

The Far East Star

OMI Japan & Korea Biannual Newsletter

Summer Issue
25

2015



We were privileged to have our Superior General with us.

General writs to the Oblates in Japan



MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE The Superior General

Casa Generalizia – Via Aurelia, 290 – 00165 Roma, Italia
Phone: (39.06) 39.87.71 – Email: lougen@omigen.org

L.J.C. et M.I.

Dear Brother Oblates of Japan and Korea,

Blessings to each of you

I would like to thank Father

Wency, Father Maurizio and all of you for the warm welcome that you extended to me during my visit. I was very happy to be among you for a week. It is true that it could have been longer as I did not get to see every ministry site and Oblate house in Japan. In this way there is a good excuse to return so that I may visit the places I missed this time!

I am very grateful for the time we spent together in a free exchange of ideas. You really gave me a lot of opportunities to express myself and my concerns. I thank you for missionary lives and your generous commitment in the context of your diverse realities in which you are ministering. You are doing many good works of solidarity with the local Church, the poor and those who suffer. I want to recognize and affirm this as very Oblate.

My overall impression is that in two very different countries you are seeking to live the Oblate charism with faithfulness. In Japan, our Congregation is generously ministering in parishes and this is a very great need of the local Church. You are also seeking to make the Gospel present through the kindergartens, ministry with youth, outreach to migrants, the homeless and prisoners. The Oblates in Japan are making a journey toward a greater commitment to apostolic community. This is very positive and must be continually fostered. In the midst of a difficult mission, you are living the vow of perseverance with great faithfulness.

In Korea we have a very different situation. The Oblates do not have any parish structures since the local Church is able to staff the parishes with diocesan clergy. Thus we are blessed to live our charism as religious missionaries outside the normal parochial framework. You have responded well to this challenge by your life in apostolic community and by showing God's preferential love for the homeless, the stranger, the youth and the sick. You have a good vocational outreach and young Koreans are becoming Oblates. This is indeed a great blessing!

While affirming these good aspects of your life and mission, I also invite you in the spirit of the 2010 General Chapter to seek continually "a profound personal and community conversion to Jesus Christ." Where is the Lord calling you to a deeper

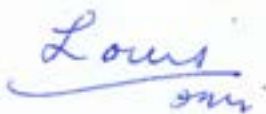


life? I would say that the challenges I find around the Oblate world are the same in Japan-Korea are similar: to have a mission statement expressing a vision with a few priorities that are formulated with the participation of everyone and owned by the leadership and members; to live together physically in communities and to foster a meaningful way of life as brother Oblates sharing a communion of life; to review the way we live the vow of poverty by sharing all we receive and by fostering a simple lifestyle; and to have personal lives grounded in a commitment to prayer according to our Constitutions and Rules.

Dare to think differently about vocations and proactively invite young men to join us. Give priority to good formation programs. Continue to foster your relationship with the laity through MAMI and missionary collaborators. Be creative in deepening your ties with the Congregation, the sense of belonging to a world-wide Congregation.

I pray to Mary Immaculate, the model and guardian of our consecrated life, for all of you so that you grow in greater faithfulness to the Oblate charism. I ask Saint Eugene de Mazenod to set you on fire with zeal for the salvation of the poor and with immense charity for one another. Once again, thank you for the warm welcome and great Oblate hospitality I enjoyed while among you. With my prayer for you and my love which is that of a brother and a father.

In Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,



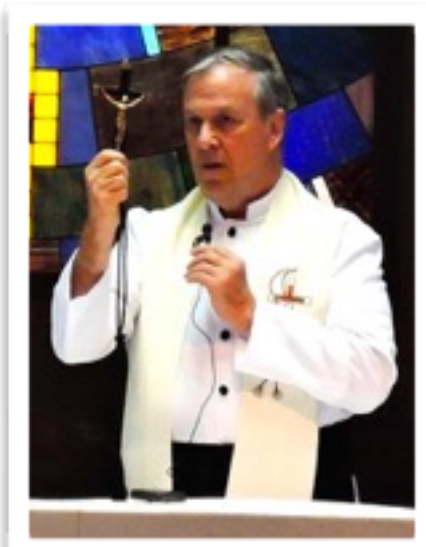
Father Louis Lougen, OMI
Rome, April 7, 2015



From the desk of delegation Superior

- By Wency Laguidao omi -

THANKS FOR THE VISIT, FR. LOUIE!



