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A Year of Oblate Vocations

Letter from the Superior General, Fr. Louis Lougen, OMI

15 August 2017

L.J.C. et M.I.

Dear Brother Oblates, and all our Brothers and Sisters associated with the Oblate Charism,

Happy feast of the Assumption of Our Lady!

During the course of the past few years, the voices of many young Oblates of various Regions of the Congregation, alive with passion for our future, made it clear to the members of the Central Government that they wanted support and direction in renewing the ministry of inviting new members to join us. They expressed their love for our charism and the desire to invite new members, often in the face of discouragement and criticism from fellow Oblates who simply accept and even justify the lack of young men interested in missionary religious life.

Some senior Oblates, likewise, were calling for a renewed commitment to vocation ministry. They expressed their deep faith in God's ability to raise up vocations even in the most challenging situations. Remember the rock which Moses struck! They are convinced that the Spirit's action still draws young people to commit themselves to follow Jesus as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

In light of these voices, on December 8, 2013, I addressed a letter to the Congregation regarding the ministry of vocations. Oblates felt supported to move ahead in promoting vocational awareness. One of the first fruits of

this movement of the Spirit was the Vocational Year 2015-2016 celebrated by the Region of Latin America. This was the first Region, and the only one so far, in our Congregation to sponsor a vocational year and to organize a congress for an entire Region. Congratulations!

Another fruit was the first Congregation-wide vocation congress held in Aix in July of last year with 32 Oblates from all over the world. The theme was beautiful and significant: **“Come and See’ (John 1:39): Focusing on the Joy and Generosity of Our Oblate Life.”** The members of this Congress called the Congregation to dedicate a year to the theme of Oblate vocations. This momentum of the Spirit was welcomed by the 2016 General Chapter, and a recommendation was given to the newly-elected Central Government: *“Declare a Year for Oblate Vocations during the current mandate, as recommended by the Congress on Oblate Vocations.”* (Article 28.4, p. 31 ACTS, English edition).

In response to the call of the General Chapter, I announce the “Year of Oblate Vocations” from December 8, 2017 to January 25, 2019. The theme is that from the Congress of vocations of 2016: **“Come and See!’ (John 1:39): Focusing on the Joy and Generosity of Our Oblate Life.”**

This “Year of Oblate Vocations” will both give support to and be strengthened by Pope Francis’ call for a year dedicated to “Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment.” In fact, his personal message to us at the audience with the members of the General Chapter on October 7, 2016,

placed before us the urgency to commit ourselves to vocation ministry in light of the needs of the Church: “The work to be done in order to achieve all of this (a Church for everyone) is vast; and all of you also have your own specific contribution to offer... The current field of mission seems to expand every day... Therefore, there is need of you, of your missionary courage, your availability to bring to everyone the Good News that frees and consoles” (Acts, Address of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, p. 5, English Edition). These words, and his entire message, do not sound like Pope Francis believes we have done our job, that we can retire our Crosses and can now fade into the past. The Church is counting on us to respond to the needs of the poor today, and to “write new pages” in the history of evangelization!

The “Year of Oblate Vocations” is being coordinated by Fr. Cornelius Ngoka, OMI, under his portfolio as Assistant General for Formation. The organizing committee is headed by Father Antoni Bochm, General Councilor for Europe, with the assistance of Father Guillaume Muthunda, General Councilor for Africa/Madagascar. More information will be forthcoming. I ask that each Unit already begin to think creatively and work to make this year a dynamic renewal of our commitment to vocation ministry. The formation of a special committee in each Unit,

working together with the Unit leadership, would be a most appropriate way to begin to plan this special “Year of Oblate Vocations.”

On this feast of Mary’s Assumption, we recall the special grace Saint Eugene received while blessing the statue of Mary Immaculate on August 15, 1822. That grace lifted his worries about the future of his little missionary group and gave him the assurance that it was not just his own idea, but truly the work of the Spirit. He was given the conviction that “our dear Society” would be the source of great holiness for us and of great missionary benefit for the Church. We entrust the “Year of Oblate Vocations” to Mary Immaculate, the model and guardian of our consecrated life. May her witness engender in us a deep belief that nothing is impossible with God. Her presence in prayer among us will make this “Year of Oblate Vocations” a Spirit-filled happening, giving us surprising perspectives and filling us with immense hope.

Already I would like to express my gratitude for your generous and full-hearted participation in this “Year of Oblate Vocations.”

Sincerely in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Father Louis Lougen, OMI
Superior General

Holy See

VATICAN

Resignation of Bishop Phillip Pöllitzer, OMI

On July 21, 2017, the Holy Father Pope Francis accepted the resignation from pastoral governance of the Diocese of Keetmanshoop (Namibia), presented by His Excellency, Bishop Phillip PÖLLITZER.

The bishop had reached the required age for submitting his resignation in 2015.

Prior his nomination as bishop on May 31, 2007, he had served as the provincial of the Province of Namibia. Born in Mörtelsdorf in the Archdiocese of Salzburg, Austria, in 1940, he completed his

Oblate formation in Hünfeld, Germany, where he was ordained a priest in 1965. His first obedience was to Namibia where he exercised pastoral ministry in the eastern part of the Archdiocese of Windhoek.



