

# OMI INFORMATION

## JAPAN

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

June-July, 1981

### Editor's Note

"Look Wency, you can be the greatest editor the newsletter has ever had," that was how Ange Siani talked me into accepting the job that almost nobody would take.

So watch out, the next time you pay a visit to the Provincial, be sure you get your own request approved first before he works his way into making his. That coffee he serves might even be laced with persuasion potion!

Except for one change which is deemed necessary, everything will be done in the same procedure as in the past.

For several reasons (space, avoiding repetitions, etc.), contributions will be edited except for reprints and requests for printing articles as they are. Hence, contributions need not be in finished form, outline would be fine.

Needless to say, the Newsletter will still rely mostly on monthly contributions with the deadline set for the 20th of every month.

We say thank you to Bill Maher (now sans Raphael, sob) for the service he has rendered as Editor for sometime and wish him Godspeed as he leaves for his sabbatical.

Wency Laguidao

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### PROVINCIAL CONGRESS ON NEW CONSTITUTION AND RULES SET FOR SPRING, 1981

Six months after the close of the 30th Oblate General Chapter which also marked the completion of a new text of OMI Constitutions and Rules now awaiting approbation by the Holy See, what should we start doing as a province to find the practical application of the new text to us Oblates in Japan?

This was the guiding question for the four-men committee formed to help in the after-chapter animation. The committee met in Itami, June 11.

Preparation on the individual and group levels are indispensable to achieve a province-wide goal. Hence, meetings by groups or districts will take place which would lead to a congress next year. Results of the congress will be incorporated in a Directory, the province's own understanding of the new text of the Constitutions and Rules.

It may happen that all matters will have been taken-up during the group meetings and the congress will only serve as the summarizing point of all proceedings during the preparation period. Therefore, the kind of congress to be held will depend mainly on the kind of preparation that precedes it.

To quote one of the chapter delegates: "If text is important, life is more important. We might have a text which is imperfect, but if we really try to live up to it, it is much better than a perfect text which would remain dead letter."

The committee has agreed to ask Ron LAFRAMBOISE, delegate to the chapter, to be the guest animator at group meetings as his schedule may allow. He will try to explain how the new text came to be completed and may suggest procedures on how to go about with the group sharing.

More definite information regarding the congress and its preparation will be made later.

The members of the committee were: Ray BOURGOIN, Ron LAFRAMBOISE, Wency LAGUIDAO and Provincial Ange SIANI.

#### THE LATEST ON BROTHER TSUDA

Brother Tsuda finished the first series of cobalt treatment and after some days he started with the second series. It is difficult to say whether the radiation is making any headway in arresting the ailment but those who go and see Brother are impressed by his fine spirits everytime. Though obviously in great pain after days of radiation and couldn't even take in solid food, he still manages to laugh and joke with those who come to visit him. A young lady from Tokushima whom Brother has instructed catechism offered her services as Brother's attendant for sometime. The Provincial and Fr. Bert SILVER are trying to get a private room for Brother. We're all behind you Brother!

W E L C O M E ! Father DES O'DONNELL

General Councillor for Asia/Oceania Father Des O'Donnell will be in Japan from July 9 to 23. The following is Father O'Donnell's tentative schedule: Itami 9-10; Tokushima District 11-14; Kochi District 15-17; Fukuoka District 18-19; Tokyo 20-21 and back to Itami on the 22nd and leaves on the 23rd.

Many still remember the days Fr. O'Donnell spent with us a few years back and we look forward to having him once again, now as the General Councillor for Asia/Oceania.

OMI Information-Rome has this to say about Fr. Des: "He has returned to Rome after a two-month study of French in Paris. He now speaks the language without (underscore mine, Ed.) an Irish or an Australian accent." C'est à voir.

### OBLATE NEWSMAKERS

It is not only the Holy Father who has hugged the headlines of the Japanese dailies recently but even two of our men have been featured on separate occasions in recognition of their contribution to society through their apostolate.

An article on Fr. Tom MAHER and his work at the Kochi Prison appeared on Asahi Shinbun (May 11) and Fr. Leo SIMONS and his baby, the Kochi Volunteer Bureau, got the limelight on Yomiuri Shinbun (June 1).

