

Man who lived in Asia refugee camp now behind altar in Mississippi

VICKSBURG, Miss. (AP) — A man who was living in a refugee camp in the Philippines more than 20 years ago is now the pastor at a Catholic church in Mississippi.

The *Vicksburg Post* reported that the Rev. Joseph Nguyen was installed as the 18th pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Vicksburg.

In 1991, the Vietnam native was waiting at the refugee camp with family members to come to the U.S. Now, Diocese of Jackson Bishop Joseph Kopacz has placed him to succeed the retired Rev. Malcolm O'Leary.

Nguyen says he was inspired to enter the priesthood by the dedication to serve others shown by two missionary priests at the camp.

Nguyen arrived stateside in 1993. He was ordained in 2008, and came to St. Mary's in September. It's his first pastor assignment.

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Rule to prevent illegal sales of baby eels approved in Maine

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — New controls are coming to Maine's valuable baby eel fishery this season.

A state panel approved new requirements for the exportation of baby eels, called elvers. The Maine Department of Marine Resources wants to add a requirement that baby eel exporters notify the Maine Marine Patrol 48 hours before preparing to pack and ship the eels. The officer will then witness the packing.

The new rule is designed to deter illegal sales of the valuable fish. Elvers are almost always worth more than \$1,000 per pound at docks. They're then sold to Asian aquaculture companies so they can be raised to maturity for use as food.

Department of Marine Resources commissioner Patrick Keliher is expected to sign off on the changes before the elver fishing season begins March 22.

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Filipino teachers return to Baltimore classrooms after visas extended

BALTIMORE (AP) — Most of the two dozen Filipino teachers who had to leave Baltimore at the end of the last school year because of expiring visas have returned to their classrooms.

Baltimore City Schools chief human capital officer Jeremy Grant-Skinner told *The Baltimore Sun* that the district was committed to bringing the veteran educators back because of the value they brought to a school system beset by high teacher turnover.

Most of the teachers worked in tough-to-fill math, science, and special-education positions, and were hired through a foreign teacher recruitment effort in the late 2000s to compensate for a lack of U.S.-born teachers.

The district worked with an immigration firm to secure visa extensions and will now try to help the teachers establish permanent residency. One case has yet to be settled.

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Permanent daylight savings in Oregon? "Hell yes," says governor Brown

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Oregon governor Kate Brown has endorsed a growing movement to make daylight savings time permanent.

When asked if she was in favor of a proposal to abolish the yearly time shift, the Democrat told reporters "Hell yes!"

"I think everyone's done with the time change," she added.

Washington and California are also considering shifting to permanent daylight savings time. Florida became the first state to approve such a change.

Any state law extending daylight savings time would have to be approved by congress.

Brown noted that this was one of the few issues where she agrees with President Donald Trump. The president tweeted earlier this month that daylight savings time year-round would be "O.K. with me!"



ICHIROMANIA. Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners bats during the third inning of a spring training baseball game against the Oakland Athletics in Peoria, Arizona. Jerry Dipoto's first introduction to the world of Ichiro was only a small taste compared to what the Seattle Mariners are about to experience when they open the season in Tokyo with a pair of games against Oakland. The most decorated player ever to export his talents from Japan to the major leagues is returning home for what could be a farewell to his Hall of Fame career on both sides of the Pacific. His teammates can't wait. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel, File)

Ichiromania returns to Japan: Will he retire, or won't he?

By Stephen Wade
AP Sports Writer

TOKYO — There's an adage in Japanese that translates easily to English.

Deru kugi wa utareru.

The nail that sticks up gets hammered down.

Ichiro Suzuki has been the nail in a culture that values formality, caution, and deference to authority. Doing it his way, he's developed into Japan's greatest baseball player and arguably its best athlete.

"At such a young age he already had his own mind," said Keizo Konishi, a reporter with the Japanese news agency Kyodo. "The older generation tells young people what they should do. Particularly in the structured baseball world."