Time flies! Almost three months have passed since the Superior General, Fr. Louie LOUGEN came to visit the Delegation (March 16 to 20 in Japan and March 20 to 27 in Korea). His visit coincided with the 25th year of the foundation of the Korean Mission in

1990. The original two members of the mission were Vincenzo BORDO and Mauro CONCARDI (Rome). They were later joined by Giovanni ZEVOLA and Maurizio GIORGIANNI, and after that, members from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, etc. The first Korean Oblate Anselmo RYU HIGU was ordained in 2008. The Korean Mission has taken small steps forward since its inception with the ordination of two more Korean priests, first Peter HONG, and then Samuel HONG, who now works in Kenya. There are two scholastics studying in Rome, two pre-novices in Sri Lanka and an aspirant. We wish the Korean Mission good luck in the years ahead. May the Lord of the Harvest bless the mission with vocations and help its members find their rightful place in the Korean Church and society.

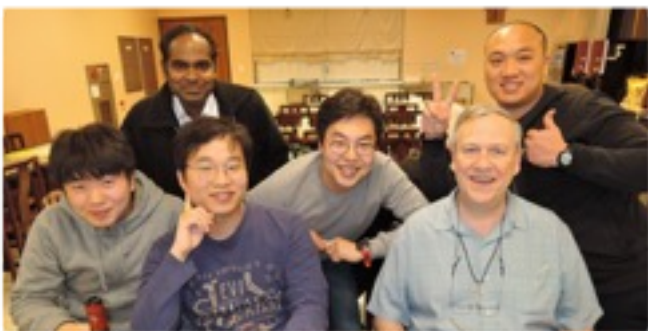


particularly the efforts of an American foundation to alleviate the plight of the large number of TB patients through education and proper medication.

Father General gave a series of talks on the state of the congregation in preparation for the next General Chapter and the 200th anniversary of the congregation culminate in 2016. He made himself available for individual consultations and gave us very helpful insights on how the General Administration sees the present and the future prospects of the Delegation and Mission.



He also had some light moments with the whole group over informal meetings like the regular evening drinks, and especially during a special dinner to celebrate the Korean Mission's 25 years of existence.



The visit of the Superior General also coincided with the annual Spring Meeting of the Delegation. We invited Fr. Jerry Hammond MM for the second time to give us some input on the situation in North Korea,





Fr. General with Mick Yamasaki, a senior Japanese Oblate, confined to his room due to his bad health.

JOON BIN and John JUNG BO YOUNG who join 8 others from the Colombo and Jaffna Provinces. I was a bit worried whether the two would survive because of the intense heat, different food, etc, but the two of them



assured me with the words: "Father, remember that we went through two years of very tough military training!"



General with the kids in Oblates run- Kindekarten



John LIM JOON BIN and John JUNG BO YOUNG and Pre Novices in Mannar, Sri Lanka

ANOTHER VISIT TO SRI LANKA

I have visited Sri Lanka a few times in the past but the last trip was a bit different. My usual host, guide and driver whenever I go to Sri Lanka is an old friend, Angelo WIJEWICKRAMA, pastor of Fatima Church. This time, I was able to visit the Pre Novitiate in Mannar (which was inaccessible during the war) and the Novitiate in Bandarewala. We have two Korean pre-novices, John LIM

From Mannar, we drove for about 8 hours to the Novitiate in beautiful and scenic Bandarewala to visit mainly our lone novice, John OSHIRO (John SUH SU KIN). There are a total of 26 novices under the able Frs. Roshan and Anthony. The novitiate year ends in August.



Worth mentioning is the lovely scenic view of Bandarewala, which perhaps was the reason why the whole country was named “Sri Lanka!” The Oblate property is on top of a mountain that used to be a tea plantation, enveloped by fog and clouds during the night. Cool air, unpolluted surroundings, quiet and pristine greenery, etc. What else can one ask for! The place was originally owned by a Protestant minister who wanted to sell the place to a religious group and it was purchased by the Oblates. I slept in the “Provincial’s bedroom” which they say was used by the late Lord Mountbatten, a friend of the minister, whenever he visited Sri Lanka.

JOHN KEVIN DEELY, 1941 – 2015



Jack DEELY’s battle with the dreaded disease, ALS, started about two years ago. It entailed a lot of pain and suffering since it is a disease characterized by the slow deterioration of bodily muscles. Thanks to the excellent health and old-age insurance in Japan that Jack was able to avail of, his suffering was somehow eased and lessened. But, it was heart-wrenching to watch him lose his motor skills slowly, starting with the arms and fingers which ironically were his tools for communication in the work he loved to do so much, sign language. He was the VOICE for those who could not talk and he was the EARS for many who could not hear. His



One of the members from “Jack’s group” express her experience and gratitude in sign language at the funeral.

undying motto was: “LET US LISTEN WITH OUR HEARTS.” (Just imagine the number of people on the

Jack was the VOICE for those who could not talk and he was the EARS for many who could not hear. His undying motto was: “LET US LISTEN WITH OUR HEARTS.”

train with earphones plugged into their ears!) I was at the hospital on the morning of the day he died but rushed home to make the necessary preparations knowing the end was near. He expired surrounded by the loving care of the Christo Roi sisters of Gotemba and three of his Hansenite friends. One sang the Ave Maria and a few Japanese lullabies while Jack was breathing his last. What a lovely way to die, I thought! Jack is survived by three brothers and sisters-in-law, about 50+ nephews, nieces, grand nephews and nieces, not to mention many cousins, etc. They say that Jack’s visits to the U.S. would always be occasions for the whole clan to gather at their property in New Jersey.



