

*BIOGRAPHY
OF
BROTHER ZENON
ZEBROWSKI*

/Translation from Japanese language/

**AUTHOR: MATSUI TORU : CRIMINAL – HEAD OF ORGANIZED
CRIME LIVING IN “ANT TOWN” – CHANGED HIS LIFE AND BECOME A
FOLLOWER OF ZENO.**



*Cover page – George Żebrowski
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BIOGRAPHY OF BROTHER ZENO

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ANT TOWN -- CHANGED HIS LIFE AND BECAME
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THE BOOK IS WRITTEN IN THREE PARTS.

QUOTES ARE FOR NAMES OF CHAPTERS AND THEIR SUBTITLES.

PART I

"INFANCY"

"I DON'T KNOW HOW OLD I AM"

In 1966 Brother Zeno claimed he was 78 years old, -however, he is not sure of his birth date; the only thing he is sure of is that he was born in December. He said "My records were burned during World War I by the Germans and the Russians. I don't care about my age"

Zeno's nephew (JOSEPH ZEBROWSKI) came from the U. S. to visit Zeno. He met with the Superior of the Convent who was trying to establish his age. According to Joseph, he should be younger than he claims. The Historical background of Poland also shows he should be younger.

Zeno explains the History of Poland's patriotic fight for freedom. Zeno's ancestors were part of the patriotic group who fought for freedom from Russia. Zeno is a graduate of the Secret School. When Poland was occupied by Russia, all subjects were taught in Russian. The villagers organized secret schools where they would hire a teacher who would meet in the various farmhouses to teach the children in Polish.

"MYSTERIOUS COLLECTIVE FORGOTTEN CASE"

The villagers in Zeno's hometown all claimed that he was older than he actually was because they did not want him to be drafted into the Russian Army. They all mysteriously had forgotten when exactly he was born but they were sure he was too old to be drafted.

When Poland finally gained independence from Russian rule, one member of each family had to represent the family in the Russian stronghold -- Zeno was their family's representative.

"THREE EMPERORS DISAPPEARED" 1915 to 1918

Emperor Nikolai of Russia retired and was massacred.
German Emperor Wilhelm took refuge in Poland.
Austrian Emperor Karl was deposed.

General Pilsudski came into power.

Zeno was critically ill with typhoid. Last Rites were administered.

"REPUBLIC OF POLAND"

Zeno recovered. He went to see thirty battallions of German soldiers disarmed. He had a relapse -- he rested in his brother's home until he was well enough to go home. He wished to be a soldier but his parents objected. He went to enlist about 35 miles away from home. He was a volunteer soldier. While in service, he wrote home and asked his parents for food and clothing. His father brought it to him but he was in training and didn't see his father. When his father left the supplies for him, someone stole them.

Zeno's battalion had to fight to defend Warsaw in the fight with the Russians. He was in the machine gun battalion. He became sick again. While in the infirmary, he nursed wounded soldiers. Then he was in charge of providing food for 10,000 soldiers.

Zeno said that as a machine gun soldier, he shot three hens.

Zeno was a farmer, a coal miner, tailor, shoemaker, sugar beet farmer, metal worker, soldier -- he was sort of a vagrant and then he continued as a vagrant brother in the religious order. Even today at his age, he never stays in one place -- he has a nature of vagrancy. It is a very strange thing -- this vagrant coming from a quiet, conservative, suppressed, catholic country.

Zeno's father Joseph was to the United States twice. He came to earn some money and returned to Poland.

"PEOPLE REALLY SEEKING FREEDOM"

Zeno's father was first in the United States before Zeno was born. There was a large difference in ages between Vincent and the next brother while the father was in the United States. The father worked in a brass foundry in the U. S. He had the money in a Russian bank which was subsequently taken by the Russians.

When the father returned, Vincent went to the U. S. and Joseph was drafted.

"SMUGGLING -- BUSINESS OF THE CHILDREN"

When cattle strayed over the German border, adults were not allowed to go to retrieve their cattle. However, the Germans did not bother the children, so that the children were sent to retrieve the cattle. Then the children would also go over the border to buy beer, cigarettes etc.

"DREAM OF MAKING MONEY DISAPPEARED"

Zeno was discharged from the Service. He wanted more freedom than allowed in Poland and wanted to make a fortune so he could get away. A coal mine that was owned by the Germans but operated by Polish laborers was for sale. Zeno borrowed money from his father and together with his brother bought the mine. The brother worked, while Zeno was the administrator of the mine. He was not very diligent in running the mine and because of his vagrancy, he lost his investment. He went into bankruptcy. He was ashamed to go home and face his father. He worked as a sugar beet farmer -- the work was hard and Zeno dreamed of becoming rich and successful so he could go home to the warmth of his parents and good food.

However, at Xmas time the spirit of the holidays got the best of him and he wanted to see his mother whom he always revered. On the way home he stopped at his brothers to rest overnite and ^{was} grief stricken to find out that his mother was buried that day. He then set out and walked all night all the way home to the cemetery.

"PRAYER OF MOTHER ANNA"

ZENO - "I was devoted to my mother. I prayed every day with her when I was home so that I should die on a nice day in the daytime. I was innocent at that time and conformed to my mother's prayers. My mother died on a clear day at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. My mother was very devout."

Zeno then stayed with Joseph & Rozalja in Miesieniec and worked as an apprentice in blacksmithing. Apprentices did not get paid for two years, but Zeno was ambitious, learned easily and got paid in 6 months. The owner was Jewish but he respected Zeno's religion and they worked well together.

After one year, Zeno went vagrant again. He was now repairing agricultural equipment in a mechanical engineering plant. The job had a higher standing than working for a Jewish blacksmith. The family was very happy about his good job, but this too did not last very long.

"THERE IS NO CHURCH IN AMERICA"

Across the street from the blacksmith was a monastery - Passionist fathers - very strict. Italian and Portuguese brothers opened this order. They lost their bucket in the well - torn rope - and came to the blacksmith to get help, and Zeno went to help them. Their building was war torn, very shabby. Zeno observed their strict fasting, rigorous life, and he felt compassion for them. He remembered his mother's fear of going to America because there would not be a catholic church built by love and devotion, by human hands and their prayers. He felt this poor Passionist Monastery was a symbol of his mother's great devotion and real catholicism.

"BLACKSMITH IS MOST PITIFUL"

Zeno's family had one of the biggest farms in the area and money from America. After the war, they lost most of their money in a bankrupt Russian bank and Germans raided their cattle. From all this misfortune they survived through the mother's prayers. The father wanted the children to go to America to educate them to be professionals and become "BIG SHOTS"; but the mother said it would only go to their heads. She said they should not be a blacksmith, tailor or a shoemaker, because these were only processors and they would keep left over materials and were dishonest. Unfortunately, Zeno became all three of these. He was very different from his brothers and sister.

"YOU ARE NOT A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR A BROTHER"

When he heard a sermon on the Feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka, he experienced emotional things in his soul. Then he felt he should study more, go to France, find a Parisian girl and get married. The sermon made him feel a compulsion to become a Passionist brother. He went to the Passionist Monastery and met the Superior who told him he was not a potential candidate.

- Z - I would like to be a brother.
 S - You are not a candidate.
 Z - Why?
 S - It is very hard to become a brother.
 Z - You are a man, I am a man, I can pray too.
 S - Yes you can -- so if you like, pray every day, receive Holy Communion daily for a year.
 Z - I think this order is too hard for me.
 S - Why?
 Z - Although I am faithful, I think this is a hard order. It would be too hard to go to confession weekly and receive daily.

