

The Far East Star

OMI Japan & Korea Newsletter

September

2016

200 YEARS Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate --- 1816 - 2016



Seeing People Through The Eyes Of Christ Changes Our View Of Them

FROM THE DELEGATION SUPERIOR'S DESK:

NEW DELEGATION SUPERIOR and COUNCIL

As announced earlier, we have a new Delegation Superior and Council. I would like to thank all of you for your patience and cooperation during the past six years.

The absence of local vocations remains the biggest challenge faced by the unit. We share the faith of many small religious groups in Japan which are faced with the problem of the aging of its members without vocations. I just attended the farewell mass of the Benedictines in Japan held in Meguro, Tokyo, who are closing down their mission. They only had two Japanese vocations during the 70 years they were here.

What was most memorable during the past 6 years was the passing-on of many of our "sempais" or stalwarts of the unit (Ange, Bert, Xave, Dick, Tom, Jack, etc.). The vacuum created by their departure (including Eddie Williams) is indeed strongly felt by many of us.

Let us give Brad ROZAIRO and his council, composed of Nobu YAGI, Iru RAJ and Bernard ONDAP our full support and prayers. They will be installed sometime in the end of October. I also thank Hiran JEYAWARDANA who served in the outgoing council for 3 years.

RETREAT 2016

Brother Pat McGee, OMI, Preached our retreat this year (Sept. 11-16) is Brother Pat MCGEE of the USA Province. He is originally from St. Paul, Minnesota. He was born in 1947, professed his first vows in 1968 and final vows in 1976.

His ministry experience includes parish and youth ministry, formation ministry, preaching ministry and spiritual direction. He is preparing to become the Director of Novices in August 2017. Br. Pat is also a holder of a PhD degree. He was with us from Sept 7 to 21. He also visited the missions after the retreat.

ONGOING FORMATION

for Young Oblates in the First 5 Years of Ministry: Br. Pat McGee was the resource person for the young



OMIs meet before the retreat at the same retreat house from Sept 9 to 11. Topic was: Religious Life and Mission to Secularity.

This year we are happy to welcome 3 members of the China Delegation who will be attending the ongoing formation meeting. They are: 1. Fr. Paul SHEN XIAOLONG, OMI (originally from mainland China and working in Hong Kong). 2. Fr. Mark Anthony SERNA, OMI (originally from the Philippines and works in HK) and; 3. Fr. Johnny RAKOTOARISOA, OMI (originally from Madagascar and is assigned in Beijing).

OTHER VISITORS

Samuel HONG was with us for a few days. It was a good respite for our devoted missionary in Kenya. We recall his close encounter with death when he was kidnapped sometime ago.

From Colombo, Br. Felix Kamal MENDIS and Fr Dileepa JAYAMAHA came for a visit around Aug 29 to Sept 12.



A VISIT With EDDIE in Tewksbury, MA

Fran HAHN and I met up at JFK airport in New York and we drove together to the Oblate Infirmary in Tewksbury, MA last July 25th. It was a good visit with Eddie WILLIAMS who looked frail but generally okay. He still misses Japan and cherishes the 57 long years that he has spent in the mission but thinks that he has made the right decision to go back to the U.S. to retire there. He is well taken care of by dedicated staff 24/7 and fellow Oblates at the Tewksbury infirmary.

FORMATION NEWS from KOREA

We have two Korean scholastics at the International Scholasticate in Rome: Br Simeon KIMOKKI and Br Joseph JUNG JAE EUN. Br Simeon should have finished his studies in Rome and should be back in Korea by now. He is preparing for his diaconal and priestly ordination which might be affected by new regulation regarding ordinations to the priesthood imposed by the Korean Church. We will be waiting for more news on the matter.



