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The Cross is in the Heart of DeMazenodian Spirituality

Due to the COVID19 restrictions, the celebration of Holy Week and Easter will be different (again) this year. We all feel pandemic fatigue – many grieve the loss of loved ones, jobs or financial security. We all deeply seek some hope and consolation. As we look up to the Cross, we can see the power of God bringing sense out of confusion, hope out of despair and life out of suffering and death. The Cross is at the heart of DeMazenodian spirituality.

When Eugene de Mazenod invited Fr. Tempier to form a missionary community, he directed him to “read this letter at the foot of your crucifix” in order to better discern his answer to his invitation to join the congregation. This approach echoes Eugene’s own experience, when the life-changing highlight of his journey of conversion happened as he contemplated the cross on Good Friday. The significance of the cross is mentioned in our Oblate Constitutions and Rules, “The cross of Jesus Christ is central to our mission.” (C.4), as well, “Through the eyes of our crucified Saviour we see the world which he redeemed with his blood, desiring that those in whom he continues to suffer will know also the power of his resurrection.” (C.4)

If we understand oblation as a dynamic, living sacrifice in the sense of drawing closer to God and accompanying people into the original vision of creation and intended intimate relationship with God, the cross can be seen as a sign of oblation. “The Oblate cross which is received at perpetual profession is a

constant reminder of the love of the Saviour who wishes to draw all hearts to himself and sends us out as his co-workers.” (C.63)

There is a direct connection between the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifices offered by Christians. Jesus is the heart of that covenant commitment between human beings and God. For Christians, sacrifice is more so spiritual and moral rather than physical. Praise and thanksgiving, prayer and intercession, communion and celebration express offering given to God as a response to the gifts already received.

When we look at the cross from the perspective of God’s love, the reality of sin and offering a living sacrifice, we are reminded that the crucifixion cannot be reflected on as an isolated event from the whole Paschal mystery. During the Last Supper, Jesus entrusted to us the continuous living sacrifice of the Eucharist: His Body given up for us and His Blood as the new covenant poured out for us for the forgiveness of sins. This same evening, Jesus taught us about sacrificial love expressed in service to others. On Good Friday Jesus redeemed us through the ultimate sacrifice of the cross when God died in order to give us life. The fact of the resurrection opens the way to renewed relationship with God. “God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.” (1 John 4:9)

By Fr. Jarek Pachocki, OMI
(Vocation Director - OMI Lacombe)

GENERAL ADMISNITRATION

SUPERIOR GENERAL

Fr. General undergoes successful surgery

(Editor's Note: On March 30, 2021, the Most Rev. Louis Lougen, OMI, Superior General underwent successful surgery in Massachusetts, United States. Below is a communication from the Vicar General in Rome announcing the news and outlining Fr. Lougen's recovery period. Your continued prayers for Fr. Lougen's recovery are greatly appreciated.)

Dear brother Oblates,
 Father John Hanley, Superior at IHM Residence in Tewksbury, just wrote a short note to communicate that the surgery on our Superior General was successful. While his appendix was not removed (because it looked normal),

the gall bladder and a portion of his colon were removed. The surgeon was also able to stitch back together the two extremities of the colon that were cut, which is also good news.

Father General will be in recovery for a while and later today he will be moved back to his room. If everything goes well, he will remain in the hospital for 3 to 5 days, then he will return to the Oblate residence.

We thank God for this good news and keep praying for the full and quick recovery of our Father! I personally also thank you all for your prayers and support.

Paolo Archiati, OMI
 (Vicar General)

GENERAL COMMITTEE OF OBLATE BROTHERS

Year of St. Joseph

*Benoit DOSQUET, OMI
 Secretary of the Committee*

The announcement of a year dedicated to Saint Joseph on December 8 came as a surprise. Pope Pius IX proclaimed Saint Joseph, patron of the Universal Church and 150 years later, Pope Francis proposes a jubilee year in his honor.