The Superior would not compromise.

"I HAD A QUARREL WITH MY MENTALITY"

Next Sunday on the way to church he wanted to go to confession. People began to question his frequency. They said he must be a criminal or a great sinner. But he continued to go weekly. He was in a great conflict with himself. He felt he must become a religious or get married. He prayed daily -- three Hail Marys to find a girl friend and get married. This was his mother's influence; she claimed happiness is based on a good marriage. His strongest enemy he knew in his heart was vagrancy. Three months later he became very impatient to join a religious order. He went to Warsaw.

"I DON'T LIKE SHAVED HEADS"

Zeno always observed his Mother's order to stop for at least one Hail Mary whenever you pass a church. He passed a Capuchin Franciscan Chapel. He said a Hail Mary, went to the Reception desk and met a brother. He shook his head, left the monastery because they were too poor, barefoot, beards like Jewish people, shaved heads and looked like beggars and he ran away.

He then went to the Conventual Franciscans because they had easier rules. He met the Father who was handsome, had shined shoes, a good overcoat, was very stylish and this was for him.

"EVENING OF MAY IN GRONODA"

Zeno did not usually write letters. This letter was very mysterious and they could not understand it at the monastery, but it evidently accomplished its purpose because he got an answer from the Conventual Superior instructing him to go to Gronoda to meet with Father Kolbe; included were instructions with what to bring in clothes and money.

He packed all necessary things, visited his father and brothers and left without telling them where he was going; he thought it would be too hard to say goodbye.

"FIRST NIGHT IN MONASTERY"

He arrived in Gronoda in the Northwest of Poland and met Fr. Kolbe who introduced him to the Superior. All his belongings were taken away -- he felt angry.

"SMILE OF FATHER KOLBE"

Fr. Kolbe told him to shave his head which he did against his will. He was also upset because he could not get a habit until his probation was over. All this was against his stylish nature. He had seven pairs of shoes, high heels, patent leathers, etc. and all were taken away. All the reasons why he wanted to join the Conventual order rather than the Capuchins were being negated.

It was very difficult for him to conform. Also manual labor was distasteful to him. He went to Fr. Kolbe to complain and told him he did not expect to be a maid and a servant and he wanted to leave.

Fr. Kolbe welcomed him to his room. In this humble room, he felt so deeply compassionate and by that time he decided to quit his vain, stylish, vagrant life and to follow this man. His whole life's philosophy was formed from this meeting with Fr. Kolbe and he remembered always Fr. Kolbe's smile when he made his complaints.

"CRAZY MARIANIST" "WHO IS THIS MAN"

Life in Gronoda Monastery was a continuous surprise to him -- early rising; prayer; daily mass; operating the printing house; maintaining silence; the busy schedule in the print shop kept him working after hours instead of sleeping. The printing machine was hand operated and very old and was always breaking down and Zeno was always called to fix the machine.

He expected a quiet life of meditation and prayer and was surprised at the hard work in the print shop, the metal shop, cleaning house, being an errand boy. The monastery was poor -- there was one overcoat for six brothers and shoes and boots also had to be shared.

"REPAIRING SHOES IN SLEEPING TIME"

Father Kolbe was sick with a lung ailment. He had to rest daily; but he kept on working and writing the manuscripts for the magazines; however, he was always smiling and always in good spirits. Brother Zeno could always see Fr. Kolbe because his shoe repair shop was next door to his room and he tried very hard to make as little noise as possible when Fr. Kolbe was napping so as not to disturb him.

"300 MILES ACROSS THE NATION'S BOUNDARY"

Fr. Kolbe's baptismal name was Raymond. His Franciscan Order Name was MAXIMILIAN MARIAN KOLBE. He was born January 7, 1894 in Russian occupied Poland. His father was a textile weaver; grocery dealer; and a houseware dealer. His mother was a midwife -- she wanted to be a religious. They led a very quiet, religious life. They had three sons. The oldest son went to a commercial high school. Raymond was the second son and there was no money for his education.

A Pharmacist recognized his ability and sponsored his education. While in High School, both boys responded to a Franciscan father from Lwow Seminary as recruits. They had to sneak out of Russian occupied boundaries to Austrian occupied territory to be able to enter the Monastery. They walked to Lwow; a great distance.

"FIGHTER FOR BLESSED MOTHER"

Raymond was 13 years old on entrance to the Seminary; he had a high scholastic record and was constantly thinking of fighting for Poland's national freedom. Eventually he made up his mind to become a soldier. He told his decision to the Provincial. However, his mother was there and said that the youngest boy made up his mind to become a priest, and now his parents were separately entering the religious orders also. This made Fr. Kolbe change his mind and he decided to be a soldier for Mary.

"FIGHTER FOR BLESSED MOTHER CAME BACK FROM ROME"

July 1919 Fr. Kolbe graduated from Gregorian University with high honors. He received two doctorate degrees -- in THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY. He returned home after eight years. Poland was at this time independent but had many internal problems with inflation etc. He became a seminary professor in Krakow. His health was very poor at this time. He had TB in Rome -- he had continuous high fever and was given only three months to live. He was sent to the Zakopane Sanitarium. Throughout all this time he meditated on becoming a fighter for Mary.

The Russians broke their treaty and invaded Warsaw.

If Fr. Kolbe died at this time, Br. Zeno's life would have been different. The summer of 1920 was a crisis year for Fr. Kolbe and Br. Zeno. Fr. K improved and he was discharged but was told this had to be a very strict rest period. He was now 27 years old and returned to the University of Krakow.

"SEVEN YOUNG FORE-RUNNERS OR PRE-COURSERS"

Fr. Kolbe organized "Soldiers for Mary" or "Knights for Blessed Mother of Immaculate Conception" or "Militia Immaculata". There were seven members. By the end of the year, two had died, others lost interest and he was alone. He was laughed at and was called crazy; but he recruited new followers outside the seminary and began to publish a magazine to spread his idea.

"WORN OUT PRINTING MACHINE"

In January 1922 he issued his first magazine. There was no money for a second issue. He prayed for help. Donations came in. He had many financial difficulties. A visiting priest from the U. S. offered to help. He gave him \$100.00 for a small printing press -- hand operated. Fr. Kolbe went back to Gronoda Monastery and carried on his work. When the machine broke down, Zeno was assigned to Fr. Kolbe to fix the machine.

"POVERTY IS A VERY BIG ATTRACTION"

The magazine increased to 45,000 subscriptions in four years. This was a miraculous increment because at this time other publishing companies were going out of business.

The purpose of the publication was to express and promulgate devotions to the Blessed Mother. Subscriptions were free to the needy; donations gave subscriptions to others; every penny went toward spreading the publication.

"REQUEST OF SUBSCRIBERS"

1925 -- Commemoration of Holy Year -- every 25 years. A calendar of the Blessed Mother was offered to the readers with a blessing from the Pope.

The printing machine which printed eight pages at a time was replaced by a new press which would print 16 pages at a time. However, the motor was old and soon wore out. Br. Zeno had to locate an engine large enough for the press. He contacted a blacksmith (catholic but not believing, and he had no respect for religion) and told him of their plight. The blacksmith felt compassion for Br. Zeno and agreed to sell him a diesel 50 h.p. engine for one-third of its market value.

