



Far East Star

Summer 2019



From the Desk of the Delegation Superior...

Brad Rozairo, OMI

The courage to take a risk for God's promise

Dear Brothers,

Reflecting on the Gospel narrative of the calling of the first disciples of Jesus by the Sea of Galilee (Mark 1:16-20), Pope Francis in his message for the 2019 World day of Vocations gave as example, how brothers Si-



mon and Andrew encountered difficulties as fishermen. Although they had learnt the laws of nature, they had to fight against the storms and high waves to earn for their living. Sometimes even if the sea was calm, their hard labor was not sufficient to fill their nets, and had to get back to shore tired, disappointed and discouraged.

Much of life is like that. We have our dreams and desires and commit ourselves for a worthy cause hoping that we will enjoy a good catch, but often times we get back home frustrated and dejected. We need courage to keep our boat from being tossed by the waves. We may have learnt the techniques and skills for our trade, but there are times we experience storms and huge waves in life that bring us pain and heartaches. At times, even if things go well with our work, we see that our hard labor does not produce enough fruits and we tend to give up. I am sure beginning from our pioneer Oblates, many who have gone before us would have had this experience, but they were successful in their endeavors because they had the courage to take the risk for what God had expected of them.

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Today Jesus invites us to put out into the deep and to let our nets down for a catch (Luke 5:4). This is not only an invitation but also a challenge. The deep is where we will find a lot of fish, but to launch out into the deep is to move away from our fears and to let go of our past. God wants us to break away from our 'comfort zone' and step out in faith to do what He thinks is best for us. It may be something that we have only dreamt of or never done before. I think it's time for us to pick up courage and to let our nets down into the deep waters. Who knows God might give us more than what we need and we might end up with our nets-breaking!

Mass in a Vinyl House

Antonysamy Irudayaraj OMI

There are many foreign students and trainees from the Asian countries living in Japan.

Kochi Nakajimacho parish in the diocese of Takamatsu has got a big number of Filipino skilled-Interns. There are more than 300 technical intern trainees from the Philippines who live in Kochi Prefecture, in the island of Shikoku, and most of them are engaged in agriculture. Everybody works for cheap wages and sends income to their families. Most of them return home in about three years. But now the government has changed the period of time from 3 – 5 years.

On March 7th 2010 I baptized a child, whose parents are Japanese and Filipino. After the baptism, they invited me to their home for a meal. During the meal, they asked me to give a talk. There were many Filipino young people in that house. During the talk, I asked them as to how many young people are living in that area. They told me that there are more than 70 students. I requested the owner of the house (not a Catholic) to give me a chance to celebrate Mass for the students at least once a month. He said immediately 'no problem Father, go ahead.' The students welcomed us for Mass. This place is called Susaki, a rural area in Kochi prefecture. These students are all Catholic, but they cannot attend Mass because they have to work on Sunday too and the church is far. It takes an hour by car from the main parish Nakajimacho Church. Now every first Friday at night we gather and celebrate Mass in this place.



Later I learnt that there is a big group of young Filipinos in another place called Tosa Yamada in the same prefecture where there are more than 80 students. I visited this place along with a Filipina and her Japanese husband from my parish. This Filipina and these students come from the same Northern region of the Philippines. Besides Tagalog and English, they also speak their native language called Kankana—Ey. For the first two or three years, we had Mass in different places according to their choice, such as house, cycle shed, basketball court, garden etc. but now we have a plastic storage shed!

Once a month on Sunday evening at 7:00 pm we come together for the Eucharist. Many come by bicycle after their day's work. Almost all are living and working in different houses and places. Some of the students cook Filipino dishes and bring with them, and after Mass we share the food

together. The place has only a few chairs, so we make use of a board to make an instant bench. Since the lower part of the bench touches the ground of the soil it is very cold during winter, but we wear a scarf and hat and take measures against the cold. Usually the mass is in English but we sing in English, Tagalog and Kankana—Ey while a guitar and a drum set accompany us. Everyone looks forward to the Sunday Celebration which also helps them meet friends. They have holiday once a month on Monday. They come for Mass and stay at their friends' place and have a meeting the following day, after which they go back to their respective places. For them this is an important moment because they take time to share their joys and sorrows together and support each other and try to grow together.



