



Japan-Korean Delegation Newsletter #14



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Dear Brother Oblates,

A few weeks ago the pre-novices made a presentation of the Japanese Mission. Thinking back on the beginnings of our mission I recalled Fr. Dechatelets Superior General and his intense desire for the Japanese Mission to grow. So intense was this desire that he presented our Mission with a relic of the Holy Cross. It was a personal possession of our Founder St. Eugene de Mazenod.

Today there seem to be fewer missionaries and yet our new Delegation we will be blessed with young missionaries from Sri Lanka, the Philippines and India. We also see signs of growth in Korea where we are blessed with seminarians. We have reasons to rejoice.

As for me, it's a day by day process. Recently I've been taken off all chemo until the doctors can build

up my blood so I can tolerate the chemo therapy. I haven't given up. I hope to return to Japan.

Jesus came into our world. At Christmas we rejoice. Merry Christmas to you all and the best of God's blessings in the New Year. Ange



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Christmas Greeting from Fukuoka

It is time to say to all of you Merry Christmas and Happy New year. This is also the time we take extra effort and time to wish the same, to many of our family members, friends and loved ones. We, the members of Fukuoka, take this opportunity to wish all the members of Japan/Korea unit and all the others who come across this article, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, 2010.

2009 is also almost coming to an end. Looking back on our lives here, I see that we have been working as a team.

Kenichi, almost every week goes to Minamikazuya, a substation of Yoshizuka, to help with the mass there. Some time he also goes to Yoshizuka to help John Iwo. In September Minamikazuya church celebrated its 50th anniversary. As you all know we have been in Yoshizuka only a little more than 10 years.

In Koga, on Wednesdays, we have mass at 11:30. Not only during my Home vacation, but also many other times John Iwo comes here to say the mass for the parishioners. Whenever he visits, he takes the opportunity to talk to people on Church History, which the parishioners enjoy very much. I hear some people asked John Iwo, when he is going to come and live in Koga.

Kenichi, while helping in many areas and being involved in many activities here in Fukuoka, he is also in and out of Koga many times. Especially, for Kenichi, this year was a year of practice of his Kindergarten study. Last year he graduated from the Montessori program and now he has a degree, and can work in any kindergarten. Due to the Flu throughout the country, some of his programs were cancelled. He is a big help in many ways to my work here in Koga especially when I went for my vacation in September.

On my part, during this year, there were so many events and programs. Thanks to the help from the members here in Fukuoka and you all, I feel I have accomplished my duties well. Spending one month at home was also very relaxing.

In the coming agenda, joining the Colombo Province, is something that we are to accomplish. I think on our part we have had sufficient discussions and paper work. Also as good news, if every thing goes well with the paper work, we will be able to welcome the new priest by next year.

May God bless you and hope to see you In Kochi.



Iwo, Kenichi and Jude



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Christmas '09 OMI letter

Looking a little to the past, this year was rather good to me. I had an especially good summer. I felt strong and ready to play tennis ... (That's a little bit exaggerated). My medicine decreased for a while but then it increased again. I take a walk everyday and look for the sunny side of the street. When it rains, I stay home. I never liked the rain, but now I hate it. My belly is round like a *small* balloon, but I keep my weight under 64 kg. I eat well and have my evening glass of red wine. (That is medicine too!). I enjoy shopping, not so much looking for the red discount labels, but to watch the babies in their buggies. Some start crying when seeing my big nose, others smile and wave bye-bye. Their mothers don't know where to look or how to look.

Blessed Christmas and best wishes for a trouble free New Year. Yoshikazu Xavier Tosa



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THANK YOU. THANK YOU. SORRY JERRY MY FINGERS ARE NOT WORKING TO WELL.
MY BEST WISHES TO YOU AND ALL OBLATES IN JAPAN AND KOREA.



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Greetings and best wishes to all for a Blessed and Merry Christmas, and a New Year filled with happiness and the blessings of the Lord every day. With my thanks for keeping me informed about the goings-on of the Oblates working in Japan and Korea. I am always looking forward eagerly for it. Merry Christmas!

Fraternally yours in Christ and Mary Immaculate,
Jan Van Hoydonck, OMI



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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Holiday Season has come around again. It gives me a chance to bring you up to date with what has gone on during the past year.

Some ongoing things, like everyone, are meetings of all kinds: delegation council (councilor + secretary [which finishes May 3, 2010!]); Diocesan Senate [which finishes December 2010!]; Volunteer Bureau related; formation committee (+ secretary); follow-up committee (+ secretary); MAMI committee (+ secretary); gatherings of the MAMI members in the various districts; taking care of 2 little parishes; availability to the delegation superior and treasurer for whatever [any one or some of these,

with no specific date, can finish anytime!].

My translation of the 34 chapters of the Mysteries of the Rosary on the Internet will reach their end January 6, 2010. Already another lady is helping me to put them in still better readable Japanese, so it's an on-going process. I've had some positive feedbacks, so I'm happy it is helping somebody. These people especially stress the deep meaning behind each mystery, as an eye opener to them.

I finally finished the project of translating the 524 letters of our Founder, relevant to our Constitutions and Rules. (Selected Texts of the Founder) KAMI NI KANSHA!

We have been blessed with the presence of Palomo for a period, which will end next March/April. At this Christmas time, I want to wish him well as he continues on the path of Oblate life and hope to see him after ordination to help with God's ministry among the foreigners especially. I hope he was able to catch a reading of our various apostolates here.

I am happy about the arrival next year of a man from Colombo. We should have his permit to apply for a visa by Christmas. Looking forward to the arrival from Jaffna of 2 more young priests in 2010. The possibility of one or two from India is on the horizon, is also a shot in the arm for our delegation. Of course one or two from the Philippines would also be a booster of the psychology of the men here. Having determined our priorities for the future, I'm sure they'll give themselves whole-heartedly to these as we did to the priorities of our generation.

I'm also happy about the Korean Mission, which has 2 scholastics nearing ordination. With one also pursuing his novitiate in Sri Lanka, and another pre-novice, besides the Scholastic from Bangladesh, it augurs well for the future. I also hear that the man from Bangladesh that we met in our Spring Meeting in Korea a few years ago is destined to rejoin the Korean Mission in the near future. May they be as creative as their "elders".

In July I received the shocking news that one of my former classmates, Gerard Bossé, had suffered a rather large stroke. He seems to be progressing well. Of course, like everyone, a number of my former classmates have had various big illnesses and some have passed away, but Gerry is one of those I was closest to.

Due to not being able to travel long distances without tiring, I didn't go stateside to visit my brother this past year. I also refused an invitation, all expenses paid, to go do the wedding of friend's (of Roman days) son, in Australia. I had baptized the son over 25 years ago, in Tokyo! Also for the same reason, I declined to go to Rome for the canonization of Father Damian. A lady in the parish would have paid everything, but I want to save myself to be able to visit my only brother in 2010. She wasn't too happy about my refusal, but I must draw the line somewhere! I also attended many canonizations while I was living in Rome!

