



O.M.I. JAPAN/KOREA

# OMI Information

## Newsletter of the Vice Province of Japan

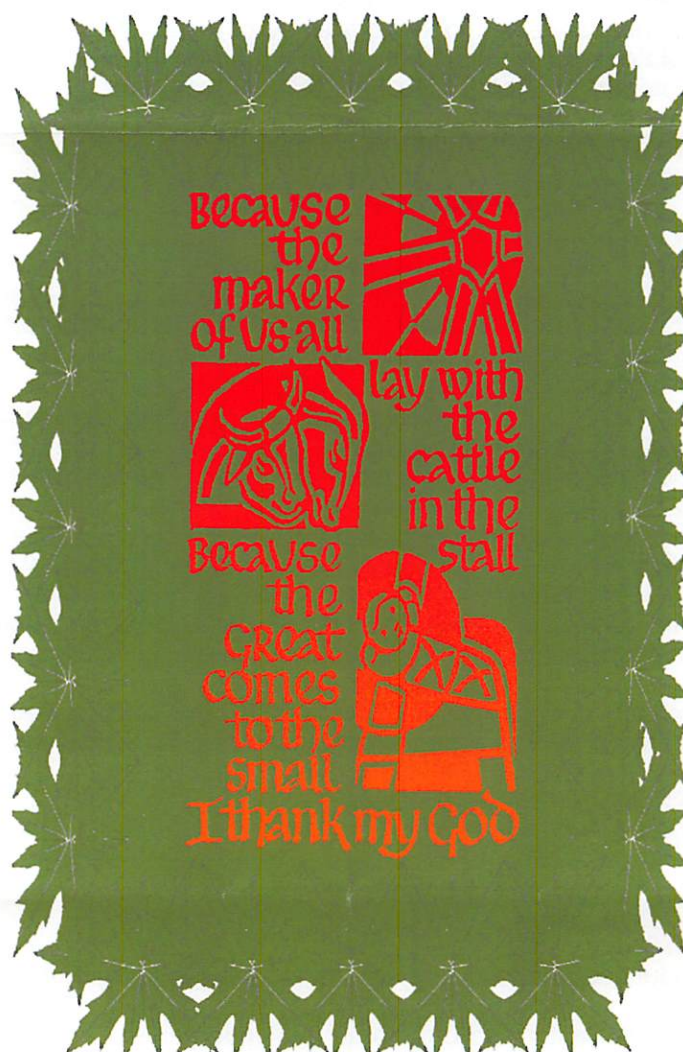
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate



2002  
Christmas

*To all Our Friends & Benefactors,*

# ***Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year***



*From the Oblates of the Vice Province of Japan*

### **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY IN KOCHI - December 27 (Friday)**

Christmas Prayer	4:30PM	In charge:	Liturgical Committee (c/o Brad)
Gaudeamus	After the Prayer	In charge:	Kochi District (c/o Xave))
Christmas Dinner	Around 6PM	In charge:	Fran & Jude(with Eddie, JKM, Wency as cooks)
Everyone helps in cleaning after the party.			
Physical Arrangement (Christmas Party)		Tokushima and Fukuoka Districts (c/o Bert and John.I)	



## *From the Provincial's desk:*

The holy season of Advent is upon us. A few days from now, we will celebrate once again the Feast of the Birth of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace. Christ's birth brought light to a world filled with darkness and hope to mankind that was on the verge of total despair.

The year 2002 has seen terrorism at a magnitude never seen before. Many people say that the world will never be the same. But the problems that have brought about terrorism to an alarming rate are not new. They have always been there. Perhaps the Feast of the Birth of Christ should remind us once again that the world we live in is never perfect. It will always need workers for peace.

In the Vice Province, we had our share of "misfortunes" this year that remind us of our vulnerability, as individuals and collectively as a group. Some sigh of relief for Bert SILVER since contrary to an earlier diagnosis, Bert does not have "melanoma" (a malignant form of skin cancer). However, Bert has decided to get a second opinion at the Hyogo Medical University Hospital and was given a clean bill of health. Mike YAMASAKI and Jerry NOVOTNY continue their cancer treatments. Mike will have his second operation sometime in late January. Tom MAHER had two successful operations on his nose. (Diagnosis: basal cell carcinoma. I am becoming an expert at medical terminology!) As we pray for our sick brothers, let us include Leo KAWAGUCHI who is on leave of absence. He gets in touch regularly and continues to celebrate mass at the seminary three times a week. Indeed, our share of misfortunes are no more than "minor injuries" compared to what other Oblate units in the world are going through. During the symposium on secularity in San Antonio, Texas last October, an Oblate told me, "Wency, when the going gets rough, just think about the Provincials in Canada and what they are going through."

This year, two Oblates I have known and were former missionaries in the Philippines have died. Archbishop Phil SMITH (former Bishop of Jolo and later Archbishop of Cotabato) passed away last Sept. 30. He was my scholasticate superior for a few days until he was named bishop. Another Oblate friend, Fr. Gene RINCHON (Belgium south) died last October 22.

