

By Fr. Frans Desmet, AA

It was on December 17, 1991, that Fathers Frans Desmet (South Belgium) and Thierry Cocquerez (France), having taken off from Logan Airport in Boston (USA), arrived at Seoul International Airport where they were welcomed by the local superior of the Missionary Fathers of St. Columban. The following day they were joined by Fr. Leo Brassard (USA) whose plane had been delayed in Los Angeles with technical difficulties. And so it was that the Assumptionists were to set foot once again in the Far East. For, in fact, they were forced to leave Manchuria in 1954 under pressure from the Communists. Christmas would be celebrated with the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption in Kwangju, a city in the southwest part of the country. It would be there that the community would establish its first community after two years of language study in Seoul.

Labor Pains

Adapting to a new culture, learning a language reputed to be very difficult, finding one's place in a new and dynamic church setting, establishing an Assumptionist community in Asia, getting involved in vocation ministry, etc. ---- such an agenda proved to be extremely daunting to the three new missionaries who were armed with little more than their faith and their enthusiasm.