"JEWISH CUCUMBER"

This was a cynical comparison. The proverb says "it grows so rapidly that it overpowers all other vegetables" This magazine grew like a "Jewish Cucumber"

Fr. Kolbe was sick again -- several months in a sanitarium. He spent this time in prayer and meditation and dedicated his life to the Blessed Mother. Doctors said he could not go back again to the monastery but with the Blessed Mother's help he could return to Gronoda.

"FATHER OF BEES"

Father Kolbe wanted to start his own monastery and was looking for a convenient place. On July 13, 1927, the Feast of St. Anthony, many priests were invited to help confess the crowds coming for the feast. They were also invited to dinner. A strange priest (Salician father) nicknamed "Father of the Bees" came. He was running an orphanage and training the orphans in vocational skills; he raised money for the orphanage by raising bees. This priest had a good knowledge of real estate and Father Kolbe asked him if he knew of a good location. He recommended his own nephew who was a business manager to a Count. This nephew was coming to get him and he introduced them.

"BLESSED MOTHER'S STATUE IN THE FIELD"

The Polish people were farmers. The land was owned by the nobility. Count D had lands, sawmills, slate producing factories and many businesses. Father Kolbe wanted a place near Warsaw. The Count donated this land with the condition of a perpetual mass for his late Father.

Sixteen days after he met the Count, Fr. Kolbe and Br. Zeno went to set statue of the Blessed Mother in the fields.

The Provincial objected to the Count's condition because of the conditions in Poland at this time it would be impossible to carry out the promise of a perpetual mass, and told Fr. Kolbe to return the land. Fr. Kolbe went to the Count and explained the circumstances and offered to return the land and leave the statue there. The Count was amazed at Fr. Kolbe's devotion to the Blessed Mother and offered the land with no conditions.

"HE LOST PUBLIC FACE FOR BLESSED MOTHER"

They wanted to build a chapel and a printing house but they had a debt of 20,000 zloty. Zeno went to the Franciscan Friars building engineer to consult about how to build with the least amount of money and was advised to put coal ashes between boards to make thick walls and this would also make the building well insulated. Zeno supervised the building -- he followed a building manual.

It was his job to seek donations because they were literally penniless. The Bishop of Krakow told them to beg -- to lose public face -- if they wanted to carry on their devotion to the Blessed Mother.

"EVERYTHING WAS DEDICATED"

Br. Zeno arrived at the station where all materials were piled up. These materials were piled up as they were donated by the Count and his Jewish business associates. The stationmaster told them to take the materials or pay 250 zloty storage per day. They would have to work day and night for several days to move the materials. A railroad man went to the next village, brought men back and a horse and wagon and all the material was moved before sunset. The railroad man offered Fr. Kolbe and Br. Zeno his attic room for them to sleep. Volunteers came from miles around to help level the ground and build. The workers thought the carpentry work under Br. Zeno's supervision was poor. A protestant professional carpenter came but he still followed Br. Zeno's orders. It was only five months after Fr. Kolbe's meeting with the Count that all the dedicated brothers from Gronoda moved to the new Monastery. The floor was rough in the Chapel and Br. Zeno made the altar and then Mass was offered. This was NIEPOKALANOW.

"MENDICANT ITINERARY"

The reputation of Niepokalanow was spread throughout Poland by the publication. People were amazed at the dedication and the publication was increased.

The Franciscans led a life of poverty. All funds went toward the publication. Three years later they had 90 brothers and were faced with the need for expanding their housing. Br. Zeno was assigned to make a "mendicant itinerary" throughout Poland to raise money.

"MARTYRS' COUNTRY -- JAPAN"

After his journey through Poland, Br. Zeno was called to Fr. Kolbe's room. Fr. Kolbe spoke seriously to Zeno about going to Japan as a Martyr.

Fr. K - "Would you like to become a martyr?"

Br. Z - "Yes"

Fr. K - "Aren't you afraid?"

Br. Z - "No"

Fr. K - "Would you like to dedicate your whole life?"

Br. Z - "Yes"

Fr. K - "Today I received permission from the General Superior in Rome for four brothers to go to Japan to spread the devotions to the Blessed Mother. I have included you if you want to come."

Br. Z - "Yes, I will go"

Fr. K - "The grace of God will be with you; have no fear."

Then they prayed very earnestly together.

When the Provincial Superior questioned them he asked "Do you have money?" "Do you know the Japanese language?" "Do you have any friends there?" All the answers were NO. The General Superior suggested they grow their beards and hair longer.

"LETTER OF FAREWELL"

They were a group of five. One of the Brothers went through France, and the other four went through Rome. They were granted an audience with the Pope on two occasions. The Pope encouraged them to go to the Pagan lands.

The evening before their departure from Rome, Zeno wrote a letter to his Father from Rome and sent him his picture taken by the Coliseum with the other Franciscans.

He wrote, "Father, I have to say goodbye. I will not be back in Poland, and I am sure you will not be coming to Japan, therefore we will not see each other again until we meet in the other world. I agreed to become a martyr in Japan with Fr. Kolbe."

Fr. Kolbe wanted him to visit his father before he left Poland but he felt it would be too difficult to part with his father. Br. Zeno did not like goodbyes. He usually just left to go on his way.

PART II

"DARKNESS & LIGHT"

"ONE YEAR IN RAIN-LEAKING HOSPITAL"

"FIRST STEP OF ARRIVAL IN JAPAN"

On April 20, 1930 about 2 P.M., after 28 hours journey from Shanghai, they landed in Nagasaki, the place where Christian Martyrs had a history. They went to the Cathedral church on foot.

Br. Severino and Br. Zygmund remained in Shanghai to see if they could start the publication of the magazine there. Br. Hilarius, Br. Zeno and Fr. Kolbe arrived in Nagasaki.

"FIRST NIGHT IN THE BISHOP'S RESIDENCE IN NAGASAKI"

A Japanese native priest welcomed them speaking in Latin. He guided them to the church. After long prayer and meditation, he took them to the Bishop. They found that they could stay in the Bishop's residence for the time being. This was the priest's decision because Bishop Hayasaka was away to a funeral.

"DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY"

Bishop Hayasaka was the first native Japanese Bishop. He was very unfriendly and showed no interest in the Brothers. He wanted to know where they intended to live and what their purpose was in coming. They told him they wanted to be of help to him.

He also wanted to know if they had official Vatican permission. When they said they did, he did not believe them. He doubted all that they said and showed a very unfavorable attitude toward them.

When the Bishop found out that Fr. Kolbe had two degrees, his attitude changed a little because he wanted Fr. Kolbe to be a professor in the seminary. Fr. Kolbe agreed to teach if he could publish his magazine. The Bishop was in great need of professors and Fr. Kolbe could teach in the Latin language without any problems, so the Bishop agreed because he secretly doubted that they would be able to do anything about getting out a publication since they did not know the language.

Fr. Kolbe then introduced Br. Zeno as a man with great strength and stamina and many, many knowledgeable skills.

"JAPANESE ALPHABET"

Br. Zeno spoke the best Japanese of the three. Fr. Kolbe got a Polish - Japanese dictionary that was issued in Manchuria for Polish soldiers. Zeno was the interpreter for the other two.

"MASTER WAS DEAF AND BLIND"

Fr. Kolbe taught and wrote the manuscript for the magazine in Latin. He requested the Bishop to send them an instructor in the Japanese language and the Bishop sent an old, feeble priest. But this priest was a personable one in spite of his frailty and was a good teacher.