So for this year, that's it. I pray you are all able to cope with your new situations that come along everyday, medically, economically, psychologically, spiritually and all the "ally"'s you can think of. See most of you at the Kochi Christmas Party! Ray



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オブレート会青年祈りと黙想の集い

Oblate Sponsored Gathering of Youth for Prayer and Meditation

11/28-29、高知県山間地の廃校になった小学校を宿泊施設にした「ほっと平山」でオブレート会青年祈りと黙想の集いが行われた。参加者は聖職者4名、神学生1名、青年9名で、総勢14名だった。自然が豊かな環境の中で「お恵み」について、神さまや自分自身と向き合いながら静かに祈り黙想した。



On 11/28 and 29, the OMI sponsored a time of prayer and meditation for the youth. It was held at "Hotto Hirayama", a place that was turned from a Grammar School to a place where people can stay overnight. This is found in Kochi prefecture up in the mountains. Attending were the directors which consisted of 5 members (a brother, 3 priests and a seminarian) and 9 young people. In this great natural environment we considered the blessings and graces we have received. We stood face to face with God and ourselves and quietly prayed and meditated.

日頃のあわただしさの中で生活している若者にとって、風による木々・葉っぱの揺らぎや道ばたに咲いている小さな野花の存在等、普段見過ごしてしまいそうな自然の営みは、心の癒しとなっているようだった。

また自分の今やっていることやこれからの歩むべき道を模索している参加者も多く、神父さんのお話や参加者同士の分かち合いを通して、自分自身と向き合う時間にもなったようだ。

今回このような集いを青年たちは渴望していることに気付かされた。これからもこのような機会を若者たちに提供していくことの大切さを改めて痛感した。

青年ローマツアー

Rome Tour fro the Youth

9/6-13、11名の青年とシスター1名、溝部司教様と共にローマ・アシジ巡礼の旅に出かけてきた。

From 9/6 to 13, 11 youths, 1 sister, Bishop Mizobe and myself went on a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi.



権威・権力のために、人間が最大限の力や能力で表した建造物、像、モニュメントが集中する父性的なローマ…。そこでは弱さや小ささを拒絶してしまう何かが存在する。対照的に、田園地帯にたたずむ穏やかで母性的なアシジ…。そこでは同じ偉大な建造物、像、モニュメントにも優しさや単純さを感じられ、貧しさや至らなさを受け入れてくれるようだ。

そんな父性的なローマで発見したものの。それは「昔と今との共存」である。昔を生かしながら今風を作るやり方である。古代ローマと現代ローマが素晴らしく調和している。石で造られた古い建物の中で最先端の流行ものが売られている。どうやら日本は昔を壊しながら今を築き上げてきたようだ。温故知新という言葉があるが、建物だけでなく、考え方や価値観までもが

そうしてきたのではないだろうか。

色々な行事を通してたくさんの青年たちと関わってきた。その中で、生きることが難しい今の社会で、信仰を土台にしながら健気に生きているその素晴らしさを、彼らの中に見ることができた。そんな青年の「真の同伴者」になれたらと心から願いたい。

Through various events I was able to relate with many young people. Amid these events, I found that it is difficult to live in today's society. But I also discovered that if we live, based on our faith, we can have a wonderful healthy life. I felt this happening especially as I witnessed the youth. I hope, from the bottom of my heart, that I can be a "real companion" to these young people.

神さまもキリストを通して私たちの「真の同伴者」となってくれている。その原点はなんともいってもクリスマスであろう。主の御降誕、おめでとう!!

God himself, through Christ is already a "real companion" for us. The source of all this is in the event of Christmas. Let us celebrate the birth of the Lord. Have a Holy Christmas.



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“That they may be One”

This was the theme of our AOS International Meeting Korea and Japan, which is being held in November 10th, 11th and 12th 2009 at Incheon, South Korea. Under the leadership of Marcellino Daiji Tani, the Bishop of Saitama, we were 25 members from Japan attended the Meeting. This was the first AOS International Meeting between Korea and Japan. During our three days meeting I felt that we were one. We had various sharing: prayer, Mass, food, speeches and our won life experiences.



Among the sharing, I would like to share with you 'A Rainbow in Us' by Fr. Jang (Korea). He used the story of Biblical Noah. While listening to the talk I was also thinking of our own vocation. The Biblical text says: God saw Noah. Among so many people, among all human beings He noticed an individual. His attention goes to each one. Noah has a strong reference point for his life, for his decisions and action. Those who are sensitive to God's voice are never outside His attention. God says to Noah what to do, to build a boat, an ark in order to be saved. God also tells him how he must build the ark. God invites Noah

to participate in His plan of salvation and Noah has to act with the same mind as God has. We can call Noah a person of right relationships. It would refer first to his relationship with God, and then with the others and with all creation. He cares for life and he has learnt it from God.

A rainbow as a symbol of hope:

We are in Priestly Year. We are all called by God to participate in His plan of Salvation. As Oblates, He has blessed us various ways. But at times everything seems gloomy and dark, cool and unfriendly. Even our existence might be shaken by violent storm and thunder. When a rainbow appears it gives a relief. The storm is over. The sunshine seems to be stronger than destructive power of heavy rain. That is why a rainbow stands for hope. It assures that the harmony in the nature is going to come back to its normal balance. And all colours are to come out and be displayed in the sunshine. So it is with our life. We are the symbol of hope for the people of God.

We are from different nationality called to live together. All the colours put together seem to catch more intensively our sense of esthetic that each one separated from the rest. That is a powerful message for a community building and for accepting the God's given diversity inscribed into the humanity. We all are different and there are so many aspects of experiencing diversity but we are to make a rainbow together.

When one is able to let the rays of sunshine break through own limits some new talents are released and new energy brings about something vital. The important thing is to put our little of what we have to the common efforts of the community. When we see a rainbow we can distinguish the colours and each one has to give its beauty so that we can admire the harmony. The same thing we can say about harmony among us. We have to make visible (our own colour) and we have to appreciate the uniqueness of the other. That demands first our willingness to see others with respect and without forgetting that each one holds own depths in heart where God himself dwells.

As Oblates we are called to work together, share together and live together. We open our hearts so that everyone who wants to encounter us can see that rainbow in us.

After the three days meeting at Incheon I went to stay with the Formation community at Suwon. With the help of Varam I was able to visit some of the Saints places over there. I also visited with the help of our brothers "Hanna's house" and also "the Centre for Urban poor" where Vincenzo shines like rainbow. I stayed the whole day and worked with them. We started with the prayer and cooked the food together. Before distributing to the people, the prayer of blessing being said and then we ate first. After that we served the people. On that day almost 400 people ate. By seeing this I thought that the Oblates in Korea shine like a rainbow in the lives of many. They give hope to the homeless, migrants and home to the

street children. Wish you a Merry Christmas and happy New Year 2010. A. Irudayaraj, OMI



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Journey For Life into the Heart of Asia – Malaysia and Korea



Miri City - near Myanmar



Malaysian Seminarians

My plane touched down in Miri, Malaysia, which, like many Asian countries is a mixture of various cultures and peoples. The temperature was 37 C. 1500 years ago, traders came from China and India. With them Buddhism and Hinduism came to Malaysia. 500 years ago, Arab traders arrived and brought with them the principles and practices of Islam.

