

OMI INFORMATION

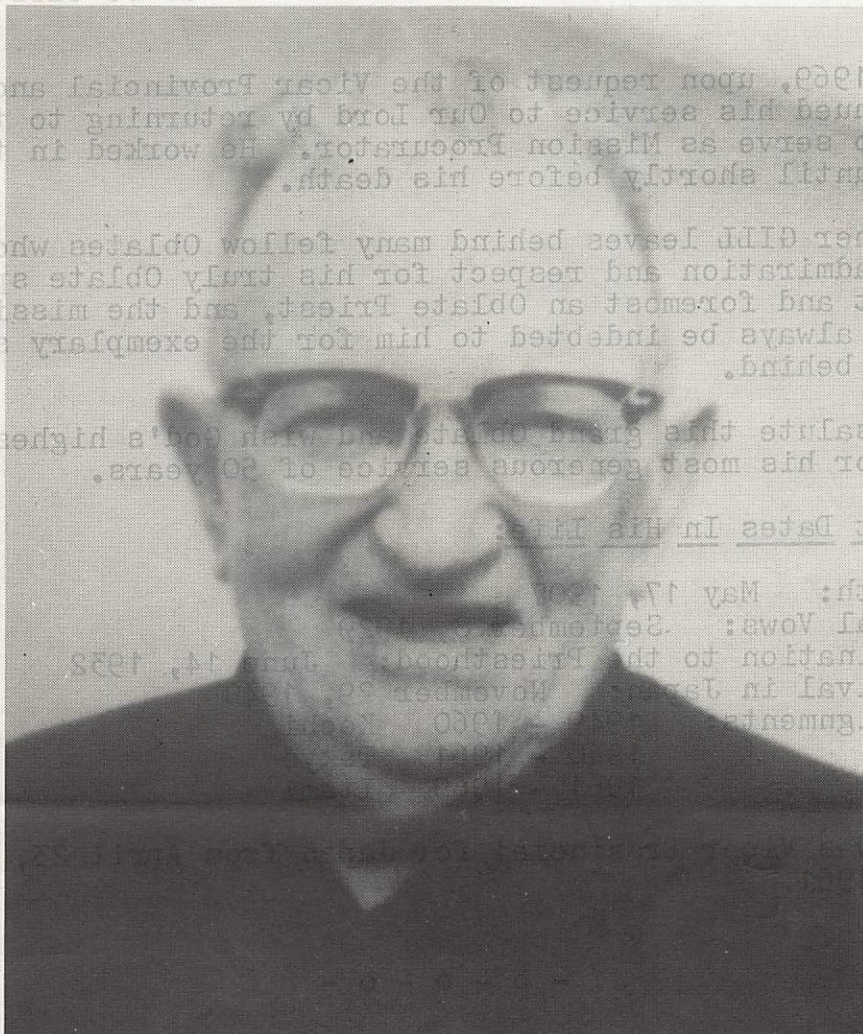
JAPAN

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

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

April, 1982

A T R I B U T E T O:



FATHER ROBERT J. GILL, O.M.I. FOUNDER OF THE JAPAN MISSION
by: Fr. Richard HARR, O.M.I.

On April 12th, God called Fr. Robert J. GILL, O.M.I. to his eternal rest. Father GILL had not been well for over 5 years; particularly so, the past year. Nevertheless, his undaunted spirit to work for the Lord kept him in parish work until a few

months prior to his death.

He was to honor his 50th anniversary in the priesthood on June 14th at St. Timothys's Church in Miami, Florida. These 50 years of service saw him in seminary work both as teacher and director in the minor seminary and as superior of the scholasticate in Washington, DC, for the duration of 16 years. In 1948, he along with 5 other pioneer Oblates, volunteered and received obediences for the new mission in Japan. For 21 years, his total interest and efforts were concentrated on the establishing of the Oblate Japanese missions and encouraging their growth. Today, thanks to his zealous efforts, there are 13 active foundations. The Oblate zeal and spirit of service he so well exemplified will always remain not only in the mortar of the various missions he built, but also in the hearts of the Oblates and the parishioners with whom he was so closely associated.

In 1969, upon request of the Vicar Provincial and Council, he continued his service to Our Lord by returning to the United States to serve as Mission Procurator. He worked in this capacity up until shortly before his death.