Africa-Madagascar

SENEGAL**Dedication of the OMI prenovitiate in Dakar to Blessed Mario Borzaga**

Mario BORZAGA was a young Italian Oblate who died a missionary in Laos in 1960. We knew him well ... he was beatified on December 11, 2016, together with other 16 martyrs among whom 5 French Oblates. On June 17, 2017, the Oblate prenovitiate in Dakar, for the OMI delegation of Senegal - Guinea Bissau, was dedicated to Mario. Why ? Here is some background history.

In 1988 the Foyer was born -- a house to welcome the young aspirants who were in the last years of high school. A few months later, Pope St. John Paul II beatified Fr. Joseph GERARD, an Oblate and the apostle of Lesotho: the Foyer was placed under his patronage. Later, to the Foyer was added the prenovitiate, during which one follows courses in philosophy at the Saint Augustine Center of Dakar. The Foyer and the prenovitiate shared the same address and to keep things brief, we spoke simply about the Foyer Joseph Gérard. In 2015, Providence offered us a new home for the Foyer, which then moved to Les Parcelles Assainies. The prenovitiate found itself alone ... and without a name! Here, the beatification of the martyrs of Laos inspired us for several reasons. Indeed, a deep link united our delegation to Laos: it was Italian Oblates expelled from Laos in 1975 who founded the Oblate delegation of Senegal in 1976.

On Saturday, June 17, friends of the community and representatives of the Oblate family of Dakar were invited for this special occasion. The prenovices set to work to present the life and martyrdom of Mario and his young catechist. Through a make-believe interview, they drew on the spiritual wealth left by Mario in his diary. To mark the new name, the prenovices made a mural with the face of the new patron and a sentence taken from his diary on the eve of his perpetual oblation. We thanked the Lord by praying vespers and we installed the picture of

Borzaga in our chapel. The evening obviously continued in a festive atmosphere with a meal for all. (Claudio CARLEO)

SAHARA**Flowers in the desert – Vocation ministry**

After twelve years of service as General Councilor for Europe, Father Chicho ROIS joined the little Oblate community in the Sahara desert. These are his thoughts on vocation ministry in a place where there is only a handful of Christians.

When you travel for the first time deep into the desert, you are moved by the lifeless immensity you are seeing. At first glance, you think that there is no vegetation, no animals ... nothing. Little by little, looking more closely, you begin to discover the beauty of the desert: a chain of dunes that is continually shaped by the permanent beating of the wind, the insects, some small rats, lizards that play hide and seek and maybe, with luck, you can see the mythical bird of the desert.

A herd of camels is guided by their sense of smell to discover water where everyone else sees only sand or they walk for days towards where they know that the first drops of rain will fall. The shepherds who follow them are therefore called the sons of the cloud. And with those first drops of rain, the miracle happens: the desert blooms ... Of course there was life; only we did not know how to look deeply enough. There were those seeds waiting days, months, maybe years, to bloom. And there are men who are able to live the beauty of knowing how to trust, to wait and to love in extreme situations, so as to sing when the desert blooms.

These images come to mind as I think about vocation ministry in our Oblate mission in the Sahara. It is a mission among a people that calls itself 100% Muslim. The few Christians that there are, with the exception of the three Missionary Oblates, are there for a year or two, five at the most, because of their work and their businesses. One cannot hope for conversions

because “proselytism” is forbidden by law. It’s a mission in which the hidden life of Nazareth becomes real, so as to enter into dialogue with suffering humanity.

Can there be vocations in the Sahara? Can flowers bloom in the desert? As we share about this in our community, we all agree on the way we can be useful for vocation ministry in the Congregation. We do this first of all by persevering in prayers for vocations which we say each day in our community, prayer so that the Lord will send vocations and will help those who feel this call to make progress in their response, especially those who are in first formation. It is a prayer we feel sure that God hears, although most of the time, we celebrate Eucharist without the presence of the faithful, as we hear the calls to prayer from the minaret. It makes us so happy every time we hear about new vocations in other missions, about our novices and scholastics throughout the world. We feel part of that family.

To prayer we join our way of living our ordinary life, our oblation, in humility and poverty. This

Oblate community life is both a testimony of Christian community for our Muslim brothers and sisters; it is itself a mission. But why not dream that the Lord send vocations to discover his call here, in the Sahara. Why not dream it? Why put limits on the grace of God?

Perhaps we are called to be like those men of the desert who know how to wait for weeks, months, years, for rain from the sky so as to be able to see a flower born. Yes, let it rain in other places so that many vocational flowers might be born but also in hope that one day the miracle will happen. Like them, we are called to love, to hope and to trust.