Chief among Malaysia's culture is the ancient Malay culture, and the cultures of the Chinese, and the Indians. These three groups are joined by many indigenous tribes, many of which live in the forests and coastal areas of Borneo.

The oldest inhabitants of Malaysia are its tribal peoples. They account for about 5 percent of the total population. Though Malaysia's tribal people prefer to be categorized by their individual tribes. The dominant tribal groups are the Dayak, who typically live in longhouses and are either Iban (Sea Dayak) or Bidayuh (land Dayak). I had the privilege to visit one tribe who were the Ibans living in a "longhouse". I was surprised to see so many ancient customs still prevailing. All of Malaysia's tribal people generally share a strong spiritual tie to the rain forest.

The Malay are Malaysia's largest ethnic group, accounting for over half the population and the national

language. Almost all Malays are Muslims, though Islam here is less extreme than in the Middle East.

The second largest ethnic group are the Chinese. Most Chinese are Tao Buddhist and retain strong ties to their ancestral homeland. They form about 35 percent of the population.

And the third largest ethnic group are Indian, marking about ten percent of the population. Most people in the country speak both Malay and Chinese.

In this atmosphere, Human Life International and its Asian Affiliates held their “16th Asia Pacific Congress on Faith, Life and Family”. Foreign delegates from 17 different Asian countries participated. The audience consisted of 650 Malaysian people, including one Archbishop, 4 Bishops, 50 Priests and 100 Asian Foreign Delegates. Together we formed one voice for the “Culture of Life”, examining the Church’s teachings on topics such as Abortion, Euthanasia, Contraception and Population within the framework of the Family.

The theme which we reflected on in this one-week Congress was: “Walk as Children of Light: Bringing about a Transformation of Culture”. Bishop Lee of Miri Diocese spoke about the “Culture of Death” that spreads its tentacles everywhere and even cuts deep into the very heart of family life. Much of life in general but particularly family life has been eroded by the “Culture of Death” and we cannot stand by without sounding the alarm that there is a deadly enemy within.”

So the big question: Is there a way out? With Divorce, Cohabitation, Contraception, Abortion, Premarital Sex, Homosexual “Marriage” - The current world-society today is in the midst of a profound sexual crisis. The prophetic words of Pope Paul VI written forty years ago in the “controversial” but beautiful encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, bears a great treasure that we absolutely have to understand. The truth that “What God has joined, men must not divide,” is still relevant today and we are all, in some way, defenders of that truth. The Congress ended with Mass at Miri Sports Stadium. Around 1000 people attended. The Bishop concluded the Mass with the following words: “What a blessing and grace for us to be able to acknowledge before man the sanctity and sacredness of life! To God Be the Glory.”

On my way back to Japan, I stopped in Korea for 5 days. Even though the temperature was cold, 5 C., it was a relaxing visit and the Korean hospitality was tremendous. I was able to meet, visit and receive first-hand information on each Oblate involvement (Fr. Vincenzo – street people; Fr. Maurizio – immigrating population; Fr. James – hospital involvement); to experience the life in the seminary with Fr. Varam and our future Korean Missionaries; and finally to visit the famous Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Namyang where a large number of Catholics were martyred during the Great Byungin Persecution. Fr. Varam spends one day a week there helping the founder, a Diocesan Priest, with

confessions and counseling.

A two-week learning experience brought me back to Kochi and a mountain of work. What will happen next year remains to be seen, but if my health holds up, it promises to be full and exciting.



May you all have a Meaningful Christmas during this Holy Season and a New Year filled with God's tender Love, Grace and Success!

God Bless

Jerry

←Oblate Korean Seminary



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A Happy New Year

2009年を振り返ってみると、二つの教会の創立50周年をお祝いしました。9月13日には南粕屋教会（吉塚教会の巡回教会）と鳴門教会です。南粕屋教会は宮原司教様を始めジェン神父様、古川神父様、遠山神父様、永富神父様と共同司式ミサを行い、16名の方が同時に堅信を受けました。古賀の信者様他大勢参加下さり、教会はあふれるばかりの盛況となりました。鳴門教会も同様に盛大に行われました。然し、考えてみると、鳴門の50周年と言うのは南浜に教会が建てられてからではないでしょうか。私達第一期生は鳴門にカトリックグループが出来た時のメンバーで、創立50周年前に教会共同会として、それこそ、熱心に、活発にキリストの道を歩んでいました。シルバー神父様の時代に二人のOblate会の司祭と大村啓子様がヨゼフ会に入会されたことは本当に恵まれたことでした。大村様御一家にはBro.津田と共に本当にお世話になりました。

心からお礼申し上げます。ありがとうございました

Fr. John Iwo O.M.I.

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Greetings from Nishi Tokyo-shi!

Not much to report from here except that I am pretty much settled in at the apartment and that I will be having a check up on 12/19 to see if the radiation treatments took care of the cancer or not.

Hope you are all well. Looking forward to seeing everyone on the 29th, especially since it's been such a long long time. In the meantime, Christmas blessings to you, your families and those people you serve.

Jack



西東京市便り

西東京市からこんにちは。 やっとアパートに落ち着いてきたということ以外は特に変わりはありませんが、12月19日には血液検査で放射線治療の効果を調べてもらうことになっています。———それでは29日にお会いしましょう。皆さんにもずいぶん長いこと会っていないので、再会を楽しみにしています。最後に、皆さんとご家族、そして周囲の方々みんなにクリスマスの恵みがありますように！ ジャック



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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year,

2009 was a year filled with many blessings for me and I hope it was the same for you. Besides enjoying good health (for being 71yrs. old) and the parish being blessed in many ways I also celebrated my 50th year in the Oblates. I was able to go back to the States for a celebration at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows. The four siblings Pat Jack and Judy were able to spend some time together in Bremen Georgia and I had a great week in Chicago where I was able to connect with a lot of old friends especially my Aunt Mary (98 years young). As I said above I hope it was a great year for you too..

For the bulk of this letter I want to share with you a story I just received from Fr. Clarence Zachman, OMI one of my former teachers and now a good friend .One of my younger friends celebrating his 89th Christmas. He writes: Parents of a young child born with a heart defect told me this story and asked me to share it with you The mother was a CCD teacher for second graders preparing for their First Communion. She took her son to class with her and by the end of the year the boy was ready for his First Communion two years before the usual age.

Two months later the child was scheduled for heart surgery. The day before the surgery the parents and the boy were in the Doctor's office. The Doctor tried his best to explain what was going to take place. The boy kept interrupting the Doctor by saying over and over, "Doctor when you cut my heart open you will find Jesus in my heart. Doctor this is true. It's in the Bible. I received Jesus in Holy Communion." By the time the family left the office the Doctor was thoroughly frustrated. He himself had fallen away from the church a number of years ago. And when he left the church he also left Jesus in his heart. The next morning the surgery was performed and the Doctor was in his office recording the diagnosis and prognosis of the case. It was not a good report.