"JAPANESE LANGUAGE"

This old priest taught them Japanese through Latin, and also the Japanese symbols. This helped them to communicate their thoughts to others. Br. Zeno was always the best student.

"TODAY WE SENT FIRST ISSUE"

On May 24, 1930 the brothers sent a telegraph to Niepokalanow "We sent out the first issue today; Glory to the Blessed Mother; we have a printing press."

Even today, the Japanese marvel about how they could in one month issue this magazine with no previous knowledge of the language.

Fr. Kolbe wrote the manuscript in Latin, Italian, French and then had them translated.

Even today, when we read this first issue, mistakes could not be found. It is all so mysterious how they accomplished this in one month. The first edition was printed by the printing house but the second edition they wanted to do themselves. Fr. Kolbe had to go to Osaka -- two days' trip -- to procure a printing press. Br. Zeno had to look for a house for them to stay in

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"SPORT FESTIVAL OF INSECTS"

Br. Zeno found a two story building which was very old. He bought insecticide but when they went to sleep, they were bitten by all kinds of insects. They had terrible bites all over them. A cathedral gate guard felt sorry for them and found them another house -- the "Rain Leaking Hospital". It was a good house, but it had no furnishing; they slept on the floor; they ate poorly.

The building did not derive its name from a leaking roof as one would assume; the house was owned by a doctor whose name when translated meant "rain leaking".

"CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND"

Fr. Kolbe had to leave the brothers and go back to Poland when he was summoned by the Provincial Superior to attend a Convention.

The result of the convention:

The publication was officially approved.
Permission was granted to start a monastery in Nagasaki.
One more brother was assigned and two seminarians were also sent back with Fr. Kolbe on August 24th.

During Fr. Kolbe's absence, Fr. Omeki, Pastor of the Cathedral was in charge of Br. Zeno. Fr. Omeki worked very hard helping the brothers in the print shop.

"OLD, BAD & EXPENSIVE"

The brothers were in dire need of paper. Br. Zeno found three wholesale paper houses but the paper was very expensive. One of the houses was managed by a Buddhist who was very impressed with Br. Zeno's poverty. He advised Br. Zeno to buy paper in the off season and to buy enough for the whole year. He gave him a very large discount and told him not to worry about the money.

Fr. Kolbe picked up the two brothers who were left in Shanghai to start the publication of the magazine. They did not get permission from the Church hierarchy. When Fr. Kolbe brought them back to Japan they studied type setting and were very helpful in the print shop.

Br. Zeno's job was to set the print and operate the press. He had difficulty in identifying the written word with the printed word. He explained this difficulty to a college professor who then explained the difference between the continuous written word and the printed word to Br. Zeno.

The name of the publication was "SEIBO NO KISHI" which translated means "KNIGHT OF THE BLESSED MOTHER".

This also became the name of two parishes.

Br. Zeno had to operate the press by hand. The press did not have a cutting knife. Br. Zeno had to cut the sheets with a saw. Then he folded the sheets by hand and stapled them together. His fingers were often bleeding when he was through. Then he had the magazines professionally trimmed.

Fr. Kolbe authorized Br. Zeno to go to Osaka to buy a better press. This was only four months after their arrival. Br. Zeno's knowledge of Japanese was still limited at this time. He concluded the presses available were "OLD, BAD AND EXPENSIVE"

"DO YOU HAVE SUPERSTITION"

EXPLANATION: SUPERSTITION IN JAPANESE IS "MEI-SHIN"
NAME CARD IN JAPANESE IS "MEI-SHI"

Br. Zeno went on foot to deliver the magazines in neighboring towns. He wanted the name cards of people to send them the magazine. Everyone he met he would ask "Do you have a name card?" However with his Japanese knowledge he was actually asking "Do you have superstition?"

This was very confusing and people laughed at him for asking about their superstition. However, he did not care. He was only interested in getting names and addresses. He approached everyone, no matter what their station in life. He especially cultivated conductors. He rode to the end of the line; met all conductors at the terminals; they liked him, fed him, gave him their friends' names. He always carried a large envelope to keep the magazines and whatever bits of information he could pick up.

"BETTER NOT TO HAVE ANYTHING"

A Japanese priest, NISHI DA TENKO, was the originator of a Buddhist religious organization with the philosophy "if you have nothing, you don't have to worry about anything" His disciples came and lived a community life and he became famous. Their community was in Kyoto.

Nishi Da Tenko came to visit Fr. Kolbe when he came to Nagasaki to campaign, but Fr. Kolbe was in Poland at this time. He heard of Br. Zeno and Fr. Kolbe and wanted to meet them. Br. Zeno knew nothing about this priest or his organization.

Nishi Da Tenko was amazed at their work and offered to help them; he sent some of his disciples to work in the printing house.

Nishi Da Tenko's magazine "LIGHTS" then published an article about the two Polish brothers, Hilarius and Zeno who were living in poverty, sleeping on straw mats, and publishing a magazine. He wrote "There are many people with smiling faces, but I have never seen men with such smiling faces and who are always delighted even though I could not understand what they were so delighted about. I am sure it was spiritual delight. We could not communicate too well, but they declared to be my friends, gave me a copy of their magazine and a statue of the Blessed Mother. Unfortunately, Fr. Omeki was absent at the time of my visit and couldn't translate for them. They are totally dedicated to the Blessed Mother. I am sure their serenity and smiling, peaceful faces are because of their dedication."

"MENDICANT OF ITTO-EN"

Itto-En was the organization started by Nishi Da Tenko. Its members were married but lived communally, sharing incomes, etc.

When Fr. Kolbe came back to Poland and heard of the help that Nishi Da Tenko had given the brothers he went to thank him for the help. He took a professional interpreter with him. The visit was very cold and business-like; not like the relationship with Br. Zeno which was very warm and personal.

This is exactly the type of relationship Br. Zeno had wherever he went. He was very warm and spoke very broken Japanese but people related to him. His misuse of the language endeared him to the people and they remembered him for such phrases as "Do you have superstition?"

"FREE SUBSCRIPTION FOR PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT PAY"

Fr. Kolbe's salary from the University went toward the publishing of the magazine; they received about \$400.00 monthly from Poland; and about \$50.00 per month from the Japanese subscriptions. Needless to say the operation was in the red.

"CENSORSHIP DELAYED"

By ecclesiastical law, the Bishop's censorship was necessary for any publication. The Bishop was a busy man and let two priests look at the magazine. They approved it without reading it. Other priests complained and met with the Archbishop.

The following month, the priest who looked at the magazine did not approve it. Fr. Kolbe was not surprised because he knew the Japanese priests did not favor "Seibo No Kishi" because it was too cheap, and too available and was overpowering other publications. Fr. Kolbe sent the magazine back, and the other priest was there and gave approval.

"REAL ESTATE"

Many people were skeptical about Fr. Kolbe's mission. The Japanese priests felt Fr. Kolbe and the brothers were adventurers. Fr. Kolbe felt this was the time to start their own monastery. Br. Zeno had to find the ground. His statement changed from "Do you have superstition?" to "Do you have ground? I would like to have some."

He was directed to a Shinto shrine by error.

Then he found some ground. Fr. Kolbe and Br. Zeno and an interpreter went to see the owner. The lady told Br. Zeno her husband died three years ago and Br. Zeno thought she said come at three o'clock. She had no intention to sell.

