



Greetings to you all!

Through this printed newsletter of Japan/Korea we come to you after a long time.

Actually this particular greeting should be coming to you through our Delegation Superior Angelo Siani. As you all know Angelo has been going through various trials health-wise. Due to his sickness I am asked to write this greeting to you all.



Besides circulating our monthly newsletter among ourselves, once a year we send a special one to people abroad.

In this situation I would like to open my greetings, as the acting superior of the delegation in order to give you an idea of our present situation.

As you all know, this unit was formally founded by the former Eastern American Province. After 20 years it became a Vice-province until recently. According to the new decisions in recent Chapters, we were reduced to a General Delegation as an interim period. We were asked by Rome to find a new way for our unit, as Rome cannot keep us as a General Delegation forever.

After prolonged talks we were to try to adjust our unit according to the C 111, which says that when a group of provinces wishes to collaborate in assuming a unit under their care, it pertains to the Superior General in council, upon recommendation of the provincials concerned, to establish it with its particular statutes and appoint its Superior and council. One of the sponsoring Provincials shall be designated as the liaison provincial with the delegation.

Thinking it best for our unit we had decided to ask Jaffna, the Philippines and Colombo as the Group of provinces to support our unit Japan/Korea. Though we thought we could go along with this, there were minor problems that cropped up, which made this reality almost impossible. Right now, after receiving advice from Rome, we thought it would be better to be under one Province but also receiving support from the other 2 units.

After thinking about it for a long time, we thought it would be better to choose to be under Colombo and then receive support from Jaffna and Philippines. Still the things are not finalized but according to the advice I get from Rome and Colombo we would go along with these suggestions.

Our annual retreat this year will be preached by Fr. Clement, Provincial of Colombo. We think this would be a good chance to also clarify our future set-up and direction.

Right now, as a unit, we stand in this situation and Fr. Angelo Siani, who is our delegation superior, will be finishing his term next year. After drawing up the new set-up, we hope that this unit will continue with a new face and new Delegation Superior.

Counting on the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit we hope to continue our mission here in Japan and Korea.

May God bless you.

Jude Peirisulle, OMI
Acting Superior



The 7th of July has been the 11th birthday of our Center called Anna's House.

This Center, a Corporation recognized by the Government, works for people who live on the streets: homeless, abandoned children, elderly people who live in distress, jobless, alcoholics and people who have been in prison. We offer them dinner and other services such as: medical care, psychological counseling, shower, cloth-distribution, haircut and different formation programs.



What's happened in the last year has been really a miracle!

Let me enumerate them in order. On the 28 of February 2008 the ten year contract between the Diocese of Suwon and the Oblates (Anna's House) expired. So the Diocese decided to close down the Center because the building was too old and not advisable to use. We were looking for the letter of termination of contract from the Diocese. Instead in March the same year a letter from the bishop arrived ...but, instead of ordering the closure of the Center, encouraged us to go on with this important ministry for the poor and to build a new center in the same venue.

In June 2008, after all the papers were approved both by the city hall and the diocese, we demolished the old structure and started a new building with a lot of confidence in the Lord. We had to raise about 640.000.000 won (530.000 \$). It was a daunting task. We were worried how to raise such a big sum of money, was a big question. The construction proceeded well and in December, the same year and we were able to inaugurate the new beautiful and clean facility after honoring all the payments with the construction company (except for 120.000.000won about 100.000 \$ that has to be paid by 1 July 2009).

The homeless people started pouring in once again more and more at our center. We now have 500 homeless friends visiting our center per day! Also the number of volunteers has increased. They now number more than 600 per month. They include both Catholics and non-Catholics. But all of them like to serve the poor. Our volunteers have been traditionally our big sponsors. They work hard; they sacrifice themselves in the heat of the kitchen other than contributing their money and wealth. Isn't a miracle!

In collaboration with the City Hall we are running a very good program for the street children. In March a very rich person wanted to help this program and he donated his own 3 storey building for our kids. Now our teen-agers are living in a beautiful house without any worries for the stability of the program in the future.

In May 2009 our very old and worn-out van broke down, but immediately a group of lay people bought for us a new one. So now we are driving a new beautiful van.

Since the economical situation is very bad everywhere we were very much worried as how to make the last payment (debt) sum of 60.000.000 won. In the beginning of June 2009, a telephone call came from one of our friends, offering us to make a charity concert to raise money for Anna's House. We witnessed in that event yet another sign (miracle) of love from God.