Meal with Fr Mauro and Br Joseph (right) and Br Simeon (left) in Rome

In Bandarewala, Sri Lanka, we have two Korean novices, John Baptist LIM JOON BIN and John the Apostle JUNG BU YOUNG (they were given new nicknames, which are easier to remember “JB” for the former and “JJ” for the latter). John (Baptist) or JB has been approved for First Vows on Aug 22nd at the novitiate in Bandarewala. Brad ROZAIRO will



represent us. “JJ” will continue his novitiate which was interrupted by the need to study more English. JB (left) and JJ (right) with the Provincial in Colombo

JUBILEE FOR PRIESTS and SEMINARIANS

(A Personal Journey) The letter from the Papal Nuncio sounded very inviting: “This might be a once and a lifetime experience for your priests...” I asked Bill MAHER and Ray BOURGOIN who are both celebrating their 50th year of sacerdotal ordination this year if they would want to attend the Jubilee for Priests in Rome, June 1-3, but both of them declined, so I decided to attend since I am 10 years away from my 50 years in the priesthood.



Short procession by groups along Via Conciliazione to the Holy Door.

The Jubilee for Priests was just one of the jubilee celebrations for different groups during the Holy Year of Mercy. The 3-day event was highlighted by the one-day retreat preached by the Holy Father himself on June 2nd. Since all the participating priests and seminarians (several thousands) could not be accommodated in one place, we were divided into three groups. One group met at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, another at Santa Maria Maggiore were for those who speak or understand Italian and the rest were assigned to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Wall. Security was very tight and all participants were “bar-coded” to gain access to the different venues during days jubilee. The Holy Father gave one talk each at the 3 basilicas and his talks were aired live with excellent simultaneous translations. His talks were very down to earth as we braced ourselves for some “dressing down” but instead he talked to us on a very personal level, sounding like a loving father talking to his recalcitrant sons.



"Papal Abrazzo"

There were laughter and even rounds of applause in between his talks, clear signs that he was really connecting with his audience even though most of us relied on translations while he delivered his talks in Italian. His talks were very uplifting and edifying with only some fatherly reminders like "Don't be overly busy with no time for your people."

The 3rd and last day was the big mass at St. Peter's square which coincided with the Feast of the Sacred Heart. Participants braved the early

morning heavy downpour to line up for the routine security check before we could enter the secured

areas. We were all drenched but later in the morning the sun came out and we like wet laundry left out to dry under the blazing sun. Amidst the usual "pomp and pageantry" in liturgies at St. Peter's square was the figure of a very humble looking Holy Father. Pope FRANCIS indeed radiates a very disarming simplicity that is now a trade-mark of his papacy. (I missed seeing the "red designer Prada shoes" of the popes before him as he strutted with an ordinary pair of walking shoes like what we all wear!) He is one with us and one of us. Seeing him in person reminded me of his first words after he was named Pope: "I am a sinner. Please pray for me."

After the mass, he took time to greet the cardinals and bishops who came to attend and after that, he greeted the priests. I happened to be seated on the very front row and when he came, I felt frozen on having the Holy Father right in front of me. I told him I am from Japan and I am celebrating my 40th year as a priest so he anointed my forehead and after that, a very unexpected "papal abbraccio" that felt like the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son" welcoming back the sinful son with a very warm embrace. Indeed, it was a once-in-a lifetime experience and more than what I bargained for!



God's Choicest Blessings on
The New Delegation Superior
Bradly Rozairo omi

The former Delegation Superior
Wency Laguidao omi

お疲れ様でした



Pilgrimage to Rome ; Japanese with Frs. Jude and Hiran



Koga Parishioners



Oblates at MAMI Mass

MIXED MARRIAGES, KEY TO MIGRANTS INTEGRATION IN KOREA

Marriages between a Korean man and a woman from another country are often the result of a financial transaction, rather than love. But the statistics show that 8.7% of all marriages in the country is of this type, and today 67,800 children studying in national schools are children of multicultural families. They are the way forward for the acceptance of migrants. Part II of an analysis by an OMI missionary on the peninsula.

