No matter how often we go to church, pray and fast, we cannot call ourselves Christians if we haven't got love for the poor," Cardinal Kim said. "Do we love our neighbors? Do we open our hearts to the poor? Do we share what we have? On the contrary, we take part in real estate speculation in order to increase our fortunes and we aggravate the plight of the poor by raising rents. We must cast off this death, rise up and put on new life," he said. "This society which is imprisoned in darkness must let the light shine in."

In order to do this, Cardinal Kim said: "We must tear down the walls of our ego that block us. We must open the doors of our hearts in the direction of others. We must be sincere in loving our neighbors."

The poor are undergoing terrible suffering, the cardinal said. "The society that doesn't cherish the poor but continues to push them aside so that they cannot live cannot receive blessings. The society which takes away the will to live from ordinary people cannot prosper. The society which is inhuman and against life will collapse." "And that is the road we are following," he said. "It is clear that if we do not love our brothers and sisters who are poor, we cannot be saved."

To lessen the suffering especially of the poor, welfare measures must be drawn up and every effort made to put them into practice, he stressed. "The government must truly unfold the politics of hope by giving priority to solving the public welfare problem," Cardinal Kim said.

ANGE SIANI'S REFLECTIONS ON HIS 25 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD

St Paul writes to Timothy, "I am reminding you now to fan into flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying on of hands." II Tim 1:6. This year, the 25th anniversary of my ordination brings back to memory the imposition of hands, my past ministry and the many people I have met through the years. It also provides me with the occasion to review the stepping stones which led me to becoming an Oblate and a priest.

My first contact: the first stepping stone to the Oblates came when I enrolled at Bishop Fallon High School in Buffalo, New York. The community spirit of the Oblate faculty made a strong impression on me. The friendship of Fr. Larry Griffin and the many hours talking with Fr. Dan O'Leary provided more stepping stones to the Oblates.

After graduating from High School, I entered the Oblate Juniorate in Newburgh, New York. Then followed the Novitiate and 7 years at Oblate College in Washington, D.C. My class was ordained by Bishop Francis McSorley, OMI, Bishop of Jolo, Philippines, on May 31, 1965.

My first obedience was to Japan. I arrived here on September 16, 1965. After two years of language school I was assigned to Naruto where I spent 11 happy years. My next assignments took me to Kochi and then to Nagoya.

Somehow 25 years doesn't seem that long to me. I'm sure it is due to the joy I have had working with the Japanese people and because of the warm support of the Oblate community.

In closing, I would like to quote from a sermon of Fr. Karl Rahner, SJ. I read this sermon a few days before my ordination. I find it just as inspiring now as I did then. In his closing paragraph Fr. Rahner says: But in all things strive after love, do not be ashamed of the gospel, speak the truth of Christ in season and out of season; let your lives always be clear testimony to your words; never forget what you are;..men who are the property of God. Speak the words of sacramental power, bring the bread of life and the chalice of salvation to a dark and demonic world, proclaim in voices now loud, now soft, the message of eternal joy. All your life long you will have to suffer the apparent experience of the world's being unchanged by what you do, even though you pour out into it the last drop of your heart's blood. Have confidence that your fidelity as priests of Christ will not have been in vain.

Ange, O. M. I.

Asia-Oceania
Justice + Peace Committee Meeting.
SRI LANKA.

1990 June 18-23
Ampitiya - Kandy

Message on the final day.

And the Lord said:

Live justly,

Love tenderly,

and walk humbly with your God."

We met in Kandy, Sri Lanka, as a group of Oblates from the Asia-Oceania region.

We had a common vision working for justice, peace, and human development. There was no visible polarization among us. During the meeting we recognized that our vision needed to be deepened and re-articulated in the context of Asia-Oceania.

We need help in coming to an awareness of the new realities which confront us. Among these realities we note that poverty is increasing, religion is taking on new challenges and dimensions, and other realities such as modernisation, militarization, ethnic conflicts, secularization, the marginalizing of tribal groups are becoming more and more manifest. These new realities take on a different form in the different countries of our region.

We meet at a time when violence has newly erupted in Sri Lanka. These new realities are causing serious problems within the country, which made us more acutely aware of the need to respond to them. We stand in solidarity with all those who are suffering. Because of this our Oblate brothers from Jaffna were prevented from attending this gathering.

We need to give and make a response to the new realities we face. Jesus Christ taught by His very words, deeds and life. He came to be with and for the people and challenged those structures which dehumanized all, especially the poor.

In the light of Jesus' life, we need to respond to the reality of poverty in all its different forms found in our region. As Oblates, poverty is more than a vow: it is an awareness of our need to be in solidarity with the people;

it means joining in the day to day struggle of the people; it means being open to the strength and wisdom of each member of the community.

We need to use the tools of social analysis so that like Jesus we too can challenge the oppressing structures, and together with our people, effect social change. For some, this will mean taking a radical departure from accepted forms which often entails political consequences. In spite of the potentially dangerous consequences of such a commitment, we affirm its possibility and pledge our support to these people.

To do social analysis and being aware of these new oppressive realities, we feel the need for a radical change to our own life styles. For our own credibility, and for the credibility of the Gospel incarnated in us, we are challenged to live a simple life style nourished by Kingdom values and witness, beginning already with first formation and to be constantly renewed in us.

To respond to the "religiousness" of our region, we need to discover the God who is already present in the other religions. We recognize that the Spirit of God exists, works and animates us all. We are prepared to work and pray with those of other religions, so that through such a dialogue, the spirit of Jesus will be liberated in us all.

We realize that each of ^{us} needs a personal metanoia - a change of heart and position which will lead us to live more simply the Kingdom values. For this a real and honest voluntary poverty is essential. We want more and more to be in solidarity with the poor and to discover Christ through them.

We need humility to accept that we do not have a monopoly on the Truth. There are many obstacles to overcome, even within the Church and our own communities. But this time together has made us aware that we too carry obstacles within ourselves.

We place our hope in the Spirit of God present in all God's people and manifested in Jesus Christ.

Asia-Oceania Region

Justice and Peace Committee Congress

Sri Lanka 1990 June 18th-23rd

Originally I intended to give you a rather extensive report of this meeting. It will still take some time to get the material they promised to send later, so now I'll give you some personal impressions and reflections.

1- The congress was held in the city of Kandy, about 2½ hours by car from Colombo. Located in the hills, surrounded by a green paradise, it was rather cool. There was no need for an airconditioner, (which they don't have). The meeting was very well prepared and the input was abundant. One day was set aside for a cultural exposure. We visited the most famous temple of Sri Lanka, where the tooth of Lord Budha is venerated. We visited a tea plantage and factory (150 yen for a day work), about 3000 meters high in the mountains. We had a very inspiring encounter with some grassroot people from the "villages". That same evening, a professional group gave us a splendid performance of traditional dances and music.