"SEPARATION FROM FR. KOLBE"

"MATCH BOX CASTLE"

Br. Zeno found land one and one-half miles from the city by foot -- there was a cemetery, dead animals, garbage, mountainous ground, hard to climb, no sunshine, shaded by mountains. Zeno reported negatively on this land because of the far distance from the city; but Fr. Kolbe said "We came to Japan to give Christianity to the Pagan people. The Blessed Mother expects us to go where there are no catholics and we should buy this ground." All the brothers were against it. They had to pay \$7000.00 in five payments.

"STILL ALIVE FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY"

The Catholic people worried about money. Fr. Kolbe said "If the Blessed Mother wants us to have this place we will manage and if she does not, then we won't." This reflected the true Franciscan spirit.

"SLEEPLESS NIGHT"

They started to build a small building and the people called it "Match Box Castle". They had a print shop, bedroom, office. The lumber was donated. Br. Zeno, the carpenter of Niepokalanow, worked continuously. They moved in when just the roof and floor were finished. There were many mosquitoes and insects and they could not sleep.

"BR. ZENO'S NICKNAME WAS "MR. ALMIGHTY"

The sound Zen No in Japanese means almighty. Because of his natural perseverance, wit, and all around know how in all trades, he was soon called "Mr. Almighty" He deserved his nickname. He made a bicycle; fixed an organ; was able to do almost anything.

The people in Nagasaki thought Br. Zeno was the Superior of the Monastery. He walked through the city, shopped, and took advantage of all bargains. Because of his limited knowledge of the language at this point, he got stuck many times. He thought he bought coffee and it was lard; he thought he bought peas and they were Japanese beans.

Two bales of potatoes came from Poland at Br. Zeno's request. Customs was surprised and questioned why? Br. Zeno said "You have no potatoes in Japan, I will plant them and give them to the people; it is very good for them." However, potatoes did not grow too well in Japan.

"BR. ZENO'S CHOP SUEY"

Br. Zeno had his own philosophy of cooking -- he would put everything into one pot and cook it and pretty soon it was known as Zeno's chop suey. The brothers ate sparingly: for breakfast, they had bread and tea; at noon they had noodles and coffee; for dinner they had barleymeal soup which was made of meal and vegetables; This was in the "Rain Leaking House". Then the brothers started baking whole grain bread.

"PRINTING MORE MAGAZINES IS BETTER THAN EATING SUGAR"

A visiting brother who came from Poland two years later was worried about Fr. Kolbe's health. He wrote to the Superior that he was eating poor food, and requested the Superior to order Fr. Kolbe to eat better and use more sugar. The Superior wrote Fr. Kolbe ordering him to make more nutritious food, but he said he would rather send out more magazines than improve the food. He never spent money for streetcars, he always walked.

"HOME COUNTRY IN CRISIS"

In 1936 Fr. Kolbe had to go to Poland for a convention. He was ordered to become the Superior of Niepokalanow, mostly because of his health and also because war was imminent.

March 1938 - Germany and Austria merged.

Sept. 1938 - Czeckoslovakia and Germany merged and demanded the Port of Danzig from Poland. Poland now had the German enemy on the West and the Soviet enemy on the East.

"LOVE IS BIGGEST AND BEST WEAPON"

Fr. Kolbe was preaching "Do not hate your enemies; do not be afraid of war; you are born once and die once; keep faith in the Blessed Mother. There were 700 families in Niepokalanow. They had an automated printing press. Fr. Kolbe was impatient to implant his Love for the Blessed Mother in all. He had aspirations to build an airport and have his own radio station.

"IDEAL FLOWER"

Fr. Rosenbieger and two seminarians replaced Fr. Kolbe in Japan. Fr. Kolbe trained them for two months in Niepokalanow before their departure. He told the seminarians "The purpose of this organization is not to buy a big building, or buy a large printing machine, or to publish large publications, but to have Love for the Blessed Mother."

The building built by Brother Zeno was used as a printing house, raise cows, and start a Junior Seminary. The Building was inadequate for a seminary. Fr. Rosenbeiger wanted to level a playground for the children and start a seminary building. They needed \$7000.00. The Brothers and priests decided to do it themselves to save money. Fr. Rosenbeiger decided to go to the U. S. to solicit funds. The brothers started leveling the ground; the people in the neighboring villages and in Nagasaki helped; some helpers came from the nearby islands. Br. Zeno was chief of the development. He was trained by a professional land developer. Br. Zeno laid the stone wall but heavy rains came and washed it away.

Br. Zeno said "In Poland we had no stone walls, therefore I had no training" and he then went to a professional mason for help and a good wall was made and it still stands. Fr. Rosenbeiger came back from the U. S. with ample funds for further building of the monastery. This was September 1939.

"DEDICATION OF THE NEW BUILDING"

Everyone came for the dedication but because the war started they could not take great pleasure because of their worry about their homeland and about Fr. Kolbe. Journalists came asking for opinion of German invasion of Poland. One brother was critical of Germany and was investigated by the Police because Japan had a peace treaty with Germany. The Brothers were cautioned not to make any comments about the war. The radio was removed from their dining room.

After Poland was invaded all financial aid and communication was cut off. They appealed to the Provincial in Rome for aid. The Provincial told them to go to the U. S. for help. Fr. Rosenbeiger made the last ship out of Italy to the U. S. before Italy entered the war. Then when Japan entered the war, there was no aid at all.

"THE TIME FOR MARTYRDOM"

When Japan entered the war, 12 M.P.'s came to the monastery, demanded to meet Fr. Mirohana and asked what kind of Japanese education was being given to the seminarians, and about the Emperor. A few days later they came back and demanded to question the seminarians. Father Mirohana told them "The Emperor is the representative of God's authority, therefore we will obey the Emperor -- that is what I teach them!"

They answered, "You're wrong. The Emperor is not a representative of God; He is God Himself." They threatened to take over the monastery. Fr. Mirohana lived in fear of his life and repeatedly prayed the Hail Mary preparing himself for martyrdom.

BR. ZENO IS SAFER THAN JAPANESE"

The Seminary building became a kind of prison for all religious -- catholic, protestant, etc. -- a form of house arrest. The publication was discontinued. They were rough on the Polish people because they were the enemy of Germany. The M.P.'s, on order from the Military, were rough on them but the people of Nagasaki were friendly, and brought them many supplies and soldiers were sent to protect the supplies. They trusted Br. Zeno more than even the soldiers and made him Custodian of the military supplies. They called him "Mr. Almighty"

"PENALTY WAS PROHIBITION TO GO OUT"

Br. Zeno was the only brother free to go out; he roamed through the city, and kept building stairs to the main entrance of the monastery. Also he was building bomb shelters. Someone said to him "You might be killed by a bomb, why are you building?" He answered, "If I will die, then I must hurry to finish building this before I die". He was devoted to building and was concentrating on getting the stairs built, he even forgot to go to benediction and then was usually penalized by being restricted by the superior to stay in the building.

"THE BOMBING"

Japanese priests were drafted or put to work in munitions plants. People turned to the Monastery; all of the priests were imprisoned except Br. Zeno and he visited all people he could and they were all happy to see him.

A young native Japanese priest came from another island in a lay suit. Br. Zeno thought he was a lay person and started teaching him to bless himself and told him "You are a nice kid, you should become a priest." This priest would not admit he was a priest because he did not want to be imprisoned.

