

第22章

カトリック信者になってくれ

<1973年3月22日、母より>

[書くことの好きなあなたの手紙を随分長く受け取らなかった様で、昨日は本当に嬉しく拝見、、、。ジムの写真はいつ見ても、どんな場合にも誠実さを感じさせるのです。今日の手紙によると、あなたをカトリック信者としたい様子、それはジムのまじめさの現れだと思います。色々と理屈をこね回す必要など無いと思います。魂からの入信など大方の人間には出来る筈ありません。形式からで結構、日曜日の礼拝とかミサ、そして毎日の生活の中の、信者としての態度などを学ばばいいのではないかと思います。そして幼い時から、知らず知らずの中にキリスト教の雰囲気のみ込んだジムと通じるものが、いつの間にか養われていけばいいのではないのでしょうか。本当にジムの言う通りで、教会が目的ではなく、司教の説教が目当てでもなく、一緒に集まる信者が、皆立派な人格者である必要などありません。絶対である神のみが、自分の関わり合う存在である筈です。その神をも信じられないと云えばそれっきりですが、私はあなたの中には、神を信じられる一種の純粋なものがあると信じています。きっとジムの云うことに従うべきだと思います。カトリックにどんな厳しい規律、又は馬鹿臭い形式などがあるかは知らないけれど、それが生活の中に入り込んでくることを、馬鹿らしいとか、無駄だとか、つまらないとか思うほど、私達は完全無欠な生

Chapter 22

Do You Want to Become a Catholic?

My Mother's Letter Dated March 22, 1973:

< I haven't heard from you for such a long time. Your letter yesterday was all the more enjoyable....the pictures of Jim, whenever I look at them, regardless of the occasion that they were taken, exude his earnest character, his sincerity. You say he asks you if you'd like to become Catholic. That shows how so truly sincere he is. You need not ask why and how. I think an average person would find it difficult to come to believe in God from the bottom of his heart all of a sudden. One should try to learn a new religion, first, by learning that particular religion's format or style, so to speak. You should learn the format of the Catholic religion by going to church every Sunday. You should learn how the Mass is said, and how the Catholics should conduct themselves in their daily life. If, by learning the way of the Catholic people, you could find something within yourself that can connect with Jim in whom the Christian teachings are deeply ingrained from the day he was born, then you are doing it right. Indeed, Jim is right in saying that the purpose of your going to church is not to please the church, or to listen to the sermon by the priest superficially. You should not expect everyone in church to be a person with a fine character, either. Only God, the absolute existence above us all, should be the one you think about..... I always thought that there's something pure and innocent within you that will make you believe in God.

活をしているわけではありません。私はむしろジムに希望されない以前に、ジムのお母さんとジムと三人で日曜の礼拝に行った頃から、あなたが進んで努めていたら、、、と悔やまれるほどです。

どうかつまらない小説など読むのは止めにして、聖書を愛読する様に薦めます。フォルタン先生の教義問答書の講義を、つまらなく思った時代もあったでしょうけれど、今は違うと思う。ジムというイメージが大きくあなたを助けてくれる筈です。聖書の原書を読むことは、あなたの立派な勉強にもなる筈です。

車の運転は私も賛成。たしか日本よりもアメリカの方が免許証が取り易いということを知りましたが、暫くの間、甘ったれ根性を捨てて、オフィスの手ごたえ無き人間関係に消耗するより、これの消耗の方がどんなに有意義か分からない。

小包は2月16日に、世田谷郵便局本局に、お兄さんの車で持ち込んで発送しました。中身は大したものではないけれど、明子に何回も買い物に出てもらいました。メイさんにたくさん上げて下さい。

マンパワーの高橋さんが、アメリカに行くとして、あなたの住所を聞いてきたので、教えてあげます。(註)]

There may be a certain astringent code of disciplines or seemingly foolish rituals in Catholicism, I don't know. None of us carry on a perfect and flawless life. We are not at liberty to think that Catholic disciplines and formalities are unintelligent and useless. You have been going to church with Jim and his mother. I even regret that you did not make an effort before now to understand and learn their religion, without having Jim ask you.

Stop reading useless novels now. Start reading the Bible in earnest. You may have thought that the lessons of Catechism taught to you many years ago by Father Fortin dull and uninspiring. But, it is different now, I think. The image of Jim and his aura will greatly help you. Reading the Bible in English is of utmost importance.

I am happy about your decision to learn how to drive a car. It's about time. I understand it is much easier to obtain a driver's license in the U.S. than in Japan. Discard your big baby attitude now. Rather than consume yourself lamenting the disappointing relationships with your office colleagues, consume yourself doing something truly meaningful.

We shipped your package out on February 16th. Your sister did the shopping, and your brother took the package to the Setagaya Main Post Office in his car. Contents are as usual. Please share them generously with May.