#### Prison Apostolate

Tom Maher's work at the prison consist in teaching English and counseling. Helping some of the inmates regain some amount of self-respect and preparing those finishing their term for reentry into society are part of Tom's work. Quite a few maintain their contact with Tom long after they have left the prison.

The write up on Tom is about one of his friends serving a life sentence for killing a prison guard. Tom has made a compilation of the poems written by this man some of which appeared on the same newspaper article.

#### The Volunteer Bureau

What? You lost the key to your room and couldn't get in? No problem, call Lee Simons. However, that wasn't what the write up on our mystery man all about but his pet project, the Kochi Volunteer Bureau, Lee's master-key to people's hearts.

1981 being the International Year of the Disabled, we see a surge of enthusiasm on the welfare of the handicapped from all sectors of society. However, the Kochi Volunteer's Bureau has been operating long before the International Year of the Disabled.

On the write up about Lee, he stresses the point that the idea of volunteer work is more on "being" rather than "doing" (free trans. by Ed.), person, rather than task oriented. The importance of man is the motivating factor in volunteer work, hence, it is geared towards being available to all kinds of people, disabled or not. Lee admits that short-lived enthusiasm is still the project's main setback.

This year, after much lobbying by Ange SIANI, Lee was able to get a donation from the Kochi Kuroshio Lions Club to allow him to build a toilet for the handicapped to the tune of... some seven-figure mark. There is no truth to the rumor that the said toilet will be airconditioned.

#### ON-GOING FORMATION

Bill MAHER leaves for his sabbatical in July. "I'm already getting nervous about getting everything I want to get done here finished and to get ready for being away for one year. At the same time however, I'm very thankful that I've been given the time and opportunity to study and I'm looking forward to it," says Bill.

In preparing for this study leave, Bill has contacted several places as to what they were offering by way of On-Going Formation. Bill also says that he has left a few brochures w/ the provincial office for anyone interested. "There are a lot of very good courses being offered, something for almost anyones tastes."

Bill winds up his preparation with a series of farewell parties and early last month, together with his English groups, he organized a picnic for the "Umorebi Kai," a handicapped people's group in Nakamura. He got the support of the local Rotary Club of which he is a member and some officials in the city also helped as volunteers. Blessed with good weather, everybody enjoyed the beach and the lunch together.

We haven't heard from Bill's friend, Raphael, for sometime. Overheard that the two are on a trial-separation for one year. Raphael breaks his silence with his usual wit: The five B's of middle age: Baldness, Bridgework, Bifocals, Bay-windows and Bunions. Raph didn't say whether he was referring to his master.

Seminars, Books, Tapes, what-have-you...

Columban Catechetical Course      When: August 24-27  
Where: Nanzan University  
Nagoya  
Tel. 052(832) 6211

This is the same course being followed by Fr. Tom MAHER in Kochi. Tom have had very good results and right now he has 3 groups going all the time. Fr. Bill MAHER also has his group in Nakamura, 8 christians will finish the course before Bill leaves for home.

Tapes:

The Parable of Willie Juan	By: Brennan Manning
Homily by the same man	Where: Tom Maher
Jesus the Healing God	By: Rohr, Richard, OFM
Jesus the Battleground of God	Where: Nakamura
Jesus the Gathered Power of God	
Jesus the Victory of God	
Jesus the Scandal of God	

## CATECHISTS MEETING

The Oblate catechists, catechists working at Oblate parishes will meet in Itami on July 6-7. Fr. Ed WILLIAMS is the adviser of the group and right now there are five members: Mr. Nishikawa of Tokushima, Mr. Tsunoda of Hikarigaoka, Mr. Kido of Kochi, Mr. Kanzaki of Itami and Mr. Kondo of Aki.