Many of you may have been wondering what has happened to the restructuring process in the congregation. Are we already a "Delegation?" We have expressed to the General Administration our desire to be accepted as a General Delegation temporarily. This will be decided sometime in May next year and if we are allowed to be a General Delegation, we will start to be so in September 2003. Until then, we still can refer to our unit as the "Vice Province of Japan."

**Provincial's Schedule:** I will be away during the whole month of January (2003). I will leave on December 30 and come back on February 2nd. (Since tickets are hard to come by during this time of the year, I decided to take the only available flight before New Year.) The few remaining members of my family will have a reunion around New Year's, something we haven't done in many years. Then, I will proceed to Bangkok for the different meetings mentioned below. After the Bangkok meetings, I will stop-by in Manila for an on-going formation meeting with my Oblate peers. Fran HAHN is in charge while I am away.

The construction of the formation house in Korea is going smoothly. Ray worked hard for the procurement of funds to build and Mauro is the "on site" builder. We want to thank the Oblate units and the General Administration that have helped us in this project, something which we wouldn't have done just by ourselves.

Let me take this opportunity to wish everyone the best for the coming year. Every year that God gives us is an *annus mirabilis*, a time that proclaims the greatness of God regardless of all the imperfections that we see around us.

Below are a few items from the Provincial's Desk

*Wency Laguidao, OMI*

### ■ NEW ASSIGNMENTS

As previously announced, the following are the changes in assignments:

Ange SIANI  
to Koga as Pastor and Director of the kindergarten.  
John Kenney MAHONEY  
to Koga Parish Reduced Ministry.  
Bill MAHER  
to Tokushima as Pastor.  
Len INUI  
to Naruto as Pastor and Director of kindergarten.  
Fran HAHN  
to Nakajimacho, Kochi as Pastor.  
Jude PEIRISPULLE  
still to be decided.

The Provincial has asked those who are affected by the changes to negotiate among themselves the exact dates of the various movements. Those involved in kindergartens might want to move before the new school year starts while those in parishes might want the change to take effect after Easter. Easter next year falls on April 20th.



## ■ NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE KOREAN MISSION

Vincenzo BORDO took over from Maurizio GIORGIANNI as Superior of the Mission in Korea. Vincenzo was installed before the members of the Korean Mission gathered last December 9 in Seoul. He will be assisted by two council members: Varam ANTHONYSAMY (1st Councilor) and Maurizio GIORGIANNI (2nd Councilor).

Mauro CONCARDI will continue as Bursar of the mission for one more year to finish the construction of the formation house, a responsibility entrusted to him and also to train a new Bursar for the mission. As we thank Maurizio for the leadership he has shown, we wish Vincenzo and his councilors Good Luck!

## ■ FORMATION HOUSES JAPAN and KOREA

Br. Akio HORIUCHI will not renew his vows in February. He has informally notified the Provincial that he wants to leave the Oblates. He will continue to live at the House of Studies until January.

NGUYEN THANH VU, 23 years old, a Vietnamese national who is finishing his university studies at the Tokushima University in March 2003, has expressed his desire to join the Oblates. He has attended the Oblate Vocation Camp and has also visited the House of Studies in Nagoya.

There are three candidates in different stages of formation at the Saint Mary's Seminary in Australia. Thomas KOO, 32 years old, has been accepted to the novitiate program which starts in February 2003. Meanwhile, RYU Hi Gu (aka Anselmo), 33 years old and LEE Ki Yong (aka Paolo Ha Sang), 25 years old, are finishing their novitiate year and are due back in Korea around February. There are three other aspirants at the formation house in Anyang.

## ■ FR. TOM SINGER'S VISIT

It is customary that when there is a Joint Session of the General Administration and the Provincials and Superiors of one region, the members of the General Council make a friendly visit of the units. Since there will be a Joint Session in January, Fr. Tom SINGER (councilor for the USA region) will visit the Vice Province from January 9 to 14. Fr. Singer preached the Vice Province's retreat a few years ago. WELCOME to Japan, Tom!

## ■ SYMPOSIUM ON INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE BANGKOK

After two very successful symposia on Missionaries to Secularity held in Ottawa and San Antonio (Texas) in 2002, the General Administration will sponsor another symposium on Interreligious Dialogue to be held in Bangkok from January 19-21, 2003. Among the presentors are Fr. Jacques DUPUIS, SJ and Fr. Michael AMALADOSS, SJ leading resource persons on interreligious dialogue.

Prior to the symposium in Bangkok, the formators of Asia will meet for their bi-annual meeting. Nobu YAGI and Mauro CONCARDI will attend the formators' meeting and stay on for the symposium. Treasurers or members of the financial committees in the region are also encouraged to attend the symposium. Brad ROZAIRO and Jude PEIRISPULLE will attend.

After the symposium, the Provincials and Superiors of Asia-Oceania (AORC) will remain for two more days for their annual meeting.

## ■ PUBLICATIONS



Front cover of the book by Ray

Congratulations to Ray BOURGOIGNIE for the release of his Japanese translation of Aime ROCHE's *When the Mistral Blows*.