Gwangju (AsiaNews) - The government and the Catholic Church in Korea are working well to help the "second generation" of migrants in Korea to find a place in society. But foreigners are still considered "different", "second class" citizens. Mixed marriages are leading to a rapidly growing number of children from these marriages. They need suitable

policies and pastoral care. Part II of an analysis by Fr. Maurizio Giorgianni, Oblate of Mary Immaculate who has been working with migrants in South Korea.

One of the avenues to emigrate to South Korea is that of so- called "international marriages". First of all it should be emphasized that in certain situations rather than marriage it is "buying" a wife, in the sense that agencies and dealers earn large sums of money from contracting similar unions. Generally the foreign woman are very young while the man is 15 or even 20 years older. Moreover, most of the time it is the second or third marriage for the man involved. There are some couples who live quite peaceably, but more often than not the huge difference in culture, language and expectations regarding the marriage create conflict.

Often, the grounds for the marriage differ between the couple involved: economic reasons are predominant among the women (to escape a situation of poverty and help their family of origin); while for the man, the need to have someone to do household chores, to combat loneliness or sometimes also to help in the work place are the main reasons.

Sometimes the woman is kept almost as a "prisoner" (not given the opportunity to study the language, to have money available for personal expenses), especially when these marriages are contracted among the socially and culturally poorer classes.

The Korean government is trying to resolve these situations by giving financial support to multicultural couples, helping the education of children, trying to help the integration of this category of "migrants".

In fact they are the only "stable" migrant presence in Korean society (other migrants with work visas must in fact sooner or later return to their country of origin). But very often they fail.



Migrant inclusion in the host society is very important, but also very complicated. If by "inclusion" we mean "integration", it must be said with honesty there is very little here.

Considering that the laws on migration in Korea do not allow a migrant to remain legally in the country for more than seven years, it is easy to understand why Korean society does not pursue a real policy of migrant "integration". The immigrant is seen and considered as "a guest who works in the territory", but who must will return to his country of origin sooner or later.

As for the acceptance of the foreign presence in Korean society, in the not too distant past in Korea there was a certain openness and greater acceptance. For historical reasons, the foreign presence in Korea has always been seen as a "invading presence", because of which the foreigner here has never been seen in an entirely positive light. Slowly, however, things are changing.

The Catholic Church and the various shelters that the Church runs (for the pastoral care of migrants, Catholics here are very well organized) are working hard to promote the positive acceptance of foreigners in society, and within a Catholic context they are considered as "neighbors" to love and respect. And when the migrant shares the same Christian faith then efforts are made to have him considered as our brother in faith, to be accepted in the Christian assemblies and given a place in the pastoral care of parishes. Many churches have Sunday Masses in English or other languages for migrants, with priests in charge of their care and premises made available for meetings or gatherings (catechesis, Korean language schools or similar activities).

The government is starting to more specifically tackle the task of integration by targeting multicultural families. The latest statistics show that 8.3% of marriages in 2013 are "intercultural" (between a Korean and a foreigner). In particular, they are focusing on the children of multicultural families (Korean father and foreign mother). The 2014 statistics speak of 67,800 children born into multicultural families in Korean schools. They are little more than 1% of total students, but still represent an increase of 21.6% in a year. It is expected that in the next three years the number of students from multicultural families could reach 100 thousand units (data of the Ministry of Education).

These figures represent a challenge for the education system in Korea, so we need the government to be aware of them. One study revealed that in the current textbooks, the



multicultural family is always put in opposition to the "normal" Korean family. For which the Ministry of Education has decided to revise textbooks and adapt to the new situation with a more positive view of the "foreigner in society." There is an ongoing effort to improve the education system for students who are "children of migrants ", with support in learning the Korean language, but also favoring the idea that the culture and language of the foreign spouse be preserved, known and learned by the children. A report of the National Commission (Korean) for Human Rights showed that 41.3% of the children from multicultural families have no Korean friends. This shows that the Koreans have little tolerance towards multicultural migrant families.