Oblates surround Late Jack to sing Salve Regina

There is a Memorial Mass for Jack scheduled to be held at Sophia University in Tokyo on June 24th. The family is planning a Memorial Mass in Virginia, USA sometime after the summer. Jack will finally be interred at the place he loved so much, the Catholic cemetery in Gotemba on August 17.



Letter from General to the Oblates in Korea



MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE The Superior General

Casa Generalizia – Via Aurelia, 290 – 00165 Roma, Italia
Phone: (39.06) 39.87.71 – Email: lougen@omigen.org

L.J.C. et M.I.

Rome, 14 May 2015

To,

Fr. Maurizio Giorgiani, OMI
Mission Superior,
OMI Community, Imok-dong 251-2, Jangan-gu,
Suwon, 440-310, South Korea.

Dear Father Maurizio, Father Vincenzo, Father Anselmo, Father Shitol,
Father Pedro;

Dear Members of the Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate;

Dear Young Men who are considering a vocation with the Missionary
Oblates of Mary Immaculate:

Blessings to all of you!

As you gather to celebrate the feast of Saint Eugene de Mazenod and the
silver anniversary of the Oblate presence in Korea, our hearts are lifted in
praise and gratitude to God for this opportunity to serve his Kingdom and
the Church in your beloved country of Korea.

The Church in Korea is blessed with strong diocesan structures and many
vocations to the diocesan priesthood. In a wonderful way the Oblates
have found our charismatic place in the local Church. While working in
close communion with the Bishops and local parish priests, you are living
the Oblate charism in faithful service to those least touched by the
ordinary pastoral labors of the Church. You witness to the Oblate charism
by ministering to immigrants, refugees, the homeless, the sick, prisoners
and young people.

At this jubilee time of the Oblate presence in Korea and as we celebrate
the Oblate Triennium, I encourage you to renew your commitment to life in
apostolic community and to your life of prayer, both individually and
communally. Community life and prayer ensure the quality and efficacy of
your ministry and are prophetic signs to the society in which you live.

At this time jubilee, I ask God, through the intercession of Mary Immaculate and Saint Eugene de Mazenod, to bless each one of you and your ministry. May God draw you close together in community life with the charity Saint Eugene called us to live. May you be witnesses that God is everything through your lives of prayer. May God continue to attract young Korean men who wish to embrace our way of life. May God bless all those who have been so generous to the mission, especially the members of the Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate and the many lay people who have assisted you and supported you. May our Mother, Mary Immaculate, always be the model and protector of your consecrated life.

With my prayers and love for each of you at this jubilee time and always.
Congratulations!

Your brother Oblate in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Father Louis Lougen, O.M.I.

Father Louis Lougen, OMI
Superior General

*I pray that mission
may continue to
flourish and prosper!*



25th Anniversary of the Korean Mission

By Maurizio omi

This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary since the first two missionaries, Fr. Bordo Vincenzo and Fr. Concardi Mauro, from the former Italian Province, arrived in Korea.



The mission was opened on May 12, 1990 and I arrived 2 and a half years later in January with many dreams and most of all with many hairs. Some hairs have gone; some dreams became true and some dreams still remain.

The celebration of the 25th anniversary is a celebration of the love of God for us. Last April we had the celebration of the 25th anniversary among the Oblates. The father General came to visit Korea and we took the occasion to have our spring meeting of the delegation in Korea. It was a moment of fraternity and joy to have all the delegation together. Though for several reasons the mission had moments of trials. The cross of Jesus is always at the center of our mission even when we want to avoid that.

For me personally it was a special gift to have the father General here, to be able to share and listen to his experience. Fr. Louis visited our living and working places, encouraging everybody. He also gave us some challenges to which we have to respond. The 25th anniversary is a moment of thanksgiving but also a moment of renewal and of new start.



Fr. General came to visit the migrant center of Gwangju, where I minister to the migrants. We had Sunday mass together and the migrants were fascinated by his words. An important moment was when Fr. Louis showed the Oblate cross of St. Eugene to the migrants and invited them to express their devotion and love to the cross of Jesus. Many formed a line to kiss the cross



and receive the blessings. Someone share with me that he was in tears of happiness kissing the cross that belonged to St. Eugene.