For us Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Saint Joseph is the protector of the Congregation and the patron saint of Oblate Brothers. Thus, the General Committee of Oblate Brothers would like to offer the Congregation and the entire Mazenodian family an opportunity, between March 19 and May 1, 2021, to highlight this event.

Saint Joseph is the man of silence. Not a word from him in the Gospels. But when he woke up from his dream, Joseph did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took his wife to his house, but he did not unite with her, until she gave birth to a son, to whom he gave the

name Jesus. (Mt 1, 24-25). This trust in God was strengthened by Joseph's fidelity to prayer. Moreover, the Evangelist Matthew specifies that the encounter with the Angel took place in a dream. Now the dream in the biblical experience is not synonymous with dreaming as we understand it, but it evokes the state of the believer entirely turned towards God and listening to his Word. The Evangelist Luke emphasizes the obedience of Joseph and Mary to the prescriptions of the Law.

In his Apostolic Letter "Patris Corde", Pope Francis does not hesitate to write:

"During the hidden years in Nazareth, Jesus learned at the school of Joseph to do the will of the Father."

Through his Letter, Pope Francis wants to help us discover in the figure of Saint Joseph:

"so close to our own human experience"; his humility, his discretion, his confidence, which make him a fraternal support, a paternal recourse, a spiritual support. "Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily,

discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble."

While cholera was ravaging Europe, on March 23, 1832, the Founder wrote to Fr. Guigues:

"My dear Father Guigues, it is very kind of you to have remembered that I live under the patronage of great St. Joseph and not to have forgotten me in your prayers to this Saint on the day of his feast..."

I believe his soul more excellent than all the celestial intelligences, above which it is indubitably placed in heaven. In that blessed abode Jesus Christ, Mary and Joseph are just as inseparable as they were on earth. I believe in these things with the most certain faith...I am quite persuaded as well that the body of St. Joseph is already in glory... And so you would search in vain for his relics over the face of the earth. You will no more find his relics than any of his holy spouse...

No one has ever presumed to produce even false ones of these two eminent personages, and I consider this as due to a special divine disposition. I simply record the fact, you will give it what value you please. For myself, it is but a confirmation of my strongly held view and I make bold to profess it. If it attracts your piety, meditate on it and I have no doubt that you will accept it, I mean the whole body of my teaching on the Arch-saint whom we venerate with all our hearts."

The 1896 Directory for novitiates and Scholasticates prescribed: "Among all the Saints which the novices are especially to honor, Saint Joseph will hold the first place, as much because of his singular privilege in being associated with the mystery of our Lord Jesus

LAY ASSOCIATIONS CONGRESS
The new date of the 2nd Oblate Lay Associations Congress

The Superior General announced the postponement of the 2nd Lay Associations Congress in his letter to the congregation on the 17 Feb 2021 because the situation caused

Christ as because he is the patron of recollected souls who live a hidden life... They will often pray to him... and join his name almost always with those of Jesus and Mary."

For several years, the Conference of Major Superiors of the United States has been celebrating May 1, as the feast of Religious Brothers. The risk of taking Saint Joseph the worker as a reference could lead to seeing in the religious brother the image of his work and to obscuring the rest of his vocation, because his vocation, like any vocation, is first and foremost part of following his baptism. Fortunately, in our Congregation, we have a tradition to pay particular attention to the vocation of the Oblate Brother on March 19.

The Committee would like to take advantage of this event, from March 19 to May 1, 2021, to promote the vocation of the Oblate Brother in the Congregation, to recall the importance of this vocation within the Church, to pray for the Oblate Brothers and to deepen their lifestyle.

Do not hesitate to consult the document of the Church on the vocation of the Religious Brother "Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church."

To live this year consecrated to Saint Joseph, some Units did not wait for this initiative and are implementing proposals. Please do not hesitate to publicize your initiatives and achievements by email: gcbo.cgof@gmail.com, we will try to share it with others.

To promote the vocation of the Oblate Brother, please do not hesitate to contact the member of the General Committee of Oblate Brothers in your region.

by the pandemic was hindering preparations for the Congress.