At a Church level, I believe that we should pursue the path of integrating ministry for migrants within the context of parish pastoral care programs (while maintaining a "special" care for migrants) so as not to "marginalize" them, and increase awareness of solidarity and acceptance of migrants among the faithful. Certainly there is much to do regarding Korea's migration laws. Often it migrants are considered "second class" people whose fundamental rights are ignored. This is because the laws tend to put the economic and political interests of the nation first rather than the fundamental rights of the person. Surely the steps that Korean society is taking to protect and take care for multicultural families is a positive sign, which could lead to greater openness towards migrants. But more still needs to be done.

Korea, Mission Superior Maurizio Giorgianni omi

J P I C IN THE REGION OF ASIA-OCEANIA ; A REPORT

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in the Region of Asia-Oceania

The Region of Asia-Oceania is very much diverse in terms of cultural, political, economic, religious, ethnic and linguistic milieu that affects and influences the lives of people including the Oblates. In this vast continent Oblates have been working tirelessly for the establishment of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), and some even have sacrificed their lives. The untiring efforts of our men have paved the way for the success of JPIC ministry, which is being continued by the Oblates in the region.

At present in different units our men are working hard to better the lives of people and society. I am pleased to present to you some initiatives of Oblates in the Asia-Oceania region.

Oblates in the Philippine Province are very much involved in JPIC. The vision statement suggests their



line of action: respecting human dignity and human rights, living truth and love, promoting justice and peace and acting as stewards of God's creation. They continue to dialogue with people of different cultures, religion (Christian-Muslim relationships) and faiths in search for an integral transformation of society. Their immersion in the lives and struggles of the poor,



particularly the Manobo-Dulangan tribe, is a vivid reality and a mission call for the Oblates.

In Australia our men run programs like Justice and Mission Expo, "Rosies" (street outreach to the marginalized), Social Justice Student Leadership Training etc. for religious education, which include Justice and Peace development for the students.

In Sri Lanka the Oblates from the two Provinces of Colombo and Jaffna are engaged in peace and



reconciliation work. The Oblate Center for peace and Reconciliation (CPR) in Jaffna works to promote the basis for a peaceful society through education and peace activities. The mission of the Centre is to empower and support individuals and organizations in their efforts to prevent violence, to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts and to foster inclusive, equitable and safe communities, locally, nationally and worldwide.



The Center for Society and Religion (CSR) in Colombo continues to campaign to address the minority grievances through a just political solution. When the civil war was at its peak, CSR initiated a program called ‘Ministry of Presence’ which helped respond to the humanitarian crisis in the North by addressing their social and psychological needs and lay foundation for reconciliation between the two estranged communities.

The CPR and the CSR are very much involved in the exchange programs of women and children between North and South of Sri Lanka. They also continue to dialogue and discuss matters concerning violation of human rights and efforts at building peace and reconciliation. With a committee organized at the regional level, they hope to set up a regional desk to coordinate activities in the Region.

JPIC initiatives in the units of Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Japan and Korea are being carried out by the Oblates either individually or collectively. In the Delegation of Thai-Lao, Oblates work with the Archdiocese of Bangkok and Caritas Thailand and Asia on social concerns such as Human Trafficking and Migration.



Although there has been no planned common activity for the region as such, Oblates have been continuously working in their respective units and make their presence felt among the poor. However, as a recent development in the region I am glad to mention that a ‘Conference on Migrants’ facilitated by the Director of JPIC Fr. Kennedy Katongo in Hong Kong this February brought the Major Superiors of the Asia-Oceania Regional Conference and the unit animators of JPIC together. It was an occasion to share, reflect and discuss the issues we face as a region and also to plan some common activity for the future.



