

20/6/1995

SALESIAN SEMINARY



FUJIMI CHO 3-21-12

CHOFU TOKYO

J A P A N

MORTUARY LETTER

Fr. Joseph MATSUO Eiichiro went to his reward on June 20th., 1995, in Kitatama hospital, where he had been undergoing treatment. The immediate cause of death was a paralytic block of the intestines, but before he was transferred to this hospital he had spent a year and eight months in the Takazawa hospital in Mizuho township of West Tama county. There he was treated for the after-effects of myocardial infarction, high blood pressure, and Parkinson's disease. He had spent two months there.

Fr. Matsuo was born on January 7th., 1923. His father was John the Baptist Gorro Matsuo, and his mother was Catherine Setsu. He was the third boy in the family, a family of deep faith. He was baptized on January 9th, in the Urakami Church Nagasaki city.

After primary school in Nagasaki he went to the Minor Seminary in Miyazaki and from there to the Novitiate in Nerima, Tokyo. He made his first Profession into the hands of Mgr. Cimatti on March 18th., 1941. From 1944 to 1945 he did military service, as a member of the garrison, in the Kurile Islands. When he reached home in August 1945, the atom bomb had been dropped on Nagasaki, leaving the city reduced to ashes. His mother, younger brother and younger sister had all perished in the bombing.

From 1945 to 1948 he did his practical training in Miyazaki and Kodaira, and in July 1947, he made his final profession into the hands of Fr. Tassinari, the then Provincial. He studied theology from 1948 to 1952 at the studentate in Chofu and was ordained in St. Ignatius Church (Tokyo) by Archbishop Peter Doi, on December 21st., 1952.

During his period in the Minor Seminary, he had been good at sports, liked music and played the saxophone in the school band. He was piously inclined, but a bit stubborn and reticent. However, he had a warm heart, and was easily moved to tears. He was also fond of playing tricks.

After Ordination, he served as Prefect of Studies in the Tokyo Salesio Gakuen, and Catechist and Bursar in Hyuga Gakuin, Miyazaki. He was Bursar again for the under-privileged children of Nakatsu Don Bosco Gakuen. Then he spent three years as office manager in Ikuei Gakuin, Tokyo, and again as Bursar and office manager in Hyuga Gakuin, performing his apostolic mission for nine years, in green and sunny Miyazaki. He was faithful to his mission and work even to the point of severity; but on the other hand his relations with his fellow-workers and the school pupils and the children of the institution were always warm and friendly.

After that he served as office manager, for five years, in the Salesian School in Kawasaki, and gave his best for the welfare of the school. Later he worked in the Parish of Mikawajima, Tokyo, as assistant Priest and director of the Nursery School, thus continuing the good work of the first Salesian venture in the capital. However when his companion Fr. Yamaguchi fell ill and needed hospitalization Fr. Matsuo took his place for eight months in the parish of Aino, Nagasaki Prefecture. While he was at the Don Bosco Nursery School he mixed with both children and staff in the spirit of Don Bosco spending a full ten years there. His achievements were highly appreciated by both the local people and the government officials.

In 1989 his health broke down, revealing Parkinson's disease, and his physical ability was impaired. He was transferred to the Chofu residence and allowed to

rest. He was able to follow the common life, but gradually his speech became unclear, he began to have difficulty swallowing, and gait became unsteady. He was examined at a nearby hospital and entered for treatment. However, when they examined him at the Aizen hospital, in Akishima city (Tokyo), they found he had pneumonia, and was in fairly serious condition. Transferred to the Takazawa hospital in Mizuno township he was given treatment and was doing rehabilitation, but since the distance from the House was so great, in order to make it possible for all the Confreres to visit him, he was transferred to Kitatama Hospital nearby. The Confreres were able to visit him daily and take him Holy Communion, thus showing their brotherly affection for him. He showed great patience obeying the directions of doctors and nurses, and never uttering a word of complaint. His constant expression was "Thank you."

In the forenoon of June 20th. his condition suddenly worsened, and we were notified that his life was in danger. Fr. Mizobe, Provincial, and Fr. Yamamoto, Rector, hurried to the hospital. However, he was in the intensive care unit, and they were not allowed to see him immediately. He had already received the Sacraments of the Sick, so they recommended him to the care of the Lord, through the hands of Our Bl. Lady. He breathed his last peacefully as they watched.

At the Chofu studentate Salesians, relatives and friends, and the parishioners attended in great numbers at the funeral Mass at which Fr. Mizobe presided.

We pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Joseph Matsuo.

December, 1995

Fr. Bernard Yamamoto
r e c t o r

D A T I P E R I L N E C R O L O G I O

Sac. Giuseppe MATSUO Eiichiro, nato a Nagasaki il 7 gennaio 1923, morto a Chofu (Tokyo) il 20 giugno 1995 a 72 anni di età, 54 di Professione Religiosa e 42 di Sacerdozio.