Before and after the congress, I had the opportunity to make a "pilgrimage" to Saint Anthony in one of the former Oblate parishes... (reflecting on the value of popular religion). This was an excellent occasion to meet people in their homes: a beer in a "rich" house and dinner with an "ordinary" family. I saw some slums, but didn't go inside. In Colombo one could see the homeless laying along the streets. And being followed by beggars was a common event. The whole country is not one slum. We passed through clean villages and hamlets. The majority of the people wore clothes what we would call in Japan "furugi". During the siesta time, I would stroll along the streets and watch the children coming from school. All wear a uniform and have still that "innocent" look, we could see 20 years ago in Japan's youth.

...and Des O'Donnell from the General House, there were delegates from Thailand, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines and Australia. The delegate from Indonesia couldn't attend. There were about 10 regular participants from Sri Lanka, but the delegates from Jaffna were absent due to the civil war in the north of Sri Lanka.

3- The theme of the congress: "Oblate Formation toward a Theology and Spirituality of Justice, Peace and Human Development". (...a rather long sentence....)

I asked the organizing committee why "human development" was added. The answer: the word 'justice' has a very social meaning, closely connected with structures, while the word 'human development' puts the accent on values rather than on rights. In the same way the expression 'social realities' and 'Asian realities' were often used during the congress, where we would say 'justice and peace'. Poverty and religion were called the two poles of the Asian reality. Of course Japan and Singapore were exceptions when speaking about poverty. Shinto religion was mentioned in the same line as other world religions, but I had my doubts about that. (I don't think one can speak about Shinto as a world religion like Islam, Buddhism etc..)

4- All delegates gave a well prepared report on the situation of their respective country. Only India had been asked to speak about their effort in the field of inculturation. In those reports the meaning of "social realities" became very clear.

Japan gave a report on "Minority groups in Japan". This report was given to Fr. Mahoney before leaving for Sri Lanka.

Besides the reports, there were six prominent speakers, each giving his input from a different angle. (I intend to share with you some of the ideas brought up by the speakers in another article). Strange enough, there was no polarization or theological conflict. It was rather a homogeneous group. I think this was due to the fact that there existed already a common spirituality based on the person of Jesus. The word 'evangelization' was not vague but defined as "Justice and Peace Evangelization"; (and so the word 'Kingdom of God').

5- The problem however was how, after the congress, we can communicate our 'Kandy experience' to the other Oblates in our respective provinces and how to realize 'solidarity in action'. I have been thinking... Can I come up with a concrete proposal for solidarity in action?

Rather than action of individuals or of Oblates interested in the "Asian realities", could it be possible that the Japanese Oblate Province as one community helps Asia in their justice and peace evangelization? Japan is rich. The O.M.I. in Japan are only poor in personnel. We live on a different scale than the other Oblates in Asia. Since we are a part of this economical superpower, we share in the guilt and responsibility towards the poorer countries of Asia. Justice and Peace Evangelization and total human development is our concern.

When I speak of the Oblate Province of Japan, I include also the people entrusted to us (the parishes, kindergartens etc.). I'm thinking of an organized action like the MAMI

But not an action to benefit the Japanese Province (which is necessary,too), but an action 'ad extra'. This action should not be we doing it our way, but making it possible for them to engage in human development the way they think it should be done. It should not be an adopting of a seminarian and paying the expenses for his studies, but the development of the Kingdom of God in the social realities of Asia.

For instance, in Sri Lanka the Oblates have lost many parishes and schools. Now they are trying to make centers where people are trained so that they can become leaders in their communities and liberate themselves. To make such projects possible in poor countries, cannot be called "charity" or "neo-colonialism" or "expansion of the only true religion", I think.

Of course, this proposal must be discussed and discerned among us and among the superiors of other Asian countries: how, where, what...?

Y.X.Tosa

ASIA/OCEANIA MISSION MEETING

Kochi, Japan was the scene of the Asia/Oceania Mission Meeting. It was held from July 2-7. Mission in a Secularized Society was the theme of the meeting. There were two input persons for this meeting. Fr. Des O'Donnell spoke mainly of the general world-wide aspects of secularization and modernity and its affects on society and the Church. Our second input person was Fr. Ernest Piryns, C.I.C.M. He is a lecturer at the Major Seminary in Tokyo and also the C.I.C.M. Seminary in Manila. He spoke of secularization as it is found in Asia and more particularly in Japan.

This last point was particularly enlightening even for us here in Japan. We realized that without a thorough knowledge of the religiosity of a people it is most difficult to understand the affects of secularization and modernity in the various societies and cultures in which we are working.

After each input session we broke into groups to discuss the matter and share our own experiences with the help of questions prepared by the Steering Committee. At about the mid-point of the meeting we formed into two groups. One was charged with the task of beginning work on the Report of the Meeting on Secularization which would be sent to all the Provinces, Delegation and Missions of the Region and to the General Administration. The second group acted as a sounding board and gave feed back to the first group as they reported on their work.

It was a busy meeting but there was time for community prayer and community recreation. One evening we all went to a Japanese restaurant to experience eating in true Japanese style. With a little effort all were able to sit on the floor. But the matter of chop sticks required some special tutoring. By the end of the meal one and all were able to carry the food from the dish to the mouth without any major mishaps. The great surprise in all this was that Mike Yamasaki had made a video of the event. There was much laughter when all returned to the rec hall and saw themselves and there confreres being intimidated by two little sticks.

There was one group that got up at about 3 A.M. every morning to watch the World Soccer Matches.

The Meeting closed with an impressive liturgy. At one point each one was asked to say a few words about the meeting. One note that came out in many of the remarks was that it was trully an experience that produced an awareness of Region. A feeling of unity and community had developed during our five days together.

ASIA/OCEANIA FORMATOR'S CONFERENCE

On June 24th representatives from ten Provinces and Delegations from the A/O Region met in Manila for the third A/O Formation Meeting.

The first meeting began on June 25th with input from Father Manuel Mina, O.M.I. on the fundamentals of spiritual direction. Our second input meeting was made by Fr. Rubin Gomez, O.M.I. on the subject of integrating personal/Oblate values through Spiritual direction.

Some points which surfaced during our sessions were:

1. The importance of Spiritual Direction in the old context of Oblate initial formation and its necessity in the process of on-going formation.
2. The need for more spiritual directors at all levels of Oblate formation.
3. Greater awareness and acceptance of the values of the directee in Oblate formation, that is his personal, ethnic and cultural values.

The best part of the meeting for me was the opportunity for an exchange of ideas and learning what is actually being done in the other areas of the Region.

The success of the meeting was due in no small part to the efforts and the generosity of the Philippine Province.