We, as a region may have some concerns to be addressed, but that will not lower the energy and enthusiasm when it comes to working for the poor and marginalized. As our Founder said, “all that is necessary is a little courage and confidence in God, who will show us the way and who will never abandon us”.

Thank you.

Bradly Rozairo OMI

JPIC Asia-Oceania Regional Representative
Japan.



First holy communion at Koga,
Fukuoka



Children after the Catechism at
Koga, Fukuoka.



Carols by children at Koga

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Maheer Bill OMI

50 years a priest but looking back at my life I'm more and more convinced that it started at least 78 years ago if not before that. In (I Corin. I; 26) we read, "Now remember what you were my brothers, when God called you. From the human point of view few of you were wise or powerful or of high social standing.

But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom. By him we are put right with God; we become God's holy people and are set free".

In 1st year grammar school, I met our assistant pastor Fr. Ignatius Mcdermott. He was so full of cheer and life I was attracted by him and in that childish way wanted to be like that. Then my elder brother Tom went to the Oblate junior seminary and I think these two factors inspired my vocation to the priesthood. By the grace of God, I was able to confront the failures and doubts that accompany a vocation to the priesthood and eventually come to Japan as an Oblate missionary.

Much later on in life I found out how much my life had been influenced by Alcohol addiction. Even now if you put Ignatius Mcdermotts' name in the internet you can find how much he dedicated his life to the addicted in Chicago. And finding out that Tom had an addiction problem it becomes clear that the Lord was preparing me at least from birth for what I would need later in life. Looking back on things now it becomes clear that the despair and failures were mine and the successes and meaningful things were the grace of the Holy Spirit.

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Bourgoin Ray OMI with Rev.Bishop Suwa

In light of all this I'd like to share some other thoughts on my brother Tom who recently passed away after 58 years of working in Japan. These are thoughts I wrote a year or two ago but they show how the Spirit works with our weakness. (the Delegation is the Oblate Japan and Korea delegation)

I recently looked at the Delegation's web-page and at the end of a list of blogs it had the Delegations' Mission Vision Statement and the three things we are placing strong emphasis on. The last of these being: seeking especially the marginalized –The Migrants, The Youth, Social Problems and Advocacy. As I read that over I thought of a thing that just happened a few days ago at our parish in Koga city. I had heard that a fellow who was coming to daily Mass there had checked himself into a hospital because of a slip in his program to quit drinking. Since I had become his friend over the months of staying in Koga on Mondays, I wanted to visit him in the hospital. But he came to Mass again last Monday so I talked to him after Mass. Since my brother is a member of AA, and remembering how that program has done so much to save our family, I asked my friend if he'd ever heard of AA. He answered yes and related how he had been to a meeting in Munakata city and at the Pastoral Center in Fukuoka city.

He produced a pamphlet on AA with some things he had written on it. I was surprised to see Tom's name in the notes as the one who had helped the present leader of the group that meets at the center and possibly partly the inspiration of the start of that group. I was surprised because Kochi city where Tom lived is over six hours by car from Fukuoka city.

This reminded me of how many times people have come up to me over the years and thanked me for what Tom has done for them. Former friends from the Rotary Club in Nakamura, a catholic in a nearby parish here in Mizumaki city, who still just a year ago visited him in Kochi, and the many in both Japan, the US and other countries that he's influenced at International Meetings and in the prison system where he was asked to give talks on addiction. God can write straight with crooked lines or use our weaknesses to accomplish his work. The disease of Alcoholism effects not only the person afflicted with it but all those around them and since an estimated 10 percent of the population are

affected by it, it can be considered a formidable social problem. The marginalized, the migrants, the youth, social problems and advocacy, all come into its scope.

Fr. Tom died at 84, April 16, 2016, one month before his 85th birthday after a long bout with various physical problems, but he still managed to make it to meetings that meet at the church in Kochi city five times a week till the time he was hospitalized. They meet in a room above the kindergarten where they've met for over forty years now. So we can say his work continues. All this must be something to do with our Mission Vision and the mysterious ways of the Holy Spirit. "Remember what you were my brothers, when God called you. From the human point of view few of you were wise or powerful or of high social standing. But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom. By him we are put right with God; we become God's holy people and are set free".

