



## OMI Japan – Korea NL

October. 2008



Oblates of Mary Immaculate

<http://www.omijapankorea.net>; <http://www.oblates.or.kr>

### **October, month of the Holy Rosary...**

The Rosary is part of the Catholic veneration of Mary, which has been promoted by numerous popes, especially Leo XIII, known as "The Rosary Pope", who issued eleven encyclicals on the rosary and created the feast, *Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary*. Pope Pius V, introduced the rosary into the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar as the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, celebrated on October 7. Most recently, on May 3, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI stated, that the Rosary is experiencing a new springtime. *It is one of the most eloquent signs of love that the young generation nourish for Jesus and his Mother.* To Benedict XVI, the rosary is a meditation on all important moments of salvation history. Before him, Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* built on the "total Marian devotion" pioneered by Saint Louis de Montfort. Pope Pius XII and his successors actively promoted the veneration of the Virgin in Lourdes and Fatima, which is credited with a new resurgence of the rosary within the Catholic Church.

The rosary is sometimes used by other Christians, especially in the Anglican Communion and the Old Catholic Church, and also by some Lutherans. Evangelical Protestants, however, such as Baptists and Presbyterians do not use it and actively discourage their members from using this method of prayer.

Here and there we find the devotion to our lady of rosary is promoted by erecting Marian shrines dedicated to our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

We Oblates, following the footsteps of our Father and Founder, St.Eugene de Mazenod, have great love and affection to our Immaculate Mother.

In the words of our Constitutions...

"Mary Immaculate is patroness of our Congregation. Open to the Spirit, she consecrated herself totally as lowly handmaid to the person and work of the Saviour. She received Christ in order to share him with all the world, whose hope he is. In her, we recognize the model of the Church's faith and of our own.

We shall always look on her as our mother. In the joys and sorrows of our missionary life, we feel close to her who is the Mother of Mercy. Wherever our ministry takes us, we will strive to instil genuine devotion to the Immaculate Virgin who prefigures God's final victory over all evil."(CC.10)

Therefore, as we pray the Rosary, may we continue to keep in mind, not only ourselves, but all those millions of people who need our prayers particularly, poor, sick, dying, neglected, downtrodden, etc.

Fraternally yours in Eugene & Mary Immaculate,

**Varam, OMI**

(for the communication team)

## **THE CHURCHES IN JAPAN & KOREA:**

KOREA:

### **World Day against the Death Penalty**

Along with the Committee for Justice & Peace of the CBCK(Catholic Bishops Conference of Korea), about 10 religious and civic organizations came together to hold the World Day against the Death Penalty at the Conference Hall of the National Assembly of Korea on October 10, 2008. In this day, the participants made it clear that they would exert diverse efforts for Korea to become literally the abolitionist country. Last year the Amnesty International designated Korea as 'Abolitionist in Practice' Country, which means that there has been not a single execution during the past 10 years in Korea.

In this event with the theme '*Way of Life, Our Way*', the participants prayed for the enactment of the 'Special Law against Death Penalty' within the session of the 18th National Assembly of Korea, so that Korea becomes the developed country in human rights up to its reputation.

Mr. Kim Yeong-ho, the National Assembly Speaker, said, "The dignity and value of human person begin from the right to life, which is the absolute unique value beyond all comparison. .... I hope Korea becomes a country which 'legally' realizes the 'precious value of human life' as well."

### **The 15th Suwon Diocesan Symposium**

The Diocese of Suwon held its 15th Diocesan Symposium at the Jeongjadong Cathedral of Suwon on October 2, 2008. The theme was 'Family in Crisis, Pastoral Care of Hope.' Many diocesan priests, religious men and women, and the lay faithful, in all about 1,300 persons, participated in this symposium to give a deep consideration for the future way of pastoral care for family.