After the General left Korea, the Oblates in Korea had the celebration of the 25th with the people in a parish close to our community house. About 300 people and some of the religious participated in the mass presided by Bishop Matthias of Suwon diocese.



For me it was a very emotional moment to see all those persons and especially to see some of them that were also with us 25 years ago. Those people loved us when we were just young priests and without anything. They loved us and they continue to love us not for what we do but for what we are. I was moved on seeing our young Korean Oblates, their love for Saint Eugene and their commitment to the mission. They are the dream that came true and they will also be the Oblates who will help the mission to reach other dreams.



The hairs have gone but the mission and the love is still here, thanks to our brothers, Oblates of the delegation, thanks to God and Saint Eugene.

Daring missionary journey – 25 years!

By Clement Waidyasekara omi

General Councillor for the Region of Asia-Oceania



The Oblate Mission in South Korea celebrates the 25th anniversary of its foundation. Blessings and prayerful wishes!

Among other objectives, this Mission was initiated with a vision, and a hope that one day the Oblate ‘presence’ will be extended to North Korea. It’s a bold and challenging vision, believing that our God is a God of surprises.

The ‘refusal’ challenged and energized the Oblates to make breakthroughs in their missionary endeavors

The pioneer Italian Oblate missionaries entered South Korea in 1989. They did not have an easy time sailing in their missionary journey. The mission did not begin under the best of circumstances. The initial welcome the young pioneering Italian missionaries received from the civil society and the local church was ‘refusal.’ The traditional parish-priest centered church and

economically advanced society did not need any assistance of men from foreign soil.

This similar situation was faced by some other religious congregations in South Korea. After a series of discussions, reflection with other religious congregations and also with much prayer and reflection, the Oblates came to the realization that ‘refusal’ was an opportunity to launch into doing evangelization in a “new way.” Thus, they started their missionary journey trusting in the blessings and guidance of the Lord of history.

Today, the Oblates have realized that what happened in their history was a blessing in disguise. The refusal challenged and energized the Oblates to make breakthroughs in their missionary endeavors and reach those men, women and children who are in the ‘peripheries.’ In short, Oblate ministry *in totum* is centered serving the neediest, the lonely, the abandoned, and the homeless in this affluent country, South Korea.

Oblates have been blessed with vocations. The Mission has three local Oblate priests, two scholastics and a few postulants. Even in the beginning stages of Oblate history in Korea, the mission has already kept to the missionary character of the Congregation by sending its first missionary to Kenya.

I must mention that we cannot forget the fact that some time back the Congregation’s general leadership had been discerning to close down this mission. *Why should Oblates be there?* Yet, the Mission has journeyed for the past 25 years with courage and determination. Oblate missionaries to Korea and the Korean Oblates themselves have many reasons to be proud of their presence and their missionary endeavors.



Memories of the Korean Mission

By Ciao Mauro omi

We are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Korean Mission. “We.” Yes, “we.” With you all I deeply feel part of this very special anniversary of the Korean Mission. As you can imagine, I treasure in my heart many memories of the Korean Mission.

Firstly, my arrival with Vincenzo in May 1990. The ride with the Franciscan Friars and some friends from the old Kimpo Airport of Seoul to the Franciscan Convent, that housed us for almost two years. It was late in the evening when we arrived on that day of May of 25 years ago, but the first and only thing that Vincenzo and I did, before going to bed after almost 24 hours of travel, was to celebrate Mass. And I think it was the best thing to do and the best way to start the Mission. And then I treasure the language school worries and joys.

I remember, 25 years ago, the first impressions and the difficulties to move in and understand a context very different from our culture, traditions and habits.

I recall the search for a new place to stay after we could no longer sojourn with the Franciscans and the even more difficult search for a place “in the Korean Church and Society”: “how can we live our Oblate Charism in Korea and with the Korean People?” was the question that helped us in this search. Not all moments were easy. But that is part of life. What I treasure more in my heart are the people. First of all the Oblates of Korea and Japan. The Oblates of Korea, who joined Vincenzo and I after our arrival in 1990. Then the Oblates of Japan who were all unknown to us, but from the very first visit to Japan at the end of August 1990 for the annual retreat, I felt their true love for us and oblate friendship and brotherhood. I will never forget the time spent to “talk and talk” until late in the night during the our gatherings or the Spring Meetings in Kochi and Fukuoka and the young Koreans that joined our Oblate Community to live with us the Oblate charism. Nor do I forget the many Korean People who have loved us and supported us for 25 years! I thank God with you and pray with you for Korea and for the people that have been part of our Mission. Knowing that only the love we were able to give and that we have received will last and be treasured not only in my heart, but in a special way in God and in Heaven forever.