Mahe Bill omi

Now, I can say with confidence that over the past 25 years as an Oblate brother, I have been blessed and happy with my commitment in our Oblate congregation. It was possible with the grace of God and the support of the Oblates, especially the members of our delegation.

On August 2, the night before my final profession I couldn't sleep well. Maybe it was because of my mixed feelings. I was nervous, afraid, anxious and uncertain at the thought of my life-long commitment. I was bit worried thinking that there would be no turning back once I made my commitment. Even I thought about escaping the situation. It was around 2 am, suddenly from out of nowhere I heard something like a female voice saying "I love you not only because of your strength and achievements, but I want to show my love though your humility in accepting your shortcomings and weaknesses." Then I had a sound sleep.

"God is love (Jn 14.16)" is the verse on my Final profession memorial card. On that day of my Final profession I told myself that this is what I am



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Brother Yagi OMI

supposed to do. To Experience the Love and Mercy of God and then show the same love and Mercy to the people I meet.

Now, I have been visiting my elderly mother twice a week. Looking at mother I sometime think that through this mother I came to this world, and this is my first vocation. My mother is the first representative of God to me as are all mothers to their sons and daughters. My second vocation is as an Oblate brother. I feel strengthened to continue to live my commitment by the Love and Mercy of God and there is no reason for despair.

Brother Nobuhiko Yagi omi

R.I.P THOMAS FRANCIS MAHER OMI

Eternal Rest Grant unto him O Lord.

May 29, 1931 — April 16, 2016 , An Oblate Missionary to Japan for the last 58 Years

Fr. Tom Maher omi was born in Chicago Ill. on May 29, 1931. At age 14 he entered the Oblate junior seminary in Carthage Mo. And after four years of high school and two years of college he went to the Oblate novitiate at Godfrey Ill.. After taking first vows as an Oblate on Aug. 15, 1952, since the Central U.S. Province did not have a major seminary at the time he studied 1 year of philosophy in Battleford SK Canada. The next year the Central U.S. Province opened a major seminary in Pass Christian Mississippi and he finished one more year of philosophy and four years of theology there. During that time he took his final vows as an Oblate in 1955 and was ordained a priest on May 30, 1958. The next year on Sept. 17, 1958 he was sent to Japan as a Missionary.

After finishing 2 years of Japanese study he was assigned for 1 year at our parish in Koga, in Fukuoka Pref., 3 years in Itami, 2 years as the assistant in Naruto and 1 year at the seminary in Tokyo as the Provincial bursar.

In 1967 till he passed away he was stationed at various mission parishes in Shikoku. Akaoka parish for 1 year as the assistant and 2 years in Aki as pastor and head of the kindergarten. He was in Kochi City at Nakajima cho parish for 25 years. And pastor of Nakamura for 19 years. From July 10, 2015 till he passed

away on July 16, 2016 he was in the Hosogi Hospital.

About 40 years ago Fr. Tom went to Guest House in Minnesota to receive treatment for an alcoholic problem. This is a special place for helping religious and priests with addiction problems. After three months there and the fellowship of AA he never took another drink. After this treatment he returned to Kochi and along with his other parish and teaching responsibilities he was very involved with helping others afflicted by Alcoholism, especially through AA. These groups are still very active as well as NA, Narcotics Anonymous. Fr. Tom also taught English at a Prefectural high school Nishiko, and a national technical school Koosen, for over 25 years. He was a prison chaplain for over 40 yrs. at the Kochi prison, for which work he was decorated twice by the Emperor.