Father GILL leaves behind many fellow Oblates who are filled with admiration and respect for his truly Oblate spirit. He was first and foremost an Oblate Priest, and the mission in Japan will always be indebted to him for the exemplary spirit he has left behind.

We salute this grand Oblate and wish God's highest reward to him for his most generous service of 50 years.

Important Dates In His Life:

Birth: May 17, 1907
 Final Vows: September 8, 1929
 Ordination to the Priesthood: June 14, 1932
 Arrival in Japan: November 29, 1948
 Assignments: 1949 - 1960 Kochi
 1960 - 1961 Tokyo
 1961 - 1969 Itami

He was Vicar Provincial for Japan from April 23, 1948 to July 7, 1961.

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HOLY SPIRIT SEMINAR IN ITAMI: by Fr. Richard Harr, OMI

On February 14, a 7-week Holy Spirit Seminar got underway at Itami as the Lenten parish retreat. In 7 successive Sundays, from 1:30 to 4:00 P.M., over 200 registered people partook in the spiritual exercises. Speakers from outside the parish talked on such opportune subjects as: The Love of God; Salvation; The New Life; Receiving God's Gift; Praying for the Fulness of

the Spirit; Growth and Transformation in Christ. Bishop Kobayashi (Ret.) of Sendai was the most outstanding speaker of all. In a particular way, he has a special bond with the Itami Parish. While still a diocesan priest in Osaka, he used to conduct catechetical instructions in Itami before there was a parish established. His presence generates unusual interests among the Catholics.

Leaders came from all over Kansai (over 20 of them) to help out with individual guidance of the participants. It's worth noting that this was the largest amount of people ever to gather in Japan for such a seminar. It is felt that even more records will be made as 3 prayer groups form to pray for the parish and the people of the area.

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FATHER TOMAS MAHER - SILVER JUBILARIAN

Fr. Tom MAHER, ordained to the Priesthood on May 30, 1957, celebrates his 25th year in the ministry this year. Tom was a member of the Midwestern American Province before he came to Japan. One of Tom's main apostolates at the moment is a catechetical program based on knowing-oneself, knowing ones neighbor which leads to knowing God at the end. Participants in the programs are Catholics and those preparing for baptism. He calls the course "Dai Boken," (An Invitation to a Great Adventure) and has drawn many people since it was started.

A big celebration is being organized by the different groups with whom Tom works to honor him on his anniversary. Organizers are the Nakajimacho Parish Council, prison chaplains' group, teachers' group and the AA group. An anniversary Mass followed by a party will highlight the celebration to be held at the Nakajimachoo Kindergarten Hall on May 2.

Congratulations, Tom and many more years in the ministry!

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A MINISTER OF THE EUCHARIST FOR TOKUSHIMA PARISH
by: Fr. Ed WILLIAMS, O.M.I.

On Sunday, February 28th, Bishop Fukahori of Takamatsu Diocese, installed Mr. Nishikawa a full-time catechist at the Tokushima Church as Minister of the Eucharist. The ceremony, which consisted of questioning, laying on of hands, presenting of the alb, etc., took place before the whole parish.

The Bishop did this at the time to give Mr. Nishikawa and the people a chance to get accustomed to the meaning of the ministry before I depart for my homeleave to America. Mr. Nishikawa gave out communion with the Bishop that same day and does so along with me each Sunday.

While I am absent he will conduct Sunday services according to the experimental liturgy developed by the Bishop's Liturgical Commission for this situation, (Liturgy of the Word and Communion Service). Basically, it is the same as what is followed at Mass except that the Canon is omitted and of course there is no Mass.

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THE PLACE OF CHRIST IN ZEN... Some Reflections
by: Dick BONANG

During the recent congress, a couple of people asked me about Christianity and Zen. Upon returning to Kamakura, I was shown a letter which a friend had received from a retreat master about the place of Christ in "christian" Zen (or perhaps, more accurately, for a Christian doing Zen). After a spiritual journey of a year and a half, he finally answered her question. I found the words very helpful, so I quote here his introductory remarks.