My visit to Arch-Bishop Mangeau in Coabato who spoke of his vocation and of the history of the Oblates in the Philippines was an unforgettable experience for me.

Ange Siani, O.M.I.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Birthdays

August 4 Nobuhiko Yagi	September 6 John Iwo
23 Ange Siani	20 John Mahoney
31 Bert N. Silver	22 Fran Hahn

OBLATE RETREAT

September 10 Monday 9 A.M to September 14 Friday Noon

Retreat Director: Fr. Odon Nemes, S.J.

May God bless you in a most special way on the Feast of the Assumption of our Lady.

OBLATES IN TAHITI

Apart from slick - and inaccurate - travel brochures, few people know much about Tahiti. It is most easily positioned by saying that it is seven hours flying-time from Sydney and seven from Los Angeles - which puts it in middle of the Pacific ocean. Coming from Rome, our travel agent assured me that it was better to travel onwards around the world than to return from there to Rome - equidistant in mileage but nearly half the cost.

It is part of French Polynesia - treated juridically like a part of France with a 75% Polynesian population, 9% European, 8% mixed European and 8% Chinese. Only 55 Klm. in diameter and mostly mountain in the centre, it has an ideal climate but very few sandy beaches. Its economy depends on French atomic interest in Murorua atoll and a few tourists but ^{it} is clearly a culture disintegrating under the influence of Modernity.

The Franciscans came for one year in 1774, followed by the London Evangelical Society in 1816 and the Pictus Fathers in 1834. 50% of its 200,000 people are Protestant and 35% Catholic. Tahiti diocese had 8 diocesan, 13 Pictus and 2 Donum Dei priests when 3 Oblates arrived in 1977. There are now five from Jean Baptiste Province in the USA(3), from France via Laos(I) and Canada(via Cameroon(I))

I think I have not yet met a team of Oblates more united around their mission nor more supportive of one another despite their varied apostolates in the service of the local church. Their Mission-vision is to form the laity for ministry and responsibility, to form a strong local clergy and to witness to community life among themselves.

They care for St. Joseph's parish, a few out-churches and 12 atolls as time permits. Their responsibility for a future local clergy is exercised in a pre-seminary academic Foyer Jean XXIII and in Le Grand Seminaire - for both of which they provide Superiors. The challenges they have noted as deeper evangelization, inculturation, the breakdown of family life because of Modernity and alcohol abuse. The growth of the sects is also of concern.

This is a dynamic section of our Asia-Oceania region which has much to contribute to Oblate life & mission for all of us. We hope to have their presence more often at future regional meetings, despite their geographical isolation.

- Desmond O'Donnell O.M.I.
General Councillor.



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

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

September 1990

My brother Oblates,

Pope John Paul II has called for a "New Evangelization" anticipating the year 2000.

THE CALL: "Look to the future with commitment to a New Evangelization, one that is new in its fervor, new in its methods and new in its expression." (Haiti, 1983)

CALL TO THE WHOLE CHURCH: "When we say that the Church is Catholic we mean that she is evangelizing, missionary and apostolic. If she lacked these qualities, she would not be the true Church." (Chile, 1989)

CALL TO BISHOPS: "Though the year 2000 still seems somewhat distant, preparations are needed now. All the faithful must be led to contribute to the celebration." (U. S. A., 1988)

CALL TO PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS: "This year begins the final decade of the century and the Millenium. Young men called to the priesthood face the challenge of bringing to their contemporaries the light and life of Christ." (Rome, 1990)

CALL TO THE FAMILY: "Families are the primary evangelizers of families. The New Evangelization cannot succeed without the contributions of Christian families." (Rome, 1989)

CALL TO YOUTH: "I wish to invite young people to open their hearts to the Gospel and become Christ's witnesses - if necessary, his martyr witnesses - at the threshold of the Third Milllenium." (Spain, 1989)

CALL TO CHRISTIANS OF OTHER CHURCHES: "On the eve of the Third Christian Millenium, it is more urgent than ever that Christians bear common witness to the Gospel." (Ecumenical Meeting in Norway, 1989)

CALL TO USE THIS MOMENT OF KAIROS: "From my apostolic visits to all the continents, I have concluded that right now evangelization is underway in the world as never before. Conscious of this, the Church is strongly

committed to the dual task of evangelizing the world and re-evangelizing its own Christian people." (Italy, 1987)

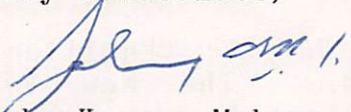
CALL TO OBLATES: "So saying I think of the fact that your Congregation, like so many others, is called upon to take up a tremendous challenge: That of announcing Jesus Christ to the man of today who is so easily dazzled by science and technology and who is the victim of a deceptive and destructive materialism. Wherever you are, in Europe, in North or South America, in Africa, in Asia, unite more than ever and cooperate to the utmost between regions and provinces to proclaim Christ and his liberating Gospel." (John Paul II to members of the General Chapter, Rome 1986)

"As priests and Brothers, we have complementary responsibilities in evangelizing. We will spare no effort to awaken or to reawaken the faith in the people to whom we are sent, and we will help them to discover "who Christ is". Our mission puts us on constant call to respond to the most urgent needs of the Church through various forms of witness and ministry, but especially through proclaiming the Word of God which finds its fulfillment in the celebration of the sacraments and service to others. We have as our goal to establish Christian communities and Churches deeply rooted in the local culture and fully responsible for their own development and growth." (Constitution 7)

How will we respond to the CALL? A question for our meditation and consideration and also for sharing in our Local and District Meetings.

THE DECADE OF EVANGELIZATION DEC. 25, 1990--DEC. 25, 2000.

Fraternally in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,


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

KOREA

Letter received from our Missionaries to Korea.

We are now only a few days away from our visit to Japan and to the Oblates working there. To forget the beautiful days we spent there is just impossible.

We arrived in Kochi on Sept. 3, just one week before the retreat. That gave us the opportunity to visit some Oblate houses: Akaoka, Aki, Anan, Tokushima, Naruto.... Fr. John (Mahoney) was our well-prepared guide. The tour was great, the Oblates greater! Everywhere we felt at home.

On Sept. 10 we were ready for the retreat. It was good to stop to listen to God deep inside ourselves and, at the same time, meet the good Oblate family.

Late in the evening of Sept. 18, after having spent three days in Itami, we were back in Seoul. We were happy. Some would say that every good thing comes to an end. That is not true. The brotherhood, the true friendship and the mutual love we experienced in those days will never pass away. We now feel that we are part of the Japanese Province in a new beautiful way. For this we would like to say: Thank God for those days but also to thank you, each Oblate, for killing us with kindness!

