

(1932 - February 2, 2001)

Eulogy delivered by Bro. John Malich, FMS Mount St. Michael Chapel February 5, 2001 Mass of the Resurrection

Several years ago, Sean Sammon and I were going through a collection of photographs that Patrick had given us that chronicled the history of the Brothers in Japan. Among them was a wonderful photograph of Patrick and Danny Sullivan, dressed in the traditional Japanese "yukatas" – the date was 1959 and Patrick was twenty-eight years old. As I recall the photograph, Patrick looks full of energy and enthusiasm. Much like the Irish phrase, he seemed "full of himself" - all the self-assurance and excitement of youth. Little did Patrick know he was at the threshold of the defining adventure of his life. His years in Japan would shape him as a person and a religious, would influence the Church and community at Kumamoto, but even more so, would influence the wider Church and educational community of Japan.

Patrick and Danny were the beginning of that long list of Brothers who would establish the Japan Project in Kobe and Kumamoto, but it would fall to Patrick to become the Founder and literally, the heart and soul of Marist High School, Kumamoto!

My first visit to Kumamoto in 1972 was a revelation. I heard about the school and Patrick's gargantuan efforts, but when we drove through the gates onto the property, I was amazed. Seeing the main building, the dormitory wing, the size of the property and the landscaping, it struck me that literally Patrick had single-handedly built a school. It was clear as the days went on, that the force of his personality and the power of his convictions truly made this a Marist work, and his genuine care for the people and the youth had raised this project from blueprints to buildings, from a dream to Marist High School as a premier educational establishment.

All of this was done with the normal obstacles of any project of such magnitude, but what further complicated it was doing this in a different culture, with special codes, educational demands, hiring procedures, and teacher's unions! And on top of this, there was the continual concerns over finances and personnel. I recall when Patrick began the building of the gymnasium, he had already dug the foundations, and was pouring the concrete when "visitors from Rome" arrived! This necessitated then Provincial Roy Mooney seeking "forgiveness" from Rome for not having asked for approval of the building, and then subsequently receiving a "sanation" – a mild rebuke for having overstepped authority. When I asked Patrick why he had not asked permission, his response was typical – "who thought of that, I had so much on my mind!" All of this said with that wonderful Irish charm.

Here today reflecting that heritage which Patrick left in Kumamoto is Fr. Vincent Youngcamp, a Columban Father who was friend, confidante, and advisor to Patrick. Presently Fr. Youngcamp is President of the school board. Also with us is Mr. Mori, present Principal of Marist High School – Kumamoto.

In the almost forty years from the time Patrick first arrived in Japan, his influence in the wider educational community, in the International Rotary Club, in his efforts for student exchange programs, his teaching within the school and with adults seeking to learn English as a second language grew leaps and bounds. He was often an advisor to the Diocesan educational programs, as well as friend to the Bishop.

When it became clear that the Marist Brothers would no longer be able to staff the school in Kumamoto, Patrick began the final gesture of the transfer of control and leadership to the local people and the school board. One can only wonder at what price to him personally did this process demand! Then came the painful leave-taking of his friends and associates, and of a culture he had come to respect, and in which he had immersed himself.

The return to the States found him almost immediately involved in the Development Office of the American Provinces, taking up his life in a culture which had changed so radically during his years in Japan. But the final challenge still lay ahead... his illness. Like all things in his life, Patrick met that with a grace and dignity, and entered gently into the long night of his suffering.

When you look at a person's life, you often wonder where the strength and convictions come from - what is the source of the person's giftedness. It would seem from my reflection that there are three wellsprings from which Patrick found sustenance. First of all, his family. His mother, widowed early in life when John was two and Patrick was four, had to enter the workforce, today a common occurrence, but not so at that time and place. But she and her sons were gathered into the Conlin family of grandparents, aunts, uncles, innumerable cousins, and later the Tyrrell family of John's wife and daughter. It was the warmth and support of this wider family that supported Patrick both from afar, and when he was home, enjoying family gatherings and dinner parties. It was here also that strong religious convictions were planted and sustained. Patrick always believed that somehow God would provide even in the most impossible circumstances, and that self-pity was not acceptable.

Friendships were another stable support for Patrick. He had innumerable friends in the Columban Fathers community and in the school community. I think of Mr. Fukijama his "Assistant Principal" who became mentor and friend and who, along with his wife, was affiliated to the Congregation. There was also Kyoko Yamauro, his executive assistant, who over the years helped Patrick through the maze of educational procedures. Of course, he was supported by the many Brothers who were part of the Kobe/Kumamoto connection, and who gathered to celebrate Christmas, provincial visitations, and summer holidays, at which Patrick was often major-domo and cook. Patrick maintained his friendships abroad with his gift of letter writing. Today with e-mail we have lost a bit of this gracious ability to develop individual literary styles. Patrick wrote wonderful epistles – and would freely "comment" on the Church, world, politics, and religious life ... with wonderful frankness.

The final quality so clear in Patrick's life was a certain gracious humility. He always carried himself with a tongue-in-cheek attitude. He could laugh at himself - look at the photograph chosen for his Memorial Card, which reflects that wonderful smile, as he stands before the school he built, hands in his pockets, ready to pass some comment, usually at his own expense. A classic example of this would be how he responded to the citation awarded him by the Emperor of Japan. Patrick was the seventh foreigner in seven hundred years granted such and honor, his for

outstanding service in the field of education! Not bad for a dropout from Cathedral Prep! His reaction to the award was to say little and he only spoke of it if asked directly by someone.

For me Patrick will always be bigger than life. He was a gentleman, a generous and gracious host, a wonderful chef – Patrick was not a merely a cook! His meals were delight to the eye and taste buds. He was a faithful friend and a man of simple and honest ways.

Really, the only thing left to say is: "Well done Patrick! Well done!"

the following obituary appeared in the Catholic New York on February 8, 2001

Brother Patrick F. Tyrrell, F.M.S., a missionary in Japan for 37 years who was honored by the emperor, died February 2 , 2001 in Calvary Hospital in the Bronx. He was 69.

He went to Japan in 1957 and, after learning the Japanese language, he established the Marist High School in Kumamoto. He was its principal from 1961 to 1994, when he returned to the United States.

Before he left, he was given the Outstanding Educator Award by Emperor Akihito. he also received an honorary doctorate from Marist College in Poughkeepsie in 1996.

For the next six years, he worked in the Marist Brothers' province development office in Pelham.

He taught for a term at Cardinal Hayes High School in the Bronx in 1956. he also taught in Manhasset and Augusta, Georgia.

Born in Manhattan, he graduated from Cardinal Hayes High School. He entered the Marist Brothers of the Schools at its novitiate in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts in 1948, professed first vows two later and final vows in 1955. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from Marist College.

Brother Tyrrell's uncle, Father Edwin J. Conlin, senior priest who resides at Immaculate Conception parish in Manhattan, offered the Funeral Mass February 5 at Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx. Burial followed at the Marist Brothers' Cemetery in Esopus. He is survived by a brother, John, of Goldens Bridge.