



M 28 : 19



Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit



establishing missionary animation desks in every salesian setting

**Every Salesian School is a Missionary School.
Every Salesian Parish is a Missionary Parish.
Every Salesian Youth Center is a Missionary Center.
The Salesian Society is a Missionary Congregation.**

Last September 20, 2008, the Mission Animation Office conducted a preliminary meeting to fast track the call for initiating missionary animation desks in every Salesian setting in the FIN province upon the mandate given by Fr. Vaclav Klement SDB - Regional Councillor for the Missions. The meeting was also intended to inform the participants of the November 2008 annual symposium held in the north province. All the houses through the rectors were informed of the activity although not all sent their representatives.

The following resolutions were discussed by the assembly:

Strengths:

- The participants were given thorough information on the directive to initiate the creation of Mission Animation desks.
- The publication of the M28 newsletter is to be reprinted and disseminated among students in every setting to promote awareness.
- The participants committed to begin organizing The Prayer Warriors Club as the most practical intervention for mission animation at the moment.

Weaknesses:

- There are apprehensions to begin a Mission Animation desk inasmuch as the planning for school activities has already been implemented. If this has to be done, it should be started in 2009 in the beginning of the school year.
- The participants believe that they are willing to cooperate with the activities of the Mission Animation office if and only there is the approval coming from the respective Rector of the houses. At the moment, there is still the hesitation to begin without actual go signal from the rector.
- Budget concerns for the mission animation desk were to be considered for the houses and different settings to implement the MA desk.

Opportunities:

- It is believed that the Mission Animation Desk will be more effective if it is in partnership with the Vocation ministry. This means that duplication of work will be minimized.
- The participants will be most welcome to invite the Mission Animation Office in the different settings to introduce missionary awareness activities.

What is Missionary Animation?

Every activity carried out to create and keep alive in the Church the awareness of being sent to proclaim Jesus Christ to all peoples, and to stir up in Christians the need to bear witness to Him with generosity even to the giving up on

Parisa Japan

Read more of the experiences of Fr. Robert Zarate as a Filipino Missionary priest by visiting <http://parisajapan.blogspot.com/>



*I am a Filipino Catholic priest who came here as a Salesian of Don Bosco on August 2, 2000, almost 8 months after my priestly ordination. After a year and a half of Japanese studies, I first worked at the Ikuei Salesian Polytechnic School as an English Conversation teacher. Then, a year with the **Catholic Tokyo International Center** gave me more opportunities to work hand-in-hand with the Church in Japan for migrants. This paved the way for a 2-year stint as Assistant Parish Priest in Yamato, Kanagawa, under the auspices of the Diocese of Yokohama. I am presently a guest priest in the Seishin Area of the diocese in Shizuoka-ken and am presently based in **Shizuoka Catholic Parish Church**.*

Our boss at Catholic Tokyo International Center thought that I would be having a 3-year contract with the office. I felt flattered that he said I was truly needed there, but there was nothing they could do since it was the Provincial's decision to transfer me to a parish in another diocese.

I was to be transferred to a parish church in Yamato, Kanagawa Prefecture, as substitute of a Salesian priest who was to become a missionary to the Solomon Islands; Yamato Church belongs to the Diocese of Yokohama. Well, it was my first time outside Tokyo since I came to Japan.

Anyway, I transferred to this new parish after a 3-week vacation in the Philippines. At first, it really felt very provincial. The planes of the Americans in the nearby Atsugi Base were also too noisy to bear! Yet, just after some weeks, I really felt at home!

I come from a province called Laguna, south of Metro Manila. Kanagawa is almost like the same with Tokyo. It takes around 42 minutes by express train from the westernmost metropolis of Shinjuku... those crowded trains! At first glance, it seemed like a place that has nothing to offer... but after sometime, you come to realize it offers one important thing: HOME.

Yamato is a parish composed of 6 language groups: Japanese, English (including the Filipinos), Vietnamese, Spanish, Portuguese and Sinhalese. It

has a kindergarten attached to the church. I only spent 2 years in this parish but it seemed that I was given so much experiences! There were Japanese masses, of course. Being busy on Sunday afternoons with English or Tagalog masses in other parishes, I was almost the one always celebrating the Saturday anticipated mass. Then, there was the daily Japanese mass which we took turns celebrating. I was also the one-in-charge of the 9:30 1st and 3rd Sunday masses. The 1st Sunday mass was considered the real **COMMUNITY MASS**, with readings and prayers (or even songs) from other languages aside from Japanese. It was here in Yamato that I was exposed to saying the homily in 2 or 3 languages. It was here that I realized that **EACH AND EVERYONE DESERVES TO UNDERSTAND**. At least, in the homily, I tried to do it. It reaped good remarks from both Japanese and foreigners alike.

The parish priest passed on to me some catechism

lessons to Japanese who were studying for their baptism or their church wedding. In the kindergarten, I was also the one in-charge of the monthly religion classes of both kids and teachers. I was also given the chance to start some English phrase classes with songs. The kindergarten was one place I truly enjoyed. The innocence and eagerness of the kids truly revive one's tired spirit!

Yamato's atmosphere is different compared to other churches. It is truly a very international church. Here, you don't have to think if you have to be Japanese, Filipino or Sri Lankan. Here, you only have to think you are Catholic. That would be enough. It was the only enticing spirit in the community... and it made Yamato show that it can be Church!

It was in Yamato that I have finally calmed down. The parish priest was also very encouraging and supportive. He treated me like an adult. He treated me as a person... and I could truly feel I grew!



The Philippine missionaries here in Japan, taken during the annual gathering last May 2008, with the ECMI in-charge of the CBCP, Bishop Cantillas.