



OMI INFORMATION OMI INFORMACION OMI INFORMAZIONE OMI NACHRICHTEN OMI WIADOMOŚCI OMI

OMI Information No. 584 (English)

February 2018

Letter of Fr. Louis Lougen, OMI, Superior General for 17 February 2018

The bicentenary of our first Rule



L.J.C. et M.I.

Dear Brother Oblates and all who form part of the Oblate Family,

Among our celebrations of Oblate history, this year is the bicentenary of the first draft of our Rule. Moved by the Spirit to seek companions to start a society whose aim was re-evangelizing the countryside of Provence, the young Eugene very soon felt the need to give this small, young society a code of life, a rule. It would contain norms to help all its members in the twofold objective that he had already outlined in broad terms to the vicars of Aix when, together with his first five companions, he had asked permission to live in community in the old Carmel of Aix, purchased by him for this purpose.

Our first fathers asked to be able to live together in community and under a common rule. The following is from the “petition” and is a synthesis of the main points of this first Rule, which begins by specifying the two main objectives of our first community.

The end of this Society is not only to work for the salvation of one’s neighbor by dedicating itself to the ministry of preaching; its chief

aim also includes providing its members with the means necessary to practice the virtues of religion to which they are so strongly attracted that the greater number of them would consecrate themselves for life to their observance in some religious Order, did they not nurture the hope of finding in the Missionaries’ community more or less the same advantages as in the religious state to which they wanted to pledge themselves.

We should read this request for permission, from 25 January 1816, more often; it is a “foundational text” of our family and of our spirituality, a veritable “miniature Rule.”

In the introduction to the book, *In Prayer with our Constitutions*, Frs. James E. Sullivan and Richard Haslam speak of Oblate life as a long-term project. We read there: “Being Oblates means living the gospel vision that our Founder and each of us received from the Holy Spirit”. This vision is expressed in our “book of life”, our Constitutions, a written expression of the fundamental elements of our religious and missionary vocation, the permanent expression of our charism. On the one hand, our Constitutions crystallize and reflect the experience of the whole Congregation, reinforcing and confirming our

everyday life. On the other hand, they show us the ideal that should inspire our life's project.

In the Constitutions, we find who we are and who we should be. The real and the ideal are woven into an endless tension which engages us daily in a continual, patient progress from the real to the ideal, causing the ideal to take flesh in the reality of our lives.

The draft of the 1818 Rule was motivated, among other factors, by the beginning of Oblate presence at Notre-Dame du Laus, scheduled for the first days of the year 1819. Eugene felt it important for the life of the young society to maintain internal unity among its members. Here is what he wrote in his Memoirs: *"I believed it was my duty to gather in extraordinary council all those who at that time composed my young society, including the young people who were not yet in the sacred orders. It was to make them understand that, having been called to another diocese for a new foundation, it was necessary to broaden the regulations that governed us and for us to get to work in drafting more extensive constitutions, to form closer ties, to establish a hierarchy, in a word to coordinate everything in such a way that there was only one will and one spirit of behavior"*.

Eugene quickly left for Saint-Laurent-du-Verdon, together with Moreau and Suzanne, and stayed there for three weeks. With his two companions, he had some spiritual conversations and the religious exercises. The rest of the time he spent alone, in his room. There, sitting or kneeling in front of his desk, on which before him he had placed his missionary cross, he wrote the rules and constitutions of his Congregation. That is what Fathers Rambert and Rey tell us in their biography of Eugene.

This Rule is also linked to the introduction into our Family of religious vows, ratified at the Chapter which began and probably ended on October 24 1818.

In his presentation to the Congregation of the commentary of Father Jetté to the Constitutions and Rules, Father Zago defined them as a point

of reference on which the identity of the family members depends; a source for deepening the charisma; a concrete way to discern the will of God; a reflection of the Gospel whose demands they help us understand; a means of renewal for individuals and communities.

He then recalled what Eugene wrote the day after the pontifical approval, 18 February 1826: "The conclusion we must draw is to attach ourselves with all our heart and soul to our Rules and to put into practice exactly what they prescribe". And a few years later, in the notes for the annual retreat (towards the end of 1831): *"So let us hold this precious Rule in high esteem, have it always before our eyes, and even more in the heart, let us continually nourish our souls with the principles it contains, let us do nothing, say nothing, think nothing that is not in conformity with its spirit. It is only in this way that we shall be what God wants us to be and make ourselves worthy of our sublime vocation."*

The Standing Committee for the Constitutions and Rules, created by the Superior General during the first plenary of the 2016 General Council, has begun a project in which it plans to involve the whole Oblate Family in order to preserve the place and value our Constitutions and Rules have in our life and in our mission in the Church and in the world. Upon the occasion of the bicentenary of our Rules, the committee will send to all Oblates a simple and basic questionnaire to help every Oblate reflect and evaluate his life and ministry in the light of this jewel which is our Rule.