On the 17th of June 2009, the concert was realized and it has been more than a success. 2100 people who attended the concert were very enthusiastic and happy. Also we were happy because the money we raised in that evening has been 60.000.000 won the exact amount of money we have to pay the constructor as the last debt.

In one year we saw with our own eyes and the



providence of God and His love, mercy, gentleness not for the “Anna's House Corporation” but for the poor, the suffering people whom He loves in an incredible way. In the last 14 months we have been witnessing a number of miracles. Still I feel just this word cannot absolutely describe what had happened last year in Anna's House.

God gave us all this wonderful gifts to serve, love and welcome the poor the neglected and the abandoned by the society but immensely loved by God.

More and more I believe and am convinced that this is what we are called to do in our center and in our life as Oblates.

Thank you very much.

■Honor your father and mother (parents)....

Anthony swamy Varam, OMI

It is one of the Ten Commandments Many people think that honoring parents is some kind of payback for all those years of bringing us up. Actually, to the Israelites who wandered 40 years in the desert, where God automatically provided everyone's needs. The parents didn't feed their children; they had the manna to eat. The parents didn't provide clothing; the clothes grew with them and never needed washing. Nevertheless, it was precisely this generation who stood at Mount Sinai and heard God utter, "Honor your father and mother."

Therefore this honoring parents does not depend on what your parents did for you, or even whether they were good parents. Rather, we honor parents simply because they gave us the gift of life, of course for bringing us up as earthly parents.

Imagine you were drowning and a stranger came along and saved your life. You would be forever indebted to that person. All the more so we should be grateful to our parents who gave us life.

By honoring those who brought us into existence, we learn not to take things for granted and develop an appreciation for the kindness of others.



With this in mind we invited the parents of our three brothers - Bros. Hong Pedro (in Australian scholasticate), Hong Sameul (in the first year of graduate school, in Korea and Kim Simeon (ready to leave for his novitiate program in Sri Lanka, after completing his masters in Philosophy). But the mother of Br.Hong Pedro could not attend at the last hour due to her ill-health.

We welcomed them all in our midst first and after a brief meeting with the formators we led them to the Eucharistic celebration - praying for their families and for vocation of their sons. And thereafter we had a festive dinner in honor of them.

■Critical inquiry on the clash of civilizations in Huntington

Huntington predicted the clash of different civilizations in the post-Cold War world. In his book '**The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order**', what is most important in the definition of civilization is religion. He wrote that conflict is likely to occur between the West and non-Western civilizations. Under his theory, non-Western civilizations such as Islamic, Confucian civilization would challenge America-led Western one. Those civilizations would witness the process of modernization restore their traditional cultures and religions, which leads to conflict with West civilization.

But, Dieter Senghaas criticized Huntington's view that civilizations are rigid structure and that they are likely to conflict each other. On the contrary, Dieter Senghaas argues that culture goes through internal differentiation and conflict. He also says that at the core of conflicts lies protracted

socio-economic discrimination, rather than cultural roots. According to him, modernization process would further intensify conflict. In his book, '**reluctant civilization**' means that civilizations enter into conflict with themselves, for tradition and modernization rarely go in the same direction. So he proposed 'the clash within civilization' as opposed to 'the clash of civilizations' and 'the civilizational hexagon' where conflict occurring democratization process can be resolved.

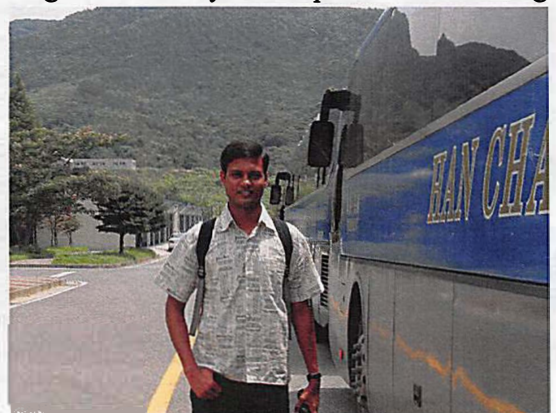
In his thesis, Br.Simeon Kim, aims at helping create peaceful civilizations living in harmony without clash, based on both authors' understanding of civilization. And the thesis goes in line with Senghaas' view of civilizations, partly criticizing Huntington's cultural essentialism. he considers the possibility and legitimacy of conflict resolution from trans-individual's viewpoint. Last but not least, he provides the way of modernized civilization where conflict and clash can be addressed in a civilized fashion

N.B: This is the abstract of Br.Simeon Kim's thesis defended for his Masters in philosophy, at Sogang university, Seoul, Korea. This university is run by the Jesuits. Simeon leaves for Sri Lanka, for a period of two years. The first year he will learn English and in the second year he will attend his novitiate program and once he returns to Korea, will begin his studies in theology.