(Japanese title: オブレート会創立者 聖ウジェン・ド・マズノ伝記 吹き抜けるミストラルのように), 207 pages.

Ray, in the Introduction acknowledges the work on the project that was started by Ron LAFRAMBOISE with the help of Ms. Fukuhara Miyoko and Ms. Maki Keiko of Zendana Parish. Ray was later helped by the same Ms. Maki and Ms. Okubo Toki and Mr. Okazoe of Nakajima Parish of Kochi.

### NOTICE (On the Book On the Founder by Ray):

The purpose of printing this book is to have something available on the Founder in Japanese. Complimentary copies will be sent to the MAMI members. Although the book is NOT FOR SALE, donations to defray the printing costs will be appreciated. We want to distribute copies of the book in our parishes. Please inform Ray as to the number of copies you need.

**土佐とキリシタン ("Tosa to Kirishitan."** Rough translation: The District of Tosa and the Early Christians by Ishikawa Masuo) 1999, 367 pages. Mr. Ishikawa is from Sakawa town in Kochi and is a parishioner of Nakajimacho Parish. In the Introduction of the book, Mr. Ishikawa gives the reasons why he decided to start his research in 1970 on the history of the Christianity in the district of Tosa. He mentions that before WWII, Japanese history was very much centered on the Emperor and the Shinto Religion and the sufferings and sacrifices of the early Christians did not make it to the history books. Any association with Christianity was considered unpatriotic and Japanese who converted to Christianity were considered traitors. Mr. Ishikawa gives credit to Bill MAHER, among others, for encouraging him to start his research.

## ■ SRI LANKA HAS A NEW PROVINCIAL

Fr. Oswald FIRTH has been named the new Provincial of the Province of Sri Lanka. He takes over from Fr. Bernard QUINTUS who was Provincial three terms.

## ■ SEMINAR ON WAYS OF EVANGELIZATION

Bishop Mori of the Archdiocese of Tokyo has invited the Provincials of the different missionary groups (or their delegates) to a live-in seminar on ways of evangelization to be held in the Hakone



area, January 12-14, 2003. Xave TOSA has been asked by the Provincial to attend.

## Christmas Messages:



**Mike YAMAZAKI**

**Mene!, Mene!, Tekel!. (writing on the wall : Daniel 5:25)**

The anesthesian touching the lower part of my back asked me "Do you feel any pain here?". Before I uttered my reply to her question, I fell into the world of nihil. I felt nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing and smelt nothing.

Some 6 hours later, I came back to consciousness screeching *cure cruciatu acuto*. I wanted to go back to nothingness. An unchristianlike thought came up: "If death is like that nothingness, I'd rather welcome it."

The cancerous part of my rectum is "removed". I take anticancer medicine twice a day, and a needle attached to an infusor tube is stuck into the socket buried under the right clavicle once a week. I have to clean my s\*\*\* bag a few times a day and change it every two days and ask myself "Quid sit(not 'est'and recall how Kyushu and Tokushima people pronounce 'sit') homo?".

I often remember the last sentence in Tom Reilly's Church history report "Arius, the heretic died in his excrement in a public toilet". Perhaps Arius had the same trouble as mine.

Well, I was very loquacious. What I really wanted to say was: Thank you all for your warm concern and care you showed me,



**Jerry NOVOTNY**

I have an answer for the question: What can one person do? When that person is you, one person can do a whole lot.

Many thanks for your support, encouragement and prayers during this time as I try to become a cancer survivor and readjust my lifestyle as retirement approaches closer.

Wish you all a Joyous Christmas and Blessed New Year!



**Yoshikazu TOSA**

**A blessed Christmas to every one.**

The work at Kochi University and at Tosa All Girls College goes on as usual. Nobody tells me that I am a good teacher but both schools asked me already for the next school year.

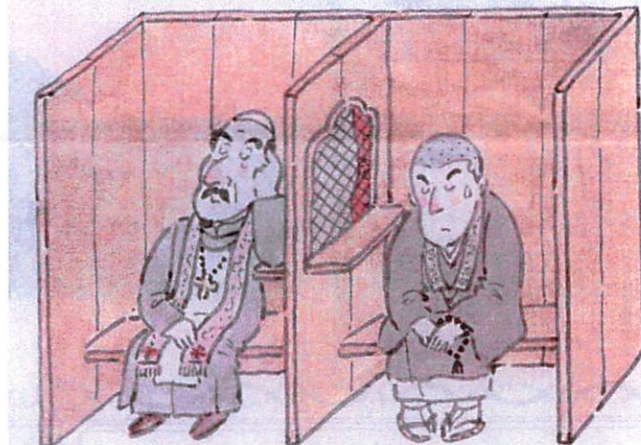
In August last, some graduates from Kochi All Girls University ESS club, organized a little party to celebrate my 75th anniversary.

It was meant to be a small gathering for the Tokushima area, but about 20 « young ladies » showed up. I recognized them all in spite of not having met or seen some of them for 15 years or more.

After 2 years of making slow progress in the sign language, I was asked to volunteer in the «

2nd National Sports Games For The Challenged ». (I don't know why the word "handicapped" is not used. Is that word now considered to be discriminating? In Japanese the word 「障害者」 is still used.)