In the course of Zen, there is no mediator. Because of this, it is not possible to introduce the thought of Christ into the void itself during this course. If this thought should be present, it must be cast aside, not because it is neither good nor holy, but simply because it is neither the time nor the place to think of Christ, no matter how much we may love him. So the Christian who takes the path of Zen must leave his Bible aside, he must put it on the shelf. He must also leave Christ on the roadside saying: "My God, I'm setting off on a great adventure... see you again at the end of the journey. But I'm leaving you now, aware that you are within me, much more so than you are near me, or with me. It will look as if I'm forgetting you. But the fact is quite the opposite; by leaving you on the wayside, I am showing that I believe in your presence within me, more profound than I am present to myself. It seems as if I am leaving you there, but it is an act of absolute Faith in your hidden presence within my innermost self. This presence, in which I believe, I trust, O Lord, that you will make me apprehend it at the end of this route of void, of darkness and of silence."

But it is clear that the Christian who follows the way of Zen must not leave aside the ordinary way of prayer and devotion to Christ. He must pass from one way to the other according to the desires of his heart.

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JOSE DE FRUYT WRITES FROM THE PHILIPPINES

"You won't believe this but I gave the sermon in the first Mass in Salaman on Palm Sunday. There were 5000 people in two

masses. A most beautiful collection of palms eagerly waving for a blessing. Getting up in the morning, accompanied by 500 crowing roosters was quite a concert, too."

"We are rounding-off our visit. Today we got a ride to Kidapawan with Bishop Orlando QUEVEDO. He is a warm and pleasant host and knows many in Japan. He came out with reminiscences of his years in Washington. Immediately after our arrival here, there was a concelebrated Mass with drums and guitars for the installation of more than 40 lay ministers. Many encounters and various trips slowly release the great mosaic of this mission. The Church is alive and articulated and in the midst of the post Vat. II transition. A spiritual Pentecost to all."

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SHE WAITED 25 YEARS

Adding to the Easter joy in Hikarigaoka parish were the baptisms of 8 adults during the Easter Vigil. The completed a year-long preparation. Four more babies were baptized the Sunday after Easter as they were too young to attend the usually long Easter Vigil.

Among the 8 who received Baptism was a grand old lady, Mrs. Nakanishi, 72 years old, whom everybody in the parish knows. She is no newcomer. She has been coming to Church for the past 25 years. Her daughter was also among the 8 who received Baptism that night.

Twenty five years ago, she asked her husband to allow her to receive Baptism but he was adamantly against the idea. She did not want to go against the will of her husband so she shelved the thought for sometime. The husband, who is a devoted Buddhist and brought up in the rigid Meiji tradition, believed that women must stay home all the time and should not even entertain the idea of going to church on Sundays.

She continued coming to church whenever she could and hoped that her husband would allow her one day to receive Baptism. She waited 25 years and never gave up. It was her husband who gave up to her persistence. Now, her husband would even prod her, "Gee, you move too slow, you'll be late for Mass."

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SICK LIST:

Bert SILVER escaped a bypass surgery but will have to be on medication for sometime after doctors discovered a defect in one of the four major valves of the heart. Bert is doing

pretty good with just three!

Jan VAN HOYDONCK will be under the knife at the Kaisei Hospital in Kobe for phlebitic infection.

Ray BOURGOIN is at Seibo Hospital in Tokyo for a series of tests after some kidney problem.

Except for Ray who is still in the hospital, all are doing fine and up and around. Take care and get well soon!

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URGENT REQUEST FROM THE PROVINCIAL:

The report requested by the Provincial (cf Provincial Letter, April 2) intended for the Asian Provincials' Meeting in November must be submitted not later than June 1st instead of September 1st as indicated in the letter. Reports should be forwarded to Ron LAFRAMBOISE in Itami.

BOOK AVAILABLE:

Catholic Beginnings in Natal and Beyond by J.B. Brian was sent by Fr. Albert DENKER, Provincial of the African Province of Natal.

A good section on the Founder and the pioneering works of the Oblates in Natal. If interested, call up the Provincial Office.

BIRTHDAYS/ ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Birthday: May 29 Tom MAHER

Ordination:	May 30, 1954	John MAHONEY
	30, 1957	Tom MAHER
	30, 1954	Bert SILVER
	31, 1965	Ange SIANI
	31, 1966	Dick BONANG

PROVINCIAL CONGRESS
March 21-24, 1982

OPENING REMARKS

by:

Fr. Angelo Siani, OMI
Provincial

It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to this Congress.