The church is not the building but the people. They are nourished spiritually. These people could not come to church, but I had to go to them and begin to build the church with them. The Lord has sent me to preach good news to the poor. Who are the poor? These are the poor with their many faces in this modern time. Very often they feel lonely, homesick and depressed. Sometimes when I get a call from the coordinator (a Filipino in my parish) asking for a Mass or Prayers for these lonely, depressed people we visit them, pray with them and support them. Many times I have celebrated a special Mass for these people and have prayed for them. They are very good Christians and their faith is deep.

For the last 9 years, the Oblates here in Kochi have been journeying with these people. Mass in a vinyl house really unites us. There are three groups of people - first year, second year and third year. Every year the third-year group goes back home and a new group comes. We have welcome Mass and farewell mass (sayonara Mass).

Thank you.

Migrant Ministry

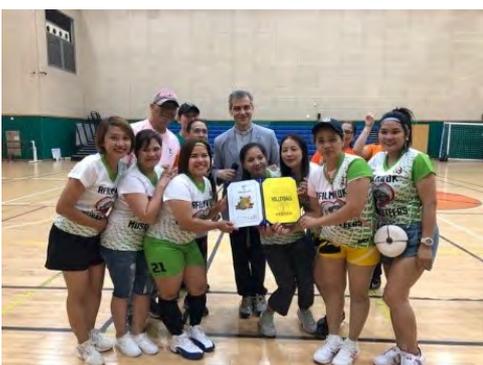
Maurizio Giorgianni, OMI

I hope everybody had a good summer.

I just want to share with you some news about the summer activities with the migrants.

On June 23, our Gwangju community had the sports festival.

About 120 migrants from Gwangju area participated in the festival. We started at nine in the morning with the Sunday mass and continued with the games until five in the afternoon. After the



lunch break, the parish priest from Gwangju, came to visit us with some parishioners. The migrants performed a dance in his honor. The presence of the parish priest and the parishioners was meaningful to us. It meant that we are all one family without borders in the eyes of God.



On Saturday June 29, I invited 12 migrants to join me visit the community of the Oblates in Seoul. We had dinner together, enjoyed the view of Seoul and had a walk and sharing together. The atmosphere in our little Chapel helped us spend some peaceful moments and time to rest felt the Lord. God was generous in providing time to the migrants to refresh their hearts and minds as He listened to their pains and sorrows. The 12 Filipinos slept in our house and on Sunday morning I accompanied them back to their places, and we met again for the Sunday mass with all the other migrants (more than 100 every Sunday).



In the first week of August, we had a two-day summer camp. More than 100 Filipinos participated and enjoyed the food, the weather, the sea and the friendship.

The migrants are a gift from God to me. As I journey with them I begin to understand the gospel better and the meaning of my life as a missionary and an Oblate. I always learn to be grateful and to live well every moment.

「人生を変える出会いの力」 – 五十嵐さんの講演を聴いて –

Nobuhiko Yagi, OMI

五十嵐弘志さんのお話を聞く機会がありました。彼は、前科3犯で20年近く服役した当事者として、出所者の社会復帰を助けるNPO法人「マザーハウス」を5年前に立ち上げました。ご自身が更生するきっかけとなったキリスト教の精神に基づいて、出所者に寄り添う支援を実践している中で感じたこと、しなければならぬこと、気づいたことを、生い立ちや受刑中の体験、イエスとの出会いのエピソードを交えながら、「人生を変える出会いの力」というテーマで語っていただき、約30名の参加者がそのお話に聞き入りました。

どのエピソードもとても興味深く、あっという間の2時間でした。特に、服役生活の約20年間の中で、イエスに出会ったことで、その後の人生が大きく変わることになったお話は印象的でした(以下)。