The occasion of the bicentenary of our first Rule offers us a privileged opportunity to continue and refocus on the journey of conversion and renewal that we have begun for some years in the Congregation.

It is not enough to have worked for so many years on the new text of our code of life, updating it in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and giving it a language appropriate to our times, rendering it "capable" of guiding us on the journey of moment in which we live. It is still not enough that this text inspire our life and our

missionary work. Nor can we limit ourselves to reading and studying it, using it as an occasional reference for evaluating our Oblate life. For our growth as Oblates and for our charism to continue inspiring us on our journey, we need to be able to assimilate the values that these Constitutions express.

We are living the year of prayer for Oblate vocations. The answer to our vocation, our ability to assimilate the Oblate charism so as to guide us on our journey, all depends on how much we are able to make our own the values contained in our Rule, and on how we make them become part of ourselves. We are called to assimilate them as principles that guide us, as a force that motivates us.

The call that our Constitutions express is a gift from the Lord, and like any gift, we must ask for it, with the desire to transform it into action, with humility and a sense of responsibility. Prayer is essential for internalizing the Rule.

On the day of our perpetual oblation, when we receive the text of the Constitutions and Rules, we are told those words that contain a promise of life: “Do this and you will live!”. And Constitution 168 brings us back to that very moment when it reminds us that “with his oblation, each Oblate takes responsibility for the common heritage of the Congregation expressed in the Constitutions and Rules and in the family tradition”. The common heritage of the Congregation is a legacy that we

must receive, cherish and pass on, together with the traditions of our family. Every Oblate is exhorted to “let himself be guided by these norms in creative fidelity to the legacy handed on by Saint Eugene de Mazenod”.

Pope Francis, addressing the Oblate capitulants on 7 October 2016, towards the end of our 36th General Chapter, gave us an invitation in which he joined the Rule to the Last Testament of our Founder. “Following the example of the Founder,” Francis told us, “charity among yourselves is your first rule of life, the heart of every apostolic action; and zeal for the salvation of souls is the natural consequence of this fraternal charity”. With these words, the pope invites us to see in our Rule the reflection of the charismatic inspiration of our common father and his final Testament. Charity among us and, outside, apostolic zeal remain the two pillars on which our charism rests, our reason for being in the Church and in the world, the synthesis of our identity and our missionary activity.

May this anniversary find us available to continue the path of renewal, always active in our lives and in our communities. May Mary and Saint Eugene bless our family and guide it on the paths of its mission in today’s world!

Your brother in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,

Fr. Louis Lougen, OMI

General Administration

GENERAL SECRETARIAT Statistics 2018

Introduction: The source for Oblate statistics is the database of members in the General Secretariat at the General House, updated and adjusted with reports which come in from the various Oblate provinces, delegations and missions. The records of first vows, final vows, ordinations, departures and deaths which are received daily in Rome go to make up the annual report.

For various reasons, these records sometimes do not arrive at the Secretariat in a timely fashion. The numbers included in this publication, especially related to scholastics, vows, ordinations and departures, reflect not only the statistics of the year that has just passed, but also of some previous years.

GENERAL STATISTICS –January 2018

JANUARY 2017							JANUARY 2018					
Total	Fr	B1	B2	PD	Schol.		Total	Fr	B1	B2	PD	Schol.
41	38	3	0	0	0	General Admin.	38	35	3	0	0	0
838	555	49	3	0	231	Africa-Madagascar	843	559	48	3	0	233
436	354	26	3	0	53	Latin America	437	345	26	3	0	64
806	583	25	2	2	194	Asia-Oceania	812	578	23	5	2	204
657	564	85	0	2	6	Canada-USA	622	534	79	0	2	7
931	773	96	3	3	56	Europe	914	761	92	4	3	54
3709	*2867	284	11	7	540	Total	3666	*2812	271	14	7	562

*Of whom 47 are bishops, 1 is an Apostolic Prefect.

SUMMARY (as of January 2018)

MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE	January 2017	January 2018
Cardinals	2	2
Archbishops	8	8
Bishops	37	35
Prefect Apostolic	1	1
Priests	2818	2766
Priests with temporary vows	1	0
Brothers with perpetual vows	284	271
Brothers who are permanent deacons	7	7
Brothers with temporary vows	11	14
Scholastics	540	562
Total number of Oblates	3709	3666

PERSONNEL BY UNIT
(As of 17 January 2018)

The next table shows the number of Oblates according to the Unit to which they belong. For example, all the Oblates attached to the Zambia Delegation are listed there, even though they are juridically members of the United States Province, or may be temporarily living elsewhere. Some of the Zambian scholastics are in Cedara, others in the U.S. etc.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
	35	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38

