



# Far East Star

Summer 2018



*From the Desk of the Delegation Superior...*

Brad Rozairo, OMI

## Oblate Presence in Japan

Dear Brothers,

This year we celebrate seventy years of our presence here in Japan! I think this is an important milestone in the history of our Delegation that invites us to reflect on what we have been doing and what needs to be done in the future. I think, beginning from our pioneers, each Oblate through his presence and hard work has contributed to this mission, and we are grateful to our older brothers for preparing the ground for us. At present, although we are a handful of men, we have to continue God's mission for His people while reading the present-day signs of the times rightly, and ready to take up the challenges.



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Our Founder St. Eugene says about the Oblates: *"Their founder is Jesus Christ, the very Son of God; their first fathers are the Apostles."* □ (1818 Rule). In a true sense Jesus Christ is our real founder, and we try to imitate him especially when it comes to our way of life and mission. As we thank God for our life and ministry for many years in this country, we have to also seriously ask ourselves whether we have really imitated His son Jesus Christ in the way we have been living and working with the people, and allowing his message to touch the hearts of those *"whose condition cries out for salvation and for the hope which only Jesus Christ can fully bring."* (Const.5).

Our last General Chapter pointed out six areas of mission for our reflection and work. One of them, the first in the Chapter main document, is about the new faces of the poor. This is a real challenge for us all, in a time where *"the Church, along with the entire world, is ex-*

*periencing an age of great transformation, in the most diverse of fields.”* (Pope Francis). But we should strive to seek out those at the peripheries with their many faces: migrants; refugees; victims of addicts, war, violence and trafficking; – not only the materially poor but also those that are poor in spirit and do not know Jesus Christ.

As we thank God for the last seventy years in Japan, let me invite us to reflect on our future in this mission by proposing a few questions that would require prayer and discernment both at the personal and community levels.

Let us ask ourselves –

- What is OMI identity for Japan-Korea in order to know why I am/we are here?
- Do we still make a relevant presence in Japan-Korea or are we just trying to survive?
- If we are to make a difference in the society, are we ready to let go of our past, fears, comfort zones, etc.?

## **News from Korea**

By Maurizio & Shitol

Greetings from Korea!

We are glad to share some news with you.

Last year in May, Fr. Samuel from Kenya came to Korea for his vacation. He shared with us the joys and sorrows of his work in the mission. In agreement with his Provincial, he has decided to take one year of sabbatical in order to have some rest and discern his future presence in Kenya. At present, he is in the community of Suwon helping in our mission especially in Anna's House with Fr. Vincenzo.

Fr. Peter continues his activities with MAMI through masses and some pilgrimages. Recently he organized a pilgrimage to Hong-Kong and Macau. He is preparing another to Italy sometime in summer. He also gives a helping hand to the street children in Anna's house with some psychological counseling.

Fr. Maurizio continues the pastoral work for migrants with other activities at the Nunciature and Eugene Bell organization that works for the MDR-TB patients in North Korea.

After years of hard work, Fr. Vincenzo was able to collect the amount needed to finance the construction of a new Anna's House for the homeless. Thanks to the generosity of many people for their contribution.

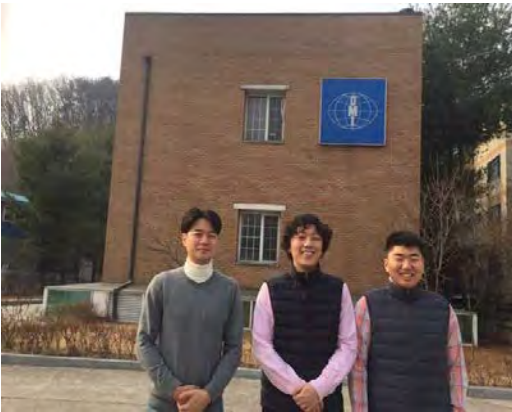
On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2018, we had the blessing of the new building. Bishop Matthias of

Suwon diocese officiated the ceremony. Some members of the family of Fr. Vincenzo came from Italy for the occasion. A good number of priests and religious including the Oblates from Korea attended the blessing. Bro.