Living the essence of our charism, giving witness to the beatitudes in community, we participate in the dream of God for humanity and we feel like members of a family that is full of life because it knows how to be missionary in the most forgotten places of our Earth. *(Article originally appeared in the Bulletin of the OMI Province of Brazil, Nossas Noticias, July-August 2017)*

Asia-Oceania

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

De Mazenod Scholarship Foundation, year 2

It was with great joy and anticipation that the Annual Get Together of the “De Mazenod Scholarship Foundation” was held on 24th June 2017 at Fatima Church, Maradana. Fr. Irwin MORAES, Provincial Superior of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Colombo Province, was the Chief Guest. Twenty five students were awarded scholarships. Fr. Dennis IDDAMALGODA, the Founder of the De Mazenod Scholarship Foundation, addressed the gathering, sharing his inspiring thoughts. All preparatory and related work was handled by Frs. Clement WAIDYASEKARA, Justin SILVA, Angelo WIJEWICKRAMA and Ajith WELLINGTON who together with Fr. Dennis Iddamalgoda should be lauded for this committed service towards this worthy cause as they strive to shoulder the enormous responsibility of continuing the mission of Jesus. (Rita Jayatilleke, Kandy)

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Missionaries to the most abandoned

Fr. Kelum DIAS, a professed Oblate since 2000 and a priest since 2007, tells of the missionary commitment of the Church in Padaviya.

As the parish Priest in this mission field of Padaviya, I have worked for more than five years in collaboration with the Good Shepherd Sisters. In spite of difficulties (especially financial) we have struggled to be faithful to God who has called us to leave comfort zones to care for the less privileged people who are struggling in the periphery to safeguard their dignity and self-esteem.

According to my understanding of mission, I feel I am not merely the parish priest of the few Catholic families living in this area. I do not consider myself only as an administrator of sacraments. God has placed me in this part of the country to be with the disadvantaged

groups, and cry out to God for help. I believe in an apostolate of presence. To respond more effectively to people's aspirations there is need for more dedicated competent persons, ready and available to become partners with us.

Since we cannot cater to all those villages we have decided to work in the most abandoned village called Namalpura, 30 kms away from Padaviya.

We visit Namalpura every Saturday to teach English to children and to animate children's societies. Good Shepherd Sisters from Padaviya and from other convents take a keen interest in working with these people. They impart life education to the women, helping them to develop their skills. To resolve the problem of malnutrition in the children, they have started a project of providing lunch on weekdays for the school-going children and the preschool children of the area. The parish provides lunch on Sundays to the Daham Pasal children.

When we started work at Namalpura, the people hadn't either electricity or water. They often had to face the threat of wild animals, mostly wild elephants. The Good Shepherd Sisters and I met the government officials and spoke to them

on behalf of these people. We discovered that facilities already approved for the people had not been provided. With our intervention, writing a number of letters and paying personal visits, we were able to get electricity to the village, and wells and also an electrified fence to prevent wild animals from entering the village. Since people's nutritional needs are barely met and many of them get only a meagre meal, we see the need to provide them with dry rations. Access to safe drinking water is an acute problem that has continued for several years.

Since the families are very much scattered, the children can hardly afford to travel to the church and also to purchase the required stationery. The children are intelligent and talented and we try our best to help them attend the Sunday school. However our resources are very limited. If and when the children are to participate in activities organized by the diocese, and the teachers are to participate in the training programmes / seminars, they have to travel to Anuradhapura and we do not have adequate finances to meet their expenses. Each trip costs approx. Rs.850/- per child/teacher. However, the active participation at Sunday school and other activities will certainly help to transform the lives of these children.

Europe

UKRAINE

St. Eugene, St. Anthony's Bread, and Our Lady of Fatima

Brother Sebastian JANKOWSKI has spent 4 years caring for the homeless and abandoned in Kiev. Twice a week he goes with his team of volunteers to the streets of the city to distribute hot food, medicines, clothes and items for hygiene at strategic points. He also reads the gospel of the day and gives a brief catechesis. No less than 200 people benefit each time from this work. On June 13, 2017, instead of going to them, he took them to a very special place for a different experience..

In our Roman Catholic Church, the year 2017 has been proclaimed "The Year of the Virgin of Fatima" in honor of the centenary of her apparitions. In

1917, in that little Portuguese village, the Virgin asked for prayers for the conversion of Russia so that its errors would not spread: a few months later Lenin's Marxist revolution would begin. At that time, Ukraine was under the Russian Empire, and then under the Soviet regime, so the people in Ukraine gratefully consider that the religious freedom we enjoy today is thanks to the prayer of millions of people over these 100 years. The message of Fatima has not lost momentum with the years. In Ukraine we continue to suffer the "mistakes" propagated by that Marxist-Leninist Russia. Many of today's social problems are inherited from yesterday's mistakes. That is why the people of Ukraine live with emotion and devotion this year of the centenary.

Sermons, novenas, retreats and pilgrimages related to the Virgin of Fatima are being organized

in all the dioceses and parishes.. Paraphrasing the Sermon in the Magdalene of St. Eugene: “Will there be anything for you, the poor of Jesus Christ, in Kiev?” Of course, our dauntless brother Sebastian Jankowski, the “guardian angel of the poor”, as the Apostolic Nuncio in the Ukraine, Monsignor Claudio Gugerotti, called him,, did not stand by idle; he organized for them a special “pilgrimage of Fatima” for his beloved poor of Kiev.