Milk was in very short supply. The brothers had their own cows and Br. Zeno used to deliver milk to the hospital. As long as he was in Franciscan garb he could go anywhere. In case of an air raid, he would seek shelter in a police station. He made friends with the police in spite of his being an "enemy". The police used to hide him from belligerent people in a closet. If he could not get to the hospital, he would give the milk to the police and he gained their trust and friendship.

"SHOE REPAIRER"

As the bombing was getting heavier daily, he was restricted to the Monastery by the Superior. He started to repair everyone's shoes. When the police found this out, he was asked to repair all their shoes. He was quite a hero because shoes were difficult to come by. He then got smart, and started demanding leather and nails. The police offered to bring the materials but he refused saying, "No, you are not a professional shoemaker and you don't know what is good." His purpose in saying this was so he could get out, and he did.

He made many "detours" to visit catholics in the city. When people questioned him how he got out into the city he told them he was a friend of the Police.

People came to the monastery to bring them food and ask for prayers. Br. Zeno always managed to get out when he wanted to.

"OFFER OF LIFE ON BEHALF OF A FREIND"

Fr. Kolbe was in Block #16670. Fr. Justinus was also in Auschwitz. Fr. Kolbe offered to be executed in place of a family man who was selected to die. Fr. Kolbe died on August 14, 1941. The Brothers in Nagasaki did not know this until after the war.

PART III

"STRAIGHT AHEAD"

Saipan, Okinawa, Iwo Jima and other small islands were defeated. The military police wanted the Polish people to go away from the monastery to a safer place. Because of the heavy bombing, departure was delayed for two days. During these two days a letter came from the governor allowing Br. Zeno and Fr. Mirohana to stay for two weeks longer until the 15th of August. During this time, Nagasaki was bombed by the atom bomb. When the bomb fell, Br. Zeno said he thought he saw two suns, then the ground shook.

"TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF NAGASAKI"

All the religious including the seven Polish brothers and priests were in a health spa under house arrest. The police vouched for them that they were good people and they were treated well. They heard about Nagasaki and were stunned. However, a young man who escaped from Nagasaki came to tell them about it, and also reported that Br. Zeno and Fr. Mirohana were spared.

"AMONG THE DEAD BODIES"

On August 15th during a devotion to the Blessed Mother, they heard that the Emperor had a broadcast and that the war was over, and Japan was defeated. Fr. Donato and Fr. Jano tried to console all, telling them they felt no enmity.

So it turned out to be very providential that the two weeks permission for Br. Zeno to stay took them to exactly the 15th of August and the end of the war.

The Brothers and priests then went back to Nagasaki. They had to walk among the dead bodies to get there.

"FOLLOW AFTER ORPHANS"

Farmers brought two youngsters, a boy and a girl to Br. Zeno who were in a cave in the mountains. Br. Zeno kept the boy in the monastery and sent the girl to the Sisters of Infant Jesus Convent. People then started bringing all orphans of the war to Br. Zeno.

About forty days after the end of the war, American soldiers arrived in Nagasaki, supplies were dropped by parachute, and they came to help in this time of utter destruction. The Japanese came to steal supplies, but the Superior asked the Americans to bring all supplies to them and that they would distribute all goods to the needy. The M.P.'s complained about the Japanese wearing American army uniforms. Br. Zeno then began to dye the clothes for the people.

"AMERICAN WITH THE LONG BEARD"

Br. Zeno went out seeking out orphans. "All boys and girls come here; I will give you candy; the Blessed Mother loves you." The orphans were scared and were hiding and when they saw Br. Zeno they came to him. They called him the American with the long beard. He brought the children into the monastery, and if they ran away, he brought them back.

"STOWAWAY"

Br. Zeno kept going out after the vagrant orphans. He had to have free passage because he had no pass. He would hide in the men's room, walk along with American soldiers and sneak on the train. He carried his briefcase with newspaper clippings and used these to communicate with soldiers and got free rides, food, candy for the orphans, etc.

"LOOKING FOR GROUND WITHOUT MONEY, NOT EVEN A PENNY"

Br. Zeno and Fr. Donato went to Tokyo to find a large tract of land to establish a senior seminary. They stayed at the Conventual Franciscan Convent. Land in Tokyo was available because of the bombings; but the people were rebuilding as squatters without permission, so a large tract was very hard to find.

While searching daily for the ground, Br. Zeno kept looking for vagrant orphans and was helping to feed and clothe the poor.

One day he found a beautiful piece of ground and got all excited about it but Fr. Donato informed him it was the Emperor's palace.

They found a tract shown to them by catholic agents, but they needed all cash to buy it and of course they had no money. They needed one million yen (\$40,000.) for a deposit. Br. Zeno told the agent to draw up the papers but to delay it a bit so he should not miss the deal.

Fr. Rosenbeiger who was interned in the U. S. during the war, was sending clothing to the brothers for the poor. Br. Zeno sold this clothing to make just enough money for the deposit on the land.

"WHY DON'T YOU GO TO SCHOOL?"

The federal government officially approved an orphanage in Nagasaki "Seibo No Keshi". They had over 100 orphans. They were overcrowded and looking for expansion. Br. Zeno negotiated with the American Army Sargeant for army barracks used by ammunition companies for temporary use of these barracks. They now had 300 orphans. There was a very serious shortage of food. The American army brought a truck full of K-rations.

Br. Zeno found many orphans near the beach during school hours. When he asked why they were not in school, they cried and answered "Because the other children laugh at us because we do not have the proper clothes." Br. Zeno worried about them and began to campaign to start their own school where these children could learn regardless of their clothing."

Br. Zeno was now looking for permanent quarters for the orphans.

"BROTHER ZENO'S PHILOSOPHY"

Br. Zeno found a good place in the mountains but it was very far from Nagasaki -- it was four miles from the station. It was a very huge tract donated by a noble family -- it had a very fine environment and would be very good for the children. Br. Zeno wanted to start building the orphanage but he had no place to sleep. He went to a nearby Buddhist temple and asked to stay there.

The Buddhist Superior asked him "Do you know that we are Buddhists?"

Br. Zeno answered, "All people are made of the same material, therefore they should be equal"

The Buddhist was pleased with this philosophy and offered him a place to stay, fed him daily, and became very friendly. They slept in the same room. Br. Zeno recited the Ave Maria and the Buddhist said his prayers.

There were no roads leading to this place. Br. Zeno petitioned the government and the forestry department to build a road and they agreed.

"ORPHANAGE WAS BURNED DOWN" (THE TEMPORARY BARRACKS)

A Shinto festival was held. The railroadmen asked Br. Zeno to come to the Shinto Shrine to meet all the village people. Br. Zeno went. He made a long speech; he was not well understood, but his blue eyes, white beard and his very attractive smile appealed to them. The next morning many volunteers came to help him to build the orphanage and they also brought pumpkins, beans and vegetables for the people and the brothers who were working.

There were no power lines in that village. Br. Zeno remembered a kind catholic man in Tokyo who installed the telephone in the Tokyo Senior Seminary. Next day he went to Tokyo and brought the newspaper describing the start of the orphanage. The man was good but could not give him the two mile stretch of lines. However, he introduced him to the Electric Power Association which was composed of many electric companies and electrical supply dealers. Br. Zeno asked them for all the materials to do this work. They were impressed with him and agreed to help him. The transformer company gave him all the transformers, the insulation company gave all the insulation, etc.