This week the General Council agreed to the recommendation to set the date of the 2nd Oblate Lay Associations Congress at the end of the Oblate Novena for Vocations, i.e. 27th – 29th May 2022.

OMI JPIC**All Around the World Oblates Are Going Green**

Compiled by Mike Viola

Philippine Priest Brings Garden To Life

Reaping the fruits of one's labor is taking place at a Missionary Oblate parish on the outskirts of Manila in the Philippines. The urban gardening project, called "Project Grace," is being spearheaded by Fr. Eduardo Vasquez, O.M.I. and the other Oblates at Our Lady of Holy Grace Parish.

"I want to prove that it is possible to plant vegetables in an urban community and in your own home despite the absence of a backyard or a piece of land," said Fr. Vasquez.

During the Covid-19 lockdown many poor families told Fr. Vasquez they did not have enough food to eat. So he developed a program at the parish aimed at helping poor families secure their own food.

Father Vasquez uprooted all the decorative plants around the parish compound and replaced them with plants that can be harvested and eaten. He urged the staff and church volunteers to collect used plastic containers and empty cans that they later used for planting.

Today the urban garden produces various fruits and vegetables including bananas, peppers, tomatoes, spinach, okra, taro, grapes and various herbal plants. Father Vasquez said to respond to the call of Pope Francis "to care for our common home" should not be complicated.

"To translate the message of the Holy Father for people to understand, we need to show them what a concrete ecological action really means," he said.

GENERAL ADMISNITRATION**Update from the General Formation Committee**

Frank Kuczera, OMI

We gathered for our General Formation Committee meeting from March 1 to 5, 2021 on zoom, due to various Covid restrictions, which

Rebirth of a Garden in Oakland

When a charter school in Oakland, California went to virtual learning, gardens at the school were abandoned and eventually overgrown. That's when Fr. Jack Lau, O.M.I. and parishioners at Sacred Heart Parish stepped in.

Father Jack and his volunteers revitalized the gardens which began to provide a bounty of vegetables. The fresh vegetables are now being distributed to parishioners who may have been laid off or otherwise are in need of help.

As a multicultural parish, some parishioners have enjoyed touring the gardens just to remind themselves of gardening back in the Philippines, Vietnam or Nigeria. In addition to his gardening skills, Fr. Jack also recently became a Laudato Si' animator which involves training in how to help the community care for creation.

La Vista Learning Garden

Since its inception in 2001, the La Vista Ecological Learning Center has taught that how we eat determines, to a great extent, how we care for creation. The La Vista Learning Garden, located on the grounds of the Oblate Novitiate in Godfrey, Illinois is one of the learning center's primarily education program.

The Learning Garden allows Oblate novices, along with members of the community, to learn and practice:

- Sustainable gardening skills like creating a garden plan, organic soil preparation, fertilization, crop rotation and harvesting vegetables and fruits.
- Raising and caring for chickens
- Backyard beekeeping
- Cooking and nutrition
- Hand carving kitchen utensils
- Do it yourself recycled garden decorations

did not allow us to travel. There were five of us meeting: Cornelius NGOKA (Assistant General for Oblate formation), Cleber LOPES (Latin America-The Caribbean), Sebastian LUSZCZKI (Europe), Joseph PHIRI (Africa-Madagascar), Ross KAPUNAN (Asia-Oceania) and Frank KUCZERA (Canada-US).

We began our meeting with checking-in and sharing how we are and we listened to the reports of our formation/vocation efforts from our regions. As the various reports were shared, we were glad that formation ministry has continued in spite of Covid pandemic. We have continued our efforts online, connecting with each other. Even though we realize that connecting online will never replace face to face encounters, we expressed being grateful for having the opportunity to use internet and different meeting platforms to be able to reach out to others. Covid pandemic has brought its own challenges to us. We have been invited to be more creative and prophetic in using social media to pray and support each other.