Two entire buses, for about 130 people, plus some Caritas-Spes volunteers, went to the central house of the Ukrainian Delegation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Obukhiv, about 30 kms South of Kiev. The place chosen is very significant. It should be mentioned that every year from May 13 to October 13, this Oblate parish organizes a procession every month on the 13th in honor of the Virgin of Fatima. Also in this house, Fr. Artur STRONCZEWSKI, the parish pastor, every week organizes the preparation of the food that is distributed among the homeless and needy people of Kiev. Father Artur is gaining fame as a cook, for he is well known among the people for preparing food not only to fill the stomach, as other organizations do, but also to delight the palate. We are all children of God, and this should also be evident in the food we offer to others.

On arrival in Obukhiv, tables were awaiting them with a sweet aperitif. After they had rested, they moved on to the most spiritual part of the program, the main purpose of the day’s activity. Perhaps moved by a large statue of St. Eugene presiding over the main facade of the parish church of Obukhiv, our needy brethren from Kiev kept asking questions about the Congregation, our Founder, our history, So I had to improvise a talk about the life and charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod. For me it was a pleasure to use the life of St. Eugene to preach to the poor: by considering his life, I could repeat by heart some fragments of the Sermon in the Magdalene. As an Oblate it was a joy for me to remind them of the dignity they all have as children of God: “There is within you an immortal soul, created in the image of God ... Christians, recognize your dignity!” said St. Eugene and I could paraphrase his words to an audience not much different. It seemed to me that in the face of so many abandoned people

gathered in the parish of the Oblates and thanks to the good work of our brother Sebastian and aided by the Oblate community of Obukhiv, Eugene, from his place in heaven, was very, very satisfied with us.

After this impromptu talk, Fr. Sergei PANCHENKO gave a conference on the Virgin Mary. With the help of a PowerPoint presentation, with photos of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, the Virgin of Fatima and St. John Paul II, he invited them to put their trust in the Virgin Mary and to bring her all their hopes and problems.

When the spiritual part concluded, we again remembered our bodies, cheering them with a delicious lunch prepared by the already famous P. Artur and his Obukhiv Oblate kitchen team. The laughter and even the games on this day spent together became all the more palpable with a dessert of cakes and cookies. After that, we ended the day with a film about the Virgin of Fatima, to focus on the mystery that had brought us on pilgrimage.

In speaking with Brother Sebastian, we realized a detail we had overlooked until then: it was the 13th of June. The date was chosen to commemorate the apparitions of the Virgin, but we had forgotten that it was the day St. Anthony of Padua, famous for his Bread of the Poor. And there was certainly no lack of miracles in order to be able to have this event. There was no money to pay for the buses, and suddenly, a few days before the pilgrimage that had been already announced and promised to the people of Kiev, a donor arrived asking: “Bro. Sebastian, what do you need?” Brother Sebastian was amazed when, as he told the donor the large sum of money needed for the, he heard her response: “Count on it; don’t worry.” St. Anthony and St. Eugene did their part to bring these poor people to the feet of the Virgin, so loved by both of them. (Fr. Diego SÁEZ MARTÍN, Delegation of Ukraine).

CENTRAL EUROPEAN PROVINCE

An example of the victory of grace over hatred

At the end of the First World War, it is estimated that 90% of the population of the Czech Republic was Roman Catholic; that percentage now is

about 10%. The Communist regime which seized power in 1948 in the former Czechoslovakia was brutal in its attempts to wipe out Christianity. Many priests and religious men and women were jailed or executed. But then came the “Velvet Revolution” of 1989 and the situation of the Church and of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate is much more positive.

To underline this positive and hopeful future, the Oblates of the Central European Province celebrated on June 10, 2017, in Hünfeld, Germany, the priestly ordination of two scholastics from the Czech Republic: Peter DOMBEK and Karel MEC. The Bishop-emeritus of the Diocese of Pilsen, Mons. František Radkovský, conferred the sacrament on the two young Oblates.

On the day after their ordination, they celebrated their First Mass at the Bonifatiuskloster in Hünfeld. Their Novice Master, Fr. Norbert WILCZEK preached the homily and focused on the meaning of the priesthood, i.e., leading the people to God.

The two new priests had done the first years of their formation in Hunfeld (novitiate and two years of scholasticate). Then they experienced the internationality of the Oblate Congregation by completing their first formation in Italy: Petr at the scholasticate of the Mediterranean Province in Vermicino; Karel at the International Scholasticate in Rome. As first assignments, Fr. Petr is working in youth ministry in a parish in Plasy, Czech Republic. Fr. Karel lives in the “Mario Borzaga” Youth Community in Fulda, Germany, and works as chaplain in a parish.

MEDITERRANEAN PROVINCE

The Oblates and Evangelii Gaudium

Some fifty Oblates and laity from Italy and Spain participated in a seminar on *Evangelii Gaudium* held in Pozuelo-Madrid from June 26 to 30, 2017. The program was intense but experienced in a climate of deep sharing and reflection on an issue that, as an Oblate Family, could not but excite us.

Professor D. Eloy De la Fuente gave us a synthesis and rich presentation of *Evangelii*

Gaudium, highlighting the key points of the document and the key ideas of Pope Francis. The group work and the conversation with the speaker were stimulating, allowing the participants to savor the novelty of this document, which turned out to be a persuasive invitation to revise our way of proclaiming the Gospel.