General Visits Naruto; Few shots



Fr.General with Bro.Yagi omi & youth



Casual chat with the Teachers of the Oblate Kindergarten



General having Japanese Tea with the Oblates

General's visit and the urge for conversion

By Fr. Peter Hong OMI

Last March, we had delightful moments since The Superior General, Fr. Louis Lougen came to visit the Korean Oblate community for the Silver-Jubilee of the establishment of Oblate Korean mission. Also, he gave a talk to the members of the Japan-Korea delegation when the Oblates in Japan came to Korea for our Spring meeting. We experienced the Oblateness together. Although he was really busy, he was generous in giving time for individual meetings with each young Oblate in Korea.

I used to think that the Superior General was really far away from me. Not consciously, I adopted the general model of a business corporation when I was thinking about the hierarchy of the religious life. Probably, this kind of prejudice may have been caused by former experiences from the hierarchy such as a military service where the term 'general' is originated. In my prejudice, the Superior General was like a military officer and I was like a person who had to serve in a region like a soldier. Even if something wrong happens, I had no way to resist against the authority at all.



Fr. Peter with General

But, when I met him, my skeptical idea was seriously challenged. I had to rethink my former prejudice in order to embrace the new image of hierarchy. He was just like my father. I could talk to him so openly and he showed feeling for me. His visit was for me was comparable to Pope Francis' visit to Korea for the beatification of 124 martyrs in 2014.



St. Eugene's cross is being kissed

It was not just my experience that was special. When the Superior General celebrated Mass with the MAMI members in Korea, many Koreans shared just what I had experienced from him. They shed tears when the general

MAMI members in Korea, dropped tears when the general asked them to kiss on the Eugene's Oblate cross.

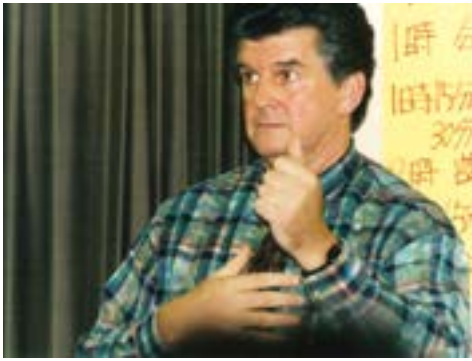
asked them to kiss Eugene's Oblate cross. It was so powerful that they experienced healing moments.

This year, we have celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the establishment of the Korean mission. Externally it looks like a festival. But, internally, we are undergoing a number of problems such as a lack of personnel. Even though we have a good number of students and candidates for the time being, in recent years the number of the Oblates in this region has decreased. Our ministries demand more individualistic movements rather than communitarian actions. As the youngest Oblate priest in this region, I felt somewhat desperate and even hopeless sometimes.

However, the General's visit was absolutely fresh here. His natural joy and empathy were so powerful. His consolation gave me power to move on. His energy was not like a revolutionary storm but more like a warm breeze in spring time as it came from the Holy Spirit. Once again I try to believe this warm breeze continues to exist in and energizes me and the community here.

RIP Beloved Brother Jack

- By Robert Robinson omi



John Kevin Deely, OMI

Birth: April 17, 1941 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA

Final Vows : Sept 8, 1965, Essex, New York USA

Arrival in Japan: Sept 23, 1965

Ordination: April 11, 1970 Arlington, Virginia USA

Professor of Sign Language, Tsukuba University 1986-1993,
Professor and semi- retired Professor Sophia University, Tokyo,
1993-2011

- Late Jack omi , Communicating through Sign Language -

“Hello young man! you are Robinson?” confirming a tall and smart man stretched his hand towards me for a shake. My reply, “Yes, you are right,” was then followed by a warm handshake and interesting conversation spiced with a few jokes. Yet, that was the first time I met Jack and my first impression of him is noteworthy.

Jack remembers people by name and he gives importance to people, Conversation with Jack is always interesting and he is ever ready with jokes. He is a good reader and in the course of the conversation with him, Jack suggested me a book, titled *-Treasure of the Nation-*. According to Wency, He had lot of books in his room, mostly written in the Irish Language.

A few months later, one day Jack called Eddi Williams and left the community at Koga with a question. On trying to find the answer to Jack’s question, the members of the community burst into laughter and had some fun at the dinning table: Thanks to Jack.

The question came about in an interesting way:
One day Jack was teaching the bible to his ‘Deaf’ (this is the word he likes to use) members. When it came to the point where Jesus was taken to the temple for circumcision, he didn't know how to explain circumcision in sign language. Then he left us with his question; How to communicate circumcision in sign language?