We discussed the upcoming workshop for post-novitiate directors. The workshop will take place in Rome July 5-31, 2021. Some of the formators will be physically present and some, not being able to travel, will join the workshop on zoom.

Then, we also discussed the formation of Oblate Brothers. Unfortunately, the workshop scheduled for November 2020 had to be cancelled, but after our sharing, we believe that such workshop should happen. It was important for us to reflect on the vocation of Oblate Brothers, who as the document of 2013 states, “are united in the same charism and are full missionaries.” We hope that it is an ongoing conversation and gathering of oblate brothers can happen in the near future.

We also shared the importance of ongoing formation. Many Units of our Congregation have been struggling with this important stage of formation. It seems that this ministry falls “by default” on major superiors or superiors of districts. Very few Units have fruitful ongoing formation program. We realize that there is a need for training of potential directors for ongoing formation. We often gather for retreats

or study days, but real experience of sharing seems to be lacking. We encourage various Units to reflect and appoint an oblate or oblate team who will lead members of their Units in deepening of our oblate life and renewal.

Another item on our agenda was the call to have protocols in safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults. We encourage each formation house to include workshops during orientation at the beginning of formation year and before sending candidates for regency experiences. Each formation house should be familiar with the Unit guidelines for protecting and safeguarding minors and vulnerable adults and have a copy of such guidelines in their formation houses.

Interculturality was also a topic we discussed. Many of our formation houses are multicultural, but the call to become an intercultural person is very much a challenge for us. We noted the need for preparing Units for sending and receiving candidates, either for regency experiences or mission. We have done some extensive work and have participated in many workshops dedicated to interculturality, but actually living it is an invitation for each and every one of us to embrace daily.

At the conclusion of our meeting, we mentioned again and reaffirmed the importance of workshop for Oblate Brothers. We also spent some time sharing on how important the preparation for novitiate is. Such preparation needs to be more adequate and intentional during the Pre-novitiate formation stage.

Although we were not able to meet in person, we remain grateful for “the next best thing,” which is having the opportunity to connect online. There was a great sense of support and appreciation for each member of our committee, as well as encouragement to continue serving the Congregation in this important ministry.



AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

CAMEROON

75 years of missionary presence and action: a brief historical overview

Fr. Ferdinand OWONO NDIH, OMI

This year, the Province of Cameroon celebrates its 75 years of missionary presence and action under the theme "Let us go forward with hope". This missionary adventure began on 21 March 1946 when the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda Fidei) contacted Fr. Hilaire BALMÈS, OMI, then Vicar General, who was leading the Congregation. He welcomed the offer and contacted the provinces of France, who were in favor of making some valiant and enthusiastic Oblates available to the new mission for the cause of the Gospel.

Thus, on May 4, 1946, the first team destined for this Cameroon-Chad Mission was formed. This new Mission was under the direct authority of the General Administration and had Fr. Yves PLUMEY, OMI, as its Superior. He was invited to Rome to receive instructions from the Propaganda Fide.

This first team, in preparation for the departure into the unknown, made a spiritual retreat from 21 to 28 July 1946, which was led by Fr. Albert PERBAL, OMI, missiologist and professor in Rome. Before their journey, Fr. Plumey went to Lisieux to entrust the mission that awaited

them to Saint Theresa, Patroness of the missions. Then, he travelled, first by plane, on 14 August 1946, and landed in N'Djamena in Chad. His confreres followed him by boat. They embarked in Marseille on August 15 and disembarked in Douala on October 16, after two months at sea. Fr. Plumey went to Douala to welcome his brothers.

This team of young Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate celebrated the solemnity of Christ the King for the first time in the territory entrusted to them on October 27, 1946. On their knees, they recited the litanies of the Sacred Heart and the consecration to the Sacred Heart to entrust their new 'home' to the Lord.