■My feelings in Korea Oblate Scholasticate.

Johan Finney, OMI

In my formation life I have been told many times that an Oblate should be ready to go to any country or place where he is sent. I was preparing myself accordingly. But I did not think that as a scholastic I will have the privilege to experience the community life and mission work of the Oblates in other countries. I am blessed by being here in the Korean Oblate formation house. I Thank God for this blessing. Before coming here I was worried about the new country, new culture and new people, and at the same time my worries disappeared when I thought that I was not going to an unknown family but to an Oblate family where there is brotherly love and sharing and each one bears the suffering of others. Since I arrived here I have been experiencing such family atmosphere. I am being taught by the Fathers and Brothers how to talk, eat and adjust myself in this new country and culture. I appreciate their loving corrections and generous helping hands that they are extending to me every moment. In this formation house the disciplined and prayer life of the Brothers sets examples for me to follow. We the students are given enough freedom to take responsibility for our own decision to be the Oblates. Sometimes I have the chance to hear about the challenging work of the missionary Oblate Fathers who are involved with different ministries here in Korea. Their sharing enlightens and encourages me to prepare myself to be a missionary.



My visit to migrant center is a chance to meet people from different countries, know something about their culture and values. Some of them shared their suffering and difficulties in this foreign land. There are many who do not have any one to share with. All these make me aware of some of the social and ethical problems of the world.

I feel that international community life is not so easy to live; I need to have an open mind to the corrections and be flexible with the things that I am not used to. In the last five months I experienced that in this foreign land I am not alone there are many people who are helping me to learn walking in the unknown paths. I consider my stay here as a time for growth and maturity in my religious life. I express my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Emil Moraes omi the Delegation Superior of Bangladesh for sending me here to have this rich experience. I also extend my gratitude to Korean mission community members for accepting me in this community to continue my formation life.

After about 47 years working in various areas of Japan I came to this mission, Toyohashi, on April 1, 2006. Where is it? Mid-Japan, the furthest mission of the Nagoya Diocese. Of what does it consist ? It is made up of five cities and all the towns and villages around them. The cities are Toyohashi (population 364,856), Toyokawa (117,327), Tahara (43,132), Shinshiro (36,022) and Gamagori (82,108). This comes to 643,445 people the vast bulk of them Japanese of whom 975 are registered Catholics.



The number of immigrant workers is less clear. However the statistics for Toyohashi City at present include approximately 13,000 Brazilians.

Hearsay has about 5000 Peruvians in the city. The Filipinos must come to several thousand as about 500 of them attend the Tagalog Mass. There are large numbers of Vietnamese though most of them are Buddhist. Large numbers of Koreans, a handful of Nigerians, other Africans and people of many other countries attending the universities make up the mix. Precise statistics are hard to come by but my personal estimate is that we have at

least 25,000 non Japanese Catholics within the mission.

The above is just statistics and tells only a small part of the story. Here we are, one Catholic Church in Japan graced with a multiplicity of peoples. All differ in language, culture, and experience. Sometimes the church culture from which people emigrated is varied within the same country. People who come from great cities with priests, sisters and a vibrant church life, are considerably different from immigrants from rural areas where pastoral care is less thorough or perhaps non-existent. Some are non-Church goers who began to come because it was an opportunity to meet their compatriots. The people are disproportionately young. The problems we ordinarily deal with are the problems of youth; little children, catechizing for Baptism, for Confirmation, for Matrimony, for Catholic life in a culture so alien



to their own. The stress of an immigrant's life is such that there is a great need for family counseling. Picture a Saturday or a Sunday with 50 or 60 adults, divided into several classes in different rooms in two or three different languages learning about Baptism, about being a God-parent, about being a spouse, preparing for Confirmation. Our weekends are a whirlpool of people usually ending about 10 P.M..