AFRICA – MADAGASCAR

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
Angola	14	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	16
Botswana	9	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	11
Cameroun	69	0	11	0	44	0	0	2	0	0	126
Central S. A.	26	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	31
Congo	96	0	12	0	30	0	0	1	0	0	139
Kenya	10	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	17
Lesotho	75	0	9	0	23	0	0	2	2	1	112
Madagascar	43	0	3	2	28	0	0	0	0	0	76
Namibia	30	0	1	0	9	0	0	2	1	0	43
Natal	44	0	1	0	10	0	0	0	1	0	56
Nigeria	11	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	35
Northern S. A.	31	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	37
Sahara	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Senegal	37	0	2	1	18	0	0	0	0	0	58
Zambia	34	0	3	0	20	0	0	2	0	0	59
Zimbabwe	10	0	3	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	24
Total	541	0	48	3	233	0	1	11	5	1	843

LATIN AMERICA

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
Argentina-Chile	31	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	35
Baja California	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Bolivia	17	0	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	26
Brazil	58	0	2	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	65
Colombia	12	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	16
Cuba	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
French Guyana	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
Guatemala	15	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	21
Haiti	90	0	8	0	28	0	0	1	0	0	127
Mexico	38	0	2	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	51
Paraguay	25	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	30
Peru	13	0	2	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	21
Puerto Rico	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Uruguay	8	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	10
Venezuela	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	10
Total	339	0	26	2	64	0	0	6	0	0	437

ASIA – OCEANIA

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
Australia	39	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	42
Bangladesh	26	0	0	0	10	0	0	1	0	0	37
China	16	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	19
Colombo	107	0	6	0	26	2	0	1	0	0	142
India	92	0	1	0	43	0	0	0	0	0	136
Indonesia	33	0	0	4	9	0	0	0	0	0	46
Jaffna	89	0	2	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	119
Japan - Korea	18	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Korea	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	7

Pakistan	30	0	0	0	7	0	0	1	0	0	38
Philippines	76	0	9	0	17	0	0	1	0	1	104
Thailand	19	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	26
Turkmenistan	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Vietnam	19	0	3	0	53	0	0	0	0	0	75
Total	571	0	23	5	204	2	0	6	0	1	812

CANADA - UNITED STATES

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
Assumption	47	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Lacombe	141	0	24	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	172
N.D.-du-Cap	116	0	36	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	157
United States	218	0	16	0	7	0	0	1	1	0	243
Total	522	0	79	0	7	2	0	9	3	0	622

EUROPE

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	Dea.	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Tot.
Anglo-Irish	66	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70
Belg./Holland	54	0	11	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	67
Byelorussia	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Central European	90	0	23	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	119
France	100	0	13	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	116
France/ Benelux	30	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	31
Mediterranean	148	0	8	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	164
Poland	237	0	30	2	39	0	0	0	0	0	308
Romania	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Ukraine	26	0	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	32
Total	758	0	92	4	54	3	0	3	0	0	914
Total	2766	0	271	14	562	7	1	35	8	2	3666

Legenda: Fr.=Father; Fr.T.=Father without Oblate No.; Br.=Brother; Br.T.=Brother with temp. vows; Sc.=Scholastics; Dea.=Perm. Deacon; Pr.Ap.=Prefect Apostolic; Ep.=Bishop; ArEp.=Archbishop; Card.=Cardinal.

Perpetual Oblations – (*reported in 2017*)

No.	Title	SURNAME	NAME	DATE	UNIT
14805	Bro.	NDIAYE	Joseph Diamé	11.12.2016	Senegal
14806	Fr.	SADIO	Joseph	11.12.2016	Senegal
14792	Sch.	DEVA DASS	Augustine Bernard	24.01.2017	India
14793	Sch.	JESURAJ	Sebastian	25.01.2017	India
14794	Sch.	NICHOLAS	Pravin Pascal Raja	25.01.2017	India
14790	Sch.	BARKAT	Adnan	17.02.2017	Pakistan
14788	Sch.	IMTIAZ	Rizwan	17.02.2017	Pakistan
14789	Sch.	MASIH	Naeem Yousaf	17.02.2017	Pakistan
14791	Sch.	SENARATHNE	Dinusha Savindhu	23.02.2017	Colombo
14795	Sch.	ANTHONY PILLAI	Jude Carowf	25.03.2017	Jaffna
14796	Sch.	AMIRTHANATHAR	Siyansthan Jenis	01.05.2017	Jaffna
14797	Sch.	SAHAYATHASAN	James Surenthirarajah	01.05.2017	Jaffna
14798	Sch.	MWAMBA	Elvis Ngosa	01.05.2017	Zambia