Vincenzo and Mauro

NAGOYA Report on 1990 Summer Vocation Camp

This year's O.M.I. Summer Camp was the sixth. It was prepared in the light of our experiences of previous camps. Until now our camps have always been held at one of our parishes. This year we stayed at a camp site called "Kangaeru Mura" (Thinkers Village) This facility is set in the woods on top of a mountain and is blessed with a distant view of the Pacific Ocean. This was quite a change for the Brothers and the campers. Most of us live in noisy congested towns and cities so Kangaeru Mura was quite a change. We spent two nights and three days with nothing but the sound of bird and insect songs. At night we could see very clearly the stars in the open sky. We could not help but feel close to God the Creator here.

Thirteen youngsters gathered at Kangaeru Mura. At first the campers who were used to city living were perplexed because buildings, shops, and vending machines were not to be seen. But little by little they began to realize nature's splendor. Actually that was in line with our Camp theme: "With God in Nature".

During the Camp we Brothers were able to talk about various things with the campers and grow to understand their thinking and values. While living with these young students I felt the generation gap but despite that I feel that I want to walk with them as they step forward in the growth process of becoming good christian men and hope fully Oblates.

They live in a society where power and honor take precedence over sympathy and love. I didn't know just how I should speak to them about Jesus Christ. But I think the beautiful natural surroundings of Kangaeru Mura made them aware in some way of the Might and Majesty of God. When I looked at their bright faces, I thought so.

Bro. Nobuhiko Yagi, O.M.I.

TOKYO

September was not a good month for the Oblates in Tokyo. Ray Bourgoin was hospitalized with a Thyroid condition. Fortunately it was caused by a virus. It was treatable with medication and the doctors assured Ray it will not occur again. Ray is now fully recovered. Jack Deely was hit from the back by a car driven by a University student (not one of his own) and suffered whip-lash. He is going for rehabilitation every day.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Birthdays

October

7 Ron LaFramboise
10 Jan Van Hoydonck
27 Xave Yoshikazu Tosa

January

2 Ed Williams
22 Ray Bourgoin
29 Dick Harr

December

24 Mike Yamasaki

Ordinations

October

1 Mauro Concardi
28 Gerard Stevens

CHURCH IN JAPAN TODAY

According to 1989 statistics, the Catholic population of Japan increased slightly by 1,724 over 1988 figures to reach a total of 424,028. Women represent 59.3 percent of the total laity and men 40.7

An estimated 25,196 Catholics were listed as having lost contact with the Church; that figure was lower than the previous year. According to the department of Social Communications of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Japan, more women (15,422) than men (9,774) were in this category. While no clear evidence was available to explain this fact, experts speculate that marriage to a non-Christian spouse was the main cause. The statistics also showed that both partners were Catholic in only 679 of the 11,238 marriages celebrated in the Catholic Church.

Sunday Mass attendance increased last year, with 29 percent of Catholics attending weekly. Baptism figures were lower than the previous year: 5,296 adult baptisms in 1989 compared with 5,400 in 1988, and 4,429 infant Baptisms compared with 4,586.

General statistics show that Japan has 24 Bishops, 694 native-born diocesan priests and 12 foreign, 936 religious priests from abroad and 437 from Japan, 6,622 native sisters and 506 foreigners, and 267 members of secular institutes.



OMI INFORMATION

JAPAN

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

CHRISTMAS 1990



My Brother Oblates,

It is the time of the year when we recall the cast and the the sights and the sounds the first Christmas. There are angels, and shepherds and kings from the East. There is Herod, his soldiers and the innkeepers too. We recall the animals; the sheep in the fields, the oxen in the stable and the donkey that carried Mary to Bethlehem. We see twinkling stars, and hear the angel chorus. And of course we picture Mary and Joseph kneeling by the crib of Jesus. Each and every one of these sounds or sights or persons points to the center of all of this; the Infant Jesus. Jesus is always the center of the Christmas Mystery. The angels announced Jesus, the shepherds come to worship Jesus, the kings led by the star laid their gifts at the feet of Jesus. Jesus-the center-the one sent by the Father to save the world.

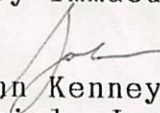
What are the cast and the sights and sounds of Christmas 1990? There are the stars over Iraq; the dessert sands of Saudi. There are the sights of khaki clad soldiers and underfed babies. There are the sounds of Christmas Choral CDs and of children rejoicing around the Christmas tree. There are sights and sounds we do not want to look at and others that we rejoice to hear and see. But one thing has not changed in this Christmas of 1990. The center of all of this is the Infant Jesus. The soldiers point to him as the one who brings peace. The starving children look to him as the sign of hope and love. The joyous sounds and family feasts of the day remind us that it is Jesus who is the source and center of all joy. For this year too Jesus is the one sent by the Father to save the world.

Jesus is always the center. The center of our lives not only as we gather in hope and joy and love around the Crib on Christmas but the center of our lives each day. It is only when He is the center of your life and my life and the lives of all men that the swords will be turned into plowshares, that love will fire the hearth and that the earth and all mankind will be whole.

Let us remember each other in our Christmas Masses. Let us pray that Christ will become more deeply the center our lives, of our Communities. and of our Mission in 1991.

Thank you for your support and and cooperation during this year. Merry Christmas and a Blessed 1991.

Fraternally in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,


Fr. John Kenney Mahoney, O. M. I.
Provincial, Japan

SEOUL

Christmas is for us a new occasion to express to you all our joy to be part of the Japanese Province. Living far from you all; a very simple Christmas Message means a lot. It is the expression of our mutual love as members of the same family. And Christmas is the feast of the family. We are the last ones to come into this family and so we feel your special love. The love and special attention that every one in every family has for the new born baby! Nevertheless be sure of our love for you. Isn't this a good step in a tremendous mission: Mutual Charity?

And so: Merry Christmas!

Vincenzo Bordo
Mauro Concardi

As Christmas 1990 nears, I have been thinking about the opening words of Albert Nolan's book, "Jesus before Christianity." "Many millions throughout the ages have venerated the name of Jesus, but few have understood him and fewer still have tried to put into practice what he wanted to see done." I am struck by the truth of this statement as I look at the world.

While the winds of hope still blow in eastern Europe, the old animosities and rivalries between minority peoples are far from settled. There is a growing solidarity in the European Community while the Soviet Union breaks apart and the people face a bleak winter of empty store shelves and hunger.

In many third world countries military governments still oppress the "little people" so that a minority elite who own most of the land and control most of the industry can continue to reap profits from their toil. Those who dare speak out are labelled subversives or leftists, arrested, tortured and murdered. Readers of the First World press are bored by the gore going on in far off countries, so most of the atrocities go unreported, unless it involves some foreigners or persons of prestige. First World governments get excited for awhile and soon push it under the rug as so much dust.