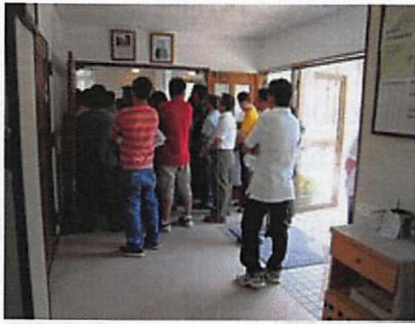
Aside from daily Japanese Masses we have Masses in 5 other languages. English, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese are once a month and Portuguese twice a month. We probably have an attendance in excess of 800 people each weekend. There are two of us Oblates here, myself Ed Williams (79) and the Pastor, Genivaldo Oliveira (35) plus another Oblate Eduardo Santos, in the last year of

his formal Japanese language studies. For the last two months we have been blessed with a Filipino Oblate seminarian Br. Boyet Palomo on pastoral exposure.

The language is not the biggest problem. Even when language skills are deficient somehow communication is possible. Answering the phone (which seems constantly to ring) and the door can be trying but also funny and somehow we manage to get through with cooperation from both sides. Broken English, broken Japanese, broken Portuguese or a mix of them are very common languages here.

There is one pressing problem that I will mention because it is a problem wherever immigrants to a country of a varied language live. The immigrant generation want the Mass and the Sacraments in their





mother tongue. The children raised in a new language have never learned or largely forgotten their parents tongue. One part or the other is bored out of their mind when they attend Mass or the Sacraments together. Solutions, even partial solutions are hard to come by, and their efficacy varies from place to place. What do we do to help pass on the faith to the new generation? A lack of personnel, space, time, money, all contribute to the difficulty. What we do have is happy pastoral workers, people with great needs and hopes and above all the Grace of God.

■ Toyohashi Mission Exposure

Bro. Boyet Palomo, OMI

In almost two and a half months of exposure in Toyohashi Church, one of the Oblate Missions in Japan, I would say that my experience was worthwhile and filled with much knowledge at seeing the church which is always filled with believers not only Japanese but also other nationalities. In the span of my exposure I had many unforgettable memories which cannot be replaced by anything else. There I met not only Japanese but huge number of migrants: Brazilians, Peruvians, Spanish, Vietnamese and Filipinos. I mingled with them. It was a grace-filled experience that I will remember and look forward to if someday I am assigned to this mission.



I was warmly welcomed by Fr. Gen and Fr. Eddie when I arrived in Toyohashi. At that time, Fr. Eduardo was still living at a language school in Nagoya studying Japanese. We communicated by emails and he gave me directions to the Church. When I arrived at the church, I was amazed because it was bright inside unlike most of the churches that look dark inside. The walls were painted in white and curtains were white too. The decorations and icons inside matched the color which added more splendor. In addition, the landscape in front of the church added

more life with the Lourdes Grotto where almost every day different people come to light candles.

During my first few days, I was helping Fr. Gen clean the surroundings. Cleaning the place, especially the garden, was a good recreation since I had nothing to do. There some people smiled and stopped to talk with me. Sometimes I could not help but smile and think that even in little things I can make people happy. It was then that I decided to clean and water the garden as a routine. Moreover, it was interesting because many parishioners (Japanese and other nationalities) who came to church would mistakenly look at me as if I was a Peruvian, Brazilian or even Japanese (hmn... what a surprise!). I too was confused because many Brazilians really look like Japanese. But beyond races and nationalities I saw how they mingled and worked with one another from different communities creating one community.

One of the reasons that I was surprised was the huge number of Filipino migrant workers. Most of them are young and working in companies. I could not imagine that even on ordinary Sundays, masses in Tagalog were filled with Filipinos not only inside the Church but also outside and in the hall area. It is the largest nationality of mass goers. However, their huge numbers create great problems too. Anyway, when Fr. Gen left to attend the migrants meeting in Canada he gave me the responsibility to handle the Filipino community. I started to listen to different problems of different groups and individuals. Almost every day I had a Filipino visitor. Honestly, I felt pity for them. Fr. Gen and I came up with a solution that will at least help the community. We decided to form a new body of officers who would hopefully help and address the needs of Filipinos regarding sacramental, spiritual, moral and financial difficulties. For example, concerning the sacramental and spiritual, many Filipinos

who are married to Japanese have children who are not yet baptized, confirmed, or do not attend mass.