In his missionary pedagogy, Father Plumey recommended "wisdom and prudence" to his brothers, and he himself showed openness to dialogue with traditional religions and Islam. We can say, by looking at the fruits, that it has favoured a peaceful cohabitation between religions. Since then, the seed of the Gospel has taken root in this part of the world, and we can only give thanks to God who works wonders.

In short, during the past 75 years, our Oblate predecessors tirelessly proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ and gave rise to a people of faith. And those seeds they planted continue to grow today. It is up to us today to "go out into the deep with hope".

WESTERN SAHARA

"A Voice in the Desert. The Oblate Mission in the Sahara".

Fr. Luis Ignacio (Chicho) ROIS, OMI

The book on the history of the OMI Mission in the Sahara has finally seen the light of day. The publication of the book has had a chequered history: the idea began many years ago, thanks

to a visit to the mission by the author, Beatriz García Traba, a doctor in Geography and History and a friend of the Oblates in Madrid. After some time that the project had not progressed, the occasion presented itself opportune with the celebration of the Extraordinary Missionary Month in October 2019 when the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples invited us to give thanks to God for the history of the Mission.

After a thorough study of documents including the archives of the Spanish Sector of the Mediterranean Province and direct interviews in Spain and in the Sahara, the book was taking shape. When much of the work had already been done, the Covid-19 pandemic crisis broke out and its publication was delayed until February 2021.

We can say that this corresponds to the missionary adventure it describes: the Oblate mission in the Sahara has also gone through many difficulties up to the present day. The book takes up this history and pays tribute to those who made it possible: the missionaries and the people to whom they were sent. Alberto Ruiz, OMI, Vicar Provincial, points out, "The lives and testimonies of the Oblate missionaries reflected in the following pages, reveal to us the difficulty of the beginnings, the vigorous work of the early years, the constancy in times of socio-political difficulty and the perseverance of the silent presence in the last stage. At the same time, they reveal to us a prophetic facet that is probably less well known: the commitment to equal opportunities, the promotion of women, inter-religious dialogue, care for the weakest, respect for differences that favours friendship. All of this is realised and lived out in simplicity and everyday life".

The entire book is full of diverse testimonies: missionaries who lived for a time in this mission, official documents and personal letters, but above all the testimony of lay people who lived with the Oblates and the even more precious testimony of the local population. The last chapter brings together a wide range of these testimonies in an assessment of the presence of the Church today and the hopes for the future. It is a beautiful and meticulous edition for which we are grateful to the work of Angelica Ciccone and all those who work at the Editrice Missionari OMI of the Mediterranean Province.

Beatriz has also filled a gap in the many studies that have been done on the history of this territory, since no one had ever before attempted to bring together in a book the history of the Apostolic Prefecture of the Sahara and therefore of the Oblates in this land. The book, with its more than 300 pages, is well illustrated with photographs selected for each period. The first edition, limited to 500 copies, has already been issued free of charge to all the post-novitiates of the Congregation and the various Services of the General Administration, as well as to all those who have participated in the production of this book. To purchase it, please write to the following e-mail address: archivoprovincialomi@gmail.com

ASIA-OCEANIA

BANGLADESH

Asia-Oceania Formation Conference Meeting, 2021

Report prepared by Fr. Johnny Finney OMI and Rupak Dominic Rozario OMI

"Formation is entrusted to you as your Primary and most important Ministry, to which you dedicate most of your time and energy. You are helping to fashion the present and the future of the Congregation." Fr. Louis LOUGEN, the Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate wrote these words in a letter addressed to the Asia-Oceania Oblate

Formators. Indeed, the Oblate formators are entrusted with a vital ministry of accompanying the young men, so that they grow in humanity, identify themselves with Christ, and finally strive to become saints. To strengthen this primary and the most important responsibility of the Oblate Formators, the Asia-Oceania Formation Conference (AOFC) organized a virtual meeting from 22 to 25 February 2021 with 46 participants from 14 Oblate units of Asia-Oceania Region.