I was assigned to one of the 'Guide and Inquiry offices' next to the charter bus stop. There was a lot of free time that we used to teach 'signs' to middle school students who were also 'volunteers', but for distributing « instant newspapers ». We had fun in the cold weather. I decided to continue going to the sign language circle on Saturday afternoons. The world of deaf-mute people was a complete unknown world to me. Now the circle of friends has grown wider. I feel better than before that I don't « work » in Japan, but that I « live » in Japan.



An "Interreligious Dialogue?"

The Church and the OMI, both out of Rome, are exploring new and different ways to evangelize. I attended the meeting « Evangelization to Secularity » in Ottawa. That meeting was for countries where Christianity is on retreat. Next year there will be a symposium in Thailand on « Interreligious Dialogue ».

Very often now the word « dialogue » is used as a new(?) missionary method. For long years (and still now) 'mission' was : exporting what in our home countries was common and normal. And our 'faith' had become a purely rational science under the influence of the Scholastics. Very often we repeat the same things in the same wording without having been in contact with what we speak about. Is it possible for the Catholic Church now to sincerely dialogue without having in the back of the head the conviction that « after all, you are wrong » ?

For the second time, I have tried to publish a small pamphlet. This time it is in the form of a prayerful reflection on the Our Father. I have no ambition or pretense to do better than our Lord himself. I have some booklets left. If you wish some more for the Christians and non-Christians, I can send you some.

The pamphlet has no 'imprimatur'...



**Ray BOURGOIN**

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

I realize that in Japan it is the custom to refrain from sending greetings the year someone dear to you passed away, but I thought I would



write a little message anyway.

Again I want to thank everyone for the support you gave me during these past few years when both Mom and Dad had their physical problems. Now that they are no longer physically here, I think of them more often than I did when they were alive. I feel them present to me in a closer way.

During this Christmas Season I want to celebrate their presence in a special way. Without their influence I would not be what I am today, a follower of the Christ whose presence among us we celebrate at this time. They were Christ for me and for so many people that they touched throughout their lives on earth. For this I want to thank our Father from the bottom of my heart.

In late November we had the visit of Dave Barton. He was in the Tokushima area and heard about Tom Maher and Jerry Novotny's physical problems and decided to come down for a day or so and get to see them.

After visiting Tom in the hospital, he took Jerry, Xave and myself to a great meal. Later that night Dave and I spent time together (till almost midnight) talking about the Immense Hope program in which he showed a very keen interest.

Dave also gave me a copy, for the Oblate files, of a book he has just written. He wanted me to let the men know so that if they want to read it they can borrow it from our library. The title of the book is "Calming the Raging Storm". It deals with the problem of human suffering.

This reflection was made in the wake of losing his son Paul in 1994. If anyone wants to read it, I will send it to them with the proviso that it comes back to our OMI library/archives.

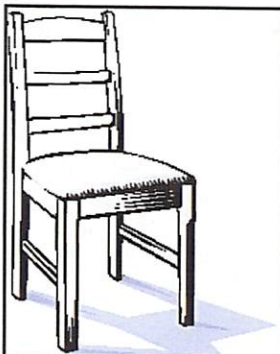
Have a wonderful holiday season.



## Giovanni ZEVOLA

### AN EMPTY CHAIR

"We go around the world to far away countries in search of a better future but when the evening comes we do remember you Naples and our faces are filled with tears because we are desiring your sunny sky; how bitter is the taste of the bread we are eating!"



There are songs filled with passion and feelings whose melody can bring us to the point of sharing tears and in this regard the Naples songs have a special reputation; who does not know "O sole mio", "Santa Lucia", "Come back to Sorrento"? Many of these songs were composed at the time when many people

were forced to migrate to far away countries (States, Argentina, Australia...). The desire and dream for a better future was driving the people out of their countries, leaving behind families, relatives, friends and all that was part of their lives. Life in the hosting countries was better in terms of money and facilities but who could fill the desire and need for support, love and friendship?

Migration has always two faces with its gains and pains and it is particularly around Christmas that a sense of solitude and desire for affection and attachment are emerging strongly within our hearts; when Jesus came in this world he had a very similar experience, according to Luke Gospel "there was no room for them to stay" (Lk2,7).

Another song speaks of a migrant thinking of the family back home seated around the table for the Christmas dinner with an empty chair, his own chair! This was a way for the family to express their sense of belonging to the person far away, "you have always a place within ourselves".

For the foreigners in Korea is extremely important to be connected with our families back home, there is an empty chair waiting for our comeback, there we find love, encouragement, strength and support. Let us be in touch with our beloved (calls, letters, prayers) and strengthen our relationships.

For the Koreans; a thank for their generosity and continuous support in many ways (volunteer services, financial assistance and showing of affection); may the Lord bless your endeavors which at times look like that arranged empty chair where the foreigner can seat and feel at home.

Merry Xmas



## Jan VAN HOYDONCK

### A Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to All!

For all of you who are enjoying good health may the Lord keep you in it throughout the whole New Year, and for the ones who have had to be treated medically, some even surgically, may the good Lord grant speedy and stable recovery and good health further on.