Yagi, from Japan represented the Delegation Superior. Many people from the City Hall and several Embassies also joined the ceremony.



Three of our seminarians, Heo Won Hyou (Paul), Park Moon Gi (Peter) and Kim Sung Hoo (Sabino) are already in Sri Lanka to begin their formation program. Before they departed for Colombo we had a special thanksgiving Mass with their parents. We thank God for this wonderful blessing and we pray for them and wish them all the very best.

In August, this year, our Novice Bro. Kim Hyun Jo (Justin) will pronounce his first vows at the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Sri Lanka. This is also a blessing for us. We humbly request your prayers for him.

On January 25, 2019, the Oblates in Korea came together at Suwon house to celebrate the foundation of our



Congregation as well as the closure of the Year of Oblate Vocations. For this occasion, we were happy to have the Delegation Superior Fr. Bradley Rozairo with us. During the homily, he shared a few words that were taken from the letter of Fr. General written on the closure of the Year of Oblate Vocations. United with all the Oblates in spirit, we thanked God for the gift of vocation and prayed that we may be always blessed with young people, passionate for Jesus, willing to commit their lives for the poor and work for God's kingdom.



## **Pastoral work with Migrants**

Maurizio Giorgianni, OMI

Greetings to everyone!

I would like to share with you some episodes and reflections about the pastoral work with migrants in Korea. One day a Filipina came to me crying. Her factory, on Good Friday was completely destroyed by fire. Thanks to God she was not injured, but the fire destroyed all her belongings, savings and documents. She was crying on my shoulder saying, "Father, the clothes I am wearing are all that is left to me, I don't know where to go, what to do, what will be my future





here". I just listened to her and was not able to say anything except this - "You have a family here, the community is here and we will give you what you need, so don't worry. You lost everything but you didn't lose us, we are here for you." She looked at me, wiped away her tears and thanked me. We prayed together and I gave her some money and some clothes. After a few days, she called me to say that she found a new job and a new place to stay, and that she felt better even after she had lost

everything. The community gave her hope and strength to face the reality and move forward.

The same day I received a picture from the Philippines with a message: "Father, look, we met again here in the Philippines after working in Korea!" The picture shows two Filipino migrants that were once members of our community. Now they live in the Philippines far away from each other, but they wanted to meet again, and so they came together to have dinner somewhere. They took a picture and sent me to share their happiness in being together again. I was so happy to see that picture and thought again about the importance of a community.

Filipinos when they leave their country, they leave everything, especially their near and dear ones and their families. When they are away from home they feel lonely, and because of that very often they start new relationships in Korea, and that gives birth to a "new family". But sadly, it ends up in destroying their real families back in the Philippines.

This is a reality that I cannot ignore and it makes me very sad. Sometimes I feel hopeless and I cannot solve their problems. It is true that their loneliness is very deep, they have no friends, no place to go to, and no people they can trust...I try to understand the situation, but it is sad to see "new families" and "new children" with all the consequences.

The two episodes I shared with you are totally different. One brings so much of joy to know that community builds relationships and unites people, whereas the other destroys people and brings a lot of sadness and pain. But the community that migrants build in Korea through our Emmaus center is the source of their consolation, hope and joy. The community of Emmaus is really "a family" for them. It is a "new" and a "healthy family" that does not destroy their families back in the Philippines. It is also a family that strengthens their own true families. It is interesting to note that when the migrants leave Korea, they also bring with them the "Emmaus community"!





I always thought that one of the goals of the pastoral care for migrants is to create an environment where they feel accepted, secured and protected. To build a community here in Korea with our centers means, to enrich our migrants and to give them something precious that they can bring with them. That is not money, but the love of a healthy family, which is a community.

## Outreach program for Youth

Samuel Hong, OMI

Hello!