At first I was surprised to hear his pronunciation when he read in Japanese, for it was not very smooth even though he has been in Japan for many years. Later I understood the reason. Its because mostly he works with the Deaf people. Yes Deaf: When he opted to write an article for the last newsletter, I emailed him and we had the following exchange:

“ Jack, received your article, thanks.I would like to suggest a change of word in your article. Instead of ‘Deaf,’ can you think of some other word? Something like ‘Differently-Abled’ or ‘hard-of-hearing?’Just a suggestion.”

Jack’s reply was:

“The word ‘Deaf’ is used with great pride to emphasize a ‘culture’ ... whereas the word ‘hard-of-hearing’ doesn’t. Deaf is fine,”

Jack was proud of serving them. May he rest in Peace.

(You can read further about Jack at our website. An article about Jack written by Ray omi)



Jack omi at a gathering with his group



Jack omi at an Interview by NHK



Jack omi - Mass in Sign language



Jack omi with his people

Jack's Important Minority Group

By Jerry Novartny

Following God's call, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you", Jack arrived in Japan in 1965. After completing Japanese studies at the Oblate House in Sekimachi, Tokyo, he entered Jochi University for his Theology and was ordained an Oblate Priest in 1970. Jack loved the big city and became a Professor at the Jesuit University. It was also around this time (1977) that he started learning Japanese Sign Language.

Leaving the university one day, Jack passed a campus bulletin board. A small piece of edged-paper caught his attention. It stated that a group of Deaf Catholics held weekly-get-togethers on Saturday evenings. Curiosity got the best of him and he decided to drop by the following Saturday and practice his Sign Language.

It was at this meeting that Jack's whole life changed. When the people found out that he was a priest who could sign in Japanese, they "latched on to me" as Jack would say

It was at this meeting that Jack's whole life changed. When the people found out that he was a priest who could sign in Japanese, they "latched on to me" as Jack would say. It was the beginning of many years of Signed Masses, Signed Retreats, Signed Bible Studies and Signed Confessions. In fact, the Japanese Catholic Newspaper published an article stating that this was the FIRST Signed Mass ever in Japan.

Being aware of the speed at which cultural differences are integrated into the Japanese way of life, Jack joined the ICDA (International Catholic Deaf Association), became fluent in American Sign Language, and took Deaf Japanese Catholics to ICDA conferences. It was at this time that Jack translated into Japanese the by-laws and other ICDA



documents.

Together with the Deaf Japanese Catholics, the group was able to form local associations of Deaf Japanese Catholics in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima and Hokkaido. This eventually led to the creation of NADJC (National Association of Deaf Japanese Catholics) which in turn became an official Chapter of the ICDA.

The foundation for NADJC having been established, Jack turned everything over to the Japanese and distanced himself from the group, even though his presence was always felt. His new concern centered around how to better incorporate Deaf Japanese Catholics into the Japanese Catholic Church. He always believed that the Life of the Church would be "enriched" if this minority group of Catholics were given a chance to share their living faith and personal insights. According to Jack, the Church in Japan guarantees deaf people "access" to information which is only "partial participation."

In contrast, "full participation" would allow the Deaf Japanese Catholics a right not only to express themselves as equal citizens before God but also share their individual ideas and opinions in the growth process of the Catholic Church in Japan.

Koga Church ; Passing the 60th mile post

By Jude Peirisulle, OMI

him, keeping the Oblate tradition, also continued the mission with zeal. The longest parish priest was Fr. Yamasaki. Fr. Edi Williams was the 12th parish priest and hosted the 50th anniversary of the church.



On the 24th of May, Koga Catholic church celebrated its 60th anniversary. Looking back on the history of the church, I read that the Fukuda family, which was headed by a doctor, came to the Koga area to live. During that time, there was no church around here but only Dimyo church, the cathedral in the Tenjin area. The Fukuda family, bringing the idea to Fr. Ito, the parish priest of Dimyo, of having a church in Koga was given permission by the bishop of the diocese, Bishop Fukohori. Bishop Fukahori found that it would be a good idea to give the responsibility to the Oblates. As a result, in 1954, the church and the kindergarten were built. The 1st responsibility was give to Fr. Mulvi, OMI, who came from USA. He took the whole responsibility to collect money to build this church.