All the materials were donated to complete the work for power lines for the two mile stretch. These lines were sufficient for light and the use of motors all along the way and the people along the road also had light and the use of small motors.

Before the work was completed, the old orphanage burned down. The children had to stay at the seminary and it was very overcrowded. Once again they had to look for temporary quarters till the new building was completed. Br. Zeno said "these children are not rats, they must have a place to stay" and once again he went to the American Army.

He asked a catholic teacher who could speak a little English to introduce him to someone in command and he agreed to go with him.

No one could enter the American Army base without a pass. Br. Zeno hitched a ride along the way with an American Army driver with a Jeep. When they got to the entrance, the gate guard thought they were guests of the American Army and let them in without question.

The driver asked who Br. Zeno wanted to meet. Br. Zeno pointed out a sargeant of Polish descent in a newspaper picture. The sargeant became good friends with Br. Zeno. Br. Zeno made himself right at home at the base and asked them for a building on the base. When asked why he wanted the building he told them because it was large and he could bring all the children in and teach them trades. They gave him a good building for temporary use. The name of this base was "OOMURA"

"THE EMPEROR AND THE WAR ORPHANS"

In May 1949, four months after the orphans moved into the army barracks, the Emperor visited the base and asked to see the orphanage. It was a very rainy day, but just before the Emperor arrived the rain stopped and he could make a good tour of the place. He was very pleased to see Br. Zeno and the orphans. He was grateful that Br. Zeno who was Polish and his Polish brothers were helping the Japanese children as no Japanese ever did. The Emperor spent twice the allotted time he was scheduled to.

After World War I in Siberia, near Manchuria, there were 3600 Polish orphans. Mrs. Wilkewicz was taking care of them, but had a hard time to keep on going. She wrote to various countries for help. No one showed much interest. Even the Red Cross answered "The war is over, we do not take care of these children any more. Good Luck."

Mrs. Wilkewicz then wrote to the Japanese Red Cross for help. They started a drive for donations and then the next year they sent a ship to bring the 844 needy orphans to Japan and took very good care of them; eventually they sent them back to Poland and the U. S. A large amount of the money for this care came from the Emperor's mother.

The Emperor recalled this event. He noted that after World War I the Japanese took care of the Polish orphans and after World War II the Polish took care of the Japanese orphans.

The Polish orphans learned to sing a Japanese children's song. Some years later, a Japanese visitor in Poland heard this Japanese song in the streets of Warsaw and when he questioned the children he learned they were the orphans who were taken care of by the Japanese.

Br. Zeno knew this story and used it to tell to the Japanese.

"GIVE A HOUSE TO THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE A HOUSE."

Br. Zeno went to Sa Sebo City and asked at the church to stay over. When asked what he was doing there he explained that he was trying to get houses for all the squatters and to provide them with all their needs. Br. Zeno asked this Japanese priest to go with him to a building contractor. The contractor was impressed with Br. Zeno's work and he built a big building to house 70 people. They had no light. Br. Zeno went to the Power Co. but they said no lights for squatters were allowed according to the law. Br. Zeno argued and said, "These are people, they are not rats, they deserve a decent place to live." After many discussions and arguments, the Power Co. installed the lights.

"CROSS IN THE SQUATTERS SLUMS" -- TOKYO -- STORY OF ANT TOWN.

Br. Zeno visited Ant Town, asked the people what they needed -- they needed everything -- but more than material things, they needed understanding from the regular society, so they could try to rehabilitate themselves. They collected junk and recycled all material to make paper pulp which was badly needed. These people considered themselves busy and industrious as ants -- that is why it was known as Ant Town -- actually they were squatters in a public park.

They wanted the government to understand their wants and not to evict them from the park. Br. Zeno had a journalist write the government of their serious work in rehabilitating themselves. The government let them stay.

"FATHER ZENO"

Catholic people who did not understand Br. Zeno's social work complained about his starting a church in Ant Town. They said it was against Ecclesiastical law for a Brother to do this.

Br. Zeno explained to the Archbishop, who was grateful for Br. Zeno's social work. The Archbishop said to him, "You deserve to be called Father" and gave his permission for the church. This was a real highlight in Br. Zeno's life; it gave him much satisfaction.

"AFTER MAY"

The officials of the garment industry threatened to destroy Ant Town. Br. Zeno called on the civil authorities to spare them. The authorities said they were going to have an exhibition there the following May and needed the ground cleared. They really wanted to get rid of Ant Town.

Br. Zeno questioned the government employee saying "How about after May when the exhibition is over?" The government employee, wanting to get rid of Br. Zeno and his persistent questioning, said it would be OK for them to come back then; he did not think anything would come of it. However, Br. Zeno made him put all this in writing and sign it, and then he insisted on the employee putting the government seal on the document. The employee did this to get rid of Br. Zeno, but Br. Zeno intended to hold them to it.

"KITAHARA REIKO" (MARY OF ANT TOWN)

Kitahara Reiko came to Ant Town when she was 20 years old with her father, who was a professor at the Agricultural University. Br. Zeno saw her, gave her a picture of the Blessed Mother and asked her to pray for the poor. She did not know who Br. Zeno was. A few days later she saw his picture in the paper and recalled him and went to Ant Town to meet him and the leader of Ant Town. She decided to work for the children, and to teach them medical hygiene, etc. They decided to build a kind of school for her. The officials objected, and Mr. Ozawa, the leader agreed not to build. However, they kept right on building over the weekend and when the officials came on Monday and ordered the building destroyed, Mr. Ozawa then pulled out of the file the official papers that Br. Zeno had, re-read them, and erected a big cross in Ant Town because with the papers signed and sealed, it was not illegal anymore and they now had their own settlement.

The children in Ant Town did not like to go to public school because they were discriminated against. Kitahara Reiko started to teach in Ant Town. She also helped with the recycling.

Br. Zeno was telling the story of Ant Town in other places and encouraged all to help each other. This was very good morale for all the people in the slums. Br. Zeno started more than 20 Ant Towns throughout Japan. People of all sects came to live in Ant Towns because they had immunity from the police and civil authorities. This was on the premise that they were trying to reform.

"ZENO'S RELIGION" "ZENO'S SECT"

In Kokura, about 200 families were squatters on national railroad grounds. They had no place to go. Br. Zeno and the French missionary priest asked the railroad to let them stay until they could get re-located. The railroad officials sent people to destroy the church, to discourage the people so they would move. Br. Zeno rebuilt the church with donations from lumber companies in several days. They were then so impressed with his persistence and labor that they promised not to destroy anything ever again.

The people who were helped by Br. Zeno here called themselves "Zeno's sect" because he helped them when they needed it, and they rejected all other religions.

"GOOD NEWS" "BAD NEWS"

In January 1958 the federal government decided to give ground, 18,000 sq. meters, for an Ant Town in Tokyo.

Kitahara Reiko died at the age of 28.

"GOODBYE BROTHER ZENO"

"MY MIND IS WORN OUT"

In the spring, news spread that Br. Zeno was to be hospitalized near Osaka and may not be able to come back to Tokyo. Sixty people came to the station to say goodbye. He was very ill. He had low blood pressure, poor circulation, a heart condition, and a serious hernia. The day before departure, he still packed clothing for the poor in the colonies. He was asked to stop and rest but he did not listen and said, "I will rest when I die".