Father Paolo ARCHIATI, our Vicar General, in his turn, drew a parallel between the essential points of the Oblate charism, taken from the Congress on the charism of 1976, and the apostolic exhortation. He pointed out similarities, not only in the contents, but also in the missionary methodologies, all of which certainly surprised the participants. This theme had also been addressed during the last General Chapter of 2016, something which Fr. Paolo did not forget to highlight. There followed small group meetings and, subsequently, a discussion with the speaker, allowing us to deepen themes specific to our Congregation.

The following days were spent going more deeply into some specific parts of the apostolic exhortation, thanks to four forums under the leadership of three Oblates and one Italian MAMI couple. The poor; the laity; the temptations of the missionary; and the challenge of proclaiming the Gospel in big cities: these were the themes that, according to the plan, not only involved the participants in sharing their own reflections, but above all, in their “relating” their daily living as witnesses of the gospel in the Church and in society.

The reflection, the sharing of experiences, praying and celebrating together, the informal meetings and a pilgrimage to Toledo were concrete occasions for us to get to know each other better, but also to become even more aware that we are called to live the mission together, animated by the same Oblate charism, as the irreplaceable people of God! (Father Angelo CAPUANO in *COMUNICAZIONI* N. 3, July 2017)

Canada-United States

NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP A question of changing islands

Fr. Alfred RAVELOMAMPISANDRAIBE was born on the huge island of Madagascar and he now serves the Church at Sept-Îles, the city made up of the greatest number of islands on the North Shore of Quebec.

On May 13, 2007, I was ordained a priest in Madagascar, the fourth largest island in the world. This year, I celebrated my tenth anniversary of ordination in Sept-Îles, the city with the largest number of islands on the North Shore of Quebec. On May 13, 2007, I was surrounded by fellow Oblates from the Oblate Province of Madagascar and my biological family. This year, on the other hand, in the Oblate province of Quebec, I was among confreres from several Oblate Units and Innu friends.

This celebration brought to mind my ten years of priestly service as a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate.

Born into a practicing Catholic family and baptized in a Capuchin parish, I was raised in the Catholic faith, but with no knowledge of the existence of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. It was through the visit of an Oblate during a vocation campaign that I discovered the religious family which has helped me so much to grow spiritually and on the psychosocial level.

After making my first vows on September 8, 1999, I continued my philosophy and theology studies in Madagascar. After my ordination, I worked for eight years in my country.

I have been in the Province of Notre-Dame-du-Cap, Quebec, since February 26, 2016. Upon my arrival in Canada, my confreres welcomed me warmly. I began my missionary experience here by visiting the Oblate communities. After that, I left for the Oblate mission on the North Shore.

The first year was devoted to learning the Innu language and culture. During this period of integration and cultural immersion, I had the opportunity to visit other Innu communities where the Oblates work on the North Shore of Quebec. I also had the opportunity to participate in other cultural activities of the Innu people, such as hunting and fishing.

Now I am preparing to take on the pastoral responsibility of the parish of Notre Dame-du-Cap, Maliotenam, in the near future. In addition to pastoral and sacramental activities, I also visit the Kapatakan Center. It is a rehabilitation center for young people leaving prison. Besides ensuring pastoral presence in this place, I also take advantage of it to continue my integration and immersion in the milieu, learning of the language and discovery of the Innu culture.

Latin America

ARGENTINA Youth Ministry, Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla

In response to the request of the Provincial Superior, Fr. Antonio MARIANGELI, the JOMI (Young Oblates of Mary Immaculate) group in Argentina has sent us a long report on their various missionary activities. Here we publish the first part of this report. In a future issue of OMI Information, we will publish the rest of the report.

At first, the group began with two or three young people who began to walk the path of learning the charism, living it in their daily life and thus becoming more Catholic and happier in today's troubled world. Now we are a group of 14 young people with a "hunger" for this way of life that offers us the charism. We are all in different ministry areas of the same parish (catechesis for confirmation, family catechesis, a missionary group and special catechesis, among others). We meet twice a month to share aspects of our work in the respective groups to which we belong and

aspects of our daily life. We are always trying to deepen our knowledge of the Oblate charism and its great richness for the youth around us and through which we feel truly missionary. Many times our meetings are based on documents that our priests bring to us, such as documents from the last General Chapter held in Rome. Sometimes we also have one of the priests to share with us: (Fr. Luis SABARRE, Fr. Basilio MALU, and at the last meeting we were visited by Fr. José María ORUÉ).

Among the most significant activities we have experienced as a group is our total participation in the novena and subsequent feast of our patroness, the *Virgen de la Carrodilla*, preparing posters, organizing the logistics of the feast together with the deacon, collaborating in the daily celebrations, supporting and accompanying the newcomer from the Republic of Congo, Father Basilio Malu, OMI, in his first experience here.