BIRTHDAYS June-July

Leo Simons - July 31

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Dick Harr - June 2  
Ed Williams - June 7  
Nestor Jao - June 12  
John Iwo - June 14  
Len Inui - June 14  
Mike Yamazaki - June 24  
Jose De Fruyt - June 28

Jan Van Hoydonck - July 1  
Leo Simons - July 5



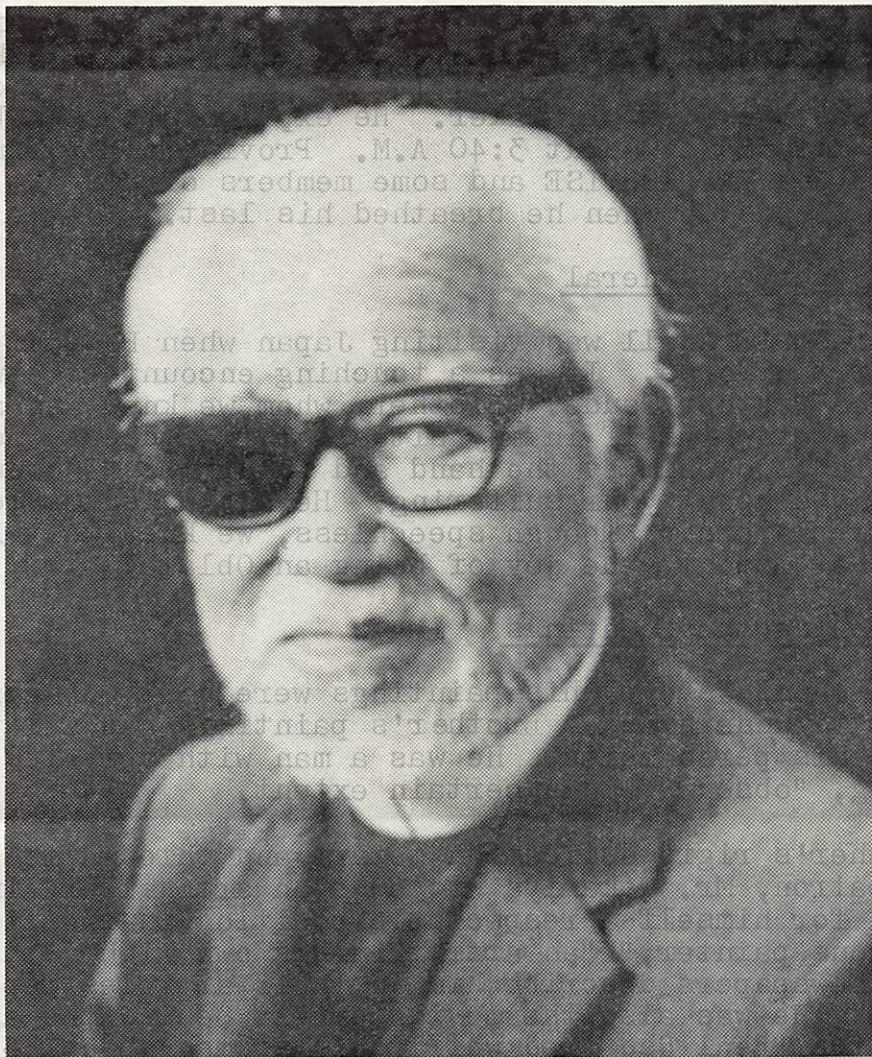
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Provincial Newsletter of the OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE  
Vice Province of Japan

P.O. Box 14 August, 1981  
Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi 816

We dedicate this issue to:



Brother JOSEPH SUEHO TSUDA, O.M.I. 1899 - 1981

It isn't easy to write about a man who lived for 82 years, for in the process, one is likely to inadvertently omit some important events in the life of that man. Perhaps, anybody would feel the same way if asked to write about Brother Joseph Sueho TSUDA, OMI. However, knowing the kind of person that he was, Brother would had been least concerned with what people would write about him when he was gone.



Brother Tsuda was a silent worker. Totally devoted to art, he also saw this field as a possible occasion to preach Christ. He was already an artist even before he joined the Oblates, thus for Brother, it wasn't one or the other but he embraced both art and religious life with equal dedication in the service of the Lord.

From the time he was admitted to Kaisei Hospital in Kobe sometime in April this year, he had been told that he had terminal cancer and had only a few months to live. He accepted his predicament with calm resignation and submitted himself to radiation treatment which he probably brushed-off as no more than routine. The radiation was making significant progress when he contacted pneumonia which eventually became the immediate cause of his death.

Thus for Brother Joseph Sueho TSUDA, OMI, almost four months of hospitalization was a wait for something he knew was inevitable yet he felt the consolation of being able to prepare to meet the Lord his Maker. He expired at the Kobe City Hospital, July 23 at about 3:40 A.M. Provincial Fr. Angelo SIANI, Fr. Ron LAFRAMBOISE and some members of his art club were at his bedside when he breathed his last.