In his keynote address, Rev. Benedictus Song Yeong-oh, Secretary of the CBCK Committee for Family Pastoral Ministry, said, "While the Catholic Church in Korea has concentrated herself on her quantitative increase since the 1980s, unfortunately, there also has been an increase of lukewarm faithful who do not practice their faith life earnestly. .... As we have had little concern about the pastoral care for family, we are now facing such a challenge." Then he urged, "We have to make a new start with a deep concern about the pastoral care for family which is fundamental for all pastoral ministries, keeping it in mind that the future of mankind depends on the family."

### **The Third Catholic Ecological Award**

The CBCK Committee for Environment held a ceremony for the Third Catholic Ecological Award at the auditorium of the CBCK on October 2, 2008.

Rev. Augustine Chung Hong-kyu of Archdiocese of Daegu received the Grand Prix. Rev. Chung has contributed much to the arousing of public awareness and practical actions for the life and environment for 18 years through many activities, including the pastoral ministry for environment of the Catholic Church around Daegu and Gyeongsangbukdo Province and the establishment and management of many networks for environment.

The Solti Community of the Korean Catholic Farmers' Movement was awarded the Special Prize. Since 1989 the Solti Branch has strived for the protection of rural area and environment. The activities of Solti Community as follows:

- 1) concrete practice of the urban-rural life community for both city and rural areas and the bio agriculture for the protection of the earth and environment;
- 2) giving the local children of kindergarten a chance for the rural and ecological experiences;
- 3) providing university students with a field for the practice of ecological agriculture in summer vacation;
- 4) initiating the movement for the agricultural life in the form of urban-rural cooperation along with the Movement for Local Agriculture.

JAPAN:

### **Training staff prepare for opening of new National Seminary**

In anticipation of the opening of the Japan Catholic Seminary next April, the Fukuoka St. Sulpice Seminary hosted a joint session of seminary teachers Sept. 1-5. The rectors of both the Fukuoka seminary and the Tokyo Catholic Seminary came together with 13 teachers. They were joined on Sept. 4 by Nagasaki Archbishop Mitsuaki Takami and Kyoto Bishop Yoshinao Otsuka on behalf of the bishops' Seminary Opening Preparation Committee. Prior to this, the seminary formation staff from all over Japan came together for a national meeting.

Sulpician Fr. Mitsuru Shirahama, chairman of the Seminary Opening Preparation Committee, said of this year's meeting, "It was our understanding that we needed to decide things at least half a year in advance."

"We got to see the outlines of the new seminary," he added.

At the end of July, once the bishops' conference began deciding the daily routine and regulations for the new institute, the general training regimen solidified. Looking at a survey filled out by current theology students, the conference came to decisions regarding trips outside the seminary, spending the night outside the seminary, drinking, smoking, cell phone usage, and silent meditation time.

Once a year, students will be asked to reflect on and express their goals for that year regarding individualized training and evaluation procedures, and the council of formators will do so as well in order to find a focus for the training in the next year.

After the meeting, Fukuoka St. Sulpice Seminary Rector Fr. Tsuyomi Makiyama said, "We'll have a meeting like this once more next February. This time was special because we got formators from (many) dioceses together, and once more verified our cooperative strategies."

The Sulpician priest continued, "Members of both campuses knew each other well, so the conversation went along smoothly. Though the conversation was very careful, we realized how distinct the basic traditions of both the Tokyo and Fukuoka seminaries are. We took time and thought about the other side, but much remains to be done, and there may be problems when issues have to be decided after the school opens. After all that preparation, we were able to get it mostly done, I think."

### **Language teacher helps newcomer foreign preists serve in Okinawa:**

Priests and religious from India, the Philippines and Vietnam and are increasing in Okinawa presenting the diocese with the challenge to welcome them and help them acquire Japanese language capability.

"When they can manage Japanese, they can be an arm of the Church in Japan," said Mami Masuda, 55, a parishioner of the Asato Church in Naha city, explaining why she organized a two-hour Japanese language class twice a week for newcomer missionaries.