Ichiro has played 2,651 major league games since joining the Seattle Mariners in 2001. Konishi has seen almost every one; from Seattle to New York, then to Miami, and back to Seattle. Add on hundreds before that with the Orix BlueWave.

The odyssey returns him to Japan where Ichiro is expected to play in a two-game series when the Mariners and the Oakland A's open the season March 20-21 at the Tokyo Dome.

Afterward, who knows? Some Japanese want the 45-year-old to finally retire, and the Mariners have said they want to go with youth.

One thing is certain in Tokyo: Ichiromania rules.

He's a source of national pride; the first position player to make it big in the majors, countering the perception that the country produced only pitchers, and players like Ichiro were too small. He's revered for breaking through, for his fashion sense, and his zen-like training. He'll be the first Japanese player inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, almost surely on the first ballot.

He can also be aloof and arrogant, known to disdain interviews, and often evasive with a habit of turning his back on reporters and disparaging questions he doesn't like. Japanese journalists have often been targets, and organizers say just over 1,000 are accredited for the two games.

"On so many occasions he's given me very interesting answers," Konishi said in an interview with The Associated Press. "But he can give me a hard time. He tries for perfect preparation. So he also requires me to be perfect, which is not easy."

The baseball editor at Kyodo, Takashi Yamakawa, described two Ichiros.

"He's acting, I think. He's playing Ichiro," Yamakawa said. "There are two different aspects. There's the very normal, polite Japanese man. And there's maybe the real Ichiro breaking the rules, fighting for himself. He's always thinking in a different way."

If Ichiro is the seldom-bending nail, his father, Nobuyuki, was the hammer who put his son through rigorous, well-documented daily baseball training from age seven.

"It bordered on hazing and I suffered a lot. But I also couldn't say no to him," American Robert Whiting quoted Ichiro saying in his book *The Samurai Way of Baseball*.

The book was first sold under the title *The Meaning of Ichiro*.

Whiting points out that Ichiro means "most cheerful boy" in Japanese. He writes he "was not always so cheerful about practicing, especially during the harsh winter days of central Japan, when his fingers grew so numb from the frigid air that he could not button his shirt."

Whiting has spent much of his life in Japan writing about baseball and Japanese culture. He speculated that because of World War II and the American occupation, Japan developed an inferiority complex in relation to the United States. Tokyo's 1964 Olympics and the booming economy of the 1970s and '80s remedied much of that, and Ichiro and pitcher Hideo Nomo further boosted morale.

"The athletic field has a different kind of symbolism," Whiting said in an interview with The AP. "No American could name a famous Japanese; not a top singer or the prime minister or even the emperor after Hirohito. The Japanese were simply known as people who could make things. But everybody could name Nomo and Ichiro. It had a huge impact on the country's psyche."

From its beginning in Japan about 150 years ago, baseball — known as *yakyu* (field ball) — has been viewed as a moral discipline and linked to the martial arts and relentless training. Whiting recounts how the first game between Japan and the U.S. took place in Yokohama in 1898. Japan won 29-4, and many of those players were members of Samurai families.

"Basically, Japanese baseball involves an insane amount of practice," Whiting said. "The whole idea of self-sacrifice and the development of spirit. Japanese baseball starts voluntary training right after the new year and camp started February 1. American spring training looks like a three-week vacation at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Florida."

Whiting called Ichiro "transformational" with five times the buzz that Nomo created just a few years before.

"He shocked everybody by how good he was. He is an everyday Japanese position player — not a pitcher — who had what it took to be a big star. It was something people didn't imagine before."

Ichiro was must-see TV when he joined the Mariners. Large-screen video displays in central Tokyo played — and replayed — every game as the Mariners won 116 times in the regular season. Ichiro won the American League batting title and was the league's Rookie of the

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TALKING STORY IN
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■ Polo

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