Finally, I would like to thank once again my Oblate community for the love and support they have shared with me. I would like to especially mention Fr. Eddie Williams for all the joys, the laughter, the dance, the singing, the music that two of us listen to during breakfast. There are also the funny stories (sometimes not-so funny), and the hundreds of stories during the time when only two of us are in the house. Thanks also to all the parishioners from different nationalities, many of whom have become my friends, including the many Filipinos for their generosity and for their sharing. My experience was not only a way of sharing my talent and service but more than these are the knowledge and growth I earned for myself. **God Bless**



■Tom Reilly

Thomas J. Reilly Jr., a former Oblate priest, died May 14, 2009 of complications from pneumonia. He was 76. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Tom attended St. Joseph's Preparatory School before joining a seminary program at Catholic University and then the Oblates in the early 1950s. He was sent to Japan on his mission, and, after studying the language in Tokyo, moved to the city of Kochi in the southern island of Shikoku. There he led masses, founded an English class for adults and worked at a Catholic kindergarten, and is even today well remembered among the faithful for his pranks and cheerfully atrocious Japanese. It was also in Kochi that he met a young Catholic woman named Hiroe Takeuchi. After much soul-searching, he removed the collar to marry Hiroe. They promptly had four children -- George, Lisa, Emy and Ken -- and Tom flourished in his new vocation of advertising.

Tom and Hiroe spent the rest of their lives in Kobe, Japan, where they attended and volunteered at two Catholic churches. Hiroe died at age 65 in August 2008 after a fierce battle with colon cancer. We, their children, moved Dad back with us last fall to our homes in New Jersey. But his heart remained with our Mom in Japan, and he joined her shortly thereafter. He is survived by his four children, their spouses and 11 grandchildren. Though he chose another path, Tom loved and revered the Oblates so much that he called the order his fifth child. Please remember him in your prayers. (If you knew Tom Reilly and care to contact his children, please write to Lisa Takeuchi Cullen at lisa.cullen@gmail.com.)

Editor's comment:

All through the years Tom Reilly was very generous in supporting our formation program. He was a member of MAMI. Thank you, Tom for your generosity.

■Summer '09

Xavier Y Tosa, OMI

What's a letter? Some people don't like to write letters. Some people just don't write letters. The OMI letter is an inexpensive way to communicate. To communicate with who? With the one who takes the trouble to read it and with the one who is interested in the fate of the OMIs.

I don't add 'omi' to my name anymore. I'm not so interested in the OMIs whose age number is close to mine. I know how they are by looking at me. They all are aging like am. I don't like to speak about sicknesses. But when somebody greets you, the question is: "How are you doing? You look good." And that is my answer: "Believe your eyes."

Anyway, I took my pencil and started thinking.

I have no people around me anymore. Most of those students from the five different schools, where I spent time and energy, are married. They have children of their own, who are in their 'rebellious' age. But once a year I get a 'not-forgotten' new year card. The postal carrier brings about 300 new year cards. Do I feel happy? Of course. However it is difficult to puzzle out who is who, because once married they change their names. And there, my weak memory cannot put that not-accustomed name under that same face.

And so you know my biggest problem now: my memory is failing me, is abandon me. The fact that other people have the same problem is no consolation. But God is good, - so we say in our sermons-, occasionally He makes it happen that on my daily walk, I meet somebody with a familiar face. "Deruchan! Do you remember me?" (An ESS club student?...)"デルポート先生! ぼくを覚えていますか?"(from the juvenile corrective school?)or(the Kochi university?)

"デルポート神父様! 私を覚えていますか?" "(sama?" only people from the church put me on the same level as Kamisama).

"Poppochan, ポッポちゃん。。。" the orphans of Maria-en!

"Tosa san, do you rember me?" This was a question about a month ago in front of the Kochi station. Before me stood a lady, in her sixties, rather gray colored face...But I couldn't remember. The lady tried: we used to eat at the same table... I knew: "Yes, I remember. The same table at Kitamura's hospital!"

I never come home late. Only on Sunday night after supper at the Nakajima OMI residence. That is my community evening. Usually, somebody brings me home by car, because I have a glass of red wine before dinner.

The evenings are quiet. My neighbors are quiet.

My telephone is quiet. My answering telephone is quiet.