This virtual meeting was convened by Fr. Subash GOMES and was hosted by the Oblate Delegation of Bangladesh. Fr. Cornelius NGOKA, Assistant

General for Formation, Fr. Chinnappan SANDHAPPAN, Chairman of the AORC, Fr. Ajit COSTA, Delegation Superior of Bangladesh, other Major Superiors and Formators of the region participated in the meeting.

The meeting was held for two hours each day, which contained presentations from two resource persons, Fr. Mariathas SELVARATNAM, from Jaffna Province and Fr. Jyoti F. Costa from the Archdiocese of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Fr. Selvaratnam spoke on the themes “Integral Formation: Affective, Spiritual, Human, Intellectual and Pastoral,” “Religious Life in the Future,” and “Discernment Process in Formation”. Fr. Jyoti F. Costa spoke on the “Interculturality and Religious Formation”.

In his presentations Fr. Selvaratnam said that the integral and holistic development include spiritual, human, intellectual, emotional and physical aspects of life. Integration in all these aspects of life helps us discover the harmony in life and mature affectively. Furthermore, he mentioned that religious life being a conscious ongoing commitment to seek God in life must revolve around prayer, meditation and contemplation. The religious life and mission in the future would be a “Contemplative Prophetic Evangelizer,” i.e., it will flow from the contemplative spiritual experience of the person. It will encourage a conversion from “Believer to Seeker.” Also, this conversion takes place through ‘discernment’ which presupposes the change of mindset and attitudes and an openness to the divine.

Fr. Jyoti F. Costa highlighted Interculturality as a significant element in religious formation in the global multicultural society. He said that Interculturality is a reality in the world today. We are immersed in a change of epoch. In the face of globalization, religious formation widely encounters the phenomenon of multiculturalism. It creates anthropological and ethical difficulties. Therefore, in the midst of cultural differences, one needs to be aware of his/her own culture and learn, respect and appreciate other cultures and avoid rigid mentality, racism and class-system. In order to overcome these challenges, religious formation should be based on “gospel culture” which presupposes universal love, Jesus’ all-encompassing salvific love.

Later, different groups shared their thoughts and reflections in the light of the presentations of the resource persons. In addition to that, Units also presented their reports on formation program. Finally, the participants came up with five action plans: Training of Formators, Training of Spiritual Directors, Training of Intercultural Facilitator, introducing a Director of on-going formation and a preparation program for the Final Vows Candidates in common.

The AOFC meeting helped all know each other and identify some common challenges. The participants expressed their strong desire and conviction that they could continue their collaboration in formation with each other as a team and walk with the oblate formandi in the spirit of our Founder St. Eugene de Mazenod.

EUROPE

CENTRAL EUROPEAN PROVINCE Late Oblate Missiologist Praised

In the April 2021 issue of the “International Bulletin of Mission Research”, Father Willi Henkel, O.M.I., was recognized for his many years of missionary research. Below is another appreciation of Fr. Willi’s achievements

written by Fr. Thomas Klosterkamp, OMI, now Professor at Oblate School of Theology.

Wilhelm Josef HENKEL, usually known as Willi, was born on 17 January 1930 in Wittges in the county of Fulda, Germany. Apparently, as a child, he showed interest in the Catholic priesthood. In fact, he wanted to become a missionary priest.

Willi knew the Hünfeld Oblate community, less than 20 km away from home, from childhood. Therefore, it is not surprising that Willi chose the Oblates. On April 25, 1952 he took his first vows as an Oblate.

Bro. Willi Henkel was sent to Rome in the summer of 1952 to study at the International Scholasticate of the Oblates. His memoirs read: "In Rome I lived in a community of about 100 Oblate students from all over the world. The Second World War was only seven years over. Yet, as a German, I experienced a great fraternal spirit ..." In 1955 he obtained a licentiate in philosophy from the Pontifical Gregorian University, followed by a licentiate in theology in 1959.

