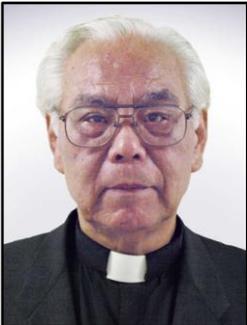


## In the Father's House

«As we have been united  
in the profession of the faith,  
so let us keep ourselves united  
in suffrage and intercession».  
(Fr. Alberione)



At 2,45 (local time) on 11 September 2017, at the Hospital of The Most Holy Mother of Tokyo, our brother priest has come to eternal life

### **FR. HITOSHI DOMENICO STEFANO HYAKUMURA**

**83 years, 69 of Pauline life, 66 of religious profession and 54 of priesthood**

The human and spiritual adventure of Fr. Hitoshi Domenico Hyakumura is connected with the extraordinary adventure of the Japanese martyrs narrated in the film of Martin Scorsese *Silence* (2016). Hitoshi, in fact, is born on April 20, 1934 in the island of Ikitsuki, in the district of Nagasaki, just 150 kilometers from the island of Goto, the location of the film. He comes to the world in a Christian village, living his faith in a hidden manner during the very harsh persecution which raged on the poor villages of the fishermen south of Japan. It started in 1587, when the samurai Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Marshall of the Crown at Nagasaki, gave out an edict which enjoined the foreign missionaries to leave the Country, until the Meiji Restoration of 1871, when following American pressure, the very long period of isolationism of the Japanese island ended and religious liberty was introduced.

The strong faith in the Risen One being breathed in his native village became incarnate in a very fervorous family, through his father Domenico Matsujiro, active in the community as a catechist and through his mother Maria, intent on nursing her nine children. The little Hitoshi, third in line, is baptized on April 30, 1934 in the church of Yamada and is named Domenico. Being of weak health, like his mother who dies when he is only ten years old, even at a young age he is already faithful to the daily eucharistic celebration, which he attends even while sick and during the cold months.

These beginnings which speak of a simple and intense faith, explain at least in part his desire felt from his years as a youth, to become a priest, as one of his sisters recalls. On March 28, 1947 he receives Confirmation, taking the other Christian name Joseph. A year after, on March 31, 1948, he joins the community of Tokyo-Wakaba. The first Paulines, Fr. Paolo Marcellino and Fr. Lorenzo Bertero, had landed in Japan only fourteen years before (December 1934), a few months after the birth of Domenico. At age fourteen, therefore, the missionary dream of the young man begins to take form according to the charism of blessed Alberione. After the primary formation, on April 9, 1954, he makes his first religious profession in the house of Tokyo-Akasaka, taking the name Stefano, together with three other companions. He makes it perpetual on April 1956.

Then follow his studies at the International Theological College of Rome until his presbyteral Ordination which took place in the Eternal City on July 7, 1963 by the hands of Mons. Ettore Cunial.

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Upon his return to the Mother Country, for a long time and on several occasions he is involved in Tokyo in the editing of books (1964-1970; 1974-1976; 1988-1994) and always in the capital of Japan, in the editing of the weekly magazine (1970-1973). From 1976 to 1979 we find him in the community of Tokyo-Wakaba as local Superior and provincial Secretary. In 1979 he is transferred to the seminary in Fukuoka, where for two times he is Master of the aspirants (1979-1981 and 1997-1999) and local Superior (1982-1988 and 1997-1999). In 1994, for one year he exercises the priestly ministry in the community of Osaka, where he returns from 2000 to 2010, also as Superior (2003-2005). From 2010 to 2014 he is in the house of Tokyo-Yotsuya, before taking up for a year the role of Delegate of Fukuoka (2014-2015).

In September of 2015, while taking the train to participate in the meeting of the local Superiors and of those responsible of the commissions, Fr. Domenico suffers brain hemorrhage. He soon recovers in spite of the negative initial expectations. His condition becomes better and he can return to Fukuoka for rehabilitation. In February of 2017 he is fraternally welcomed for some months by the Pious Disciples in their community at Tokyo-Hachioji. His becoming better is such that he can even celebrate Mass, but only until the discovery of an aggressive tumor in his liver. Last July, at his request, he returns to our house in Tokyo-Yotsuya to be immediately after sent, because of the worsening of the state of his health, to the Hospital of the Most Holy Mother of Tokyo, where he renders his soul to God in the first hours of last September 11.

Fr. Hyakumura is remembered by his Japanese brothers for his keen intelligence, not lacking of a good dose of humor, characteristics much appreciated in common life. He loves stamps with Christian subjects which he used to show in our monthly magazine *Katei no Tomo*. He was also good at repairing Missals and liturgical books. Many faithful of the churches and people of religious Institutes for whom he has made this service, together with our brothers and sisters in the Pauline Family in Japan will continue to remember the fruitful passage of Fr. Domenico in this earth.

Roma, September 12, 2017



Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio, ssp  
Secretary General

*His funeral has been celebrated at 1,30 p.m. (local time) on Wednesday, September 13, 2017, in the chapel of the community of Tokyo-Wakaba. Soon after the rites his body has been cremated. The disposition of the ashes will take place on a following date in the Catholic cemetery of Fuchu (Tokyo).*

The circumscription Superiors should inform their communities about the prescribed suffrages (Cost. 65 and 65.1).