In the U.S. the city streets are not safe, the number of homeless increases with little serious effort to include them in the last national census. Small business increasingly feels the pinch as unemployment rates rise; and there are rumors of depression, while the President drags the world to the brink of war in the Middle East.

In Japan the glitter and sparkle of the enthronement rites are now history. An extravaganza that cost millions of public funds that could have been better used for aid to refugees in the Middle East desert, and aid for the small countries affected by the trade embargo against Iraq. The media gave but token space to the few voices that questioned the meaning and contradictions of the whole affair. Government officials are more intent on squabbling about the fingerprinting of Koreans most of whom are descendants of the labor force forcefully brought here to keep the war machine going. These officials seem to have forgotten that these people were once citizens of the Empire (forcefully so by annexation) and then dis-enfranchised by imperial decree May 1947. Few seem to recall that 45 years have past without any effort on the part of the government to compensate these victims of the war for the injustices inflicted upon them.

Rural areas of Japan seek out foreign brides, because young local girls prefer to go to the city rather than marry into the rigorous rural farm society. The cities are flooded with a tide of foreign laborers who manage to get in despite the closed door policy against unskilled workers. But the authorities don't seem too concerned. Big business needs this cheap labor force to do the menial jobs locals don't want to do anymore in order to keep its edge in the international market. And what would the night life districts do without the tens of thousands of asian girls? Most of these workers being illegal they are easily exploited, and if they cause trouble the Police and Immigration Authority are happy to deport them. The cry of the day is "internationalization". But to those with a discerning eye it

looks more and more like expansionism and exploitation all over again.

In such times "Merry Christmas" sounds very hollow. I rather wish and pray that the One who is called "King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Prince of Peace" show us what he wanted to see done and give us the courage to put it into practice. May his kingdom come, the kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, the kingdom of justice, love and peace.

Ronald LaFramboise, O.M.I.

Dear Fellow Oblates,

Good news...everything here in Nagoya is going well...more good news...as we have one applicant for the Oblates from Itami we will be opening the pre-novitiate in the spring of 1992! I hope you will introduce more young men to the Oblates so we can have a class of ten! Yoroshiku! (Please)

Merry Christmas and the peace of Christ. The Russian Saint, St Seraphim said, "Have peace in your heart and thousands around you will be saved" I wish you that peace for Christmas.

Angelo Siani, O.M.I.

One day in December a cold and hungry person was walking through the night streets. "Where shall I sleep tonight? Where shall I get something to eat?"

Then from afar could be heard a song that had never been heard before. The person walked in the direction of the strange song. The singing was coming from a small old house. The door was open and upon entering, there in the unheated place about ten children and adults were standing around something. Since they all smiled pleasantly the newcomer spoke.

"If it is something good, won't you share it with me?"

"We can't share the baby, but please share in the joy of the birth of this child."

It was really a long time since seeing a newborn baby so close.

"Might it not be fate that brought you here. Won't you name the child for us?"

After thinking a while the newcomer said:

"Well, is my name alright?"

"What is your name?"

"My name is Joshua."

Joshua decided then and there: I shall spend the rest of my life watching over this new Joshua

Looking on and on at the new Joshua, hunger and cold were soon forgotten.

Leo Satoshi Kawaguchi O.M.I.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

I write the following to the Lord and to my brothers about 1990.

I made mistakes and had some success. I also had much sadness, pain and pleasure in 1990 concerning my life, relationships and Oblation. I wish to thank the Lord and my brothers for all the happenings of 1990.

I ask the Lord to strengthen me physically, spiritually and in every way in 1991. I hope to be a child in my heart forever.

John Hashimoto Masashi, O.M.I.

On this Christmas and New Year I send you my cordial compliments. May the joy and peace of Christmas always be with you.

Nobuhiko Yagi, O.M.I.

TOKYO

Greetings from Tsukuba

...hope this finds everyone in good health and ready for the start of a new year! As for myself, I've been diagnosed as having a fat heart and a fat liver. So with my next visit to the doc's, in order to avoid being diagnosed "a fathead", I figure I better start taking better care of the ole bod!

...never a dull moment here at the College for the Deaf, with all the different needs of the students.

...attending the International Catholic Deaf Association's Workshop in St. Louis in July, with 12 deaf Japanese Catholics was an invaluable experience for all of us. And, attending the International Congress for Deaf Educators, in Rochester in August, with 140 Japanese educators also provided participants with a wealth of information on how to implement change (e.g. how to bring about change in attitudes towards deafness and deaf people).

A MEANINGFUL AND MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOOD HEALTH IN 1991!

Jack Deely, O.M.I

*A Blessed and Happy Holiday
to you and those you love*

Hope this finds you all well.

At Christmastime, I rather like to celebrate the on-going birth of Christ in our hearts and in our society.

As I see it,

When JUSTICE is truly born there, so is CHRIST.

When PEACE and RECONCILIATION are truly born there,
so is CHRIST.

When LOVE... When TRUTH...

On March 19, 1991 I will be celebrating my 25th anniversary of ordination. May it be the beginning of another 25 years of fostering JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION, PEACE... I beg your prayers that that be so.

Ray Bourgoïn, O. M. I.

KOCHI

Christmas best wishes and greetings to all the Oblates in Japan and Korea.

All have been here this year as far as I know and it was wonderful to see you all. This is one of the blessings of being here in the Provincial house. During the year have been able to make a few changes for the better, I hope, in the house here. The latest is the installation of a new wooden tabernacle from the Pieta Sisters in Tokyo in the house chapel. If everyone is as pleased with that as I am I will be satisfied.

Attendance is good in the parish, the old people seem to appreciate my loud voice. For next Easter we have nine people (including a family of four) preparing to be baptized. Your prayers are asked for these catechumens. Another bright spot in this apostolate is that we now have three young men coming to church here, two of them are coming to Bible class and another has been through Tom Maher's catechetical course. This is a particularly bright hopeful thing as we have so few young people here. The Marian cultists are still pursuing their stubborn dangerous way. Absolutely will not listen to the priest or the Bishop. And as they are very actively evangelizing any newcomer they can approach, they make catechizing the new members a big problem. For this also we need prayers.

Our oldest member is 97 years old and doing fine; our youngest is two days old. In between we have about 400 members of all ages. Pray for all of us this Christmas as we pray for you.

Ed. Williams, O. M. I.

"1990" Celebrations of life, celebrations of death, celebrations of recovery and growth. "Subete yoshi, subete kansha". (All is good, all is thanks)

It was a joy to be with my aunt and relatives at her 70th Anniversary in Religious Life. Three priests celebrated the Mass in August. My cousins Joe, Bill and I. In God's plan Fr. Joe Calleton C.S.B. was taken to his own celebration in heaven on November 24.

Again I saw recovery from addiction as well as death from addiction. My own going-on-recovery one day at a time is a gift that must be shared. This has become a major part of my work.