In the last two years he was especially cared for by a Filipina who works at the Church, Jean and Fr. Ray Bourgoin who visited Tom the previous day before and arrived 4 seconds before his death going right to the hospital after hearing he was getting weaker. Many many others visited him over those two years also. That's why Tom wanted to be buried in Kochi where he lived most of his life.

Bill Maher omi & Ray omi



NEWS FROM KOREA

1. The Oblates in the Korean Mission inaugurated the 200 years of the foundation Jubilee of the congregation on January 25, 2016. Fr. Hong Peter, OMI, the animator of the MAMI arranged the Holy Mass and lunch. All the MAMI members, well-wishers and migrants participated in the Holy Eucharist and to the other programs. It was very simple but meaningful because we, as a family celebrated the event. The MAMI members and the Oblates with whom we inaugurated the 200 Jubilee year of the Congregation

2. Fr. Maurizio, the Mission Superior went for AORC meeting in Hong Kong from February 22- 28, 2016. He also had the justice and peace meeting in Hong Kong. He also participated in the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of the Hong Kong delegation.

3. Fr. Daniel, OMI, the representative of the Congregation Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the United Nations visited our Korean Mission. He also visited all the ministries we do in South Korea, with the Migrants, Hospital, Homeless people and street children. Fr. Daniel, OMI, is the representative of the OMI in United Nations.

4. In the year of 'Mercy' the Korean Mission is really blessed with two new students. Paul and Justine joined us on the 6th of April 2016. Now they are following the English course and basic catechism courses. We wish them all the very best.

5. On the year of 'Mercy' we have another reason to thank and praise God for the life of Bro. Kim Simeon, omi. Bro. Simeon professed his final vows on May 1, 2016 in the International Scholasticate, Rome. He did his novitiate in Sri Lanka and went to Rome for the theological studies. We also congratulate him and wish him our best in his religious life. Bro. Kim Simeon made his final vows in Rome on May 1, 2016

6. We were glad to see our first Korean missionary Fr. Hong Samuel to Kenya. He was on his vacation in Korea. We were especially glad to have him during the feast day of St. Eugene de Mazenod. He celebrated the feast day Mass and shared with us his mission and experiences in Kenya.

Sebastian Shitol Nôkre omi

ST. JOSEPH MISSION STATION (Minami Kasuya Catholic Church) welcomes the Easter season with the blessing of the new parish hall.

Fukuoka, Japan—The wait is finally over for parishioners at St. Joseph Mission Station in Minami Kasuya, Fukuoka. His excellency Bishop Ryouji Miyahara of Fukuoka Diocese led the parishioners in welcoming the Easter season of 2016 with the blessing of its new parish hall on April 10, 2016.

It has been a long dream of the parishioners to have a parish hall of their own. Since the mission station was built 20 years ago, the parishioners have been using the church building not just as a place of worship but as a multiple-purpose hall as well. People longed for a parish hall where they can do church activities without disturbing other parishioners who wish to stay in the church and pray longer.

After a series of meetings and consultations with Bishop Miyahara, Fr. Bernard Ondap, OMI (pastor) led the ground breaking held last October, 2015. With the praiseworthy skills of the construction workers and unwavering support of the parishioners, the new parish hall was completely finished 4 months after the ground breaking.

The blessing of the new parish hall began with a Eucharistic celebration presided by Bishop Miyahara with Oblate Frs. Furukawa, Iwo and Ondap concelebrating. Frs. Iwo and Furukawa were the former pastors of the mission station. After the Eucharistic celebration, everybody transferred to the new parish hall for the Rite of Blessing of the parish hall. Bishop Miyahara in his short yet heart warming homily challenged everybody to use the new parish hall in strengthening the relationships of the parishioners by organizing several activities and programs. The parishioners and some guests from nearby churches shared a sumptuous meal after the blessing.



Bernard Ondap omi

30 th Youth Gathering: This time it was held in at Matuyama, for the Net Work Meeting- February 27-28,
Organised By Bro Yagi together with other people involved in Youth Ministry.