3度目の逮捕で留置場に勾留されていたとき、後から入ってきた日系ブラジル人から聖書の話聞いたそうです。そして、「イエス様についてもっと知りたい」という思いから、拘置所の中で差し入れてもらった聖書をむさぼり読むうちに、使徒言行録9章4節の「サウル、サウル、なぜ、わたしを迫害するのか」という御言葉に、「弘志、弘志、なぜ、罪を犯すのか」という神の声が重なりました。その時、自分の罪を深く悟り、生まれて初めて「神様、ごめんなさい」と告白し、イエス・キリストを受け入れたということです。

このように、お話の内容も素晴らしく、考えさせられることも多々ありましたが、波瀾万丈の人生を歩んでこられた五十嵐さんの親しみやすい人柄、何よりもイエスに出会った喜び、お恵みを伝えようとするその熱情、意気込み、大変惹かれるものがありました。イエスの愛に触れた方はホントに凄いですね。周りの社会、組織、環境に関係なく、このイエスの愛に人をつなげようとする…その熱意にあふれ、その力が内面からほとばしり出て、みなぎっている…そんな雰囲気を感じ取ることができました。復活したイエスに出会い、毎日の活動(過ちを犯してしまった人たちを見捨てない)の中で、その出会いを日々更新していらっしゃるお姿を感じました。

イエス・キリストとの出会い=ゆるし、受容、そして神さまの愛に触れる=他者(ひと)をその愛につなげていく…という、小さな悟りに似たようなものを得ることができました。私も五十嵐さんに倣い、私とイエス・キリストとの出会いという原点に立ち、その出会いを更新しながら、そのイエスの愛に触れ、今度は私が出会う人々をイエスの愛につなげていく、という熱情に満たされながら、日々歩いていけたらと思っています。

とても大切なことに気付かせてくださった五十嵐さんに、そして神さまに感謝!です。

NB: The above report is a summary of a talk given by Mr. Hiroshi Igarashi, a former convict at an event in Tokushima this summer. He spoke about his experience of meeting God in a prison cell. Presently he runs a nonprofit organization known as “Mother House” which helps former convicts return to society. If you wish to know about his experience in English, you may check the link below:

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/01/23/national/social-issues/ex-convict-helps-inmates-return-to-society/#.XWN0wpMza8U>

First Religious Profession

After spending a year in prayer, study and ministry at the Oblate Novitiate in Bandarawela, Sri Lanka, eleven young men (7 from Sri Lanka, 3 from Pakistan & 1 from Korea) professed their first religious vows at the Sacred Heart Novitiate Chapel on August 22, 2019. A good number of Oblates, priests, religious, family and friends witnessed the ceremony during which these young men came forward saying, ‘*this is my choice and I will do this for a year*’. It was a day of new generations coming forward, and that is always a good thing in a family to have new life.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Bro. Justin Hyeonjo KIM on your first religious profession of vows.



SEVENTY YEARS OF OBLATE PRESENCE IN JAPAN

Our websites: English – <https://www.omi-japankorea.net/>

Japanese – <https://oblates-japan.com/>



OMI
The Missionary Oblates
of Mary Immaculate



OMI MISSIONS:

- 1949: Kochi
Tokushima (returned to Bishop in 2012)
- 1950: Itami - Mission house & Kindergarten
- 1952: Aki - Mission house,
Novitiate & Kindergarten
- 1953: Kochi - Mission house & Kindergarten.
Hikarigaoka (returned to Bishop in 1988)
- 1955: Koga - Mission house & Kindergarten
- 1959: Naruto - Mission house & Kindergarten
- 1961: Tokyo - Provincial house, Scholasticate,
Novitiate & Mission (now closed)
- 1962: Awa Ikeda - Mission house
(returned to Bishop in 2006)
- 1963: Akaoka - Mission house
- 1966: Anan - Mission house & Kindergarten
- 1970: Nakamura - Mission house
- 1972: Tokyo - Formation house (now closed)
- 1987: Nagoya - House of studies (now closed)
Zendana (returned to Bishop in 2006)
- 1998: Yoshizuka & Minami-Kasuya
- 2006: Toyohashi

WELCOME TO JAPAN!

Here to preach our annual retreat is
Fr. S. Chinnappan OMI, Provincial of India