"1991" Bill's 25 Anniversary and my sister's 25 Wedding Anniversary. My twin brother and I will turn 60. "There is nothing I can not master with the help of the One who gives me strength." Phil. 4: 13

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. Love,

Tom Maher, O.M.I.

Best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

The years seem to pass faster and faster as one gets older. Looking backwards for just a little while, one sees only good things. Especially two events were encouraging and at the same time a kind of "consolation". First, I had the opportunity to meet fellow Oblates from Asian countries and Australia in the Justice and Peace meeting held in Sri Lanka. The second event was the official recognition and start of the J. & P. Committee in the diocese of Takamatsu. I have great hopes that Justice, Peace and Ecology involvement will contribute to make the Church more genuine and bible-like.

My esophagus is healed, but my left knee got old too early. I can still play tennis once a week but twice a week is too much. In order to keep fit, I decided to go to a "fitness" training center. I try to go twice a week, but unfortunately circumstances usually allow me to go only once a week. Can you imagine me among the "senior citizens", doing all kinds of stretching manoeuvres...? Oh, yes you guessed it my belly sticks out too far!

Hopes and wishes for the next year? Indeed I wish many things for you and for me, too. To be more specific: for you; I pray that all your wishes come true. And for me? Not too much: something like the past year wouldn't be too bad.

Hoping to see everybody a few time in the coming year.

Y. X. Tosa, O.M.I.

Christmas Greetings !

The past year has been good both with my student work at Kochi University and the involvement in the Pro-Life Ministry to save unborn children.

For the coming year, I pray that the Lord, as our co-pilot, will continue to guide the involvement of each Oblate in the Japanese Province.

Merry Christmas!

Jerry Novotny, O.M.I.

AKI

Here in Japan it seems that 1990 is coming to a safe end; but if one looks at international society it seems we will enter the coming year with the problem of Iraq unresolved. I pray that this problem will be solved peacefully as soon as possible.

This Christmas of 1990 I wish you a Merry Christmas. As we look to the New Year I wish you a Happy New Year. With the help of God may you climb the staircase to heaven step-by-step.

John Iwo, O.M.I.

AKAOKA

A blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you for everything during the past year, especially for remembering my brother in your prayers.

December 8th Aonami no-Ie was one year old.

May the blessing of the Christ Child be with you during the New Year.

Léo Simons, O.M.I.

NAKAMURA

Fully two years have flown since I arrived in this mission of Hata-Gun (County), and I can say that in spite of my age (60) and a few other handicaps, I have been able to visit almost the whole territory entrusted to my care; 9/10 of it at least once, many places more often, and some on a regular basis. The remaining 1/10 is due mostly to the difficulty of getting to those remote villages.

A special challenge are Okinoshima and Ugurushima, which have a daily boat service, but whenever I plan going to those

islands (about one hour each way from Sukumo Port) there is either a typhoon or a sea storm; so that the ships remain moored in the harbor; moreover the trip itself turns out to be at least a two day affair on account of the boat and bus schedules. In the meantime I am not idling the hours away, as there is still more than enough to do. Each mission trip make me realize how large my territory is, because of the distances between the many small mountain villages.

Hata-gun contains extended areas of national forestry (kokuyuurin). The scenery is very beautiful, as the roads are usually cut out in the mountains along the rivers. However the remaining population consists mostly of elderly person and there are almost no young couples and thus few children. Remote area schools have had to close down at the average of one a year. One can't avoid the impression of living in a dying-out country. (A punishment for too many abortions?)

Thank God the Filippina brides are bringing new life and hope to this Mission.

My prayerful best wishes to all for Christmas and 1991.

Gerard Stevens, O.M.I.

TOKUSHIMA

This has been a very eventful year and it went so fast I have not had time to think about it in depth. I hope to get some time for that after Christmas. But I do want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May it be your best year yet.

Beside the fact that I'm getting older myself, and the wrinkles that are sprouting in the morning mirror offer ample proof of that, two more events of the past year have highlighted the wonderful gift of "time" for me. One was the celebration of 70 years as a Religious of my 89 year old aunt in Canada with 3 other of her immediate family present, including my mother. When we totaled the ages of the four of them we found that 356 years of the gift of "time" was sitting in the front pew of the beautiful convent chapel. At the same time on the altar beside the main celebrant, my brother Tom, stood my cousin Joe Calleton a Basilian Father and myself. Although Joe was only 55 years old he died on November 24th. The Lord has taken the gift of "time" from him and given him eternity.

For this renewed consciousness of "time"; the years He has given me and for the years He may give me in the future, I thank the Lord. May the Lord give you all a wonderful "time" this Christmas and during the New Year. You are in my prayers.

Bill Maher, O.M.I

NARUTO

A very special Christmas remembrance for each and everyone in the Community.

In November Shibaori-kun from Naruto began his Novitiate at the Trappist Monastery in Hakodate. Brother Hashimoto is doing well at our Oblate House of Studies in Nagoya.

At Christmas we thank the Christ Child for these vocations from our small Mission Parish and we pray that he will continue to call more young men into His service.

Bert Silver, O.M.I.

ANAN

A VERY MERRY, MUCH BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL!

The year 1990 brought some good things my way. One was a grand 3 months of vacation at home. It was hot in Nebraska also. Another was the honor of attending the Oblate Pastoral Conference in Winnipeg, Canada. The views of our Canadian Missionaries (70 in all) plus those of the General Administration were aired, and these gave new life to each of us. Myself and Father Kegler from the U.S. Central Province were the only non-Canadian Missionaries at the meeting.

More recently I was present at the Santa Retreat for Priests where Evangelization 2000 was explained and urged on all 60 in attendance. In the near future there will be reading material available on this great work of the Church. It is spread all over the world, leading the laity to take a more active part in the evangelization effort. There are some good men working on this. Now if I can muster the same spirit and effort here in Anan we'll be even more blessed.

Dick Harr, O.M.I.

AWA IKEDA

From the "center" of Shikoku I extend my best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all my brother Oblates in Japan and wherever they are in the world. May the Lord lead you, protect you and bless all your activities.

No (at least visible) miracles have occurred concerning the Ikeda Parish, so about my apostolate I cannot relate much, except that most of it takes place outside this area, be it at the Bishop's residence or in the Kansai region. There is another part that I would rather call "indirect apostolate", a mosaic of all kinds of things (mainly translating), by which I hope to be of service.

Jan Van Hoydonck, O.M.I.