#### From the Superior General

Fr. Des O'Donnell was visiting Japan when Brother Tsuda turned for the worse. It was a touching encounter between Fr. Des and Brother Tsuda. Brother, whom we knew was always able to contain himself in any situation, was deeply moved when Fr. Des took him by the hand and told him: "The Superior General knows about your suffering. He has asked me to assure you of his prayers." Though speechless, we knew what Brother felt at that moment: the joy of being an Oblate.

#### The Man Behind the Paintings

To a layman's eye, his paintings were dark, obscure and difficult to understand. Brother's paintings had a lot to say about his personality. He was a man with very few words, unassuming, "obscure" to a certain extent.

Brother's rigid dedication to art and through the help of his art patron, Mr. Takamiya who owns an art gallery in Osaka, he gained for himself a respectable position in the field. He was a "famous painter," "an artist in his own right," as the national newspapers describe him in their articles reporting his death. He was also the moving spirit behind the art group known as the "Beni Usu (red whirlpool) formed about 35 years ago. The Beni Usu members learned painting from Brother and he saw this as an opportunity to teach them catechism, too. Hence, the group became a catechism group through painting. The members remember Brother as a very strict teacher. Almost all of the members have been baptized after receiving catechetical instruction from Brother.

#### Important Events in His Life

1899 - November 23, Birth



- 1914 - Lost right eye in an accident.
- 1917 - started painting.
- 1943 - Baptized at Sekiguchi Church, Tokyo.
- 1945 - Left leg amputated, TB of the bone.
- 1946 - Birth of "Beni Usu."
- 1952 - Joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate
- 1959 - Perpetual vows.
- 1960 - Assigned to Koga.
- 1967 - First individual art exhibit.
- 1968 - Assigned to Anan.
- 1971 - Art exhibit, Osaka.
- 1972 - Art exhibit, Tokyo and Osaka.
- 1973 - Art exhibit, first time at the Takamiya Gallery, Osaka.
- 1974 to 1976 Yearly art exhibit.
- 1979 - TV interview, NHK Education, Religion Time.
- 1979 - Paintings compiled in a book, art exhibit.
- 1980 - Art exhibit, moved to Naruto
- 1981 - July 23, death.

### Last Tribute

Oblate confreres from far-away Tokyo and Kyushu and from the neighboring places travelled to Naruto for the wake and the funeral. Funeral mass was held in Naruto Church, July 24, with 20 priests concelebrating. Fr. Ed WILLIAMS preached at the wake and the Provincial was the main celebrant at the funeral mass. Fr. Bert SILVER made all the arrangements for the funeral, cremation, etc.

Mr. Takamiya, Brother's art patron and close friend gave the eulogy and Brother's nephew gave the response in behalf of the family.

Brother Tsuda was the third to pass-away while serving in the mission. The two others were Fr. Danny WARD and Fr. Len ROBITAILLE. May the Lord grant them eternal rest.

### PREPARATION FOR THE 1982 PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

The Committee on the Constitutions and Rules had its second meeting in Itami, July 22 with Fr. Des O'Donnell present. Two new members have been added to the committee: Fr. Ed WILLIAMS and Fr. John IWO.

The main task of the committee is to encourage individual and group preparation for the provincial congress next Spring. "How do we go about this?" was the inevitable question. READ - PRAY - WRITE was a method suggested in the effort to interiorize the new text. READ and give the text a chance to speak to you; PRAY over what you have read; WRITE the points you consider are most important.

Preparation will zero-in mainly on Part 1 of the new text, namely: "The Oblate Charism." Part 1 is divided into Chapters 1 (Mission) and 2 (Apostolic Religious Life). Chapter 2 is

further divided into 3 sections: Sec. 1 The Evangelical Counsels; Sec. 2 The Living Faith; Sec. 3 The Apostolic Community.

All districts are requested to hold e meetings in Sept., Nov., and Jan. to take up Part 1.

It was also suggested during the meeting that the province invite the Superior General for the congress.

