

OGF report Japan-Korea

Members:

Ondap, Bernard

Savarimuthu, Stephen Rosario

Devanesan, John Selvaraj

Nokrek, Shitol Sebastian

Hong, Jangwon Peter

During the April 2015 Spring meeting at Munakata, Fukuoka the group met after a year of hiatus. The members then recalled the past OGF gatherings, especially the gatherings that took place for the past three years.

2013—The group under the leadership of Robinson gathered at Genji no Mori in Fukuoka for 2 days of sharing, discussion and recreation under the guidance of Fr. Rosario, OMI (Sri Lanka). After the gathering the group then joined the delegation for the Japan-Korea Spring meeting which was held at Munakata, Fukuoka. The members at that time were Burns, Christy, Robinson, Shitol, Samuel and Peter.

2014— The group under the leadership of Christy decided to gather at Yoshizuka Church, Fukuoka for sharing and discussion. The group focused their discussion and sharing on their present ministry involvements and community life in line with the preparation for the Triennium celebration of the Congregation's 200th year foundation anniversary. Fr. Rohan, OMI (provincial of Colombo) facilitated the group's gathering. The group gladly welcomed the newly arrived missionaries from India in the person of Steve and Selva. This gathering will also be a farewell gathering for Samuel who is set to leave for Kenya for his missionary endeavors. All the members were present for the gathering: Burns, Christy, Robinson, Peter, Shitol, Samuel, Steve and Selva

2015— The group planned to gather in Korea since the all the members of the delegation will gather in Korea for the 25th founding anniversary of the mission in Korea. However, the plan was not materialized.

After recalling the past gatherings and plans not materialized, the group discussed and came up with the following suggestions:

Plans:

1. The Group (both Japan and Korea) will meet **once a year as one group**.

The resource person and the topic for the gathering may be decided/ suggested by both Japan and Korea members.

If the gathering will be held in Japan, then the Japan group will be the in-charge.

If the gathering will be held in Korea, then the Korea group will be the in-charge.

2. The Japan group (Burns, Steve and Selva) will meet in Japan once a year.
The Korea group (Shitol and Peter) will also meet in Korea once a year.

Each group may decide on the time, place, speaker and topic for the gathering on their own.

3. 2016 Japan-Korea gathering

Date: September 9-11, 2016

Place: Fukuoka

Topic and Speaker:

Option 1: Mass media with Fr. Eduardo Vasquez, OMI (Philippines)
Under negotiations

Option 2: any topic with the Retreat master (retreat master of the 2016 Retreat)

Option 3: Faith sharing and camaraderie on our own

Members: Burns, Steve, Selva, Shitol and Peter

4. OGF contact person: Burns

After the meeting at Munakata, Fukuoka, the group immediately contacted the persons being eyed to be the resource person of the gathering. Fr. Vazquez was very willing to joined the group but because of some problems with the schedule the group opted to have Bro. Pat MacGee, OMI (retreat speaker) to be the resource person for 2016 OGF gathering. With the help of Wency, Bro. Pat gladly accepted the request and he was very willing to guide the group with **Secularism and religious life** as the topic.

The group planned to gather on September 9-11, 2016 at the Oblate residence in Koga, Fukuoka since the retreat will also be held in Fukuoka. By June of 2016, Wency happily informed the group that three young Oblates from China delegation (**Mark Serna**—Filipino, **Paul Shen**—Chinese and **Johnny Rakotoarisoa**—Madagascar) will be joining the Japan-Korea OGF.

A few days before the gathering Shitol informed the group that he could not join the gathering because his visa won't be released on time.

2016 –

In general, it was a fruitful and successful gathering. Bro. Pat gave a concise and very informative talk on Secularism and Religious life were the members gladly shared their experiences in line with the topic. Since most of the members were coming from different nationalities and ministry backgrounds, the gathering was indeed very informative and a sort of an encouragement for each and everyone.

The group planned to gather again sometime in Spring next year (2017).

- By Bernard ONDAP OMI