The boy had less than a month to live. The Doctor began to express his anger. “God, where are you in all this? Why did you create this boy with so much suffering and so much pain for the parents?” The Doctor sat back to listen to God for an answer. And God responded: “My friend, this little boy is a dear friend of mine. He is very special. In a few weeks he will be with me in heaven for all eternity. His parents will join him. Moreover this little boy has already brought back a lost sheep”. With that the Doctor got the message. He sat back and shed a cup of tears. He got up and went to the hospital. The very moment he sat down at the bedside of the boy, the boy awoke and said to the Doctor: “did you cut my heart open this morning?” The Doctor said, “Yes”. And the boy said, “Doctor, did you find Jesus in my heart?” The doctor smiled for the first time in many years, and he said, “Yes, I found Jesus in your heart.” An amazing story responding to the Lord of Christmas be filled with joy, peace and happiness and a renewal of life with Jesus in your heart. Share your story with those near and dear to you. Know that the world is in dire need of a living Jesus. Have a Prayerful and Joyful Christmas and May 2010 Be Your Best Year Ever. Bill Maher

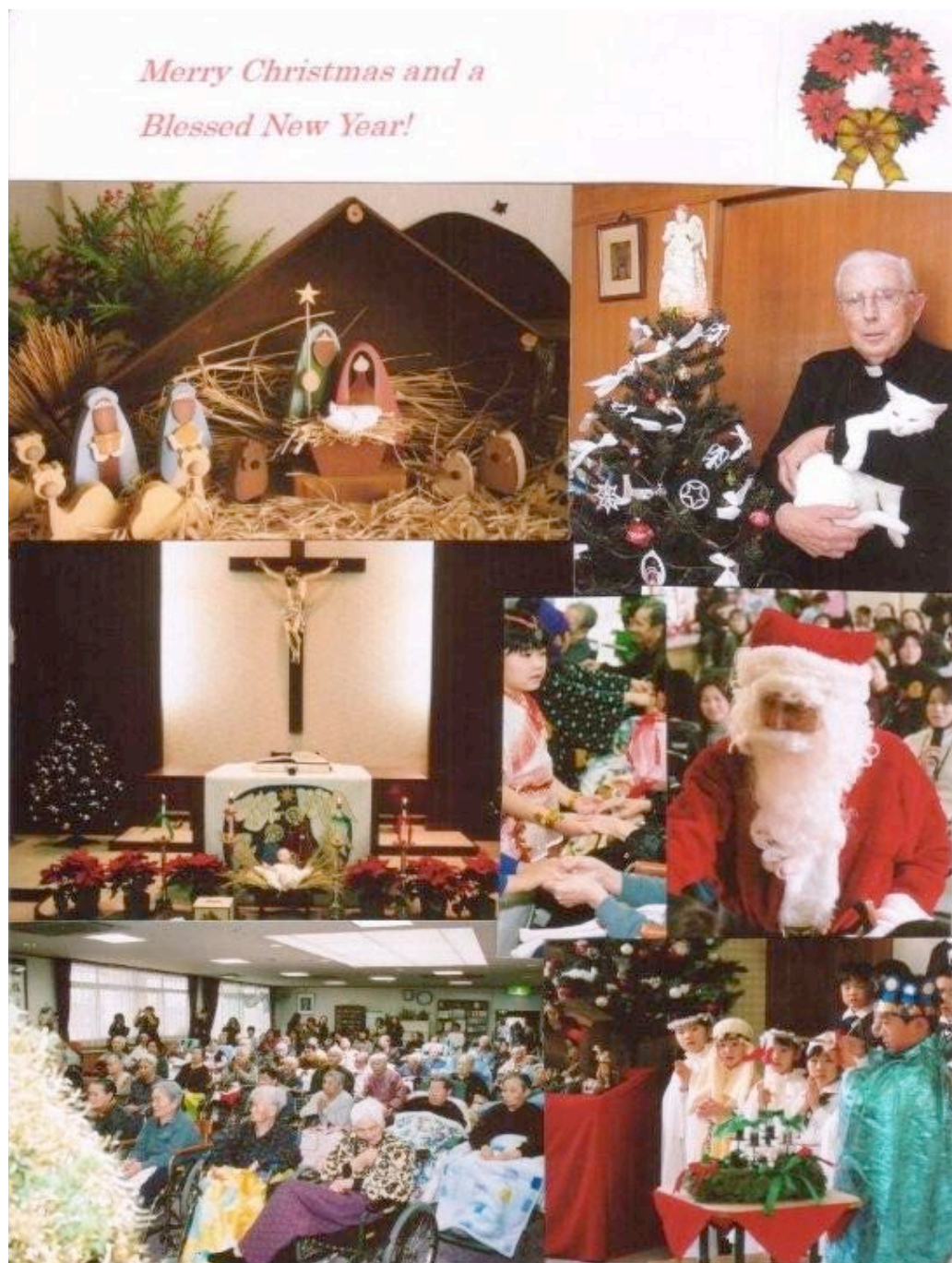


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The crib is always in my Christmas greeting. It is something that I made a few years ago in my "little" workshop. I think it is the only one like it in Japan. The ornaments on my Christmas tree are new this year. Picked up the designs in some Scroll Books. I like the simplicity of the decorations in our chapel (church?). Every year I play "Santa" for the kindergarten children. A few years ago I used to have to put two pillows around the "gut" but recently with the added pondage - no need for the pillows. I like the picture of the childrens' hands and those of the "elderly". A little love goes a long way! It is nice to see the smiles on the faces of the elderly in wheelchairs when they see the children.

Christmas in Japan. The celebrations, gift giving, Christmas cakes, lights bring the Japanese close to what Christmas is. Maybe some year they will find that Christmas is "Christ" with us - with joy and blessings for all. May Christ be with us at this time of the year, Bert, OMI





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As 2009 comes to an end, I try to recall some of the things that happened to me during this year. After a very good year of sabbatical I got back to Japan in March. From April onwards I have been going around helping different people and learning new things.

During the Holy Week and Easter I was in Nakamura to help Tom. After Easter I went to Naruto to be with Len and to help him especially on Sundays. During summer I was in Itami to cover up for Wency for a very short time. One Sunday I was in Anan to help Bert. After our annual retreat when Bill went to Chicago I was in Tokushima for almost a month. Then in October I was asked by bishop Mizobe to attend the AsIPA General Assembly which was held in Davao, Philippines. I'm not finished!

The JPIC work in the diocese of Takamatsu also took me to different places like Hiroshima, Kyoto and Saitama to attend meetings and seminars. By the way, JPIC ministry has given me a good opportunity not only to study what the church is doing to those in the society, but also to know some people who are actively involved in various ministries like ministry to migrant workers, ministry to homeless, Caritas Japan and AIDS, Justice and Peace etc.

Now, when I look back, I see that I have been on the move. Recently when I was talking to a person he asked me as to where I would go next. I said Kobe. So, now I'm in Kobe not so much to help people but to learn from them. I chose Kobe Central Church(中央教会), because I am interested in social welfare and ministry to migrant workers. Since I have no place to live in Itami, I decided to stay with the priests here in Kobe. Living with two non-Oblates is my first experience. Fr. Cirilo (Spain) and Fr. Masiel (Brazil) are very hospitable and kind. I enjoy not only their company but also good food. We are three different nationalities and our common language in the house is Japanese!