As for myself, during this finishing year I have had to say farewell to my youngest brother who left this world on February 20, a week before his 69th birthday, to go to the eternal joy in the Father's House. Six months later, almost to the day, on August 18, his wife Annie followed him. Annie was older, and would have become 78 on December 3. To all I wish to express my thanks for prayers and expressions of sympathy.

The best to all in this Christmas Season and throughout the New Year, and if there is an opportunity of meeting I will be truly happy.



## Dick HARR

### Greetings from Aki

A very happy and much blessed Christmas to each, & a happy hope-filled new Year.

As I wrap up this year, there are many graces to be most thankful for. This year, as you knot, marked the 51st year for both the parish and the kindergarten. We honored this with a banquet at the local hotel. Solve 60 persons helped us celebrate. Actually the 50th year was still in progress or March 21st, so it was a golden event.

This year, as you know, also marked my own 50th year in Japan. And it was truly ~ grand celebration. Over these years I've been stationed in 6 different parishes: Hikarigaoka, Koga, Tokushima,



Itami, Anan, and now Aki. It's been a fast 50 years, filled with many happy memories. My special thanks to all of my Oblate brothers who made this year so memorable for me.

My ordination classmates gathered in Tewksbury, Mass. on June 3rd, There were 13 of us ordained back in 1952: 3 are convalescing there in Tewksbury, 5 are still on assignment, I joined the diocesan clergy, 2 have died, and unfortunately 2 left the priesthood. There were close to 60 Oblates on hand on that day.

Here in Aki there have been Some happy changes of late. There is now a beautiful promenade at the beach that stretches almost 2 km., and this has changed the appearance of the beach considerably. I take a walk there when I can. The city is also putting in a sewage system. Come to Aki for happy flushing.

Finally I want to wish every success to those who are being transferred this April. I'm cheering for you.



## Kenichi FURUKAWA

### Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

I am in the Eternal City at last. I somehow passed my final exam at Nanzan and I arrived here on 28th August. Fr. LaFramboise and Fr. Chinnappan met me at the airport.

Time went by fast from the time I started language course. I was the only one from an Asian country in my class. My classmates could guess the meaning of words even before learning Italian.

I studied Italian for 5 months in Japan, but one day at the Gregorian university of my language course is equal to all the time I spent learning Italian in Japan. Can you imagine that? I have started to struggle from the first day of class. Everything is new and fast.



A joint party of the International and Italian scholastics.  
Kenichi is standing front row, left of center.

Somehow after finishing a short course in Italian, I am now studying theology at the Gregorian University. I also study Italian twice a week with a teacher. Fr. Paolo who is Superior of the international scholasticate also teaches me Italian once a week.

Fr. Cyrille and Fr. Tony also take care of us. There are 19 scholastics (including myself and a deacon) from 16 different countries. Each person has a different back ground. I find this interesting. I feel happy but oftentimes I cannot express myself

in Italian.

Soccer is a famous sport in Italy. When the Italian scholastics came to our house recently, we played soccer together then we had mass and party.

Now I am little bit busy but I am happy. I hope that my new friends, Antonio will become a priest and Salvador will become a deacon. On 7th December they will be ordained in Firenze. I am looking forward to my first Christmas in Rome; it will be exciting. I hope you all have a nice Christmas.



## John IWO

A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to all of you!



## Fran HAHN

A Blessed Christmas and A Grace Filled New Year to Everyone! May our "Immense Hope Project" bring rebirth to our unit. I pray for all our sick brothers, that the Lord may give them strength and healing and give them HOPE in their adversity. May God bless us all.



## Brad ROZAIRO

### Dawn of Peace

The four candles of the Advent Wreath symbolize Hope, Love, Happiness and Peace.

I think, to experience peace and happiness we have to wait in hope. In line with this, I would like to share something that I experienced during my visit to Sri Lanka this summer.

My home town Trincomalee is the hottest place in Sri Lanka. The people of Trincomalee are not tired of heat but war. Since there are checkpoints I thought that the journey from Colombo would take longer time. But it was not, because beginning from last December the government and the rebels observe cease-fire. The atmosphere in Trincomalee has changed. People are free to move around. There is no fear. For us Sri Lankans this is not only a good news but also a big hope that Sri Lanka will once again be a place where light shines (paradise!).

People, who waited in hope for the last nineteen or twenty years are beginning to experience the dawn of peace. I wish and I believe that the peace talks which is in progress, will find some solution to our problem in Sri Lanka.

May the birth of Christ bring lasting peace not only to Sri Lanka but also to the whole world.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and best wishes for the NEW YEAR.



## Maurizio, Mauro and the Korean Students

### Getting bigger and bigger

Greetings from Anyang! For the last time, our Christmas greetings will reach you from Anyang. Next time, they will come to you all from Suwon,



where our new formation house is getting bigger and bigger, day after day. Though at only 10 minutes by car from the present apartment, the location of the new formation house is in a different city, the city of Suwon.