14799	Sch.	ZULU	Mathews	01.05.2017	Zambia
14801	Sch.	MUCHIRA	Zachary Mwenda	21.05.2017	Kenya
14800	Sch.	JEAN-LOUIS	Germéus	25.05.2017	Colombia
14724	Sch.	SAMEDY	Louiseau	25.05.2017	Haiti
14802	Sch.	MIRANDA ATOCHE	Samuel David	06.08.2017	Peru
14830	Sch.	BOON	Dannis Jr. Tabella	15.08.2017	Philippines
14831	Sch.	DIGNOS	Ian	16.08.2017	Philippines
14832	Sch.	DIHAIR	Paul Udomsak	17.08.2017	Thailand
14833	Sch.	LAGNAODA	Harold Horlador	18.08.2017	Philippines
14834	Sch.	ORNOPIA	Dennis	19.08.2017	Philippines
14835	Sch.	PACIENTE	Roy	20.08.2017	Philippines
14836	Sch.	SOTOMIL	Peter Anthony Divinagracia	21.08.2017	Philippines
14812	Sch.	COSTA	Pinto Louis	25.08.2017	Bangladesh
14804	Fr.	DLADLA	Andile Christian	26.08.2017	Zimbabwe
14817	Sch.	NYAMBE	Felix	02.09.2017	Zambia
14818	Sch.	PATRICIO SILVA	Victor Manuel	02.09.2017	Zambia
14821	Sch.	MBADI NYEK NTEP	Luc-Raymond	08.09.2017	Cameroun
14824	Sch.	SA'A NGOUNI	Simplice	08.09.2017	Cameroun
14819	Sch.	BALEMO BADJOKO	Fiston César Eugene	08.09.2017	Congo
14814	Sch.	FAVARD	Nelio	08.09.2017	Haiti
14815	Sch.	GASPAR	Louis Kendy	08.09.2017	Haiti
14816	Bro.	MARIUS	François	08.09.2017	Haiti
14837	Sch.	RAKOTONDRANAIVO	Andre Emile	08.09.2017	Madagascar
14838	Sch.	RANDRIAMAMPINANINA	Jean Bruno	08.09.2017	Madagascar
14822	Sch.	OBIEJE	Basil Ebubechukwu	08.09.2017	Nigeria
14823	Sch.	ONYEMA	Christian Michael Chigozie	08.09.2017	Nigeria
14826	Sch.	DYRDA	Marcin	08.09.2017	Poland
14827	Sch.	KLOCEK	Cezary	08.09.2017	Poland
14828	Sch.	LICHACZEWSKI	Piotr	08.09.2017	Poland
14829	Sch.	ZIÓLKOWSKI	Daniel	08.09.2017	Poland
14807	Fr.	DIENG	Hyacinthe	08.09.2017	Senegal
14825	Sch.	DOROSH	Vadym	08.09.2017	Ukraine
14808	Sch.	FAYE	Jean Pierre	09.09.2017	Senegal
14809	Sch.	GUEYE	Jean Noël	10.09.2017	Senegal
14810	Sch.	SAMBOU	Louis Barthelemy Koutakone	11.09.2017	Senegal
14811	Sch.	SENE SAMBA	Pierre	12.09.2017	Senegal
14842	Fr.	KIABILUA LANDANA	Jean-Bosco	16.09.2017	Angola
14841	Sch.	SANGO PINDALI	Paulo	16.09.2017	Angola
14813	Bro.	TAVODZERA	Mathias Njabulo	23.09.2017	Zimbabwe
14843	Sch.	LE KHAC Tuyen	Paul	07.10.2017	France
14844	Sch.	NGUYEN TRONG MANH	Joseph	07.10.2017	France
14845	Sch.	NGUYEN VAN NGHIEU	Antoine	07.10.2017	France
14846	Sch.	TRAN ANH DUNG	Joseph	07.10.2017	France
14839	Sch.	SHEELEKENI	Josef Hafeni	14.10.2017	Namibia

14820	Sch.	MZOLO	Nqobile Robert	14.10.2017	Natal
14840	Sch.	JOHANNES	Vitalis Shimwetheleni	08.12.2017	Namibia

Obediences – 2017
(* indicates first Obedience)