The leader asked the government in Tokyo how to send the clothing to the colonies; he showed them Br. Zeno's clippings and one official who did not know Br. Zeno was very much impressed with his work and felt that such work should be publicized. When he visited Br. Zeno in the hospital, he brought two letters with him from the Superior and from Br. Zeno's cattle ranch asking for help.

"ZENO'S BOYS' TOWN"

A young man, oriented in social work, came to Br. Zeno for a good place to start a boys' town, ranch style with animals, for the mentally retarded. Br. Zeno got the ground from a ship building company's president and the money for the building he collected from the Boy Scouts, Lions Club, etc.; donations from contractors and volunteers; and the ranch came into being.

"GOOD FINE DAY IN THE SUMMER"

This leader arrived and found that Br. Zeno was not in the hospital and the Sister explained to him that Br. Zeno went back to Tokyo. He was surprised and questioned them. She said the doctor told Br. Zeno that he could leave soon, but Br. Zeno left a note and said "I have no time to die" and he left without permission.

EPILOG

In order to write this book a lot of research was done and many, many stories were collected. This book is just a resume. It is a collection of events, not necessarily in chronological order.

COMMENTS: "ZENO TALKS TOO MUCH"

"ZENO IS TOO CLEVER -- HE DOESN'T SAY MUCH"

On examination of Br. Zeno's recorded conversations, you could tell he would not speak about anything he did not care to talk about. When he said "I forgot" or "Grandpa's head is worn out" it meant that he just did not care to discuss it. He referred to himself as Grandpa when he made excuses for not doing something, or doing it wrong; this was supposed to indicate that he was old and senile and did not know any better.

"AFTERMATH OF SOME OF HIS PROJECTS"

In Nagasaki, Ant Town was given a proper place and rehabilitated into the regular society.

The railroad constructed a large apartment to give to the people.

The orphanage was being run by the catholic sisters. They also have a home for the mentally retarded.

Boys Town -- Everything is going fine. Br. Zeno had stamps and seals to raise funds.

In 1965 Br. Zeno started an Ant Town in Korea.

THEREFORE HIS STATEMENT IS REALLY TRUE THAT HE HAS NO TIME TO DIE.

*The book - "No Time to Die" is translated
by Father Yamada, a Japanese priest
serving at St. Andrew's parish and
studying for his doctorate in Education
at Fordham University. (1970)*

Japanese Priest at St. Andrew's Mother's Error Made Him a Catholic

By ROBERT S. ZYWICKI

The Japanese priest serving in St. Andrew's Church became a Catholic because of a mistake.

The Rev. Peter S. Yamada said his mother was a Protestant. In Japan however, where the Buddhist faith dominates, the people find it difficult to differentiate between the western religions — Protestantism and Catholicism. To them all Christian churches are the same.

So it was when Father Yamada's mother decided to go to church. She went to the first Christian church she came to, believing it was Protestant. As it turned out it was Catholic and according to Father Yamada, his mother joined after the pastor had told her that the Catholic church was the chief organization of the Christian faith.

Father Yamada himself was not baptized until he was 10. He noted that he had begun his education in Catholic schools, but because his father was a teacher in a public school, the pastor had counseled him not to convert with his family until after the war, lest he lose his job and source of support for the eight children.

Father Yamada continued his education in his native Kyoto, the former capital of Japan, and was graduated from the Sophia University, a Jesuit institution in that city. He attended the Jesuit seminary and was ordained as

a priest of the Kyoto diocese in March, 1961.

The 37-year-old priest served in a parish in Kyoto where he established a kindergarten and later became pastor of another church in that city and administrator of the parish high school.

Father Yamada came to the United States about 2½ years ago. He is studying for a doctorate in education at Fordham University in New York.

The priest, who has mastered an excellent English vocabulary, said the social situation in his country has changed. "When I was ordained," he said, "there were a good number of catechumens to convert. Today with so much quick

progress being made, everybody is just looking for money."

Father Yamada said the church in Japan is now taking an indirect role. He noted the importance of education in Japanese life saying the prestige of the school a student graduates from will govern the student's social level afterwards. For this reason there is stiff competition to get into the more prestigious universities, he added.

Many of the schools in Japan are operated by the Catholic church. These for the most part are staffed by laymen and are attended by students who are predominantly Buddhists, according to Father Yamada.

He said current plans are to supply these institutions with administrators who are young Catholic priests and who have received extensive education in their specific fields.

In most cases these young priests are being sent to study in the United States. Father Yamada said that just being able to speak and understand English is a mark of leadership in Japan.

Catholics in Japan are in the minority according to the Father Yamada. He said that out of a population of some 100 million only about 300,000 are Catholics.

At one time the minority religious groups were the targets of discrimination by the majority Buddhists, but today religious discrimination no longer exists, according to the priest.

Father Yamada pointed out that although the Catholic population is small, there are some 6,000 native nuns and about 800 native priests on the island. Japan is also served by numerous missionary orders of priests, brothers and nuns.

One such order is the Conventual Franciscans. Father Yamada recalled working with an elderly brother, Zenon Zebrowski, who is affectionately called "Father Santa Claus" by the natives.

Brother Zenon is the uncle of Chester Zebrowski a member of the Bayonne Parking Authority. The Polish-born cleric has been decorated on several occasions by the Japanese Government for his work among the poor and last year *The Bayonne Times* carried

a feature story about Brother Zenon on its Church Page.

Father Yamada recalled that the Japanese called Brother Zenon "father." He said it was difficult for the people to differentiate between brothers and priests saying that in Buddhism everyone is marked as a priest without any special education being required. Therefore religious brothers are often considered priests. Father Yamada said, musing, "sometimes they even think sisters are female priests."

The priests said that Christianity was still considered to be a "foreign religion" in Japan. Even after Vatican II, changes in the liturgy did not include the use of the vernacular in services. Father Yamada said the people felt that a "foreign religion should use a foreign tongue in its prayers." However plans are now being made to use Japanese in services as more people feel that it is time for Catholicism to be Japanized, he said.

Father Yamada came to St. Andrew's about four weeks ago. For two years he had worked in the Archdiocese of New York. He said he would have stayed there, but had difficulty in finding a parish. Most churches, he said, preferred an English-speaking priest.

He recalled that he would remain in a parish as long as the pastor needed him. When an English speaking priest was available, Father Yamada had to move on.

In one parish, he said, the pastor received letters of complaint from parishioners that he couldn't speak English. These complaints came despite the fact that Father Yamada was accepted in a parish only to celebrate Masses and assist with other services. He was not required to preach. The priest mused, "The people complained about me not understanding English, but they never complained about it when they came to me for confession."

Father Yamada's language problem is no longer a barrier. He has learned the language well and he delivers sermons at St. Andrew's as



SCHOOL BOUND — Father Yamada leaves St. Andrew's rectory, on his way to Fordham University where he is studying for his doctorate in education,

well as performing the other duties of an assistant pastor. The priest said he liked Bayonne very much, and enjoyed riding the bus to school every day as it passed through the city. He said the parishioners have been very cordial adding that they were "the most friendly in my last three parishes."

As an interview ended in the parish rectory last week, Father Yamada extended his hand to the reporter. Although he has adopted a western language and western customs since coming to this country, a slight bow, was evident as he shook hands.



ORDINATION GIFT — The Rev. Peter S. Yamada, who is serving at St. Andrew's Church, accepted a floral bouquet from a kimono-clad girl at his ordination in 1961 in his native city of Kyoto, Japan.