On November 1, 1960, the young Fr. Henkel was sent to study Missiology at the Westfälische-Wilhelms-University in Münster. Fr. Henkel was ordered back to Rome before graduation, on May 9, 1965. In the General House of the Oblates in Rome Fr. Henkel initially acted as a formator in the International Scholasticate and as coworker in the Mission Secretariat of the General Administration.

With the sudden death of the Archivist of the Pontifical Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Fr. Dr. Nikolaus Kowalsky, OMI (1911-1966), on June 6, 1966, a successor had to be found for the Vatican editorial team of the missionary records "Bibliotheca Missionum" and "Bibliografia Missionaria". The choice was made for the 36-year-old Fr. Henkel. Willi Henkel thus entered a long German Oblate tradition of missiologists.

On June 1, 1972, he was appointed Director of the Library of the Pontifical Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Between 1979 and 1980, Father Henkel, as the new librarian, carried out the transfer of the library from the historic Palazzo di Propaganda Fide in Piazza di Spagna to a new library building at the Pontifical Urban University on the Gianiculum hill. In the new building, Fr. Henkel had merged the two libraries of the "Propaganda" and the "Urbaniana".

The second modernization project, which Fr. Henkel was responsible for in 1993/1994, was the digitization of the library. By 2004, more than 100,000 titles were accessible digitally.

This process facilitates the use for the university studies immensely, since the Urbaniana has a number of affiliated seminaries and educational institutes worldwide, especially in the so-called mission countries.

Fr. Henkel's personal bibliography included, between 1968 and 2008, more than 90 articles on current mission topics, missiological research, mission history of the Oblates, the theology of Henry Newman, as well as the missionary history of Latin America and the Vatican. In 1991, Fr. Henkel was appointed consultant of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Here he worked among other things, on the beatification cause of John XXIII (1958-1963). He was also a founding member of the Advisory Board of the Journal for Media, Ethics and Communication in Church and Society, "Communicatio Socialis". At the same time, he was a scientific advisor to the "International Biographical Centre Cambridge". He was a member of the "International Association for Mission Studies" from 1980 to 1990. He also held memberships in the "Society for History of Councils", the "International Institute for Mission Research", the "International Association of Catholic Missiologists", and the "Roman Institute of the Görres Society". In 1980 and 1988, he organized two international missiology congresses in Rome at the Urbaniana University.

Fr. Henkel was also awarded various honors. He was an honorary member of the "German Society for Missiology". In 1990, he was decorated with the "Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany". On December 8, 2000, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., USA, together with Fr. Josef Metzler, since 1984 Prefect of the Pontifical Secret Archive. On 29 July 2001, Fr. Henkel was made an Honorary Knight of the University of Salta in Argentina.

At the end of 2000, Fr. Henkel retired. His health had been in poor condition since 1996. However, until the end, he took an active part in community life. When the COVID-19 virus reached the Oblate-community of Hünfeld on November 14, 2020, Fr. Henkel was one of the first infected. Due to his advanced age, he was not able to cope with the disease. He died on November 19, 2020, just before midnight.

CANADA-UNITED STATES

NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP**Alexandre Taché, OMI (1926 - 2021)**

By Fr. Gaston Morin, OMI

Fr. Alexandre Taché, a well-known canonist and a former Procurator General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate passed away from this world in Richelieu, Quebec, Canada on February 7, 2021.

Alexandre Taché was born on June 13, 1926 in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce parish in Hull, Diocese of Ottawa as the eldest in the family. He first attended the Notre-Dame du Sacré-Coeur residential school in Ottawa, then the Garneau school in Ottawa from 1933-1937, and then the University of Ottawa from 1937 to 1943.

His introduction to the Oblate world was through his studies at the University of Ottawa, as well as in the two parishes where he lived: Sacré-Coeur in Ottawa and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce in Hull. His ancestors also include a famous archbishop of Saint-Boniface, the uncle of his grandfather, in the person of Msgr. Alexandre-Antonin Taché OMI. The archbishop might have been a determining influence in young Alexandre's vocational choice. Thus, in 1943, Alexandre entered the Oblate Novitiate in Richelieu, and he pronounced his first vows a year later.