Fr. Gerard's horse knew exactly where to bring his owner, where to stop and where to bow to people. Times are different and cars have replaced horses and chariots. Yet, we can say that our car, like Gerald's horse, knows how to get to the new house, where to turn and where the "speed cameras" are (so that we don't get tickets for over speeding). In fact, in the last few months our car has taken us daily to the new house. The works started with the digging for the basement in early October. The sun was warm and it was a pleasure to be out in the open field. If you have time to go and have a look now, you will find that the house has grown up. It's now a two store high building, proud of being tall, with the shapes of windows and doors that give already a homey atmosphere.

Of course, the inside it's always more important, isn't it? So we are happy to share with you that we, who are inside our houses, are fine too. Thomas started his novitiate year last November 17 and joined HaSang Paolo and Anselmo who, with the help of God, will finished their novitiate on February 17 an return to Korea by the and of February. Pedro has finished his first year at Suwon Catholic University while Pio and Joan are getting reading to move to Melbourne. Joseph, a 26 year old student, will take the entrance examination at Suwon Catholic University this month: please pray that he will pass the exam and so join us next February.

Christmas is at hand. We all in Anyang... on our way to Suwon... wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



**Bert SILVER**



**To one and all!**

A very blessed Christmas and  
A New Year filled with much  
happiness in our efforts to  
bring Christ to the Japanese!

Looking forward to seeing  
you in Kochi, Bert



**John Kenney MAHONEY**

This year I had home leave. I had plans to visit some of my 18 nieces and nephews as well as 34 grand nephews and nieces. Plus a few cousins here and there. There was one other item in my plans. A visit to Ground Zero. Like so many things the visit was postponed any number of times. Suddenly it was time to pack my bags and be on my way. The result being that on the day before leaving I made a trip to Ground Zero.

I was staying with my sister who lives in Staten Island. I took the train to St George and then the Staten Island Ferry to lower Manhattan. It was a bright, brisk, sunny day. The Statue of Liberty stood in her usual place a symbol of freedom and permanence to those who see her standing there each day as they take the ferry back and forth. But a half turn toward the front is all that is needed to have this feeling of permanence destroyed. There is a gap in the famous New York Skyline It was filled by the Twin Towers until September 11.

The walk from the Ferry took about 15 minutes. I turned left off Broadway and ahead of me I saw a huge area of open space with a steel latticed fence around it. In its self; this was startling. Almost weird.

I looked through the fence and in the bare emptiness there was Cross. A cross of rusted steel beams. Again that feeling of emptiness creeps in. There are pictures on display of the area one is looking at before which increases the awareness of what has been done. Of what evil men were able to do.

Across the street from ground zero there is a fence that is covered with t-shirts torn and covered with dirt and grim. These belonged to the men who fought the fires. Both of those who died in there effort to save others but themselves became victims. As well as of those who are still suffering from this unprecedented experience which leaves them with a deep and abiding emptiness.

As one looks at these memorabilia. There comes a feeling of the need to pray. I experienced this most deeply when I saw a picture of two young firemen. Perhaps twins who had died to save others.

There was definitely the need to pray but is it for these good men that we should pray. Is it not the evil men who did this for whom we should pray. They are the enemies and Christ taught us to pray for our enemies. Perhaps it is only by praying that the evil may be driven from the hearts of evil men; by praying that the power of evil that now seems be abroad in our world may be driven out by the power for good whose birth we will celebrate at Christmas.

Prayer: "Lord, in the name of Jesus, I come against the strongholds Satan has erected in the mind of -----.(use persons or groups name) I cast down these strongholds and every high thing in that mind which exalts itself against the knowledge of God. And I release that mind to obedience to Christ. I loose it to be reconciled to God. Amen (2Cor. 10: 3-6)





## Ange SIANI

Naruto - Kindergarten Apostolate

So many of my ideas concerning child education have changed since I began working in the kindergarten apostolate five year ago. This is due in part to my own experience in the Montessori Educational system. However the real credit for the revolution in my thinking about child education goes to Miss Hirowatari (Assistant Principal of Ake no Hoshi Kindergarten) and the Principal Fr. Leonard Inui, OMI.

Miss Hirowatari comes to our kindergarten to teach Montessori for three days every month. She is a hard driver but the teachers look forward to her coming and throw themselves into their lessons. The result of their hard work is clearly seen in the children and in their own personal growth. I also attend the classes. Some say there's big change in the principal too!

What I have learned is the "classical" educational system of drilling knowledge into the child makes learning a boring and sometimes painful experience. What Montessori has shown is that the child learns from sensory stimulation and education can be a happy experience. The method is based firmly on the belief in the essential dignity of all children, on the value of all human work with head and hand. Its goal is the maximum possible development of each child as happy, fulfilled adult at peace with himself and his neighbor.

She saw that children worked better when left to themselves with a minimum of adult interference. Adults upset the child's rhythm of work. Therefore she planned her "prepared environment", the equipment small and light enough for a child to move himself; cleaning materials which were not toys but small sized replicas of adult works tools; all wide range of sensorial materials which were graded and self-correcting.

Let me give one small example. Learning about Christmas.