DATE	TITLE	SURNAME	NAME	ORIGIN	DESTINATION
16.01	Sch.*	KEETHAPONGALAN	Bede Sujaharan	Jaffna	Mexico
18.01	Sch.*	MIRANDA DUARTE	Derils Gualberto	Paraguay	Paraguay
02.02	Sch.*	SIMSANG	Sobuj Samuel	Colombo	Japan-Korea
01.03	Sch.*	ONDOY	Stephen Calungsod	Philippines	Philippines
29.03	Fr.*	PAPI	Jacopo	Uruguay	Mediterranean
10.05	Sch.*	DUDEK	Karol Zbigniew	Poland	Poland
10.05	Sch.*	GRABKA	Robert	Poland	Poland
10.05	Sch.*	HETMAN	Adam	Poland	Poland
10.5	Sch.*	KONIECZNY	Jaroslav Mariusz	Poland	Poland
10.05	Sch.*	LEMEKH	Pawel	Poland	Poland
10.05	Sch.*	MATORYN	Slawomir Stanislaw	Poland	Poland
10.05	Sch.*	PILARCZYK	Pawel	Poland	Assumption
10.05	Sch.*	CHE PAAU	Antonio	Guatemala	Guatemala
23.06	Fr.*	DUVERSEAU	Jean Dielhomme	Haiti	Haiti
30.06	Sch.*	THIBINYANE	Peter Moabi	Lesotho	Lesotho
14.07	Fr.*	DLADLA	Bongani Patrick	S. Afr. Northern	S. Afr. Northern
28.07	Fr.*	MPHANA	Simon Kefuwe	S. Africa Central	S. Africa Central
01.08	Sch.*	LIPALATA	Benny Kupangula	Zambia	Zambia
24.08	Sch.*	ANTONYPILLAI	Jude Carowf	Jaffna	Jaffna
11.09	Sch.*	SENARATHNE	Dinusha Savindhu	Colombo	Colombo
25.09	Sch.*	BERCHMANS	Jerman Jesuraj	India	India
25.09	Sch.*	DEVA DASS	Augustine Bernard	India	India
25.09	Sch.*	JESURAJ	Sebastian	India	India
25.09	Sch.*	NICHOLAS	Pravin Pascal Raja	India	India
25.09	Sch.*	ARUL RAJ	Casmir	India	Australia
28.09	Fr.*	MEC	Karel	Central European	Natal
07.10	Sch.*	BARKAT	Adnan	Pakistan	Pakistan
07.10	Sch.*	IMTIAZ	Rizwan	Pakistan	Pakistan
07.10	Sch.*	MASIH	Naeem Yousaf	Pakistan	Pakistan
24.11	Sch.*	NGUYEN NGOC THANH	Casimir	France	France
24.11	Bro.*	DLADLA	Andile Christian	Natal	Natal
02.01	Fr.	CORDEIRO DE OLIVEIRA	Antonio Genivaldo	Colombo	Brazil
06.01	Fr.	PINON GAYTAN	Gilberto Florent	General Admin.	Mexico
06.01	Fr.	ROIS ALONSO	Luis Ignacio	General Admin	Mediterranean
13.01	Fr.	NDJOKO BWATU	Dominique Savio	Congo	France
31.01	Fr.	KEDAH	Martin	Cameroon	France
10.02	Fr.	FERNANDO	Santhiyogu Christy	Jaffna	Poland
11.04	Fr.	RENAUD	Daniel Lucien	N.D. du Cap	USA
20.04	Fr.	FRITZ	Miguel	General Admin	Paraguay

27.04	Fr.	DUKOWSKI	Jaime G.	US Province	OMI Lacombe
09.05	Fr.	MOSOEU	Emmanuel Maphoma	General Admin	S. Africa Central
09.05	Fr.	WAIDYASEKARA	Clement	General Admin	Colombo
13.05	Fr.	FILION	Robert	OMI Lacombe	N.D. du Cap
20.06	Fr.	ABRANAM	Jerome Velichor	Jaffna	General Admin
20.06	Fr.	SAEZ MARTIN	Diego	Ukraine	General Admin
23.06	Fr.	BELEY	Mark Yoniz Capili	China	Philippines
10.07	Fr.	AUGOSTINE	Velankanni	Uruguay	India
10.07	Fr.	MARK	Antony Raj	Uruguay	India
16.07	Fr.	CRUGNOLA	Gabriel	Cameroon	France
28.07	Fr.	MICHALAK	Paul	N.D. du Cap	France
01.08	Fr.	CONCARDI	Mauro	General Admin	Mediterranean
01.08	Bro	LOIN	Ryszard Adam	Poland	General Admin
11.09	Fr	MICHALSKI	Maciej	General Admin	Poland
25.09	Fr.	OSIECKI	Bogdan	OMI Lacombe	Assumption

Oblates in First Formation - 2017
(Reported as of January 2018)

Year	Scholastics	Bros. In Temp. vows	First Vows	Perpetual Vows	Ordinations
2017	562	14	94	60	46
2016	540	11	90	46	65
2015	570	12	107	49	50
2014	524	13	129	79	55
2013	558	3	101	49	76
2012	627	9	87	100	84
2011	685	17	132	72	74
2010	672	19	82	47	32

Deaths and Departures - 2017

Deaths **reported** in 2017: **91 (1 Bishop, 78 Priests, 12 Brothers)**
2016: **96** 2015: **94** 2014: **108** 2013: **95** 2012: **103**

Departures **reported** in 2017: **44 (19 priests, 23 scholastics, 2 Brothers)**
2016: 72 (17 priests, 54 scholastics, 1 Brother)
2015: 43 (18 priests, 21 scholastics, 4 Brothers)
2014: 131 (19 priests, 105 scholastics, 7 Brothers)
2013: 116 (19 priests, 91 scholastics, 6 Brothers)
2012: 74 (22 priests, 49 scholastics, 3 Brothers)
2011: 47 (16 priests, 31 scholastics)

2017:

- 18 scholastics did not renew their temporary vows.
- 5 scholastics were dispensed from temporary vows.
- 2 Brothers were dispensed from perpetual vows
- 6 priests were dismissed from the Congregation.
- 7 priests were laicized
- 6 priests were definitively incardinated into a diocese.