She used to be a teacher at a Catholic school in Tokyo. She happened to join a Tokyo diocesan summer camp in Okinawa, which led her to a marriage and family life in Okinawa. An encounter with Fr. Rommel Cruz of the Mission Society of the Philippines, pastor of Yomitan Church, got her involved in teaching Japanese.

Masuda described the challenge of teaching priests, saying, "Senior priests with a higher education background are difficult to deal with in comparison with young seminarians, as they are in general perfectionists, and tend to be too anxious about results. You need to alter the manner of teaching, placing more emphasis on practice rather than grammar. The purpose of their coming to Japan was not to get full marks at school."

"After a year or so," she continued, "I became aware that a curriculum designed for daily usage in church could be better as a shortcut to the goal."

She developed a course program and allowed eight or so Filipino and Vietnamese into her class. As occasions arose, she exchanged ideas and opinions with the diocesan language school.

"Since they were committed to come to Japan," she commented, "they are supposed to commit themselves to the language as well, so that they may continually renew their missionary engagement

to the Church in Japan."

### **Polish sisters in neighborhood ministry to elderly**

Thirty years ago the Sisters of the Divine Providence came from Catholic Poland to largely non-Christian Japan, where they have steadily continued their missionary activities and devoted themselves to "treasuring every individual person" they encounter. They decided that the best application of that ideal in their new home was to focus in particular on the care of the elderly.

For 20 years now, the Sisters have invited seniors in the area to the Nakameguro Convent, the group's headquarters in Tokyo, to spend their days engaged in pleasant conversation and handicrafts at "Daycare Socials."

Every Monday and Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., a group of about 10 local women in their 70s, 80s and 90s gather at the sisters' Nakameguro convent. In the morning, and again in the afternoon, they spend two hours with felt, cloth and cotton work gloves making mascot dolls, decorations and other small crafts, all the while enjoying lively chit-chat about life. Since the convent sits atop a hill, volunteers assist with transportation.

Kuniko Sawai, an 80-year-old who has participated in the Socials for about 20 years, said, "This is great fun. Everyone speaks kindly, without insults or grumbling. And on top of that, we can work with our hands, talk and make friends. I missed it during the summer break, when the convent takes time off. I would have been happy to come all summer, for sure!"

"Our goal is neither to make works of art nor to make rules. Rather, we are pleased if old people living alone and other lonely people can feel happy in an atmosphere just like being at home," explained Sr. Jordana Skakuj, the 51-year-old superior of the convent.

## **NATIONAL SITUATION IN JAPAN & KOREA:**

### **KOREA:**

#### **BOK (Bank of Korea) to supply dollars to banks:**

Korea's policymakers were spurred into action yesterday to aid local banks struggling to secure dollar funding amid a global credit squeeze.

The central bank decided to provide the much-needed U.S. currency directly to the banks from next week, while the government was working on a set of measures to stimulate the economy and restore confidence in the local financial system.

"We're looking at those steps the United States is taking - injection of capital (into troubled financial institutions), inter-bank loan guarantees, expansion of deposit guarantees," Finance Minister Kang Man-soo said.

Korea's stocks continued to sink, after massive losses, as fears of the looming global economic recession grip local financial markets.

#### **Dollar supply**

The Bank of Korea changed rules to adopt an open bidding system for won-dollar swaps, a move aimed at supplying dollars to banks that need them the most, it said yesterday.

"We expect the new trading system will help calm the foreign exchange market which has been very volatile recently," the bank said in the statement.

"It looks now that Korea's economy will struggle to grow 4 percent next year," he said. he added. Korea's \$970 billion economy relies heavily on overseas sales of cars, ships, computer chips and high-tech products in major markets including China, Europe and the United States.