ITAMI

CHRISTMAS and Voices of 1990

Filipinos love to sing *I'm dreaming of a white Christmas...* (n.b. no snow in the Philippines) as if to parody the peace and joy that Christmas sings about every year. At home and in every country like Japan where there are Filipino migrant workers: hired as domestic workers, construction aids, factory workers, hostesses, computer operators, etc., their outcry is for fairness in the job and to be treated as human beings. The mythical plastic Santa Claus takes his usual seat at the show window of the ritzy department store this Christmas with his checklist of who has been naughty or nice... the Filipino worker stands outside the thick glass wall wanting to ask good old Santa... *Is it a sin to be poor?*

Instead of the usual christmas message, I would like to share with you portions of my diary, quotes I found very meaningful from people this year, voices of joy and despair and even a threat left on my answering machine... they are my unworthy gift to you this Christmas:

Baptisms of Fil-Jap babies are becoming a weekly event of our group in Osaka. Just think about the implications of this to the catholic population of Japan. I had four funerals of four people, two Filipinos died of illness, one Japanese married to a Filipina committed suicide and the fourth was a 21 year old Filipina murdered by her Japanese boyfriend. I brought back to Manila the ashes of the two who died of illness. After explaining to the father of one over the phone that we have to cremate the body of his son, he tearfully made a simple request: "Please take a nice picture of him before you..." (he wasn't able to finish his sentence).

Work-related accidents are also a big problem among undocumented workers. In case of an accident while at work or on the way to or from the work place, the worker is entitled to compensation regardless of status. I made another trip to Manila to deliver a check for 7M yen to a Filipino worker who had an accident in Nagoya. Another undocumented worker cut a very small part of his finger while at work and was compensated for 1M yen. A joke went around the foreign workers... "Now we know what to do when we will be in need of money!"

A Japanese historian teaching in Manila told me this: "What is happening to your people in Japan happened to the Japanese at the start of this century." She has compiled historical records of Japanese immigrants to the Philippines. Early Japanese settlers worked as housemaids, carpenters, plumbers and many *karayuki-san* (Japanese prostitutes) plied the streets of Manila 1903-1920. Politely, I agreed to what she said that history is repeating itself but Japanese immigrants to the Philippines did not suffer from inhuman treatment and discrimination like present day Filipino workers in Japan.

A Filipina who gave birth to a baby-girl: "Father, I had a

girl! (then jokingly) but since Japan only allows hostesses to work here I will raise her to be the best hostess in Osaka!"

A Filipina writer in Tokyo: "Why should FILIPINA be scarlet letters scrawled across ones face?" Overheard from a group of Japanese girls on a train: "Firipina mitai!!" (Gee, you look like or is acting like a Filipina!). Japanese kids learn from their elders how to look down on others early in life. A child of a Filipina mother refuses to go to school since his classmates have been bullying him... "Firipijin, Firipinjin!" No less than the "Justice" minister makes a parallel between blacks and prostitutes at a raid of a prostitution district in Tokyo. Adding insult to injury was his scathing additional remark... "I'm surprised there were no Filipinas among the prostitutes arrested."

In April, 8 Filipino trainees at a nearby tire factory in Itami walked out of their company and sought refuge in the church. Four TV stations and 6 newspaper crew came to listen to their complaints. An analysis by a Waseda Univ. professor on the case: "This couldn't have happened if the trainees were from western countries. The Japanese look down on poor Southeast Asians, this is a reality we cannot deny."

From AISA-Yokohama (Asian Institute for Social Action of FABC) Statement: "The mistakes committed by the Japanese in the past are being repeated in its inhuman treatment of foreign migrant workers."

Yes, about that threatening phone call. A guy has been intimidating me over the phone with his record of names and cases I have handled... "You have been engaged in activities not in keeping with your status of residence (shikakugai katsudo), better stop of else..."

We are still following the case of 27 Filipina computer operators in Osaka who were brought in as trainees but actually made to work for 15 hours even on Sundays for a pittance. Luckily, we have no less than the Osaka Bar Association behind us and several labor groups in Osaka and Tokyo to help us pursue the case.

Fr. Honda, the Franciscan Provincial who now works as a day laborer said about his life with the poor: "It is not what I can give them but what they give me that counts... they are the ones evangelizing me."

"I envy you for the work that God has called you to do..." were the consoling words of Fr. Nemes at our retreat. I'd like to think of Christmas not as a time to temporarily forget the ills of our society but rather as the mystery of the coming of God in Jesus to pick up the pieces of a shattered humanity. I know I still have to be converted to the real meaning of Christmas.

Wency Laguidao

Merry Christmas!

I hope the coming year brings bountiful blessings from our Lord to all.

By the way, the roof of the church building has been leaking for a long time. The experts haven't located the cause of the leak. So what they did was to set a huge vat under the ceiling to catch the water. Now we have another problem to solve: how to drain the water in the vat.

The building is still beautiful externally, but you see age and wear on the inside. Hope that no one thinks the building symbolizes the present state of the parish. Sure we have had ten funerals this year so far, and many young people have moved out to the country where it is much easier to purchase a piece of land. However more children have started to come to Sunday Masses. They call me "Ame Shimpu", (Father Candy) as I distribute candy after Mass out of "my pocket" No matter what! They come to Mass.

I take a long walk practically every day. Occasionally you see strange things. The other day I came upon a little hill, fenced with barbed wire. Several places on the fence I saw pieces of wood. There on the the wooden boards was written, "Dangerous! Stay away". The hill was a cemetery with many tombstones shining in the afternoon sun.

Hoping to see you at our Meeting in March.

Mike Yamasaki. O.M.I.

KOGA

This year has been a busy one for me. I hope that the coming one is more Christ filled and less me-filled. He is coming and I only pray I'll be there, awake and ready to move with Him and His Spirit. May he also fill all your days and moments with His Peace and Hope.

Have a Blessed and Holy Christmas and the Best of Years to Come. Peace in Christ.

Fran Hahn, O.M.I.

A blessed Christmas.

This last year was filled with the joy of becoming free for many peoples. It was a wonderful year.

Among the students at the training course in Kyushu was a former teacher and school board member; seventy years of age. She studied right along with the young teachers; trying to become more useful to Society.

We pray that all the teachers who go through the course will be blessed with good health and joy as they carry what they learned into their work places.

We pray to that the New Year will be a wonderful year for all; and thank you for all your goodness to us this year.