I would like to say a word of thanks to those who helped bring about this Congress. First, to the members of the committee; also to John Deely and Fran Hahn for accepting to be secretaries; to Jan Van Hoydonck for printing; Wency, Len and Mike for taking charge of leasure and Ron for accepting the difficult task of chairman.

The first task set before us since the General Chapter of 1980 is the work of interiorization of the Rules and Constitutions, what Father General called a "second conversion." In his homily on February 17, 1980, he said, "A second conversion is often more painful than the first because it penetrates to greater depths. It draws us out of attitudes and habits that are more firmly rooted, and it reveals to us our attachment to our own self and will, that we may never have suspected. If we want to put the Rules and Constitutions into serious practice, we will be called to make choices, difficult choices not only in regard to our works but first of all in regard to our way of seeing things and to deepen our commitment to the values expressed in our rule and the call to deepen our desire to give our lives totally to the service of the gospel.

We need therefore a spirit of prayer. We should realize we are men of prayer, looking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We need a sense of the importance of what we are doing here, for what we do here will have consequences on our mission for good or otherwise for years. If we work well it will certainly be a step forward for the mission and our work will produce an effect in the people to whom we are sent to bring the good news.

So we are not here only for ourselves but for the congregation, our community and for those with whom we work.

It is good and necessary for us to get together as Oblates. I am convinced that here in Japan our life and our work are directly influenced by the quality of our community life. I am aware that many find community with those with whom they work and this is necessary... to be attached to our people for then we are close to Christ who came to serve. Yet still we need Oblate time together... time for learning acceptance, get-

ting rid of prejudices, showing concern and growing together. I don't think it's a waste of time for us to be together for we achieve unity in our life only in and through Jesus Christ.

In the task which lies ahead of us in these few days, the big red-letter word is mission, Christ invites us to follow him and to share in His mission. We are not here merely for self fulfillment but to be a cooperator in the work of Christ, therefore, we are missioned by the Church through the congregation.

The hope is that we will come up with some concrete recommendations for the council for something we will commit ourselves to as a missionary community, because we feel it is important for us now. It is only important that we be together with open minds, open hearts and open ears, to listen to what the Spirit is calling us today. What is the Spirit prodding us to? If indeed the Spirit is active in our world and in our conscience, to refuse attention to those promptings is to remain closed in on ourselves and so to sin against that Spirit. To be open, to listen, wherever the Spirit moves, is to grasp hope for the O.M.I.'s to become what they can be!



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May, 1982

FR. EDWARD WILLIAMS, O.M.I. - 25 YEARS IN PRIESTHOOD

It will be 25 years in the Priesthood for Fr. Ed WILLIAMS this year. He was ordained on June 7, 1957. Ed is home to celebrate his 25th with his family, friends and former classmates. Before he left for vacation he had an early jubilee celebration in his own parish in Tokushima on Easter Sunday and another in Itami where he served as pastor for some years.

Ed was a member of the Eastern American Province before he came to Japan. He said his final vows on September 8, 1955.

His assignments include Naruto 1960-61; Okinawa U.S. Army June-Sept. 1961; Itami 1961-62; Hikarigaoka 1962-68; Nakajima-cho 1968; Itami 1968-80; Tokushima 1980 to present.

CONGRATULATIONS Ed and many more years in the Lord's service!

CATHOLIC CHURCH INTRODUCTION COURSE IN TOKUSHIMA by ED WILLIAMS

We held a five meeting series to introduce the Catholic Church to people who were interested. The advertising for it was taken care of by two small items in the Tokushima Shimbun (one written two weeks before, one about five days before the opening night). In addition we gave out printed flyers 10 to each adult Catholic and asked them to distribute them whenever possible.

The five meetings were as follows:

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|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Jesus Christ | (Speaker) Nakatome Sensei |
| 2. Catholic Church | Bishop Fukahori |
| 3. Bible | Fr. Ed Williams |
| 4. Catholic Liturgy | Sr. Takabayashi |
| 5. Catholic Life | Nishikawa Sensei |

The content was very simple, very general, aimed at answering questions ordinary people might have.