"CHALLENGE EACH OTHER!" - Fr. Des O'Donnell

Fr. Desmond O'Donnell was in Japan, July 9-23 on his first visit as the General Counsellor for Asia/Oceania region. While here, he had a hectic schedule visiting the different districts. He set aside time to meet the men as a group and also time for individual talks with each man in the province. He also had a meeting with the Provincial Administration and another one with the committee on the Constitutions and Rules.

"This is so far the most humid place I've ever been to," said Fr. Des as he sweated his way through Shikoku, Kyushu, Itami and Tokyo. Provincial Fr. Angelo SIANI accompanied him around the different districts.

Fr. Des spent some time visiting the Oblate missions in India and Bangladesh before coming here. He now boasts of having found the easiest way to secure a visa to countries that give missionaries the cold shoulder. It only cost him a 2dollar HK made fountain pen. However, something went wrong with his artifice when he was denied entrance to Taipei for not securing a visa. He had to fly straight to Manila two days ahead of schedule.

Learning the ropes is indeed taxing the new regional counsellor. "There are times when I wake up asking myself where I am," Fr. Des said. However, meeting the Oblates in their places of work and sharing their joys and pains are the only ways of knowing the region.

While visiting the different districts, Fr. Des briefed the groups particularly on what's going on in the congregation. His talks with the Oblates in turn briefed him on what's going on among individual Oblates.

With the tenacity of an Irish and the easiness of an Australian, Fr. Des left us with some challenges and some insights to think about.

What's Going On In the Congregation?

To ask the question what's going on in the congregation is tantamount to asking what's going on in the Church. Not that the two are the same questions but the realities within the congregation should always be seen in the context of what's going on in the Church as a whole.

Just to remind ourselves once more, the Church is always

divided into the charismatic and the institutional. Tension in the Church arises when the two factors are at work. The Church has seen an age when the institutional aspect became too strong resulting to paralization. On the otherhand, chaos brought about by too much stress on charism is an experience not unknown in the history of the Church.

Religious congregations themselves were results of a reaction to an age when the institutional aspect was too strong. The prophetic movement came as a response to a Church caught within a web of institutional structures. God, as it were, started tapping some people to give life to an institutionally atrophied Church. Hence, the rise of religious orders.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculat  were born under the same circumstances. Eugene de Mazenod having been touched by God gathered men around him to respond to a need in the Church.

"Routinization of charisma" was what happened to congregations when the pendulum swang from being too institutional to being too charismatic. Corruption characterized by departure from the original charism of the founder became a common painful experience among religious orders, the OMI included.

To succinctly describe the situation in the Church today, we can say that it is "dynamically uncomfortable" and "fruitfully confused."

#### On the Constitutions and Rules

Fr. Des outlined 3 main points that make the substance of the new text of the Constitutions and Rules, namely:

1. Personal Holiness - a constant evaluation of our relationship with God.
2. We are on mission to those marginalized - the marginalized are the poor, neglected by society and the Church.
3. We are a community on mission - we respond to our mission as a community not as individuals. Our commitment should be "Oblate," the congregation sends each of us to a mission.

Moreover, we are communities of support and we should not fear to actively express fraternal concern when called-for. For a example, a meal together is not enough to fulfill our responsibility in building a community of support. Camaraderie should not be mistaken for community. If we really share the same values, then we should not be afraid to express them actively.

We are also communities of faith, hence, some symbols, not semblance, of faith must be shown, eg, common prayer, celebrating Eucharist together, etc.

#### To the Oblates in Japan:

Fr. Des commented that we should look at each other's

mission more and support each other more. The marginalized are all over Japan and we must evaluate whether our work is infact reaching them.

Finally, CHALLENGE EACH OTHER!, for it is only in challenging each other that we grow in the understanding of our mission and our vocation as Oblates.

#### ANOTHER YEAR WITHOUT A RETREAT

First it was the cancellation of our request to use the Jesuit retreat house in Hiroshima. The Jesuits had to demolish the building to give way to newer facilities leaving us without a place to hold a retreat. Then came the sad news about our retreat master, Fr. Jim Sullivan, OMI, falling ill.

This is the second year in a row that the province will not gather for a retreat.

#### BIRTHDAYS

August 23 Ange SIANI  
31 Bert SILVER

September 6 John IWO  
20 John MAHONEY  
20 Fran HAHN

August - September: No ordination anniversary

NOTE: Next issue will be on the first week of October.  
Have a nice Summer!