Asia-Oceania

KOREA**OMI missionary: bearer of the Olympic torch**

(The Olympic Committee of Korea has chosen an Oblate, Fr. Vincenzo BORDO, for a special honor.)

“This is the Korean Olympic Committee speaking. Are you Mr. Kim Ha Jong?” says the voice on the other end of the phone. I immediately think: “They have noticed my cycling skills and they are calling me to be part of the national team”. This thought passes through my mind like a flash; then a second thought: “But at the Winter Olympic Games there is no cycling. So?”. I concentrate and listen more attentively to the one who is speaking to me. Is this a stupid joke? “We are calling you,” continues the speaker, “because we want you to be one of the bearers of the Olympic torch, a torch bearer.” “Excuse me—please—there must be a mistake. I am Vincenzo Bordo and I am an Italian”. “Yes we know”. “But I am a foreigner,” I continue. “Yes, that’s why we are calling you. The spirit of the Olympic Games is a spirit of universal brotherhood and welcome, and with this gesture, we would like to say to our fellow countrymen that Korea is one country and that all those who live and work here are part of this people, without discrimination or prejudice, and are part of this wonderful story that we are building together”.

With hesitation and joy I accept the offer. At the same time I feel honored to live and work in a nation that is capable of expressing these values of acceptance and kindness towards immigrants.

Yes, I am a foreigner too. Today, talking about immigrants is not easy because this word is too often

associated with social degradation, violence, rape, robbery, theft and much more negativity. I also have experienced this difficult reality.

I remember the fear and the prejudices I encountered at the start of my life in Korea. There was misunderstanding because we did not know anything about each other: I did not understand nor speak the language, I did not know the habits of the Koreans; they did not know my culture, my origins, the reasons why I had come to a country so far from mine. I felt their distrust, their fear, so much so that children, startled and scared, chased me, shouting: “Stranger, foreigner, go home, go home”

Then I started to run a center for the poor and for the street people. Next, the municipal officials accused me of tarnishing the good name of the city since, because of our center, so many of the poor, the abandoned, the beggars came, even from outside, to ask for help and have a hot meal which only we were providing.

Slowly our center has become bigger and bigger: 550 meals distributed every day, a dormitory for the homeless, a small workshop for the unemployed, 4 family homes for street children. To handle all these activities, there is the constant effort of 600 volunteers, 5000 benefactors, 40 young employees—social workers, teachers, counselors, administrative employees—properly hired. It was obvious to everyone that our association was responding to people’s real needs and at that point, no one could deny the positive contribution it made to Korean society.

At that moment, the desire to discredit me, to hurt me, perhaps even to destroy me, was born in the

heart of jealous people of bad faith. So for about a year I found myself running between the police station, the prosecutor and the court because of being falsely accused of stealing the money of the donors and having ... listen to this ... even sexually abused some of our children. Yes, I too have been accused of sexual violence! How did it end? The one who accused me of these serious crimes is now in jail for extortion, defamation and forgery, while I am here to carry the Olympic flame.

I understand very well that when a stranger arrives, at first one has an instinctive fear and a natural anxiety because this person is different from us, speaks a language that we do not understand, eats food that smells disgusting and prays to a God we do not know. ...

But Pope Francis says: “It is important to promote the culture of the encounter, the openness to the other as a face, as a person, as a brother and sister to get to know and respect, with their history, their strengths and weaknesses, their richness and limitations. Do not be afraid of the differences nor of the conflicts that normally exist”.

TURKMENISTAN

“The Catholic community grows with enthusiasm”

Ashgabat (Agenzia Fides) - “The period spent in Turkmenistan was a very positive experience. The participation in the catechesis held in the church of Ashgabat was very high: the entire community of the capital was present - about 100 people - but there were also those who came from other parts of the country. In the days following Christmas, then, we priests reached the faithful who live far from the city”. This is what Father Diego SÁEZ MARTÍN told Agenzia Fides: the Oblate of Mary Immaculate, a missionary in Turkmenistan from 2010 to 2013, who has just returned to Italy after spending three weeks in the Central Asian State to help his confreres in the preparation and in the carrying out of the liturgical celebrations during the Christmas period.

The theme of catechesis held by Fr. Diego was “You will be like God”, the phrase with which the devil tempted Adam and Eve: “I explained

how the Father really makes us like him, if we do not turn away from him, as our biblical ancestors erroneously did. I tried to explain it in practical, not theological terms. On the day of departure, for example, my flight was delayed and I arrived at the destination exactly five minutes before the start of the first catechesis. I did not prepare myself well: I let the Spirit act”.