The format was as follows: (Saturday Night)

7:30 - 7:50	Video Bible, Life of Christ
7:50 - 8:50	Talk
8:50 - 9:30	Tea and Questions

Eleven people, average age about 40 attended, 5 men and 6 women. Most had some slight connection with Catholicism, i.e. one had a Catholic aunt, another had attended the high-school beside our church (graduated 17 years ago), two were Protestants (a university professor and his wife), one lady was a Catholic from Naruto, another man had an elder sister buried in our mausoleum, one older woman had a Catholic son and daughter.

Once the series was ended (it ran for five successive Saturdays Feb. 20-March 20) we took a poll by mail asking various questions about timing, content, delivery, should we hold such course every year, etc. So far 9 people have mailed in replies. One man was disappointed with content. All the others seem extremely happy and all asked to be sent invitations to Christmas, bazaar, etc. (this was one of the questions on the questionnaire).

In addition to the questionnaire we sent separately an introduction to a Catholic doctrine series of 27 lectures to begin Saturday night April 17th. So far five have applied to attend this including the two Protestants who were in the Introduction Course. This series will end in mid-December. Anyone attending that and Mass who is considering becoming a Catholic can begin the baptism preparation with an introduction to the community late in the year and then immediate preparation for Baptism next Holy Saturday.

This catechism course will also be taught by the various members of the team here, with Nishikawa Sensei making sure of continuity and over all preparations.

For this course we took a fee of 2500 yen per person. Everyone was given a Bible (N.T. Franciscan version) plus a number of printed pages, etc.

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TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CHURCH STAFF IN TOKUSHIMA
by Fr. Ed WILLIAMS

Each Thursday in Tokushima we devote to study and preparation. We meet from 9:30 in the morning to 4:00 in the afternoon. About 25 times a year, every 5th or 6th time is a retreat day arranged and led by one of us in turn. The members include myself, Nishikawa Sensei, Nakatome Sensei, the Sisters (two from the girls' dormitory) and Sasaki Ken.

We would like to extend it more but for now only people who can give the entire day are able to attend.

Usually the morning is taken up with study consisting of the Bible, Church History, the local church history, demography of Tokushima, letters of instructions from Rome, etc. The morning is usually divided into two classes. We open with Lauds at 9:30 and close the morning with None at 11:50. We lunch together and start the afternoon at 1:00.

In the afternoon we schedule one study hour, then the remaining two hours are used for preparation of different courses we give, events in the Church, etc. Sometime this year we intend to visit the various Protestant churches in and around the city.

At times we have other people in to help us. Makino Sensei gave us a whole day on the history of Tokushima Church.

The above arrangements give us at least a little study, especially the one who is preparing a class learns something. All of us take part in teaching each other.

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THE OBLATE CATECHISTS by Fr. Ed WILLIAMS

The Oblate catechists, (there are five of them), have been meeting for some two years now. These meetings have now taken the following form.

We meet twice a year. One meeting is a business meeting. The other meeting is a study meeting one year, and a retreat the other.

This year our business meeting was held in Itami in January. All the pastors who are working with catechists were also invited and all, except one, were present in January. At the former meeting the Provincial and both councillors were in attendance. The Provincial has attended all the meetings so far.

What Is Discussed

In the past questions of salary have come up.

Recently the question of retirement age for our catechists have repeatedly asked that a date be set. The Provincial Council is still weighing this request.

Another item discussed was the idea that as fulltime Church workers the catechists also needed retreats, just as priests and religious do. This led to the resolution to provide time for the catechists' retreat each year- one year in private at any time, place, type of retreat desired- the alternate year the retreat will be held in common.

Still another item discussed was continuing study. Most

of our catechists have had no substantial training since they left catechists' school, in most cases, 20 years ago. A double approach was taken to this problem. One help is the study meeting to be held henceforth in alternating years. Another is something like a Sabbatical year- an opportunity for long range study whether in Japan or abroad every 6 or 7 years. Given the number of our catechists (5 and 1 in training) this means about one a year. This latter request has been granted in principle by the Provincial and his council. How it will be implemented remains to be seen.