He returned to Ottawa to continue his studies for the Licentiate in Philosophy at St. Joseph's Scholasticate from 1944 to 1947. Young Bro. Alexandre pronounced his final vows on September 8, 1947 at Saint-Famille Church in Ottawa.

He was then called to Rome to the International Scholasticate where he studied theology at the Gregorian University, obtaining his Licentiate in 1951 and his Doctorate in 1960. He was ordained a priest on March 24, 1951 in Rome.

Upon his return to Canada, he was professor of philosophy at the University of Ottawa and a member of the staff at St. Joseph's Scholasticate

(1951-1953); then director of the International Oblate Scholasticate in Rome (1953-1963) where he later became superior (1966-1972); and professor of philosophy at the Oblate Scholasticate in Santiago de Chile (1963-1965). Returning to Canada in 1972, Father Taché joined the staff of the University Seminary at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. He then obtained a Licentiate in Canon Law and taught this discipline from 1974 to 1994. During these years, he was, among others, President of the Commission for the Revision of the Oblate Constitutions and Rules (1975-1980); President of the Christian Council of the Capital; judge at the Regional Ecclesiastical Tribunal of Ottawa, and later at the National Appeal Tribunal of Canada; Assistant Secretary of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops; and Vice-President of Saint Paul University (1983-1988). From 1988 to 1994, he was General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In 1994, Father Taché was recalled to Rome as Procurator General of the Oblates to the Holy See, a position he held until his return to Ottawa in 2003.

In 2010, when he was then 84 years old, he received his obedience for the Résidence Notre-Dame de Richelieu. He lived there for 10 beautiful years, where he was able to receive the care his condition required, while maintaining a certain intellectual activity.

For the past several years, his mobility has been reduced to a wheelchair. However, until the very end, he has been intensely involved in the service of others in his own simple ways. He has not wasted the time allotted to him!

Fr. Alexandre was certainly an incredible gift of God to the Oblate Congregation and the Church at large. He did not refuse efforts, work, and moves to serve wherever he was invited to serve his brothers and sisters. Now that he has left our world, we pray to the Lord to welcome him with kindness and warmth and give him the eternal peace that he always hoped for.

ANNIVERSARIES - APRIL 2021

60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

02/04/1961	10064	Fr. Francis McGreal	Southern Africa
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50th Anniversaries of Ordinations

08/04/1971	11678	Fr. Hendrik Koen	Belgique et Pays Bas
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25th Anniversaries of Vows

18/04/1996	13675	Fr. Gnanapragasam Kulandai	India
18/04/1996	13674	Fr. Peter Naron Sakra	India
18/04/1996	13676	Fr. Jesu Susai	Lacombe
18/04/1996	13673	Fr. Amalraj Vethamuthu	India

25th Anniversaries of Ordinations

13/04/1996	13365	Fr. Chrysantha Thilakaratne	Colombo
20/04/1996	13201	Fr. Phu Cuong Joseph Nguyen	France
27/04/1996	13358	Fr. Francis Vusumuzi Mazibuko	Southern Africa

Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 30 - 37

NAME	PROV/DEL	BORN	DIED AT	DATE
Fr. Mariano Martínez	Peru	23/11/1958	San Juan	02/03/2021
Bro. William Lundberg	United States	01/11/1938	Belleville	08/03/2021
Fr. Achiel Vermeulen	Belgium & Netherlands	27/03/1933	Waregem	10/03/2021
Fr. André Doyon	Notre-Damedu-Cap	22/11/1937	Richelieu	14/03/2021
Fr. Fernando Gargantini	Mediterranean	24/01/1930	Pescara	22/03/2021
Fr. Hernán Correa	Cruz del Sur	20/09/1925	Santiago	26/03/2021
Fr. Lucien Perera	Colombo	03/02/1936	Colombo	28/03/2021
Bro. Erich Brähler	Central European	15/07/1938	Fulda	28/03/2021

“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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