The church here has a Catholic Social Action Center (CSAC) which caters to the needs of Japanese as well as foreigners. In this place everyday you will see the homeless. During the day they come here just to relax. By evening they leave the place and go to a park to spend the night. CSAC gives them food (three times a week) and materials like clothes, blankets etc. It also provides them medical treatment,

hair cut, shower and laundry facilities. Every Wednesday some volunteers come together to do a night petrol from 7:30 to 10:30. During this time they distribute hot soup and some portable body warmers to the homeless. Many foreigners who live in Kobe area come to CSAC to study Japanese. There are for about ten volunteers who teach Japanese to people from fourteen different countries. They also conduct an international cultural exchange program. CSAC is connected to Kobe NGO network for foreigners. This helps foreigners to get some advice and assistance. Rooms at this Center are available for AA & NA meetings, study sessions etc. Practically everyday there is some activity in this place.

I am happy that I came to Kobe at least for a short time. I feel that the church here is very much alive and active. Since the Catholic Social Action Center is open to anyone, people feel free to come in. The poor who come here with hope receive it, and those who work for them are also happy to give their services to the needy. Here everyday is Christmas!

Brad Rozairo





Len -- lenmiomi@guitar.ocn.ne.jp

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A NEW YEAR FOR PEACE GROWING !

Naruto St. Joseph Cathollic Church celebrates its 50th Years Anniversary. Last November 3, 2009. Bishop Franscis Xavier Mizobe Osamu officiated the Mass with 21 priests and 82 people, who are representing parishes of Shikoku, Nagoya and Fukuoka. The bishop told a episode of a catholic lord Takayama Ukon, who was persuaded to adjure his faith by Rikyuu, whom Hideyoshi ordered to do so, Ukon told Rikyuu not to be shaky; then Rikyuu left without saying anymore. The bishop encouraged to stand and step foreward again on a solid faith.

Fr. Jude Peirisipule representing Oblates told, that we miss Fr. Ange Siani on this occasion. But through faith and power of Naruto's first group, guided by Brother Tsuda, we were given good vocations. He also congratulated the parish with oblate mission priority which is ; to evangelize the poor from (Fr.) silver to gold age. Other guests praised the history of Naruto parish which started by the local people. Before the Oblates arrival, people borrowed 2nd floor of Omura family to start brother Tsuda's mission. In addition some elder members paced the thanksgiving occasion. At the banquet after the official ceremony, Fr. Bert Silver shared his mission experience, like building the parish facilities, working for youth and developing areas of kindergarten. Mr. Mabuchi, a parish representative shared his experience. He enjoyed to serve every Sunday's Mass preparation. He also help to improve Church and Kindergarten facilities. People expressed that the occasion was wonderful. They have learned much from the development in Naruto Church. DEO GRATIAS!

One more 50th celebration : Naruto Seibo Kindergarten held the official thanksgiving celebration on November 23rd, 2009. It started with a thanksgiving ceremony: a significant talk of its history given by Fr. Bertran N. Silver, former principal of 39yrs since its opening. He has given a special compliment for an accomplishment of Montessori education, which took a good steps since last ten years. Because this educational philosophy and practice is a/or most realistic human formation, which arch-bishop Ikenaga Jun of Osaka announced that all catholic kindergartens should be doing this preschool formation, (given at 2008 national convention of Japan Catholic Kindergarten). Fr. Silver's sincere talk made this Oblate-founded school person, Akenohoshi Gakuen, feel very blessed before so many people of this field.

Also Fr. D. Cambara, vicar-general of Takamatsu diocese, gave a well prepared freeting and compliment on the occasion; catholic school's value at this area of preschool education in Japan. City Mayer sent Mr. Kondo as proxy who has also a good view and evaluation talk about our kindergarten's presence. Mr. Shiuchi, chair person of association of Tokushima-prefeture private kindergarten gave us a very cordial greeting to the audience of principals and teachers.

I am very grateful to every persons who has given all kind of support and shown interest. May His Blessing be on them through this Christmas season. Len Inui, OMI



Mike -- _jomi@dp.u-netsurf.ne.jp

巡り巡って又クリスマス。
有り難う 皆さん。

I 'm moving into the new house, my last sojourn I suppose. Life is like roaming in a sanddune, your footprints are blown off in no time. Every time my pain from colon sneaks in, I remember Tom Reiley's church history paper: Arius the heretic died in a public toilet.



Dick -- Wpmcsweeney@aol.com

I am happy to receive the written greetings of each of you after your annual retreat. It's a joy to receive the spirit of community that's evident. A very merry, much blessed Christmas and New Year to each of you.

Dick



MY EXPERIENCE IN OCTOBER 2009 IN ANNA HOUSE

“It makes me suffer – a dear friend told me once – to see you go here and there to beg and glean some funds for the table of the poor. I hope to become rich enough that I can help you much more.” My answer came immediately: “I am not a poor beggar. I am a rich person. I am rich of the joy that comes from feeling welcome by God’s merciful and infinite love. This gives me a free and happy heart.”

I remember once when, after taking part in a wedding banquet, I realized that so many delicious courses and dainties were left untouched. Seeing all that plenty, I approached the person responsible for the buffet and asked him if I could be allowed to take some of those tasty foods for the boys I had left at home (we are managing three Family-Houses with 25 boys). The person responsible very happily agreed and gave me two large bags; he invited me to take all that I needed. I couldn’t believe my ears. I filled the two bags with choice meat, exquisite cakes, chicken, fish, rice and several other delicacies which my boys go crazy about.

A devout churchgoer, who was present when I was happily being a predator, approached me with an attitude of annoyance and told me: “But, Father, have a little dignity! At least for the sake of the habit you are wearing. Are you not ashamed to do that?” My answer was prompt and decisive: “I know very well how much my boys appreciate these good things and I would feel guilty if I had to go back to them empty handed... That would have been the greatest shame!”

Bowing to the poor

Many people think that my missionary life must be beautiful and happy because it is filled with so many important activities to be done. These people think that it is those actions that bring me satisfaction and joy. It is not like that at all. On the contrary, the works I do in my priestly life, besides being a beggar for the love of God, can be summed up to only 3 or 4, not more, simple gestures that make my life happy and full of so much serenity.

The first and most significant reality of my apostolate is that of “being together” with my volunteers: to work with them, to sweat with them when it is hot, to experience together, the swelling of legs when our service becomes heavy; not being afraid of dirtying my hands with the sauces and of the smells of the kitchen in order to serve the poor. Towards the end of the evening, after having worked the whole afternoon side by side with them, I approach each volunteer, put my hand on his/her shoulder and whisper: “Thank you, brother!” or “Thank you, sister!” It is because of the commitment and sacrifice of

these men and women that we can open our soup kitchen everyday and accept 450 people, who come to our threshold, and offer them something good to eat.

Another beautiful aspect of my daily life is that of welcoming the poor who come to our gate with a profound and devout bow – here in the Far East, culturally, the greeting is a bow more than a handshake; bowing is a sign of respect and sincere humility. While I bow, bending my body as low as I can, and with a cordial smile, I tell them: “Welcome this evening. I hope you will like our supper. Please make yourselves at home.”