### **Dwindling jobs**

A decline in job creation can easily be anticipated at a time when the economy is slowing. Even so, it was nothing short of shocking that the year-on-year increases in the number of employed people fell to 112,000 in September, the lowest in three years and seven months. Conventional wisdom has it that Korea needs to create 300,000 to 400,000 new jobs each year if it is to avoid any serious employment problem. Given the recent employment trend, however, these figures now appear to be unattainable.

Year-on-year job creation remained above 200,000 from August last year to February this year. It has since fallen below - a grave setback for President Lee Myung-bak, who, as a presidential candidate, promised to create 600,000 new jobs in each year of his presidency.

Despite the slowdown in job creation, the jobless rate was 3 percent in September, the same as one year ago. Moreover, the jobless rate for youth dropped by 0.9 percentage point.

A drop in job openings will undoubtedly discriminate against the youth. According to one estimate, one in two graduating from high school or college will not be able to land a job next year.

But it is the government that will have to take the initiative in the provision of jobs. For instance, it may launch new projects to build roads, railways, ports and other infrastructure and complete existing construction projects ahead of schedule.

JAPAN:

**Prime Minister Taro Aso** expressed support for a proposal to hold a series of world summits on the global financial crisis including among leaders of the Group of Eight major industrial countries and others Sunday.

"I told the United States on the telephone that the summits should be held," Aso said to reporters in Tokyo.

Aso expressed support for the participation of leaders of newly industrializing countries, saying; "The issue can't be discussed only by G-8 countries. There are more countries concerned."

While Aso had previously said that Japan was ready to host such a meeting as the current chair of the G-8 countries, he suggested that he would not stick to the idea saying, "The U.S. East Coast is convenient for world leaders to get together."

According to sources close to the government, Aso exchanged opinions on addressing the financial crisis with U.S. President George W. Bush in a telephone conversation at night on Oct. 11. The contents of the agreement on holding a series of world summits between North American and European leaders were announced from Washington through a diplomatic channel on Saturday night.

### **Oblate News – Japan & Korea:**

Korea

Varam

1) The two Oblates (Fr. Bobby & Br. Noel) from the Philippines are learning their Korean language in a university closer to the Seoul community. They seem to be enjoying life, with the language difficulties and the cultural shock, etc.

2) On the fifth Monday of September, the Oblates in the mission, now totaling to 8, went for a day out and dinner. In the mission we have this fifth Monday, which comes twice or thrice a year, a day of outing for the Oblates. On this day, we went on hiking on a mountain called 'Nam Han San Seong'. It is where one of the Korean martyrs' shrine situated on the southern part of Seoul.

Also it was kingdom in the southern Seoul. Tradition connects the site of Namhansanseong with Onjo, founder of Baekje. In 672, a fortress called Chujangseong was built on the western edge of Namhansan to protect Silla from Tang China. Later the fortress was renamed Iljangseong. Goryeo kings kept the fortress in repair as a defensive outpost for Gwangju, the nearby provincial capital

The fortress went unused and slowly crumbled until 1954, when it was designated a national park and

a good deal of repair work was done. The fortress area once accommodated nine temples, as well as various command posts and watch towers. Today a single command post, Seojangdae, and a single temple, Changgyeongsa, remain. There are other more recent temples on the path up to the south gate and fortress walls. The north, south and east gates have been restored.

3) The life goes on well as usual in the house of formation. The two brothers Pedro (in Australia) and Samuel (in Sri Lanka) are doing well with their given theology and English studies respectively. And the candidates, Simeon (Studies masters in philosophy) and Laurencio (preparing for the entrance examination to the university) are fine. They are taking their examinations in philosophy and university entrance exams respectively. Please do keep them in your valuable prayers and all the Oblates both in the house of formation and in the apostolic community.