Fr. Diego says: “In the following days, I left with Fr. Rafał CHILIMONIUK to visit the places where there are other Catholics who could not reach Ashgabat. We traveled about 2000 km, meeting also people of Muslim faith, who wanted to know our faith. We also visited a family converted from Islam to Christianity: a family: father, mother and two children, who live in a small village, 750 kilometers from Ashgabat.

Providence allowed me to meet them about six years ago, when I was permanently on a mission in Turkmenistan. At the time I went to visit them once a month for the preparation for baptism, which they then received”.

Regarding religious conversion, the priest explains: “In Turkmenistan, the Constitution grants religious freedom and protects the possibility of converting to another faith. Problems for those passing from one belief to another can arise from the family of origin or neighbors, who sometimes do not accept this change, and consider it a betrayal”.

According to the Oblate, the Catholic community in Turkmenistan is undergoing a process of transformation: “In the past, the group of the faithful was composed mostly of people of Russian, Ukrainian, Polish or German origin. At the same time, the percentage of Turkmen ethnic faithful is increasing”.

“The community grows with enthusiasm and could be even bigger, because there is great interest and curiosity and people are open to friendship with Catholics. The problem is that, currently, there are only two priests for the whole country and this represents a great limitation”, concludes Fr. Sáez Martín. (LF) (Agenzia Fides, 12/1/2018)

PAKISTAN**Oblates join prayers for peace between India and Pakistan**

Lahore (*Agenzia Fides*) - A prayer addressed to God, a prayerful silence, a common song to invoke the gift of peace, calling for “mutual respect and the promotion of harmony and development between Pakistan and India”: is the initiative promoted by the National Commission for Interreligious Dialogue and Ecumenism, in the Episcopal Conference of Pakistan. As Fr. Francis Nadeem OFM Capp, Secretary of the Commission reported to *Agenzia Fides*, the ecumenical prayer meeting on the theme “Peace between India and Pakistan” was held at the border between the two nations, in Ganda Singhwala, near Kasur. “We prayed, we held hands together, we lit candles as a sign of the heartfelt request to God but also of a personal commitment”, said the Franciscan friar to *Agenzia Fides*, explaining that the initiative was carried out during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, involving leaders and faithful of other Christian communities in the country.

The delegation visited the Catholic Church of Kasur, led by Fr. Bashart EXUPARE, missionary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, near the Indo-Pakistani border. Protestant Christian Pastors of the Presbyterian Church, the Salvation Army, the Anglican Church of Pakistan and representatives of the Catholic Church were present.

Christians in Pakistan recalled that in 2017 India and Pakistan celebrated 70 years of independence

from the British Empire (August 15, 1947) and since then have been suffering the negative effects of a long conflict, given the developments regarding the last decades. It has become a risky confrontation between two nuclear powers.

The “partition” between the two states was a traumatic event and India and Pakistan, from the first day of their existence, were the scene of killings and violence that in the following years became an authentic war when the armies of the two nations met in the Kashmir valley, a mountainous area that both countries claim as their own. In 1965 and 1971, India and Pakistan clashed again in Kashmir and since then the tension has remained latent. In the area, from the mid-1980s to today, Pakistani guerrillas and Indian repression have caused more than 40 thousand deaths, official sources report. The presence on the political scene of the two countries of nationalist forces (such as the Barathya Janata Party in government in India) fuels hostility, in a confrontation that also exploits the religious factor (Hindus towards Muslims).

“70 years after the beginning of their rivalry, reconciliation is possible”, the Commission of the Bishops’ Conference notes to *Fides*. The spokesman of the Commission, Catholic Pakistani priest Fr. Inayat Bernard tells *Fides*: “India and Pakistan have much in common and can reach an agreement that brings mutual benefits to their respective populations. Peace is the greatest gift. We will continue to work and pray for peace”. (PA) (*Agenzia Fides*, 26/1/2018)

Europe

POLAND**Bishop Eugeniusz Juretzko, OMI: 1939-2018**

The Bishop-emeritus of the Diocese of Yokadouma (Cameroon), Bishop Eugeniusz JURETZKO, died on 16 January 2018 at a hospital in Lublin in his native Poland.

As a young priest, he was part of a group of four Oblates who left Poland in 1969 to study French in Paris before sailing for their new mission in

Cameroon in January of 1970. For 21 years, he organized mission stations, built churches and chapels, organized education and sanitation, and took part in dialogue with Muslim leaders. His fellow Oblate, Archbishop Yves PLUMEY (†1991) appointed him Episcopal Vicar of the Archdiocese of Garoua in 1982. He also served as Vicar General for Archbishop Plumey’s successor, Cardinal Christian Tumi.

On 20 May 1991, Eugeniusz Juretzko was named

the first bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Yokadouma, a territory of over 30,000 km² and currently, over 20,000 Catholics. One of his most outstanding works was the evangelization of the Pygmies, organizing schools for them in the forest and becoming their advocate for just treatment.