This "work" begins with unrolling a ribbon. The ribbon is four meters plus in length. The first two meters are colored green and the rest is red. A small crib is placed at the seam where the green is sown to the red ribbon. A candle is placed in back of the crib. The teacher explains that the green represents the time span from Abraham to the birth of Christ. The green symbolizing hope. The candle is lit (Jesus is with us), Silent Night is sung and the story of the birth of Jesus is told. Someone always asks "why is the rest of the ribbon is red?" The teacher focuses the attention of the child on the cross. She explains that we have been are saved by the blood of Jesus and that is why the ribbon is red. Then she marks off the year 2002. Jesus loves each one of us right down to our own day.

*His Name is Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us  
May Jesus' name be on your lips  
And in your heart  
Today  
And throughout the New Year.*



## Bill MAHER

クリスマスおめでとう

It's that time of the year again when the whole country decorates for the Christmas sales and Christmas songs fill the shopping centers. Anything for sales! If it will make a profit we'll even build wedding chapels, and provide you with Christian services. What a country we live in. It's wonderful. One taxi driver is said to have been surprised that even the Christians celebrate Christmas! And then there's that Iraq thing which could get us into another war at the same time we are engaging terrorism on a global scale. Add to this the world's inability to distribute our blessings and abundance to everyone and our financial slump. The news nowadays certainly points to the fact that we need a savior. And Christmas if taken seriously assures us that we have one. I pray that we all can experience that immense hope that Christ brought 2000 years ago and renews every year at this time by strengthening his relationship with us as Emanuel. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Kochi.



## Varam ANTHONYSAMY

God Become Human

Dear everyone, Greetings.

I'm fine here in the parish. A little busy with the annual confessions which is a big affair here in Korea twice a year both at Christmas and Easter seasons.

And once again Christmas is around the corner and it is the apt time to wish every one with love, joy and peace brought-in by the One who become man among us.

When we contemplate God become man in Jesus we often think of the words of St Paul to the Philippians: "Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself,... humbled himself..." (Phil. 2:6-8). This image of 'humility' is a popular one. Many of our sermons and carols are full of admiration and commiseration for such renunciation.

I think that our astonishment in the face of the 'humility' of God is misplaced, because we are led to misunderstand not only what really happened, but also the motivation behind it. The fault lies with



our system of values. We set great store on possessions, power and influence and how they can help us in achieving our goals. Who has all these more than God? And yet, there is God giving up all that and becoming a child. What humility! What sacrifice! What a model for us!

Power, honor, riches, possessions, and influence - all these are not really important in life. They are not worth clinging to. They do not offer us anything worthwhile. What are important are human persons, rich in their diversity and individuality. They ask for our appreciation and respect. "Count others better than yourselves", advises St Paul (Phil.2:3). If we wish to promote the emergence of a community of peace and justice in the world and in our communities - of which the Angels sang at the birth of Christ - then we have to invest in people who alone can create such a community. Money, power and positions seem capable only of dividing and are often counter-productive. "Trust people, be with them, empower them, enable them to create" - this is the message for me of God becoming human - "CHRISTMAS!"

Merry Christmas and a grace-filled New Year 2003!



## **Jude PEIRISPULLE**

### **Greetings from Kochi**

At the end of the year, when Christmas is near, happy to recall you, who are dear.

When peace prevails and New Year dawns accept my kind greetings.

As the year comes to an end I could say that this year was special to me as I had the opportunity again to visit my family and spend my vacation with them. This vacation was also different for me as my oblate classmates got together to celebrate the 10th anniversary of our Priesthood.

I came back from my vacation straight to do my annual retreat. It is also nice to be back to one's place with that type of a renewed retreat which spoke about the charism of our founder.

Now I continue my work, as I am waiting for the new transfer.

Hope to see you all in Kochi on the 27th



## **Nobuhiko YAGI**

### **Silence**

Before recently I was always living at a rather fast pace. Now, though I must admit to some exceptions, I am living a more leisurely life. I have come to realize the importance of quiet times to reflect upon myself, to think about and appreciate what is happening around me. This past year there have been many things that have happened around me. And I have noticed that I do take the time to appreciate these. Among all this, however, more than the happening itself, I appreciate more what is going on in the deepest of my heart in relation to these, the mysterious feelings and calls I sense. I find that this is the most important and has the most meaning. In all this the celebration of the birth of our Lord is upon us. When I think of Christmas, rather than the being engulfed in decorations, and

listening to songs that echo in the streets, I appreciate the quietness that engulfs me and the simplicity of the feast. In reality, Christ was born in the quiet of Bethlehem, unnoticed by anyone, among the most abandoned of society. In the same way, today, the Lord is born in our own selves, selves full of faults that we don't want to admit, and walks along with us. Therefore, amid all our cares, the noise and violence surrounding us, to taste and to appreciate Christ is probably most difficult but most important. At least during this period, in the quiet of my heart, in full composure, through the celebration of the birth of Christ, I want to be able to listen to God calling me.

May everyone have a wonderful Christmas and New Year Season with all the graces they can bring.