Ms. Takahashi of Manpower Japan is going to the U.S. She called me and asked for your address in Chicago. (Note) >

註: 高橋令子さんは、マンパワー・ジャパンの社長ミスター・フィナティ配下の部長さんで、私がさんざんお世話になった女性。



この1973年3月22日付けの母の手紙引用は、ここで打ち切りますが、全文、スキャンしたものを、別途ブログに入れておきます。また、これより2ヶ月前の同年1月に届いた母の手紙も、ついでに入れたいと思います。

ジムはこの頃私に、洗礼を受けてカトリック信者になってくれ、と言いついていました。即ち『結婚の日取り』を心中密かに決定したのだと思います。洗礼を受けるには、その前にCatechism[教義問答]の勉強をするべきだと、自分が行く St. Clement 教会の若い神父に頼んで、私はこのハンサムなパトリック・レアドン師から、毎土曜日朝、教えることになりました。

余談ですが、この私の先生を選ぶ時、年取った抹香臭い司教より、若々しい人からの教えの方が私が真面目に拝聴する可能性ありと判断して、ジムはレアドン師を選びました。結局この人物が、後に洗礼式も結婚式も執り行ってくれることになります。ただ痛快なのは、この若き 아일랜드人神父レアドン師は、その数年後に僧職を去り、驚くなかれ、ジムと同職、弁護士となったのです。ジムはこの事実を面白がって、折りあるごとに友人たちに「エセ神父だった」とか「彼がとりしきった我らの結婚は無効である」と言ってふざけました。

本章2ページ目にある母の言葉、「フォルタン先生の教義問答書、云々」に関し、以下説明を付け加えます。

第一章で述べましたが、立教大学時代、私は第二語学で取ったフランス語が大好きで、卒業

Note: Ms. Reiko Takahashi is the trusted manager of President Finnerty, Manpower Japan, where I took frequent assignments while in Japan.



I am skipping the last paragraph of my mother's letter dated 3/22/1973. However, I am posting the original letter in Japanese, in its entirety, separately, for my Japanese readers. I am posting her January, 1973 letter, as well.

Jim asked me if I wanted to be baptized and become Catholic around this time. He must have decided "the day we shall wed," without telling anyone. He made arrangements for me to learn Catechism from a young priest at the church in his parish, for I should have the basic knowledge of Catholic teachings before being baptized. I started to see the young and charming Father Patrick Reardon every Saturday morning at St. Clement Church on the near-north side of Chicago.

Jim selected this young priest with a belief that I would seriously learn from him, rather than from an old and saintly priest. Father Reardon eventually baptized me and then married us in St. Clement Church. What's amusing is that this very likable Irish priest, a few years later, left the priesthood, and to everyone's surprise, pursued the same profession as Jim and became a lawyer. Jim used to joke with his friends later that, since Father Reardon defrocked himself, our marriage was no longer valid.

I'd like to explain what my mother said on the previous page, "the lessons of Catechism taught by Fr. Fortin many years ago."

As I stated in Chapter 1 of my saga, my minor at Rikkyo University was French. I

後仕事を探そうとはせず、上智大の外国語学部・フランス語課に一年通いました。その時フランス語課の教授の一人、フランス系カナダ人のフォルタン神父が、一般教科課程外のコースで、数名の生徒達に教義問答を教えており、私はどういう風の吹き回しか、その放課後コースを取っていました。フォルタン神父様は、フランス系カナダ人特有の妙な発音のフランス語を喋り、どちらかと言うと英語の方がお達者で、その教義問答クラスはもっぱら英語でした。

彼は、カナダご出身だけあって、冬場のスポーツがお好き。余暇を使つては、当時日本ではまだ珍しかったはずの、山中湖にあった屋外アイススケート場に、出向いておられました。お仲間は、外国語学部の教授や生徒だったところ、どうした具合だったか、私が一人でお供したことが2・3回あり、私がまた私で、フォルタン先生と一緒に食べるお昼のサンドイッチまでお作り申し上げて、お付き合いしたので、母や姉が

「生徒とデートするとは怪しからぬ。教義問答とアイススケートと、一体どっちが大事なの？」

と立腹していたのです。おそらく母は、私が、アイススケートの方に熱を入れ、教義問答はチャラッポコだ、と鋭く観察していたのでしょう。

その上智大教授フォルタン先生から、アイススケートと教義問答を教わった時から、実に数十年を経て、ジムと私は上智大構内に現在もある、イグナチオ教会の日曜ミサに行つたことがありました(2003年の5月)。ミサの後、達者な日本語でミサを執り行つたスペイン人の神父様とちょっと立ち話をしたところ、その方も数年前に引退するまでは、上智大の外国語学部で

loved that language so much that after graduating from Rikkyo, I continued to study French for one year at the Foreign Languages Department of Sophia University. Father Conrad Fortin, a French-Canadian Jesuit priest and one of the French Department's professors taught Catechism to a handful of students (I was one of them) in an extra-curricular course. His French didn't sound as beautiful as other Parisian professors' French, and, in fact, he taught us Catechism in English.