A witness of God’s signs

Another beautiful dimension of my missionary commitment is fulfilled rather late in the evenings. After having closed the soup kitchen and put everything in order, I go to visit our three Family-Houses and I stay a bit with the boys. I listen to them and exchange some words with them. Then, on taking my leave, I extend a light caress to their faces, one by one, and wish them good night. I go back to the community late at night, tying up the loose ends before going to bed. After having placed my existence in the Lord’s merciful heart, I spend some time recalling the great favors the Lord has done for me during the day and for each one I whisper with all my heart: “I praise you, Lord ... for the friend that you made me encounter today; I praise you, Lord... for that little offering that has reached me today; I praise you, Lord... because the boys are fine; I praise you, Lord... for those unexpected bags of rice; I praise you, Lord....” This is the most beautiful moment of my being a missionary: in the darkness of the night, in the solitude of my little room, I give witness to the Lord for the marvelous realities that He accomplishes everyday in my life.

My missionary existence is not a frantic going, traveling, converting, doing... no, no. It is just being a witness of God’s love, of God’s miracles and signs He gives me every moment. It is I who have to be converted first so that I may then give witness to others, not so much with words but with my life – that God is a loving Father and takes care of us, His most beloved children.

Full of joy and happiness

Concluding this reflection on my missionary commitment, I can tell you, honestly, that those few gestures I wrote about: to beg out of love; to bow in front of the poor saying: “You are welcome!”; to whisper: “thank you” to the generous volunteers of the Center, with my hand on their shoulders; to extend a caress to the boys before sending them to bed, wishing them good night; to give a true and sincere praise that becomes a prayer to the Lord before falling asleep: all these make my life full of joy

and happiness. This has been my missionary life for twenty years. Others may think that my life is boring and meaningless. I don't mind. It is sufficient for me, and it gives fullness of life to my heart.

Tomorrow, sure of God's love, I will start again doing the 3 or 4 small things that make my life great and my spirit happy. My only desire is to witness to the whole world the marvels of the Risen Jesus who is alive in our midst.



Wency -- wencylag@ta2.so-net.ne.jp

THE VIOLINIST

(a borrowed story for Christmas reflection) wency laguidao



I received the following story from Jun Mercado (Philippines) and I asked Mike Yamasaki to translate it into English for our December newsletter at the kindergarten. I have shortened it a bit to save space and want to share it with you here.

[A man sat at a metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin. During that time, since it was rush hour, it was calculated that thousands of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. Three minutes went by and a middle aged man noticed there was a musician playing and he slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried up to meet his schedule. A minute later, the violinist received his first dollar from a woman who dropped the money without stopping. A few minutes later, someone leaned against the wall to listen to him, but the man looked at his watch and started to walk again. The one who paid the most attention was a 3 year old boy. His mother tagged him

along, hurried but the kid stopped to look at the violinist. Finally the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk turning his head all the time. Several other children did the same thing but all the parents, without exception, forced them to move on. In the 45 minutes the musician played, only 6 people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed it. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition. No one knew that the violinist was JOSHUA BELL, one of the best musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written with a violin worth 3.5 million dollars. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the metro station was organized by a newspaper company as part of a social experiment to test the reactions of people. The lessons we can learn from the story are: in a familiar environment at an inappropriate hour: Do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize the talent in an unexpected context? One of the possible conclusions from this experience could be: If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world playing some of the best music ever written, how many other things are we missing?] Christmas, the mystery of God becoming man in Jesus Christ, comes and goes every year but have we ever stopped to listen to the true meaning of the story? Do we have time to listen to our children whenever they relate to us the beauty of God's creation unfolding before their eyes?



Varam -- varamomi@yahoo.co.in

Dear Confreres,

It is the Joyous occasion again,
Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.
Shall we cut a cake? Toast a drink
or send some gifts, may be?
Oh No, it is a different kind of a birthday, we claim.
Many a birth day pass us by,
some formal and some others very dear to our heart.
Shall we be convinced of this Christmas as a special one?
Look at that tiny babe, all powerful but shivering in cold.
He affects me, my life, person, work and relationships.
How I wish to walk his way, share his love and gift his grace.
Make everybody happy truly.
I am happy he is making it possible for us,
To share that joy with you.

Merry Merry Christmas

Happy Happy New Year 2010!

And more blessings throughout your life.

Since Christmas brings joys to everyone, there were some guests in our house to share our joy, in November and December 2009. Namely, Frs. Irudayaraj(Iru) & Jerry Novotny, from Japan. Fr.Roberto Sartor, from Italy. And Mrs.Akemi Theresia (a sponsor mother of the scholastic from Bangladesh,Johan Fenny) from Japan too.

Varam, OMI

Oblate Formation House, Suwon(Korea).



Fran -- treyhahn@ceres.ocn.ne.jp

At this time last year, I was going crazy covering two parishes, serving as the Dean of a nine-parish area, and as the bookkeeper for our delegation, all jobs with few perks but lots of meetings and headaches. At year's end, I was unable to send New Year's greetings. I had done so for 41 years, but last year I was so overwhelmed with work, compounded by a computer program glitch, or more honestly not knowing

how to use the program properly, I failed to get out any New Year's cards. I felt bad about this, as I prided myself on keeping this tradition, but such is life.

This year I'm back to serving one parish and there is a "new Dean" to attend all those meetings, so life is a lot easier. The new rectory-central house here will be completed on the 18th, Mike moves in first soon after so we can tear down his "little house" to make a parking lot. Then Bradley will probably move in before year's end. And Wency and I will be leaving the "rabbit hut" we've been living in on January 6th. On February 11th we hope to have a dedication ceremony, and will invite all when the plans are finalized. We had hoped to have it on, Founder's Day, but that is Ash Wednesday so we moved it up.

There are no still no buyers for the Tokyo property. so I'm still pondering how to pay back the loan to the Bishop. This will keep me on my toes, and humble for a while. I am blessed with good health, less hair, more grey than brown, and 20 pounds I don't need, but God is Good and everyday is a grace. I want to take this chance to wish you all the holiest of Holidays, filled with Grace and Peace, and Hope this season promises and my great "Hope" is to see you all well in Kochi for our annual Christmas gathering.

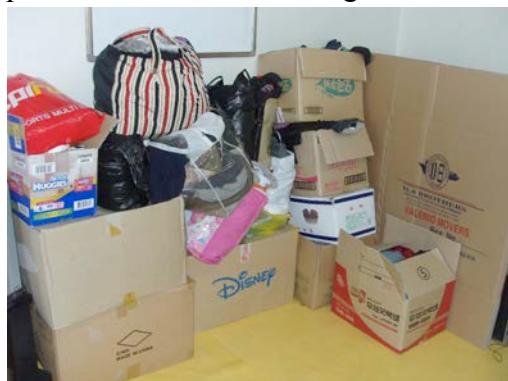


Giorgianni -- gioma18@hotmail.com

"Good or bad? Right or wrong?" ANovember in Our Migrant Center

November is always a particular month for the Filipino community. The celebration of All Souls is very felt by the Filipinos. During the Sunday mass the Church was full and in a deep atmosphere of prayer. But this month has been particular also because of the solidarity of the Filipino community towards the families that received damage from the typhoons.

Since last month in the center we have collected clothes and money to send to Philippines to help the poor families. It is amazing to see that the immigrants even though they don't have here houses, good



clothes or big money they are always open to share what they have, when there is someone in need.