I am glad to introduce myself to you through this newsletter. I am Fr. Samuel Hong, an Oblate from Korea. Actually, I was assigned to Kenya as a missionary about 5 years ago, but returned to Korea a year ago in order to have a discernment period. I needed that because I was not so sure whether I could continue to live as a missionary in Kenya.

The past year was a special and great moment to me because I could discern my life as an Oblate. Particularly, an apostolic work in Korea has helped me a lot, and that is called AJIT. – in Korean an abbreviation for 아이들을 지켜주는 트럭 which means the ‘truck that cares for youth’. This ministry is an outreach program for the youth which was initiated by Fr. Vincenzo, who runs Anna’s House (soup-kitchen) for the homeless. AJIT team that goes out to the streets every Wednesday to Friday also visits different schools every Tuesday to meet young people and children. The work of the team members is very simple. They welcome the youth, serve them some snacks and talk with them. Whenever we go out to the streets we meet for about 50 children.



When Fr. Vincenzo began this work, he had an intention of meeting children who run away from their homes, but it was not so easy because they hide themselves and not want to expose themselves in public places. So now, the purpose of this ministry is to become friends with the youth and try to prevent them from leaving their parents and schools.

At the beginning when I joined the team, I had some kind of fear and anxiety, because my personality as such I am shy of strangers. But lately I have found that it is not necessary to worry too much about my personality. The youth are friendly and kind enough to be my friends. I think all they want is my presence with them and for them. Now as friends we talk together, eat together and laugh together and listen to each other. I just found that I do not need any special skills of counseling but just affection, patience and mercy.

When you go to the streets you come in contact with all kinds of youth. Some can be drunken, shy, simple, arrogant, rude, kind, loving etc. but all of them can be your friends. With love, mercy and patience you can earn a lot of friends with whom you can smile, cry and talk.

Jesus who is God, came to this world to become a friend to us. When we go out to the streets we become friends especially with the youth.

## **Feb 17<sup>th</sup> “Oblate Day”**

Steve Rosario, OMI

We were happy to celebrate the “Oblate Day” together with the parishioners of Naruto and Anan parishes on the day of the approval of the Constitutions and Rules of our Congregation. It was also an occasion to celebrate the closure of the Year of Oblate Vocations.



For our liturgy, we used the mass text of our Founder. To make it more meaningful I chose five symbols with intercessions, such as the **Oblate Cross** (to symbolize the whole church), **Constitutions and Rules** (a symbol of Oblate way of life), **Bible** (to symbolize the importance of preaching of the Good News to the poor & non-believers), **Globe** (a symbol that reminds us of Global Warming) and **Vegetables** (to represent many foreign workers who work in the agricultural field risking their lives for a better living).

After the Eucharistic celebration, we got together to share some information on the Oblates with the people. Bro. Yagi had two presentations, one on the oblates who worked in Anan church





## マドラスとマイラポア 大司教 アルラッパ

スリランカ管区から最初の2人の先駆者オブレートの宣教者が  
1968年6月29日にインドに足を踏み入れました。

イマヌエル マリアンビライ神父

スタニスラス ビリブ神父



and the other was a display of statistics of Oblates and Oblate seminarians in the world. This created an interest in our parishioners, who really felt the need to work with the Oblates and to pray for vocations continuously.

Since the Oblates in India celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Province, I prepared a short presentation on OMI India and spoke about the arrival of the first missionaries from Sir Lanka in the Indian soil, and how they accepted the challenges in establishing the mission, formation of seminarians, missionary activities, challenges and also many achievements.

Our "Oblate Day" with the people was a meaningful and wonderful celebration.



**May God grant eternal rest and peace to Mr. Akihiko KIDO, our honorary Oblate.**

*We had the privilege of having Father Marek Jazgier, OMI the Secretary-General from Rome with us for a week.*

*THANK YOU, Fr. Marek for visiting us. Hope you enjoyed your stay in Japan.*