Looking back on the history, I see, there are some parishioners still coming to church and talking about the beautiful days of Koga. Right now there are not so many young people in the parish. One of the reasons for this is that many young people have moved to big cities for their studies or work. But there are so many children who come to church and there are many activities taking place for the children. This gives us lots of hope for this church. As we pass the 60th mile post of this church, I give thanks



When the church was built, I hear there were only 12 parishioners, but that number has grown now to 1000 parishioners. Fr. Mulvi, who took initial responsibility in the parish did not continue his responsibility long. Fr. Dick Harr, became the next parish priest, making tremendous effort to makes this parish a wonderful place. Many Oblates, who became pastors and assistant pastors after



to God for the tears, toils, and hardships that the missionaries and the parishioners endured in order to make this a beautiful day.

In celebrating the mass at this church, together with the



Oblates and the parishioners we made a wish that this church will be a place for many to experience God's love, for many more years to come.

News Bits

My Vist to Sri Lanka

I visited a few Oblate missions in Sri Lanka in June and stayed there for 20 days. The purpose of my visit was to meet the two Pre-Novices from South Korea and the Novices from Japan who are undergoing the Oblate formation in Sri Lanka. I also wanted to experience the Youth Ministry there. I spent most of my days in the Noviciate at Bandarawela. It was an enriching experience for me both spiritually and psychologically. I was touched by the warm hospitality and strong faith of Sri Lankans. I could also feel the impact of ethic war which came to an 'end' six years ago. - Bro.Yagi omi -

Congress on the Oblate Charism in Contest

We had the "Congress on the Oblate Charism in Context" in Manila about a month ago. The primary objective of the Congress was to listen to the opportunities and the challenges of the Oblate charism lived in different contexts. The four-day gathering spearheaded by Fr. Federico Labaglay brought 32 Oblates from the Asia-Oceania region (Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Thailand-Laos & Vietnam) together to listen to each other and to share their stories. It was a young and energetic group that included many scholastics and a laywomen.

The Congress was an occasion to know and to learn how the Oblates have been living the charism of our Founder in Asia. Listening to different presentations it was very clear that amidst challenges, threats and difficulties many of our committed men were ever ready to live with the poor and give their lives for them. It was their 'being with' the people and communities that had become a powerful witnessing beyond words and actions.

I think the Congress gave us an opportunity to re-evaluate our identity as Oblates and to become more aware of the richness of the charism and Oblate life today. - Brad Rozairo -

Fr General 's visit to Kochi District

It was in fact a grace-filled occasion for the Oblate community and the people of Kochi to have Fr General, visiting the Oblate working places, giving his very special blessing with our Founder's Cross. Fr General was very appreciative of the work, still being carried out by the Oblates especially in the very remote places like Akaoka, Aki, Nakamura and so on. Even though his visit was very short, Fr General visited Enoguchi, Aki, Akaoka and the Oblate cemetery at Nankoku, praying for our predecessors. People of Nakajimacho and Enoguchi gathered at Nakajimacho to give a warm welcome and they all were very much impressed and thanked Fr General for sending the Oblates to Japan, especially during the post-war years, when their city was completely



destroyed and in turmoil. It was very much a time of need and at an appropriate time, they said to Fr General, that the Oblates arrived in Japan and very specially to Kochi of Shikoku, that was considered the remotest place. In other words, each one expressed his or her gratitude from the bottom of the heart. On the other hand, not only Fr General appreciated the people for their long-standing deep-seated faith being transmitted to their kith and kins in this godless materialistic society, but also he encouraged each and everyone for the commitment to the witnessing life. He also praised and gave a big applause to our predecessors and the senior retired Oblates for their missionary zeal and the ardent Oblate spirit. It's because of their hard toil right from the beginning, He added, that now we are reaping the full harvest. Finally he made a common appeal to each one to stand together and support each other mutually in spreading the values that would contradict the contemporary values of the society. On the whole, his visit gave a lot of boost and spiritual energy to look forward to our future as we prepare steadfastly to celebrate our jubilee.

- Christy omi -

Greetings from Kenniya -

By Samuel omi, a missionary to Kenniya from Korea

Dear Brothers,

I have been keeping fine and doing good. Now I am serving as an assistant priest in a parish which was newly erected as a parish. We Oblates are in charge of this parish. It is called St. Paul's Catholic Church in Ngong Diocese. At the moment 3 Oblates are present for this community. Fr. Gideon is the first priest among Kenyan Oblates, I give thanks to God for such a humble and loving person, and I have many things to learn from him. Our parish is a small community and scattered. We have 6 out station Churches. Each out stations are far from one another and it is challenging to bring all to one place due to unaffordable transportation.

I experiences that most of people are kind to me and good. One day I was heading for a mass then I happened to get stuck in the mud. I was driving alone and I was afraid to ask for a help. I had a kind of prejudice that they might laugh at me as they saw me struggling. But the whole story was different, some people approached me and they were willing to help me. So I could get out of the mud. They did not care about their clothes getting dirty as they helped me. Likewise I learn and I am getting broken by daily experiences.