November is also the month of many baptisms. Almost every Sunday we have baptism of babies. It is always a joy to see the eyes of a small baby. Sometimes I think that I should look at

the people around me with the same eyes. That means to have always pure and clean heart to encourage the good things, and sometimes to cover and to be merciful for the bad things that I see. Filipinos,



whatever is their “ family status” always welcome a new baby with joy and as a gift from God. They don’t think, as sometimes people do, that a new baby means expenses for education, for health, for food... Filipinos believe that God will help them if they are open to welcome a new baby and they are happy. Someone of us can have different opinions or even criticize the attitude of Filipinos, I myself also struggle inside of my heart... “What is good, what is bad?”... surely a baby is not a problem for the family but a

joy. When I talk to them preparing the baptism I underline the joy and see their good hearts, and try to help them to keep that joy with responsibility.

This month we also had the visit of some people from the Philippine Embassy. They came to visit our community to inform the Filipino about the activities of the Embassy towards the workers and give them



some information on the new laws for the workers in Korea. I see that Filipinos have expectations about their Embassy, they think that it will be close to them in their difficulties, but sometimes they are disappointed...Again I was struggling in my heart: “What is important to say? What is right?...” I thought that to underline the good, the visit they give to us can build a relation. If we want the love of someone we don’t have to ask “why don’t

you love me?” but we have to love them first. So we love the people that visit us and they will have interest for us.

The month of November finished with a sad story. In one Sunday around 40 illegal migrants were caught by the immigration in Kyonggido Kwanju. It is sad because those migrants were earning money



honestly for the good of their families and working for the good of the Korean companies, and the Korean economy...but they are illegals and so they cannot stay in Korea. It is the law and to be illegal is not right. But those migrants have done something good for Korea. Again in my heart I struggle: “What is good and what is bad? What is wrong and what is right?” I have no answer but Jesus gave an answer one day... He said “ come you that are blessed by

my Father...I was stranger and you received me in your homes...” (Mt 25, 34-35).

My wish for this Christmas is for this world and for us to recognize more and more the different faces of our Jesus, and welcome Him. He is coming to us anyway even though we are sometimes distracted.

Fr. Maurizio (Korea)



Gen -- _genomijp@hotmail.com

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all for the help we have received during this time for the Toyohashi mission, and an especial thanks to the Honshu district members who have given some time out of their commitments to come and see our reality and needs. That support through retreats, Mass and visits really gives us strength and a sense of support from the whole group in the midst of the immense challenge of this place.

From us always talking about what goes on here I think is a very different thing to see and experience it oneself. I have hope, but with the tiredness I must admit that my hope is far from being immense.

May God renew the hope of all of us this Christmas! Gen



Palomo – boyetomi755@yahoo.com

THE JOY THAT CHRISTMAS BRINGS

By: Bro. Palomo, OMI

Christmas is a celebration of Christ or a Festival of the Lord. The very word itself brings joy to our hearts. It is not merely a season but a feeling of hope. Christ's himself has taught us to be always hopeful. He always assures that in the joys and pains in our life, he allowed them to happen so that we may look forward to recognize Him. Because Christ – the Emmanuel will help us see the light in

darkness and make us aware of His immanent presence everywhere.

We have seen and read some heartbreaking news on televisions, internets and newspapers. To name the few are the continuous global economic downturn and job recession, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, earthquake in Samoa and Indonesia, and other effects of natural calamities. Yes, it is really sad most especially like me who come from a country which is recently aired with back to back painful news. There were typhoons, floods and mud slides that killed thousands of people. The most tragic news was the hostage taking and the massacre in Maguindanao. A Muslim dominant area, quarreled between two high profiled political families that caused the death of 57 innocent civilians. Hundreds of families are crying for justice until now. Vigilant and church people especially the media keep banging the doors of the government so that justice will triumph.

Is Christmas can bring meaning with people that were affected with these recent crises? Will they be able to move on? Is the feeling of joy can be felt in this time of Christmas? I often asked myself if what is then my participation and contribution with these crises. It is truly hard to believe these entire crises brings. My heart tears as I have seen the victims on television and internet news.

The time of Christmas – the Nativity of our Savior brings joy. It also unites us all. God's incredible act of love is really manifested everywhere. Despite the turbulences he always inspires us to remain hopeful. The playing of Christmas songs on radios and the different decorations of Christmas lights are all symbol of Joy and of Hope. These symbols also convey new life and new beginning. Amidst all the crises, we have to be grateful for the faith that keep us strong, that fill us with hope and an abiding trust that He dwells in us amidst all joys and sorrows. We thank Him for the gift of our faith life. We thank the Lord for the gift of being able to rise with the assurance of his walking through the day with us. Thank you Lord for having a journeying community and for people you have used as instruments in touching many lives in different ways. With my prayers and sympathy to the families of the victims of killings, may the Good Lord, the Emmanuel – The God Who is always with Us, keep us strong as we pray one another, animate, empower and love as we journey together.

Merry-Merry Christmas and a Grace-Filled New Year to One and All!



Greetings!

Since my rich and wonderful exposure in Japan this will be my 1st Christmas here in the Philippines. It's kind of nostalgia. I guess it has been a common knowledge already to everyone that Christmas season here starts as early as September. Christmas carols are already invading the airwaves and Xmas decors fill the place with color and life. Yes, the country has been thru a couple of destructive typhoons and senseless killings, it doesn't stop the country from celebrating Xmas as happy and as meaningful as it can. Food served in the tables may be not as much or as many as before, or gifts are no longer as much as grandiose as before but still the celebration must go on. What's important is we are celebrating the real spirit of Christmas.

Yes, we may vary in the manner we celebrate Xmas but the very essence of this celebration, the very reason for this celebration is our common denominator and binds us one. As earlier said, it not so much on the food on the table, wine shared "gaudiamus" or gifts exchanged but on the spirit of celebration.

This season of Christmas calls us to contemplate on the 5 G's. First G stands for Grace. We have so much to thank for because of the many gifts and graces we have received for the past year. These gifts/graces are given to us many different forms given by many people we have walked with, journeyed with. It may be something we truly like or even something that we haven't expected and caught us by surprise.

Second G stands for Gratitude. We have received so much gifts and graces and thus it is just fitting to give thanks, express our heartfelt gratitude for these gifts and graces. We may express it many ways: outreach program for the benefit of our least and less fortunate brethren (feeding for the homeless); visitation to the sick...(ei. Analiza, a Filipina confined in Kenmin Byouin in Nakamura, and many other patients: Christians or not); visitation to the prisoners...and a lot more.

Third G stands for Goodbye. We bid goodbye to the past year. We say goodbye to the beautiful and splendid moments of the past year. We also bid goodbye to the not so pleasant things we have encountered during the year. It may be problems we have encountered in our own ministries or trials and difficulties we have encountered as a community, as an Oblates and as a nation. We have to let go of the past and move forward.

Fourth G stands for Go. We have said our goodbyes and now it's time for us to GO....move forward and move on. Let us not allow ourselves to be haunted by the past, which we can no longer change. In English we have this expression: "Don't cry over the spilled milk."