Nobody rings the entrance bell.

Only Bach's music or another classic fills the room.

Evenings: that's the time to open my computer and it happens that an e-mail is waiting. E-mails don't make noise. Those mails come from different sides of the world: Flanders, Canada, South-Africa....Nothing anymore from India. My brother got an expulsion order from the Indian government and he insists that the Jesuits are happy with that.

Oh yes, it can happen that there is a mail from Itami: "Xavier, there is again a mistake in your monthly report!" He is always right, and I should be very thankful to him for doing that job.

All those happenings don't make me older. Only God, who adds the days, is responsible. I try to accept and my age and my illnesses.

"Oh! it's six o'clock in the evening....I have to pray!" I light a candle ...(a prayer without words)

God knows for what, for whom, because before I tell Him, He has already answered. And I believe that.

Next October is my 82nd anniversary. I sometimes ask myself, why Jesus only was allowed 33 years. He fulfilled his mission in 33 years and I still have to start my mission at 82!

This contribution to the OMI letter was interrupted by a week in the hospital. One more name of a disease to be added to the list: Ménière's syndrome. (Does that make you any wiser?) Your head spins in all directions and your eyes turn around in the wrong direction...

Before wasting my time at the hospital, I brought two etchings to the Kochi City exposition...That is an exposition where you must pay to be 'hanged up'.

Wishing you all things you wish for yourself.

■Mission experience in Japan

Bradly Rozairo, OMI

It is going to be 15 years since I came to Japan. As I sit back and reflect on my life here, there are two questions that come to my mind. One is "what have I done in this mission for the last 15 years?" and the other is "what have I learnt all these years?" I think I'll take the second one and share

an experience I had in a mission parish with you.

After my two years of language studies, I thought that I would get settled in one place for a good amount of time so that I could concentrate on my work and life here in Japan. But it did not happen. Within about two years I was moving from one place to another. I was not only disappointed but also found life difficult, because it was not easy for me to adapt myself to different situations and people. But now after more than 12 years when I look back at the experiences I have had, I am grateful to God and to the Oblates for giving me that opportunity to experience life in various places within Japan.

For me, my second home is Itami! I say this because it is there that I got settled. I mean, I could really have the taste of mission parish. I think it was mainly because of some very good people that I met. I was there for 7 years and 6 months. Although I was appointed the “parish priest” (the title that I don't like very much) I did not know how to function, because after my ordination I worked as hospital chaplain in Colombo for two years before coming to Japan. But, I must say that it is the people, who, through their active participation in church activities taught me how to run a parish. What I found in them was dedication and willingness to work for the community. They were trained to take up leadership and work as a team. They even could run the parish without the parish priest! Thanks to the Oblates, who had been there before me for training the laity.

I was blessed with so many talented people who had the desire to build the parish community. It was easy for me to sit down with them to talk, discuss and plan things for the parish. Of course things did not go right all the time. But in spite of difficulties people could come together and work for a cause.

Working with them was a learning experience for me. It is the people with whom I worked and continue to work that make a big difference in my life, and I thank God for them. If you expect a change in your life, allow people to get to know you.

But, it is sad to say that we priests and religious often think that we know everything. This particular thought makes us act like some “parish priests” who think that they have all the powers to control the flock that is entrusted to their care. To form a community you have to become part of it and not stay in the center and act like a “boss”. When I see how certain parish priests function, I say to myself I am not for that. Maybe that is my nature. My experience in Itami made me feel that I am more an animator than a pastor. Of course people in the parish will always have the tendency to look at you as their pastor. But I would say all that depends on how you function as a parish priest/pastor.



Finally, with my little experience this is what I can say. If you make yourself available for the people and be part of the parish community then you will receive a warm welcome from them. Also, if you are ready to listen and learn from the ordinary people, then you will be happy and successful in your ministry. I think the latter is more important to be a successful missionary.

■ Minami-Kasuya Church Celebrates 50 Years

John Iwo, OMI

Yoshizuka parish which is in the island of Kyushu has two churches, one is Yoshizuka and the other is Minami-Kasuya. Foundation of Yoshizuka was on 10th May 1955 and Minami-Kasuya was on 3rd November 1959. Both churches were founded by the Canadian Missionary of Scarborough.