Also noteworthy is that, as a group, we participated in two missions so far this year. One was held in a village on the outskirts of the province of San Juan, Argentina, in January. Following the style of the Oblate mission of Fr. Oscar CARRICABURU, we were able to practice the charism that invites us to be close to the poor and bring them the Word, boldly and creatively. There were 10 days with celebrations of the Word, praying the rosary and processions together with the townspeople. We recently experienced a baptismal mission proposed by Fr. José María RIEGA in the farthest neighborhoods of our parish, sharing with the poorest people the way we all live our lives as baptized children of God, how we live our faith in our daily life and fostering a personal encounter with Christ within us as a source of peace and happiness in a world as difficult as the present one.

Later on, for the feast day of our Founder, St. Eugene, we organized a vigil in the parish and invited all the young people who wanted to know about the charism. We prepared ourselves for the Founder's day by first talking about the most important aspects of the Congregation and of the charism, bearing in mind that the majority of

those who attended did not know about it. Then we shared videos and testimonies of missionaries who have exemplified how to be missionaries of Jesus in the Oblate style; we finished by sharing with the missionaries who are at our parish today. Once again we were able to enjoy the missionary witness of Fr. Luis Sabarre. The next day, as a group we attended the celebration of its patron saint in the Saint Eugene Chapel. We participated in the procession and mass, together with the laity of all ages.

(To be continued)

BRAZIL

A gift from Africa

According to *Wikipedia*, "Today, with the exception of Nigeria, the largest population of people of African descent is in Brazil." Of course, the Brazilians of African ancestry are mostly descendants of the millions of men and women who were violently seized from their homelands and brought to Brazil and other countries in the Americas as slaves.

On July 12 of this year, Fr. Isa Vincent INALEGWU, an Oblate born in Nigeria and a member of the Province of Cameroon, has joined the Province of Brazil to add a 21st century African flavor to the multi-cultural Church and Oblate community of Brazil.

The fifth of the nine children of his parents, the 31 year-old Oblate began his formation in Cameroon in 2006. He professed his first vows in 2008 and did his philosophy and theology studies at the scholasticate in Cameroon. He returned to his native Nigeria for his priestly ordination in 2016.

Upon arriving in Brazil, he was asked about his expectations and pastoral plans. He responded: "Initially I have no pastoral project. I am ready and open to meet the most urgent needs of the Province, and willing to do well whatever the provincial and his council ask me to do. In Cameroon I worked in parish ministry and with youth... I really want to learn and integrate into this beautiful pastoral ministry of the Church in Brazil."

Anniversaries -- August 2017

70 years of religious life

02/08/1947	08327	Fr. Adhemar Deveau	United States
02/08/1947	08331	Fr. Gustave Pelletier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
02/08/1947	08334	Fr. Germain Ranger	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1947	08341	Fr. Laurent Alarie	Lacombe
15/08/1947	08349	Fr. Dominique Kerbrat	Lacombe

65 years of religious life

02/08/1952	09302	Fr. Denis Dancause	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
02/08/1952	09253	Fr. Benoît Garceau	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
02/08/1952	09254	Fr. Hubert Lagacé	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
02/08/1952	09295	Fr. Réal Mathieu	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1952	09265	Fr. Bernhard Albers	S. Africa, Central
15/08/1952	09266	Fr. Bruno Carpene	Mediterranean
15/08/1952	09393	Fr. Antonio Di Benedetto	Mediterranean
15/08/1952	09274	Fr. Urban Figge	United States
15/08/1952	09305	Fr. Guy Fortin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1952	09311	Fr. Gilles Gauthier	Lacombe
15/08/1952	09262	Fr. James Lantsberger	United States
15/08/1952	09499	Fr. Noël LeBrun	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1952	09394	Fr. Romualdo Lopardo	Mediterranean
15/08/1952	09269	Fr. Anthony Padidilian	Colombo
15/08/1952	09313	Fr. Léonce Paquet	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1952	09276	Fr. Thomas Singer	United States
15/08/1952	09263	Fr. Bertram Tirimanne	Colombo

60 years of religious life

02/08/1957	10320	Fr. Roger Hallée	United States
02/08/1957	10318	Fr. John Louis Henault	Haiti
15/08/1957	10324	Fr. Edmond Brouillard	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
15/08/1957	10332	Fr. Gérard-François Cloutier	Haiti
15/08/1957	10278	Fr. Alexander Costa	Colombo
15/08/1957	10279	Fr. Widanalage Stanley de Mel	Colombo
15/08/1957	10284	Fr. Theogenes Joseph	Jaffna
15/08/1957	10330	Fr. Leo Kertz	Poland
15/08/1957	10875	Bro. Peterosi Mokeki	Lesotho
15/08/1957	10323	Fr. Vaughan Quinn	Lacombe
15/08/1957	10283	Fr. Philip Singarayar	United States

60 years of priesthood

06/08/1957	09115	Fr. Hilarion Vethanayagam	Jaffna
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50 years of religious life

02/08/1967	11854	Fr. Norman Comtois	United States
02/08/1967	11948	Fr. George Roy	United States
15/08/1967	11943	Fr. François Paradis	Lacombe
15/08/1967	11881	Fr. Thomas Rush	United States

25 years of religious life

01/08/1992	13373	Fr. Timothy Paulsen	United States
01/08/1992	13374	Fr. Andrew Sensenig	United States