Fifth G stands for GOD. All of these graces, gifts, saying goodbye, moving forward are all connected and geared to GOD. He is the uncreated grace, the most precious gift we receive, the reason why we have to give thanks, and all our direction should be towards HIM.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all!!!! My warmest Christmas greetings to all!



James -- jeya11@hotmail.com

Dear Brothers

I am very happy to wish and share the incarnation of Jesus and many more blessings in the coming year 2010. These are few events that took place in our house.



1. On 13th of October, Joseph entered our formation house to discern his vocation. He is doing very well with his life. He is experiencing the religious life and learning english while doing some volunteer work in our soup kitchen. Please pray for Joseph so that he may become strong in his vocation.



2. Fr. Antonysamy Irudayaraj, OMI, came to Korea to attend the Seafarers meeting. When finished, he spent a few days with us. In order to get some practical experience, he worked one day in our soup kitchen with Fr. Vincenzo Bordo. He brings many wonderful memories back to Japan.



3. 21st of November Bro. Peter came to Korea to spend his two months summer vacation. But what to do? Here the weather is cold. Few weeks he will spend the time with his family members and rest of the time he will do ministry with our children programme and with us.



4. Akemi Teresa a Japanese lady visited us on 22nd of November. She is known as the co-ordinator of helping the education of the poor children in Bangladesh and India. Since she is known to Bro. John, she came to meet him.



5. Fr. Jerry Novotny, OMI, involved in Pro Life Ministry, was on his way back from Malaysia to Japan after a one-week Pro-Life schedule. He spent five days with us, visiting our mission and ministry. One evening he gave a PowerPoint Presentation to our seminarians and priests about the Oblates in Japan and their various involvements. On another day, he spent time with Fr. Maurizio Giorgianni, OMI, and received a detailed insight into his work with the immigrants and the many problems they face living in a foreign country. On the last day, he spent with Fr. Anthonyswamy Varam, OMI, the directory of the seminary, visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Namyang, also known as “Rosary Hill,” where a large number of Catholics were martyred during the Great Byungin Persecution. He enjoyed his stay at the seminary and promises to return soon.



6. Rev. Roberto Sartor came to Korea on the 29th of November. He is our present procurator general. Before he took up this ministry, he was superior of the international scholasticate in Rome. He visited our formation house and shared with us his experiences.



7. As you all know December 8th is our feast. It happened to be on the first Monday of the month. As usual every first Monday we do our day of recollection. But it was a special day. Fr. Roberto Sartor preached the retreat and we also invited Maryknoll fathers to join our eucharistic celebration and supper. We also consecrated ourselves to our Mother Mary.



Eduardo – eduassis.omi@gmail.com

Who I am?

I am a 39 years old Brazilian man, who have been born in the city of São Paulo and it could grow and ripen there for of the lived experiences. I will share with you a little of those experiences in this short article.

My parents moved from a city in the interior of Brazil for the city of São Paulo where made dwelling and constructed the family of which I am part. It was a poor family, no money or ownerships, but rich of hopes and faith, both visualized in the figure of our parents. My father who worked intensely and made many overtime to support the six children, of the eight that they had (two of them died when were about one year old), and my mother. Not only this, in secret my mother was washing clothes of some neighbors to get some extra money and thus to be able to buy something beyond the rice and it beans to give us a little better meal. This exactly, money for eggs, sometimes to buy meat came from the secret work of my mother. My father could know about this many years later when all we already were grown. Life was not easy, but with sacrifice, they had been able in offering to a proper house and as much to them other small important things throughout the time. Among them, value of faith and the commitment with the Church, as well as a great feeling of humble mixed with the conscience of the dignity to be children of God. Throughout of the years I learned to be humiliated of the others, but never to leave that somebody humiliates me (I think that this is something very strong in my

personality).

Due to importance of these traces in my life, the approach to the religious life was an almost natural way, despite of not easy acceptance. Since it has much time I come strengthening myself to over all follow the way that God presents me for my life, perceiving me in my limits, but not losing of sight the qualities those I received as a gift of God. Of course in this group they are my gladly and my preferences, sometimes as defects and other times as qualities. In this way, by grace and favor of God, I was ordained priest. In the priesthood with that I was gifted, two very important elements are enclosed, two dimensions, religious and missionary. Without these two dimensions, probably I could not be ordained priest, therefore I would be an incomplete human. I think just because of it Gods has invited me to this vocation and not to another way to live the priesthood, therefore He better knows me than myself. I do believe that completely. Until here many steps had been done, but still a very long way to be tread.

The steps I had done brought me to Japan, nowadays I'm trying to learn as much as I can, for sure concerning my limits, and believe I have many. I have spirit to follow, but I do not believe that is the most important thing. For me the most important is that I am sure of that is pushing me up is not the spirit that I bring with me, but the certainty of the favor and mercy of God, those I feel are the best gifts I never had in my life.

I hope I can be able to still following the road in the direction of the Project of God for my life, here or in any place wherever God can sends me, obviously counting on your prayers and friendship to make this real.

God bless and fortify all of you. Merry Christmas and Happy New year!

Fr. Eduardo de Assis, OMI

私は誰ですか

私は39年前ブラジルのサンパウロに生まれた男の人です。この39年間の間いろいろな経験がありました。そのについて少し話したいと思います。

私の両親がブラジルのいなかから、サンパウロに引っ越しました。それは45年前だと思います。その時、子供が2人だけいました。少し時間をたって、子供は6人になりました。私は末っ子です。もちろん、最初に父は仕事を探していて、すぐサンパウロで働き始めた。ですが、給料が少なかったので、たくさん残業しました。それにしがつて、母は家族のために、父を知らずに、ある近所の洗濯してしました。その活動から、少しお金をもらって、卵や鶏肉が買えるようになりました。時々、牛肉も買えました。母の活動は何年もたった後に、父を知るようになりました。その時、6人の兄弟のみんなもう大きくなりました。

サンパウロで生活するのが大変だったけれども、両親の犠牲で自分の家も買えたし、子供たちに小さいですが、大切なことをたくさん教えてくれました。例えば、信仰の重要性や教会へのコミットメントの重要性を教えてくれました。または、謙虚さの感覚と神の子供達の尊厳意識を教えてくれました。私は少し年を取った後で他の人の前に謙譲が大切なのを習いました。私は他の人々が私に恥をかかしようとすることはできません。それは私の性格とても大切な部分です。

それで、ほとんど自然にカトリックの司祭になりました。その後日本に参りました。今の頃、日本語の勉強にすごく頑張っているのに、今まで習った日本語が足りないので、終わります。では、また。

メリークリスマス！

エドゥアルド神父



[A note of apology from the Communications Committee to Tom Maher for having lost his article and photos last summer. It was not inserted into the OMI Newsletter. As you all know, Tom was awarded the Emperor's Medal for his tremendous work with the prisoners here in Kochi. It is an honor which no Oblate has ever received in Japan and something that each one of us should be very proud off. Congratulations Tom and kindly accept our deepest apology for having messed up.]



In closing, the Communications Committee wishes each member in our Delegation a Meaningful Christmas and a Grace-Filled New Year in which the Blessed Mother through her Son will continue to guide us in our works, keep us healthy throughout the new year, and fill our hearts with much spiritual joy and warmth.