

The
Missionary Oblates
of Mary Immaculate



The Superior General

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To the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Japan-Korea

Dear Father Wenceslao, dear Father Clement and dear Father James,
Dear Oblates in Japan and Korea, dear friends,

From Rome I send you all my best wishes on this May 17, 2010 as we are preparing for the feast of our Founder. For the Oblate Delegation of Japan-Korea, this year marks a change: you will now belong, as a Provincial Delegation, to the Colombo Province which is seconded by the provinces of Jaffna and the Philippines - and no longer be directly attached to the General Administration in far-away Rome.

I see in this development a promise of growth and life. From this restructuring onwards you will have a provincial superior much closer to you than the superior general could ever be, even with the help of the liaison vicar, Fr. Federico Labaglay, whom I thank for his persevering efforts. Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all who have made the changeover possible: first of all, the Oblates in Japan and in Korea, and then the sponsoring provinces with their leadership, Fr. Clement Waidyasekara of Colombo and his two colleagues, Frs. Paul Nadchethiram Mariampillai and Fr. Ramon Bernabe. You have all worked together for several years to make this outcome possible.

At the time of the establishment of the new provincial delegation a new leadership will also be installed. Special words of recognition are due to F. Angelo Siani for his commitment and dedication, and his interest shown to the Delegation even in times of sickness, and to Fr. Jude Peirisulle who accepted the challenge to take forward the Delegation in times of transition. May I offer my best wishes to the new Delegation Superior Fr. Wenceslao Laguidao, an old hand who generously accepted the responsibility to take the rudder of the boat within the new structures.

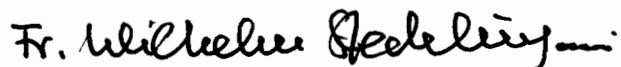
Any reorganization that happens in a Congregation like ours has only one purpose: the best possible service of our mission. This mission never changes: we Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, priests and Brothers, are always sent to bring Good News to the poor, through our words, our actions and the way we live. Let us be grateful to God for what the missionaries in your part of the world have done up to now: in Japan for more than 50 years and in Korea for over 20 years. In such long periods many things are bound to change and we must react with creativity to the ever new needs of the times. You have already made big efforts to do so through the Immense Hope process, a means of strategic planning. I fervently pray that the new era in the life of the Delegation of Japan-Korea and the Mission of Korea, may contribute to even more creative responses to the new missionary challenges of today. To my mind comes questions like: What are the urgent needs of the Church and the secular culture in Japan and in Korea? How do we respond to the poor, which includes the migrants? How can our community life speak in new ways to the

people with whom we are in touch? Is there the possibility of a future outreach into other countries where missionaries might be needed?

I believe our Founder Saint Eugene de Mazenod would be very happy with you all. The Oblates and Saint Eugene's other friends - MAMI and Lay Associates - inspired by the same charism, have already grown roots in your two countries. The composition of your groups of Oblates expresses very well the interculturality of the Congregation and its vocation of crossing borders. Through the persistent efforts of many, local vocations to our community have appeared, in recent times especially in Korea. Through Saint Eugene's intercession, may Christ's blessing be always upon you, so that the Oblate mission continues with strength. May the words of the Scripture apply to each one of you: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor" (Lk 4:18).

I wish you a happy feast day of Saint Eugene. May the new Provincial Delegation of Japan-Korea enjoy a good start, may the Province of Colombo and the co-sponsoring provinces of Jaffna and the Philippines also be blessed as they enter into a new responsibility! I am confident that the Delegation Superior, Fr. Wenceslao Laguidao, the Mission Superior Fr. James Jeyachandran and their councils will lead your missionary group to ever greater heights!

With fraternal greetings in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fr. Wilhelm Steckling". The script is cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Fr. Wilhelm Steckling, OMI
Superior General