Coming September 13th (Sunday) we will celebrate 50 years anniversary of Minami-Kasuya.

a. History:

1. Since there was no place to say mass a family offered a place.
2. Borrowed a Japanese house.
3. Bought a house

4. New church was built at the present place Tatomi On Dec.11, 1994.
Minami-Kasuya church can accommodate 80 people. At Christmas over 100 people attend mass.
- b. Organization of church is well done and vivid. For the last two years I had knee operations but Fr. Furukawa the newly ordained worked hard for the church. We had study course every week and it is continuing until now. I could study Church History, Bible, Islam and other things with people very much. The faithful increased to 250. Everybody prays and works hard for the church. I hope this church grows more and more. I pray for it.
- Deo Gratias.

■During summer in Fukuoka

Jude Peirisulle, OMI

Summer is the time where many things change. Many people take time to have a vacation. It is also time for the change of weather. According to these changes there are a few things taking place in the area of Fukuoka where some of the events can make changes in my life here.

Asia Pacific Children's Event

Every year during this time children from Asian Pacific countries come to Fukuoka to take part in this event. Sri Lankan children too join this event every year. Though not directly, ever since I came to Fukuoka, I had the chance to experience various events of these children. First they experience home stay in the Fukuoka area. They also attend a Japanese school to see the differences that exist between their countries and schools. The event takes place for about a month. Towards the end of the event, each country takes this opportunity to present what goes on, in their own countries. This is also a chance to study and get an idea as to how to protect the environment. They call it " ENECOLOGY", which is a combined word.

Peace Day

In August, when commemorating the days of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Hiroshima, there are many events that take place in the Church and outside the Church. Last year I was asked to give a talk on the war situation in Sri Lanka. This is an event where the Church is trying to send a message to the world that war is a waste, learning from their past experience. This year also I am asked again to give a talk on Sri Lanka. The theme is "aftermath" of war. I am planning to speak on whether peace has truly come to Sri Lanka.

FYCC

Every year, during summer, we too have a program for the middle and high school children. FYCC is Fukuoka Youth Catholic Camp. This year we are expecting about 100 children for the camp from different parishes. Kenichi and I had the chance to participate and to support this camp in different ways. This year we will have it from the 21st to the 23rd of August.

There are many more things going on around us and there are lots of changes taking place in and around us. I think it is the same with you all. It is in a way a chance for all of us to experience in summer. Wish you all the best and hope to see you in Fukuoka for the retreat.

■Should Pro Lifers Focus Just on Abortion in Asia?

Jerry Novotny, OMI

Outside of Japan, the Asian Pro Life Movement is generally well-organized by Christians in Parishes and on Diocesan levels both of which are fully supported by most Bishops and Priests. One of the questions often asked is "Should Pro Life people focus just on abortion?"

We all know that the Church is one body with many parts. For example, the nose is not the foot, the eye is not the hand, and those that focus on serving the poor by establishing soup kitchens are not



the same as those who save babies from abortion factories. Each individual has received a special call from God and not only has the right but also the duty to focus on it. (John 15:16. "You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit")

From our Catholic training, this seems obvious, so why mention it?

Looking at the present society, there are many Life Issues and each individual is called to see the connection between them. However, seeing that connection does not mean that we are not free to focus.

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin is often noted for his firm conviction of the consistent ethic of life. Yet he, too, made it very clear that it is legitimate to focus on a particular Life Issue. In his address to a group of university students he asked, "Does this mean that everyone must do everything? No! There are limits of time, energy and ability. Each individual is shaped by his individual vocation. People must specialize, groups must focus their energies. The consistent ethics does not deny this. But it does say something to the Church: It calls us to a wider witness to life than we sometimes manifest in our separate activities."

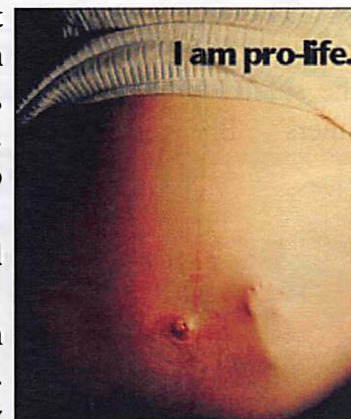
When the US Bishops wrote about the consistent ethic of life, they said the following:

"Among important issues involving the dignity of human life with which the Church is concerned, abortion necessarily plays a central role. Abortion, the direct killing of an innocent human being, is always gravely immoral (The Gospel of Life, no. 57); its victims are the most vulnerable and defenseless members of the human family. It is imperative that those who are called to serve the least among us give urgent attention and priority to this issue of justice.