Bishop Juretzko's retirement from pastoral governance of the diocese had been accepted by Pope Francis on 25 April 2017. He spent his last months in his homeland, but his mortal remains will be returned to his diocese for burial.

Latin America

CHILE

Commitment of OMI laity

Dear world-wide Oblate Family of the Orb, rejoice with us, because on December 16, 2017, we had the first commitment or renewal of commitment of lay men and women for the year. The day chosen corresponded to the day when 69 years ago, in 1948 the first OMI's destined for the Mission in Chile arrived. The ceremony took place in the City of Antofagasta, in the Chapel of St. Eugene de Mazenod, St. Paul Parish.

December 17 coincides with the day of the beatification (in 2011) of the OMI martyrs of Pozuelo de Alarcón-Spain, a group that included Cándido Castán, a layman who stayed committed until his death in 1936. On December 16, the martyrdom of another OMI group killed in Laos in the 1960's is remembered in the Catholic Christian calendar; this group is composed of six religious men and the lay catechist formed by the Oblates, Paul Thoj Xyooj,

This celebration was very special, because the statutes and directories for the OMI Laity in Chile were distributed for the first time. These were organized and written by one of the current animators, Oscar Quiñonez Martínez, LOMI, with the help of his fellow minister. Sebastián Cortés Cruz, LOMI. This document is based on the statutes of Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay; they took the best parts from these and added the contributions of the laity and consecrated personnel of the Chilean sector.

Eighteen brothers and sisters made their commitment which took place before the official witness of the congregation for such things, the Vicar Provincial and Major Superior of Chile, Fr. Sergio SERRANO, assisted by professed

Oblates: Frs. René GONZALES and Alejandro OSORIO, and Brother Miguel DÍAS.

During the month of January, it is expected that there will be the same ceremony in the cities of Santiago de Chile and María Elena, the last inhabited nitrate factory in the world, with five more lay people who on this occasion could not attend for various reasons, but who have prepared for this moment. (Fr. Sergio Serrano, omi)

CHILE

Pope Francis with the Oblates of Chile in Iquique

On January 18, during his apostolic journey to Chile, the Holy Father Pope Francis visited the small Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Iquique where the Oblates serve. On that day, the Holy Father celebrated a Eucharist with the people of northern Chile who gathered at the Lobito Campus in Iquique. There he crowned the statue of the Our Lady of Carmen of "La Tirana", the Patroness of the locality. After the celebration, he visited the Shrine where he had a moment of prayer and the blessing of some sick people. Then the Pope had his lunch together with the entourage that accompanied him and the Oblates in Saint Eugene de Mazenod retreat house, where he rested before his departure for Peru.



Anniversaries -- March 2018

65 Years of priesthood

22/03/1953	08797	Fr. Pierre Tissot	France
------------	-------	-------------------	--------

60 Years of religious life

25/03/1958	11387	Bro. Adam Kruk	Poland
------------	-------	----------------	--------

60 Years of priesthood

01/03/1958	11944	Fr. Louis Jolly	France
19/03/1958	11362	Fr. Peter King	Australia
22/03/1958	09653	Fr. Philippe Alin	France
22/03/1958	09803	Fr. Robert Loison	France
22/03/1958	09251	Fr. Amador Lopez	United States
22/03/1958	09252	Fr. José María Riega	Argentina-Chile
30/03/1958	09433	Fr. Josef Ostendorf	Central European
30/03/1958	09435	Fr. Gerhard Scheuermann	Central European

50 Years of religious life

19/03/1968	12182	Fr. Denis Béland	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
25/03/1968	11918	Archbishop Buti Joseph Tlhagale	Northern S. A.

50 Years of priesthood

30/03/1968	11524	Fr. Dermot Mills	Anglo-Irish
31/03/1968	11166	Fr. Michael McMahon	Australia

25 Years of priesthood

20/03/1993	13069	Fr. Omar Maza	Argentina-Chile
------------	-------	---------------	-----------------

Suffrages for our Deceased

2017 -- No. 3-7

Name	Prov./Del.	Age	Died at	Date
Fr. Yves L'Henoret	France	85	Pontmain (France)	11/01/2018
Bro. Louis Rioux	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	102	Richelieu (Canada)	12/01//2018
Fr. Jean Maboge	Belgium/Netherlands	95	Marche-en-Famenne (Belgium)	13/01/2018
Bishop Eugeniusz Juretzko	Cameroon	78	Lubliniec (Poland)	16/01/2018
Fr. Danilo Ceccato	Mediterranean	75	Dakar (Senegal)	23/01/2018

“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)

OMI INFORMATION is an unofficial publication
of the General Administration of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
via Aurelia 290, I 00165 Roma, Italy
Fax: (39) 06 39 37 53 22 E-mail: information@omigen.org
<http://www.omeworld.org>
Editor: James Allen; Webmaster: Shanil Jayawardena
Printing & circulation: Shanil Jayawardena