## **MEMORABLE OBLATES IN JAPAN**

**Dave Barton** <[dymbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:dymbarton@earthlink.net)>

Like any Oblate who worked in Japan between 1948 and the present, I look back on a marvelous collage of people and places and events. I want to bypass the "places" and "events" in that collage, and concentrate on the "persons". Because there are so many wonderful men packed into that collage, I'm hard pressed to know what "persons" to select. Each Oblate in his own unique way contributed to the establishment of the Church in Japan - a church incidentally which I think will experience stupendous growth over the next fifty years. Each of them became a part of what I like to call the "Oblate Personality", that combination of wonderful qualities which constitute the Oblate corporate image.

I could be wrong about the qualities I see in the Oblate Personality, but all I have are my personal experiences among my brother Oblates, and if they are wrong, forgive me for that. Also, to write about any one of those Oblates and the qualities he contributed is to neglect the others. I don't want to do that, but I have to, in the interests of space. All I ask is that those not mentioned here



(living or dead) realize; they are just as admired and remembered as the ones I choose.

The first component I see in the Oblate Personality is selfless dedication to the interests of others. Who comes to mind? Danny Ward. There is no end to my admiration of that wonderful man! He was my hero ever since I first met him in the juniorate in Newburgh. No one in Japan has to be told about Danny. We all were beneficiaries of his attention and compassion. No matter what happened, Danny was always there to help. Ask him for an hour of his time, and he'd give you five. Ask him to climb a hill with you, and he'd be ready to tackle a mountain. No matter what we chose to do on our day off, Danny was there with us (even if that meant a whole afternoon and half of the night playing Go with Xave in Akaoka). Often Danny compromised his own work so that our work could succeed. I know that happened when he spent many hours designing the cover to my book, "The Mind of the West". I wonder to this day if Danny shortened his last days on earth with his persistent efforts to answer (in Japanese) every letter he received from his beloved shinja in Aki. Oh, Danny boy, you loved us so!

The second component I see in the Oblate personality is zeal; and Jack Barrett immediately comes to mind. I lived with Jack for two years in Fukuoka and two in Kochi, and I must confess that his relentless activity (from early morning to altogether too late each night) used to exhaust me. He ran his church like a business corporation, with the same attention to specific goals and specific measures to achieve them, with weekly meetings (attended by everybody in the church who could remotely be called staff), and with accountability assured by the weekly reports he required of each member. One day I said, "Jack, why do you have to be so damned structured; why can't you relax a bit?" He answered, "People in the business world work with that kind of dedication, and I'll be damned if, as an Oblate, I'll be willing to do anything less." Some may not agree with all that Jack did, but every Oblate has to respect his determination to do whatever it took to succeed. Doesn't that kind of zeal deserve a place in the Oblate personality?

The final component I perceive in the Oblate personality - there are many more, but I'm out of space - is an honest-to-God love for people, an almost reckless devotion to their best interests. Many Oblates fit into this component, but I choose Gerry Stevens. As with Jack, some may not agree with all Gerry did in the mountains of Awa Ikeda, but no one can challenge his innocent, selfless, ebullient love for his people. Not just the Catholic people, mind you, but all the people. Gerry's vision also included anonymous Christians - tucked away in the Ikeda mountains - saved by their own goodness. Gerry's goal was to encourage them to be the best they could be, even if they chose not to become Christians. For Gerry "the glory of God was the human person fully alive," and he spent himself to make that kind of aliveness happen. Trudging along the mountainside, often forgetting to eat, he seemed to personify the words of Raissa Maritain when she said, "I have the feeling that what is asked of us is to live in the whirlwind, without

keeping back any of our substance, without keeping back anything of ourselves, neither rest nor friendships nor health nor leisure - to pray incessantly...in fact to let ourselves pitch and toss in the waves of the divine will till the day when it will say, 'That's enough'"

As the Oblates in Japan join forces in the formulation of an "Immense Hope" mission statement for the next fifty years, please keep people like me informed, would you? It will be thrilling to learn what that mission statement will be; and witness, in the years ahead, how you succeed in achieving it.

## Anniversaries

### ■ Birthday:

January		
02 1930	Ed WILLIAMS	
22 1938	Ray BOURGOIN	
29 1926	Dick HARR	
February		
13 1963	Maurizio GIORGIANNI	
15 1935	Len INUI	
21 1957	Vincenzo BORDO	
March		
01 1940	Jerry NOVOTNY	
23 1938	Bill MAHER	

### ■ Ordination / Final Vows:

January		
15 1994	James JEYACHANDRAN	
February		
22 1953	Xave TOSA	
March		
19 1966	Ray BOURGOIN	
27 1976	Wency LAGUIDAO	
29 1993	Leo KAWAGUCHI	

### ■ Death:

February		
02 1978	Charles MC BENNETT	
March		
12 1979	Len ROBITAILLE	

## From the editor

**Nobuhiko YAGI**

The next issue is scheduled for March 15. Please send in your contributions by March 10. Whenever you send an article for the newsletter, always include a title to the manuscript.

### Enclosures:

1. Year 2003 OMI ORDO
2. Daily Prayer Intentions  
(Vice Province - Japan  
Korea and AORC Region)