4) Rev.Fr.Richard MacAlear, an Oblate from the United States, was here in Korea for a month long retreat for Charismatic leaders – Clergy, Religious and lay people. He is touring whole of Korea, conducting retreats, charismatic prayer conventions in almost all the dioceses of Korea. We could see him, loving the Oblates and the congregation very much. He came early to stay with the Oblates for a couple of days, prior to his program and whenever he gets a chance to visit the Oblates he makes it possible and calls us in between his busy schedule. We could see him the spirit of the Founder who always loved the Oblates and cared for them. Thanks to his visit to Korea, his retreat program is a kind of advertisement for the oblates. People sometimes call us up after attending his seminars/retreats, as he always loved to introduce and identifies with the Oblates.

JAPAN

**Jerry**

1) **CONGRESS ON LOVE, LIFE AND THE FAMILY:** From Oct. 25 to Nov. 1, I will attend the 15th Asia Pacific Congress on Love, Life and Family. It will be held in Goa, India. It is sponsored by Human Life International which is a Pro-Life and Pro- Family Organization. The Asia Pacific Congress is a gathering of people with an interest in promoting and defending the dignity of life and the sanctity of the Asian family. Delegates from around 14 Asian Pacific Countries will participate in this Congress which is held annually in different nations. Experts in the fields of demography, sociology, moral theology, and Bioethics and those working in Pro Life and Family Movements will share their experiences with the Delegates. Usually an average between 400 and 600 dedicated people participate in this event.

The three days will try to accomplish the following themes:

1. Commemorate the 40th anniversary of Humanae Vitae
2. Uphold the dignity of life from conception to natural death
3. Instill in the delegates the sanctity of family life
4. Enlighten the participants on the proper understanding of human sexuality
5. Study the Culture of Death
6. Lay a firm foundation to foster the Culture of Life

This is the first time that I will be traveling as a Disabled Person with my cane. With my artificial knee going through the metal detectors, I can already hear the bells ringing, visualize the immigration officials running over, making me stretched my arms out as they search me and then the apologies for not finding anything. My last trip to Fukuoka, the immigration guy asks me for permission to feel my knee..... With all the terrorist in India, it will be interesting to see what their reaction to the buzzers will be. They all carry automatic rifles and point them straight at you while asking questions.

I will fly Singapore Airlines with one night at the beautiful Singapore Mall-type Airport and change planes for Mumbai early the next morning at 7:30. In Mumbai, I will have a four hour layover before

catching a small plane for Goa. People will be waiting to pick me up and then drive me to the hotel where the Congress will take place. Say a prayer for the success of the Congress and that the delegates will return to their respective countries with fresh and new ideas on how to develop better the Culture of Life among Asian people.

**Ray**

2) This time, I have nothing to share. It seems every week is the same ... Hospital visits etc. I'm going to 4 different hospitals for different ailments and so it keeps me busy. Things are looking up however, as the length between visits is becoming longer! If something comes up, I'll let you know, but for the moment ... Nothing!  
Hello to all.

**Jude**

3) I am sure you all received this mail from Eduardo. He, talking to me decided that it is good for him to be with his father at this moment. Last night he flew to Brazil. Please keep his father and his family in your prayers. As I hear, Gen's father is also not still doing well. Let's continue to pray for his father too.

And after few days, Fr.Jude writes, "Pray for Eduardo's father has passed away".

So dear, Eduardo, please do accept our deep condolences on the demise of your dear father.

-Oblates, Japan/Korea unit.

## **Announcements:**

1. November Issue of the Delegation Newsletter will be ready by end of that month. Please send all materials to me at this address: [varamomi@hotmail.com](mailto:varamomi@hotmail.com). Thank you.
3. We would like someone to take over the Delegation OMI Website and update it regularly. Are there any volunteers?
4. Please access the OMI Website, go to 'Personnel' in the menu, and check the information under your name. <http://www.omijapankorea.net/> If you notice any errors, kindly notify Jerry at [jerry@shirt.ocn.ne.jp](mailto:jerry@shirt.ocn.ne.jp)
5. Delegation Newsletter Archives at present URL address:  
<http://www.omijapankorea.net/delegationnews/index5.html>



THANK YOU!