"This focus and the Church's commitment to a consistent ethic of life complement one another. A consistent ethic of life, which explains the Church's teaching at the level of moral principle -- far from diminishing concern for abortion and euthanasia or equating all issues touching on the dignity of human life -- recognizes instead the distinctive character of each issue while giving each its proper place within a coherent moral vision" (USCCB, Pastoral Plan for Pro-life Activities).

We are all called to be concerned about every Life Issue, and for our voices to be heard loud and clear. But it is the Church as one Body that is called to carry out the many works of Justice. It is the individual vocation of each part of the body to do its appointed task which is received from God, rather than being made to feel it must do the task of everyone else.



■ With the Youth ...

Br. Nobuhiko Yagi, OMI

I want to introduce you to an article that appeared the other day in the Catholic Newspaper.

In the Takamatsu Diocese, led by Bishop Mizobe Osamu, DD, "Youth and the Bible", a study and sharing group centering on the youth was started 3 years ago.

The young people, following a common theme, learn about the Bible, and share their feelings about and understandings of the text. It is an initiative of the diocese but those who attend are mostly non-Christian, which is a special feature of the groups.

One young lady of 28, says that "because I was baptized as a child, my faith was always fuzzy, but by attending these group-sharings on the Bible, my faith has become more solid." Then there's a 27 year-old young man who talked about his experience. In these groups reading the Bible and listening to others share about how these things apply in their life, he strongly became attracted to "the love of

God”, and this spring received Baptism. Now, “I feel that I want to follow this path of Love in my life”.

These groups of “Youth and the Bible” are held in 6 places throughout the diocese. The gatherings are held once a week, on a weekday, and the sessions last 6 to 8 times. These cycles are held 3 times a year and the members are usually in their 20's.

A priest, Brother or Sister is sent as the facilitator to help in the learning and sharing process. However, starting with this year, some of the Christian youth are also involved as facilitators. The person in charge, Oblate Brother Yagi Nobuhiko, says that “once we have played our role in starting the groups, isn't it possible to let the youth take over? In this day and age it is possible to get the necessary information from a variety of places.”

This time around, the theme is about St. Paul. Basing themselves on Paul's letters, a 21 year-old young woman, talking about the verse that mentions “within the one Christ we are all bound together”, she shared with us what her mother had said: “Love is the only thing that grows when shared with others”. She said that this experience had really moved her.



Another young lady of 23 was asked by Brother Yagi to lead a session. Since she really had never read the Bible, at first she was very unsure of herself. The theme was the “conversion” of Paul, using Paul's letters and relating it to her present employment she was able to make a presentation. The preparation was difficult but, as she looks back, it was a great experience “when all were able to share about one thing”

Brother Yagi adds: “For the person presenting as well as the persons listening there is a lively reaction.

After all, it is only natural that people of the same generation, seeing things from their point of view, are better suited to speak about God and they can relate to what is said as they share about their life-experiences.”

As Brother Yagi has related with the young people who just started to learn about the Bible, he finds that he was pleasantly “surprised that the young people strongly feel that they want to pass on what they have learned and felt as well as deepened in the groups, and not just keep it to themselves. “The clergy and Religious must pass on the faith but the young people also have a role. Maybe it should be half and half!”

On one occasion he prayed the rosary with the youth. It was really wonderful. Most of the young people never learned how to pray the rosary. Since 5 decades take about 15 minutes, he had a feeling that some might not appreciate it. However, trying it out he realized that this was far from the truth. Praying the same prayer together in a silent atmosphere seemed to help them experience a sense of oneness, a sense of solidarity. Some were able to look within themselves more deeply. Others experienced that it was okay to relate about matters that they feel deeply about and pass them on. “In reality, the youth would like us to be more open about our feelings towards these things that matter to us. I feel that they are looking for this” says Brother Yagi.

In the future Brother Yagi wants to expand into other areas like the sacraments, prayer life and other spiritual things, like spending time in silence before the Blessed Sacrament.

■ From Communication Committee.

We, the Communication Committee THANK YOU for your contribution.

As Mother Teresa said,

“We can not do great things. Only small things with great love.”

Blessings on you and the people you serve.