I wished to be a missionary and God granted me the opportunity to do so, but now I am complaining about my situations. What if I could have communicated with people by their mother tongues? What if I could have remained in Korea? I was shocked When I realized that I am an Israelite who is complaining to God as if God would give them maltreatments. Now I realize that God is always on my side and always wants me to be freed from everything and He sent me here to be freed and to praise Him with people. I humbly offer myself to God's providence. Please pray for me.

At the moment, during weekdays, I am away from the parish and learning Kiswahili some more. I was in Tanzania learning Kiswahili for 4 months but I still find difficult and this is the reason why I am learning some more. I guess this is all about my recent days. Once again thank you very much for your tender cares and prayers. I hope you may have grace filled days. I am with you in our prayers. We may bear fruit through our humble offering of ourselves to God's providence. Many thanks to you again.



Two Student Priests: Soon to graduate from the Japanese language school

After having lived two years in Japan, encountering an unknown culture, unfamiliar life style and studying a new language, I really had a different, painful experience. But there were a few things which made me happy to continue my life and enjoy my studies. There were namely the YWCA school teachers, my classmates and the stay in SVD house. It was lucky for me to study at the YWCA Japanese language school where the teachers were very gentle and kind in teachers, and were ready to explain many times



over until I understand the grammar. Moreover, not only during class hours but also during free time they were ready to help me to learn language by checking my writings, speeches, and compositions. It was a great help for me to improve my Japanese. Secondly, my classmate who in spite of my inability to speak Japanese, accepted me as their friend and made my school days unforgettable. Being with them, I enjoyed my classes and did not feel lonely. Thirdly, staying in SVD house, praying together, eating together and playing together made me live a community life and added some flavor to my life. As a priest I believe that all these things happened to me by the blessings and work of God. - Steev omi -

My heart is filled with immense joy and happiness as I am going to graduate soon. Soon after my priestly ordination I will receive my first obedience to serve the church of Japan. When I look back on the last



two years of my life, I am indebted to many Oblates who have supported me morally and materially in many ways. First and foremost they provided me an opportunity to be evangelized first in the competitive society of Japan first, and then to evangelize others with the redemptive power of the Holy Cross.

To be strongly rooted in the culture we began studying the unending characteristics of 'Kanji' which is the base for learning the art of creativity, culture of the people in the YWCA. We were almost moving heaven and earth to acquire the ability to read and communicate in the native language of Japan. Indeed it took two complete years to acquire little knowledge of the cultural background of Japan. In the YWCA there were volunteers coming every Monday to chat with us. Since we were students from many different cultures studying, and it was very enriching to learn about different cultures' ways of thinking and doing the same thing in different ways. These two years I had a golden opportunity to witness and learn more from the SVD community. Really I cherish their brotherly care every moment that I spent in their congregation. They treated me as one of the members of the community. Then in the last six months I had a chance to visit the Oblate parish in Toyohashi which was very helpful to become grounded in the reality of the church in Japan.

-Selva omi -

We Fondly Remember

Birthdays	Names
August	
04/1960	Yagi Nobu
06/1930	Iwo Jhon
September	
17/1964	Peirispulle Jude
17/1967	Jeyachandran James
22/1943	Hahn Fran
October	
05/1973	Furukawa Ken-ichi
30/1964	Rozairo Brad
December	
24/1934	Yamasaki Mike
March	
01/1940	Novotny, Jerry
23/1938	Maher, Bill
24/1969	Ryu Hi Gu

Ordination	Names
August	
04/1990	Bro.Yagi Nobu(Final Vows)
22/1992	Peirispulle Jude
22/1992	Rozairo Brad
October	
19/1991	Giorgianni Maurizio
January	
15/1994	Jeyachandran, James
February	
05/2011	Shitol, Nokrek
March	
19/1966	Bourgoin Ray
27-1976	Laguidao, wency

Death Anniversary	Names
21 Aug 2014	Silver Bert
12 March 1979	Len Robitaille
29 March 2002	Patrick Brady
31 April 2011	Xavier delporte Tosa
10 May 1996	Gerard Stevens
26 May 2008	Donald O'Brien

Remembrance is the ability of the human mind to recollect memories from the past. It is a travel back in time that brings forth both the happy and sorrowful experiences of your life. A memory from the past can be a realization, a cautious alarm to your brain, a moment of happiness or sadness. Lets appreciate this unique human ability to remember.



Hiroshima, Nagasaki
 Grief & Horror of Atomic Bomb
 Remembered 70 years on



What do I think and do about PEACE ?

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Oblats of Mary Immaculate
 Japan & Korea