

## Greetings from the Christmas Committee Team

Advent is coming to a close and next week we gather in Kochi to celebrate our annual Delegation Christmas. The team held a meeting yesterday and finalized our Christmas together in Kochi. Enclosed is a brief outline:

**(Dates: December 26-27)** - Attendance 20

\*\* Main Menu:

- Sushi, Osechi-ryōri (お節料理), Pizza, Chicken Potato Salad, Desert

\*\* International Sub-Menu: (optional) each country bring a sample of one dish which would be eaten on Christmas Day in their country. This is not the main course, just a taste sharing of food. This can be done individually or by the group.

The more, the merrier!

- Japan: (main Menu), India, Sri Lanka/Jaffna, Philippines, USA (Chicken Potato Salad), Korea

### **[December 26]:**

- arrival: afternoon/evening
- no meals, 3 restaurants within walking distance
- contact Iru for lodging (optional)

### **[December 27]:**

#### **- MORNING:**

- free (shopping/sightseeing, visiting, etc)
- breakfast: coffee and pastries available at the house
- The kitchen is open to those who want to prepare their country's Christmas dish in Kochi. A supermarket is located 10 minutes from Church for necessities.

#### **- AFTERNOON:**

- (noon): lunch together at a restaurant in Kochi.
- (pm 2-3:30): prepare table, etc for evening meal. Volunteers needed.

- (pm 4): Liturgy - Theme is LIFE

Mass: main celebrant - Bishop

Gospel - Deacon

Homily - Bradly

Christmas Community Singing Director - Yagi

- (pm 5-6): social hour - drinks and snacks

**- EVENING:**

- (pm 6) Christmas Party

- (pm 7:30) clean up. We ask for your participation and that all leftover be taken home with you when you leave. Doggie bags available.

- (pm 8+) Social Hour and Activity

**[December 28]:**

- breakfast: coffee and pastries available at the house

- those wanting to come earlier or stay an extra day or so, notify Iru for lodging.

***We wish you a blessed and prayerful Christmas, filled with the joy of the season. Also have a happy New Year, but before that we look forward to seeing you in Kochi.***

**God Bless**

**Iru, Jude and Jerry**

**Christmas Committee Team 2018**

## **Christmas Party in Kochi**

Once again, OMI community in Japan gathered for their yearly Christmas party which was held on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

This year our delegation Superior and the council decided on creating an organizing committee to set up the Christmas Party. Jerry Novotny, Irudayaraj and myself, Jude Peirisulle were put in charge. After discussing the matter, we decided to give a different color to the gathering this year. As the venue, it was decided to have it in Kochi as it is our custom to gather here and the facilities are good. We agreed to have it on the 27<sup>th</sup>, with everyone coming on the evening of the 26<sup>th</sup> and leaving on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, we would have mass instead of the annual prayer service. The big difference this year was the food. Since we are from various countries, why not have the men make a dish representing their country, of course the main being Kochi ryori (food). The reason for doing this was to spend more time together instead of rushing to a hotel for the meal.

The guys arrived in Kochi on 26<sup>th</sup> from different parts of Japan and Korea. The following day, we decided to go out for lunch as a community. Since the morning was free, some members took the opportunity to visit Nangoku cemetery where a number of our senior Oblates are resting. Even though this was not on the agenda, it was a fine gesture and hopefully if we can include it into our agenda in the future.

Personally, the team thought the gathering was a big success. Instead of one meal representing each country, many took the initiative to make a dish themselves and ended up with a variety of food, more than what we needed.

After everybody finished the meal, each one got a doggy bag for the leftover food which they took back home with them. Then they enjoyed the cleaning and dish washing where the community spirit and family atmosphere were experienced. Our Christmas theme this year was 'Life', beginning with our community gathering, celebrating Mass and enjoying the moment of being together as one Oblate family.

Rather than organizing the social hour in the evening, we had fun just sitting around one table in the dining room, sharing stories, laughing and expressing our feeling about Christmas and other topics. Though Bishop Suwa Eijiro, Bishop of Takamatsu diocese could not make it to the party, he was represented by Fr. Matsunaga, parish priest of Bancho Church, a good friend of Oblates, and deacon Nishikawa, a long-standing supporter of the Oblates. They joined the Christmas party and made it colorful with their sharing and humor.

The next morning, the guys departed for their respective missions. Hopefully the organizing team for next year will build on this year's atmosphere of celebrating a Christmas centered on Christ and a genuine Oblate community spirit.

As the writer for this article, I take the opportunity to thank Jerry and Iru for their hours of preparation and to all those who joined the gathering with their presence and their contribution. I end this write-up by saying that this year's Christmas gathering was a "brotherhood shared" gathering.

Jude Peirisulle OMI