Another item that is discussed at every meeting and in some ways is most profitable is better ways of doing things. We always exchange experiences in our work and the pluses and minuses of the various catechetical/Bible courses (100 week Bible Course, the Columban Course, Bethel Bible Course, the Charismatic Seminar, etc.). This sharing has proven very helpful to at least some of us in planning and carrying out things worthwhile for the building of the Church in our various missions.

One final item under consideration is the question of how to enlist, inspire and educate a much wider variety of people ministering in the apostolate, from Sunday school teachers who only can give an hour or so a week to people who can give many days or hours, to people who might be able to give pre-marital instructions, the whole vast range of possibilities. This last item is looming larger and larger in our meetings of late.

Our next business meeting is in January next year. Each man attending has been asked to bring some consideration on the Sunday Mass as celebration by the community, as community builder and as the Mass which sends us forth to make better world, etc.

In August, in Kochi, Fr. Tom Maher and Nishikawa Sensei will give a three day study meeting on the Columban Course. Fr. Maher has extensive experience with this. Nishikawa Sensei has received the training courses and gone through the series once.

For your consideration I append the names, ages and length in the apostolate of our catechists:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Started Apostolate</u>
Aki	Kondo Sensei	63	1960
Nakajimacho	Kido Sensei	55	1960
Itami	Kanzaki Sensei	59	1958
Hikarigaoka	Tsunoda Sensei	44	1961
Tokushima	Nishikawa Sensei	31	1975
Tokushima	Sasaki Ken	27	

Mr. Sasaki is just beginning his training. He lived at the rectory in Itami for about 7 years. We hope next Spring to be able to send him to Eichi University. Money for his

maintenance and education is coming from the Eastern American Province at present. The deficit is being covered by the Japanese Province.

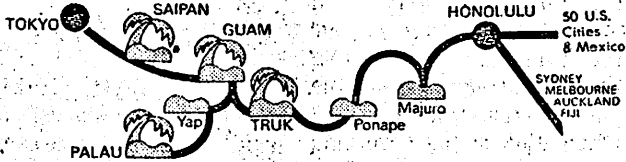
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TODAY'S MICRO PHRASE

Mu-byō sokusai

I'm fit as a fiddle after seven days in
Saipan. Just as brown, too.

J. K. Mahoney, O.M.I., Kochi





CONTINENTAL
AIR MICRONESIA

7-100 SUITE 242 KOKUSAI BLDG., 1-1, MARUNOUCHI 3-CHOME, CHIYODA-KU, TOKYO

See your travel agent
or call (03) 592-1631
GSA for **EASTERN**

Ed.'s Note: This is not a paid ad nor did John Mahoney really spend a week in Saipan. This was John's entry to Mainichi Daily's "Today's Micro Phrase" contest.

BIRTHDAYS AND ORDINATIONS

Birthdays - None

Ordinations:	June 2	Dick HARR
	7	Ed WILLIAMS
	14	John IWO
	14	Ien INUI
	24	Mike YAMAZAKI
	28	Jose DE FRUYT



OBLATE FATHERS

ST. TIMOTHY'S
5400 S. W. 102 Avenue
Miami, Florida 33165
Phone: 274-8224

23 April 1982

Dear Friend of Father Gill:

You might have heard already that Father Gill was called home by God on Easter Monday. I had been with him Easter Sunday and together we recited the Rosary and I received his blessing. At that time Father Bob made an offering of his life to Almighty God as an oblation for the health and protection of the Holy Father and for the apostolic works of the Oblate Fathers.

I stayed with Father Gill until 4 A.M. He had received Holy Communion and the anointing of the sick. He was a bit restless in the early evening but went into a deep sleep. I left the hospital at 4:00 AM and he breathed his last at 7:03 AM. His death was quiet and peaceful.

Easter Saturday, he opened some of his mail and read it. I brought it home from the hospital and I am returning it to you. I am sure that you are pleased that Father Bob realized, on the last day of his life in this world, that you were thinking of him and grateful for his friendship. I am sure that it was a great joy and consolation to him. May he rest in peace and continue to pray for all of us who loved and admired him.

God bless you

Patrick F. Healy, OMI
Pastor

Ed.'s Note: This letter was sent by Fr. Pat Healy to the friends of the late Fr. Gill. It is being reprinted here incase you had written to him before his death.

Fr. Healy's letter serves as a rejoinder to Fr. Gill's unanswered correspondences.