Fr. Len Inui, O.M.I.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Birthday

JANUARY

2 Ed Williams
22 Ray Bourgoin
29 Dick Harr

FEBRUARY

15 Len Inui
21 Vincenzo Bordo
23 Masashi Hashimoto

MARCH

1 Jerry Novotny
23 Bill Maher

APRIL

1 Leo Kawaguchi

Ordination

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

22 Xave Tosa

MARCH

19 Ray Bourgoin
27 Ron LaFramboise
27 Wency Laguidao

APRIL

4 Jerry Novotny
11 Jack Deely

DATE TO MARK IN YOUR CALENDAR

MARCH 5-7 MISSION MEETING ON THE KINDERGARDEN APOSTOLATE

Place: Kochi

Animator: Joseph M Abbella, C.M.F. (Claretian)

SEPTEMBER 2-6 ANNUAL OBLATE RETREAT

Place: Fukuoka Passionist Retreat House

Director: Fr. Kelly Nemeck, O.M.I. U.S. Southern Province

クリスマスおめでとうございます。今年は世界中で、解放を喜ぶ数多くの
人々とともに感謝でき、信頼を強めてお祝いできて嬉しいですね。

九州のトレーニング・コースの研修生の中には、70歳の元教師で教育
委員も務めた人も若い人たちといっしょに学んでおられます。48人来て
います。幼児“現場”に立てることを祈ります。

新年が、素晴らしい年でありますようにと、お祈りいたします。

今年中、皆様から頂きました数々のご好意に心からお礼申し
上げます。有難うございました。

乾 盛 夫

Christmas Message

1990年も無事終わろうとしています。しかし、国際社会を見てみると、イラク問題が残ったまま
年を越そうとしています。一日も早く平和的に解決出来るようにお祈りします。

1990年のクリスマスに当たって、

メリー クリスマス とお祝い申し上げます。

又、1991年の新年を迎えるに当たって、

新年おめでとうございます と申し上げます。

神様の御保護をもって、天国への階段を一步一步上って行く事が出来ますように。

1990年12月1日

FR. John Lwo am.

クリスマと新年おめでとうございます。

年をとったせいかもしれませんが、今年が去年よりはやく過ぎ去ったように感じます。
ちょっと振り返って見ると、毎年繰り返さない出来事が二つありました。まず、スリ・ラ
ンカで行なわれたOMIの正平協の会議、それから高松教区において、正平協の設立。
両方の出来事は私にとって大きな励ましと慰めでした。

私の食道は直りましたが、左のひざははやく“年”を取りました。週に2回テニスを
やる事は無理になりました。健康体力のために高知社会保険センターでストレッチング
をやっています。うまく行かない時があります。。。その理由を想像する事が出来るで
しょう。そうです。。。おなかが出過ぎるから。。。。

来年は？ あなたの夢と望みが全部実現されるように祈ります。私のために？新年
は去年のような年になってくれば、満足です。

では、1991年中たびたび出会う事が出来るように。。。。

その人は12月のある日、寒さと空腹に耐えながら夜の街を歩いていた。

「今夜はどこで寝ようか、どこで食べ物を手に入れようか」

遠くから聞いたことのない歌が聞こえてきた。その人は不思議な歌が聞こえる方へ足を運んだ。歌は小さな古い建物の中から聞こえていた。扉が開いていたので中に入ってみると、暖房がないそこに子供と大人合わせて10人くらいが何かを囲んで立っていた。新しい訪問者に皆はうれしそうな顔をしたので、

「何かいいことでしたら、私にもそれを分けて下さい」

「赤ん坊は分けられませんが、この子が生まれたことの喜びをあなたも共に喜んで下さい」その人が生まれたばかりの赤ん坊を追って見たのは本当に久しぶりであった。「あなたがここに来たことは何かの縁かもしれません、この子に名前をつけて頂けないか」その人はしばらく考えた後「私の名前でもければ」「あなたのお名前は」「わたしの名はヨシュア Josua」

その人は決心した「これからの私の人生をこの新しいヨシュアを見守るために使おう」と。その人は新しいヨシュアをいつまでも見ていた。寒さと空腹を忘れて。

Leo. 川口 敬

Dear John,

I hope I'll be in time to get my new address in the newsletter:

Father José De Fruyt, o.m.i.
Missionarissen Oblaten
A. Gomandstraat 24
IO90 Brussel
BELGIUM. Tel. (02) 426.84.I9

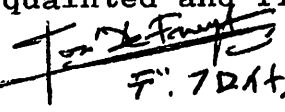
Yes, after 6 years in Antwerp, I'm moving to another o.m.i.-community. Our house in Antwerp closes. At one time we were 10 oblates here in the house. But our brother superior died suddenly. The provincial doesn't live here anymore. Two people left for Bolivia. A few others moved. The seven members of a sharing group in town here, with whom I have been leading a life of sharing for the last three years, will bring my packed books to Brussels on Sunday. Only two members will then be left in the house. Part of the house will be closed down at the end of Februari, when four students at the Tropical Institute will leave the facilities. Only two oblates will then be left at the house. They will move before the summerholidays next year to strengthen communities in other houses of the province. Our numbers go down, so we have to start closing houses. In the house of Brussels, Father Wilfried Rossel has been nominated superior last month. He asked me to join the community in Brussels.

I'm also changing my job. At the end of October I ended two terms of three years at the Pontifical Mission Works in the Diocese of Antwerp. I'm moving to the diocese of Cardinal Danneels (Brussels-Malines). From next January I will be prison chaplain in the prison of Forest (Vorst) in Brussels, half-time. Tom Maher will enjoy it, I would think, when he will read that I am again a colleague in the same job. After my arrival in Brussels I will look out how I best can combine this work with another half time job on the scene.

Next year in Februari I will be 50. I feel it's time to spend my heart in a very simple way to very ordinary people. I always believed that God is to be found with poor people. I concluded that I had somehow to be in the neighbourhood of such place. I don't know well what I am starting, but I guess that, if God is there, he sure will do the rest, as long as I will give my best. As an oblate, I twinkle an eye to our blessed founder who was once a prison chaplain himself. In Brussels I will have a colleague who is on pension from the same job in the same prison. In Matthew 25 I get a gospel-line that should inspire me for this kind of pastoral work: "I was in prison, and you visited me." You certainly won't refuse a prayer that the guy's I'll meet there will be blessed sacraments to me!?!

Dear John, let me round up this letter with thanks for sending me faithfully the O.M.I.-Japan-Newsletter. I always read it with much interest and best memories of my 15 years missionary life in Japan. Now and then I'm also able to pass on part of the news to our local o.m.i.-newsletter in Belgium. Our circle of friends who get this letter still counts 5000. Every year we bring the families of our missionaries together in two of our houses for an afternoon of sharing. On such occasions, our missionaries tell us that they count on us to keep their stories spreading in the homechurch.

Last month, during a visit to my aunt with the Passionist Sisters, the mother superior asked me to write a letter in English to their community in Japan in order to arrange some matter for both the communities in Japan and Korea. I thought of the link of the oblates between the missions of Japan and Korea. Things may go slowly over there, but the mustardseed of the gospel keeps filling our heart with hope. It's always again the small beginning of Bethlehem. But the promise of that little 'House of Bread' keeps defining the course of history. To one and all, I wish a very Blessed Christmas and a Joyful and Fruitful New Year 1991. Your old acquainted and from now on 'Brussels sprout', José De Fruyt, o.m.i.


F. 721472

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