25 years of priesthood

02/08/1992	12941	Fr. Lalhe Anaclet Dupar	Congo
02/08/1992	12944	Fr. Maweze Roland Gishiyo	Congo
02/08/1992	12942	Fr. Lankwan Cyrille Mpuki	Congo
06/08/1992	13135	Fr. Celestine Mascaringhe	Jaffna
08/08/1992	13141	Fr. Gregory R. Gallagher	United States
15/08/1992	13003	Fr. Wladimir Rojas	Argentina-Chile
22/08/1992	13129	Fr. Jude Canisius Peirisulle	Colombo
22/08/1992	13131	Fr. George V. Perera	Colombo
22/08/1992	13130	Fr. Bradley J. Rozairo	Colombo
22/08/1992	13124	Fr. Dudley D.D. Saparamadu	Colombo
22/08/1992	13127	Fr. Roshan J. Silva	Colombo
22/08/1992	13128	Fr. Derrick Vernon Wamakulasuriya	Colombo
22/08/1992	13126	Fr. Angelo Dilan Wijewickrama	Colombo

Anniversaries -- September 2017

75 years of religious life

08/09/1942	07585	Fr. Marc Guiziou	France
08/09/1942	07413	Fr. Léon Saison	France
15/09/1942	07535	Fr. Oliver Mohan	Lacombe

70 years of religious life

08/09/1947	08408	Fr. Félicien P. Labat	Lacombe
08/09/1947	08387	Fr. Paulin Van Eeghem	Belgium/Holland
08/09/1947	08372	Fr. Eugeen Van Helden	Belgium/Holland
15/09/1947	08396	Fr. Jean Col	France
29/09/1947	08397	Fr. Heinrich Döing	Central European
29/09/1947	08403	Fr. Desmond O'Donnell	Anglo-Irish

65 years of religious life

08/09/1952	09372	Fr. Rudolf Basista	Poland
08/09/1952	09361	Fr. Stanislaw Czyn	Poland
08/09/1952	09338	Fr. Gerald Flater	United States
08/09/1952	09370	Fr. George Gruber	Lacombe
08/09/1952	09347	Fr. Carl Kelly	Lacombe
08/09/1952	09350	Fr. George Kirwin	United States
08/09/1952	09938	Bro. James Lucas	United States
08/09/1952	09342	Fr. James Mac Gee	United States
08/09/1952	09325	Fr. Lorne Mackey	Lacombe
08/09/1952	09218	Fr. André Marion	France
08/09/1952	09352	Fr. Bernard McCosham	Lacombe
08/09/1952	09322	Fr. Claude Tardif	Lacombe
08/09/1952	09346	Fr. Sherman Wall	United States
08/09/1952	09331	Fr. Jorge Wavreille	Bolivia
29/09/1952	09382	Fr. Paul Byrne	Anglo-Irish
29/09/1952	09593	Fr. Anthony Quinlan	Anglo-Irish

65 years of priesthood

20/09/1952	08176	Fr. Guy Boulanger	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
20/09/1952	08177	Fr. Garcia Lussier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

60 years of religious life

08/09/1957	10981	Fr. Yves Abert	France
08/09/1957	10370	Fr. Jean-Pierre Caloz	France
08/09/1957	10367	Fr. Leo De Visscher	Congo
08/09/1957	10982	Fr. André Hebting	France
08/09/1957	10350	Fr. Ben-Awis Benoit Kabongo	France
08/09/1957	10996	Fr. Alain Playoust	France
08/09/1957	10971	Fr. Henri Richard	Cameroon
08/09/1957	10369	Fr. Otto Rollheiser	Lacombe
08/09/1957	10364	Fr. Leo van den Berg	Belgium/Holland
08/09/1957	10356	Fr. Gerard van Kempen	Belgium/Holland
15/09/1957	10373	Fr. Yalai Carlo Bertolini	Indonesia
15/09/1957	13692	Fr. Piergiorgio Scarpellini	Mediterranean
29/09/1957	10387	Fr. Cornelius Campbell	Anglo-Irish
29/09/1957	10389	Fr. Patrick Carolan	Anglo-Irish
29/09/1957	10390	Fr. Michael Guckian	Anglo-Irish
29/09/1957	10386	Fr. Donal Madigan	Australia
29/09/1957	10385	Fr. Vincent Mulligan	Anglo-Irish

60 years of priesthood

08/09/1957	09274	Fr. Urban Figge	United States
08/09/1957	09276	Fr. Thomas Singer	United States
15/09/1957	09675	Fr. Donald Hughes	Australia
15/09/1957	09593	Fr. Anthony Quinlan	Anglo-Irish
15/09/1957	09774	Fr. Luigi Sion	Mediterranean