Hailing from the rugged Canadian Rockies, Fr. Fortin loved ice-skating outdoors. In those days, there was only one outdoor skating facility at Lake Yamanaka of Fuji Five Lakes, and he went there frequently with fellow professors and his students. I don't recall how it happened, but I went to the Lake Yamanaka skating rink, which was a two-hour train ride out of Tokyo, with Fr. Fortin, probably twice. I even made sandwiches for his lunch. My mother and sister did not like this, and said quite openly, "That's not the way of a respectable Catholic priest. Which is he more serious about, teaching Catechism, or going ice-skating with you?" My mother's remark in her letter, "You may have thought the lessons of Catechism by Father Fortin dull and uninspiring" brings back these memories.

Many years after I had learned Catechism and skated with Fr. Fortin, Jim and I, on our third or fourth trip to Japan together, went to the Sunday Mass at St. Ignatius Church at Sophia University. After the mass, we met Fr. Ochoa, the Spanish priest who had said the Mass in fluent Japanese. Fr. Ochoa told us that he had taught Spanish

スペイン語の教鞭をとっていたとのこと。私が、30数年前の事を持ち出して、話が弾みましたが、

「コンラッド・フォルタン先生はよもやご健在ではないと思いますけど、、、」と尋ねると、やはり

「ああ、彼はちょうど4年前に亡くなりました」との答えが返ってきたのです。オチョア師はそのあと親切にも、ジムと私を教会内の納骨堂に案内してくれ、コンラッド・フォルタン先生の遺灰が納められている場所を示され、一緒にお祈りを捧げて下さったのです。

[その折(2003年5月)のオチョア師といっしょに撮った写真数葉、本章最終ページに入れます。]

さて、もう一度母の手紙に戻ると、『オフィスの手応えなき人間関係、云々』は、冷ややかなアメリカ法律事務所でこき使われていた、当時の私の心境に対する彼女の手厳しい批判です。私は、面白くもおかしくもない仕事環境を、常に手紙で訴えていたに違いありませんが、一方ジムに対しても、同じ調子で、身勝手な訴えをぶつけていたと思います。ただ、ジムもこの点我が母と共通性があって、包容力や優しさは天下第一なれど、オフィスの同僚だとか、仕事に対する私の不平不満は激しく嫌悪し、よほど正当な理由が無い限り、絶対味方してくれませんでした。

「仕事が楽しくて痛快でならないとしたら、ナンダそれなら給料を貰うんじゃないか。ロバート・ミッチャムの映画を観にいつてウツリする時は、リョウコから金を払うべきじゃないか。いやな思いをして働くからこそ報酬を貰うんだよ」

と、厳しく説諭ありました。

at Sophia until he retired a few years prior. I told him that I used to be a French student at Sophia more than 30 years ago. I asked him if he happened to know Father Conrad Fortin from those days. Fr. Ochoa responded, as I suspected, "Oh, yes, I used to know him, but he passed away about 4 years ago."

He then took us to the church crypt and showed us where the ashes of Fr. Fortin were kept. The three of us prayed briefly together.

< I' have posted photos of Fr. Ochoa at the end of this chapter. >

Now, going back to my mother's letter, her reference to my "consuming myself lamenting the disappointing relationship with my co-workers" is her criticism of my negative state of mind at the time. I know I was forever writing to my parents about the uninspiring work environment, dealing with the heartless American lawyers and lackluster secretaries who worked under them. I'm afraid I bewailed my insipid work to Jim also. Jim's stance was quite similar to my mother's; he was second to none in being kind-hearted and having patience with the shortcomings of others, but he didn't like my complaining about my co-workers. He refused to feel sorry for me, unless I had legitimate, justifiable reasons.

"If your job is wonderful and you spend eight hours a day enjoying every minute of it, well then, you shouldn't be paid; you should pay for that job, instead. When you go see a movie of Robert Mitchum, don't you pay for it? Because you provide labor, not liking it at all, you get paid for it."

Jim and I went to Japan in May, 2003. I needed to see my lawyer in Tokyo to discuss issues regarding my father's estate. Here are several photos from that trip.



Fr. Ochoa and Jim, Near St. Ignatius Church, Yotsuya, Tokyo



Jim on the Sophia University campus. There was an "All Sophian Alumni Reunion" going on.



Fr. Ochoa and me, near St. Ignatius Church.



Sophian cheerleaders were practicing for an event. They all looked like grade-school kids, not college students!



With Fr. Ochoa, in front of St. Ignatius Church.



Visiting the Okamura Law Offices, downtown Tokyo. Jim and Attorney Kitao, on the right, have just exchanged their ties.



With my friends from high school, May 26, 2003.



With my friend Kuro and her husband, Dr. N. at their house in Kunitachi, Tokyo. May, 2003.

< End of Chapter 22 >