50 years of religious life

08/09/1967	12004	Fr. James Bleackley	Lacombe
08/09/1967	12255	Bro. Omer D'hondt	Belgium/Holland
08/09/1967	11868	Fr. Paul Hughes	Mexico
08/09/1967	11952	Fr. Mark Kemseke	Belgium/Holland
08/09/1967	11889	Fr. Pawel Latusek	Poland
08/09/1967	11866	Fr. Michael McCarthy	Lacombe
08/09/1967	11872	Fr. Adam Rolek	France
08/09/1967	11870	Fr. Christopher Rushton	Lacombe
08/09/1967	12031	Fr. Robert Smith	Lacombe
08/09/1967	11996	Fr. Krzysztof Tarwacki	Poland
08/09/1967	11867	Fr. Luis Carlos Tierney	Brazil
08/09/1967	11873	Fr. Franciszek Zok	Poland
29/09/1967	11894	Fr. Francis Gormley	Anglo-Irish

50 years of priesthood

08/09/1967	11244	Fr. John Franko	United States
08/09/1967	11100	Fr. Antonio Lorenzo Rendon	Brazil
08/09/1967	11243	Fr. Edward Ward	United States
23/09/1967	11275	Fr. Denis Grenier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

30/09/1967	10760	Fr. Jaime Dukowski	Lacombe
30/09/1967	11087	Fr. Noël Maheu	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

25 years of religious life

08/09/1992	13444	Fr. Jerome Velichor Abaranam	General Admin.
08/09/1992	13667	Fr. Frisner Anglade	Haiti
08/09/1992	13746	Fr. Anthony Thiagaraj Anthirayas	India
08/09/1992	13534	Fr. Wedner Berard	Haiti
08/09/1992	13569	Fr. Jacques-Brunet Cassamajor	Haiti
08/09/1992	13443	Fr. Sebastian Anthonymuthu Croos	Jaffna
08/09/1992	13516	Fr. Lylie Jayanth Fernando	Colombo
08/09/1992	13519	Fr. Thyagan Emmanuel Fonseka	Colombo
08/09/1992	13436	Fr. Stanislaw Golab	Poland
08/09/1992	13631	Fr. Iyan Daquin Iyo	Lacombe
08/09/1992	13573	Fr. Lambin Willy Katanda	Congo
08/09/1992	13570	Fr. Constant Kienge-Kienge	General Admin.
08/09/1992	13440	Fr. Grzegorz Krzyzostaniak	Poland
08/09/1992	13576	Fr. Okan Emmanuel Mabondo	Congo
08/09/1992	13575	Fr. Kiyungu Didier Mafuta	Congo
08/09/1992	13437	Fr. Lukasz Majdan	Poland
08/09/1992	13566	Fr. William Meng	Australia
08/09/1992	13496	Fr. Samba Moïse Monseju	Congo
08/09/1992	13571	Fr. Dominique Muscadin	Haiti
08/09/1992	13474	Fr. Maciej Pajak	Assumption
08/09/1992	13517	Fr. Ruwan Prasanna Perera	Colombo
08/09/1992	13636	Fr. Katang Guillaume Puludisu	Congo
08/09/1992	13535	Fr. Alphonse Rakotondravelo	General Admin.
08/09/1992	13475	Fr. Tomasz Schawinski	Central European
08/09/1992	13445	Fr. Alrin Soosaipillai	Poland
08/09/1992	13591	Fr. Ashok Stephen	Colombo
08/09/1992	13565	Fr. Anselme Varana	Poland
08/09/1992	13574	Fr. Manyanga Adolphe Vunga	Congo
08/09/1992	13518	Fr. Ajith Kiriieldeniyage Wellington	Colombo
11/09/1992	13439	Fr. Wojciech Turski	Poland
15/09/1992	13376	Fr. David López	Mediterranean
29/09/1992	13472	Fr. Santi Ardiri	Mediterranean
29/09/1992	13598	Fr. Gianpaolo Gugliotta	Mediterranean
29/09/1992	13597	Fr. Giuseppe Rubino	Mediterranean

Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 41-51

Name	Prov./Del.	Born	Died at	Date
Fr. René Charrier	France	08/10/1924	Nantes	21/06/2017
Fr. Marcial Cabon	Argentina-Chile	01/07/1927	Buenos Aires	26/06/2017
Bro. Urbain Mailhot	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	19/09/1925	Richelieu	05/07/2017
Fr. Jean Lamy	Cameroon	07/06/1935	Garoua	09/07/2017
Fr. Francesco Arrigo	Mediterranean	26/08/1937	Santa Maria a Vico	11/07/2017
Fr. Fernand Cosquer	France	27/06/1939	Pontmain	16/07/2017
Fr. José Frisch	Paraguay	06/05/1933	Fischat	17/07/2017
Fr. Cornelius Campbell	Anglo-Irish	09/10/1937	Dublin	18/07/2017
Fr. Antonio Petrone	Mediterranean	20/05/1938	Santa Maria a Vico	30/07/2017
Fr. Peter McCluskey	Anglo-Irish	05/10/1925	Dublin	30/07/2017
Fr. Elinio Isip	Philippines	27/12/1931	Quezon City	06/08/2017

“They are before God, bearing the sign, the kind of character proper to our Institute, the vows common to all its members, the firm habit of the same virtues. We are linked to them by the bonds of a special charity. They are still our brothers and we are theirs. They now live in our mother-house, our main residence. The prayers and the love they retain for us will one day draw us to them and we shall live in our place of rest together with them.” (Letter of Founder to Fr. Courtès, 22 July 1828)

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