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January-February 2023

Letter of the Superior General on the 197th Anniversary of the Papal Approbation of the Constitutions and Rules

February 17, 2023

LJC et MI

Care for our common home so that it becomes a missionary home for the poor

Dear fellow pilgrims, Oblates and members of our charismatic family,

The months of January and February are marked by two important dates for our family: the beginning of the missionary community in Aix on January 25, 1816, and the pontifical approval of our Constitutions and Rules (CCRR) on February 17, ten years later. These days we are holding our first plenary session in which the Central Government and all the directors of the general services have begun to try to put into practice the proposals of our last General Chapter. Listening and reflecting on our origins, I thought about sharing some dreams about our common home, our charismatic family.

In the mind of Saint Eugene, the house in Aix is the place to which we always must return to find our identity. We have all read his memoirs on those first moments of life together in the old Carmel in Aix. For us, Aix is not a museum. If its walls speak to us today, it is because those men knew how to turn that house into a true missionary home. Every time we visit that house, we feel something of our own, something that speaks to us: Aix is our home; Aix lives within us.

Faced with the possibility of opening a new house, the missionaries considered how to live the same spirit, despite the distance. Eugene de Mazenod would write our first Rules, ensuring that each

Oblate house maintain what is proper to our family. Successive crises will lead Eugene, urged on by his brothers, to risk traveling to Rome to seek pontifical approval: it was a matter of life or death, of being or not being! Ten years after the beginning of the adventure, the Pope would approve the Rules that from that moment on would become the road map to make all Oblate communities, present and future, a missionary home like the one in Aix.

With the pontifical approval of our Rules, the gift received in Aix becomes both a task for each one who embraces this lifestyle and also a commitment to hand on this heritage to future generations. Our 37th General Chapter calls us to take care of our common home: our Congregation and our charismatic family. Everything that we can propose to animate our charism, by applying the proposals of the Chapter, presupposes strengthening the life and mission of the local communities: it is in the local communities where we live out our present and our future, our identity and mission.

During our discussions in the plenary session, the General Councilor for Africa-Madagascar proposed an image to motivate the post-Chapter animation: the life of a couple. I imagine this couple looking for a house to start their life together. Once they find it, probably more modest than they dreamed, they must prepare it according to their tastes and needs. Talking it over, they must decide many things: what the furniture will be like, the decoration, some remodeling... In addition, they must organize their life together, their way of cooking, how

they will make decisions, how they will solve conflicts; but above all, they must take care of their relationships and dream together about the future, about children, etc. Living together and knowing how to overcome difficulties, little by little they will turn the house they live in into their home and the home of their children. A home that, being more than simply a dwelling, will live within them forever. Even if they have to move to a different house, that will still be their home. We all have experienced this.

To take care of our common home, we will have to listen attentively and gratefully to those who live the charism from within the vocation of marriage and family. How much we can learn from them! Do we listen enough? Do we go to “their” school to learn how to make a home out of our common home?

To make our house a missionary home like the one in Aix: a gift and a task.

The Founder dreamt of us as the most united family on Earth. In his letters to the Oblates, he insists that, to keep this spirit alive, one must be faithful to the Rules and live together, in community. Practically all the Superiors General agree on this: our charism cannot be lived without this community dimension! The 37th General Chapter also invites us to let ourselves be inspired by our Constitutions and Rules to care for our common home, especially in these years as we prepare to celebrate the 200th anniversary of its pontifical approval.

It is true that looking at our communities, we could focus on our weaknesses, our failures and sins, to try to correct them; indeed, there are things to change in our personal lives, our community, and our family. Some, following this path, fall into the temptation of eternal regret for things that are not going well and become prophets of doom, always pessimistic, but rigid when it comes to proposing alternatives. I would like to follow another path that, for me, is much more urgent: that each member of our family **rediscover the beauty of our missionary vocation lived in apostolic communities.** Amazed and attracted by the beauty of living our vocation together, we will be able to find new energy to change what does not correspond to the gift received.

Community life is a missionary gift that we must make fruitful by collaborating with the Holy Spirit: that is our task. The CCRR are the gift that the Church gives us to check if we are walking evangelically in the right direction. The Rules are the roadmap to make our communities authentic missionary homes, to make each house an authentic missionary home like the one in Aix. The prayerful reading of our Constitutions and Rules has generated new forms of lay and religious life. I myself am a witness to this, among youth, the laity and even with new modalities of consecrated and missionary life. The Spirit is acting and that is why I dare to dream that the commitment to live the CCRR in a more radical way and within the different charismatic realities will generate a new life for the good of the Mission, of the Church and above all, for the good of the poor and most abandoned.

Communities as prophetic signs.

C.91 says: “It is of the nature of a local community to be a prophetic sign that offers grounds for hope to the world in its search for integrity and harmony.” What an amazing statement and what a wonderful challenge! Making our way of living in community a prophecy that gives hope to a world that is falling apart. Renewing our local communities according to the CCRR is a missionary urgency. Everything we propose should answer this question: how to live the apostolic community in order to be prophets of hope and communion?

How I would like each Oblate community to become a home where the poor are listened to, welcomed, protected, recognized in their dignity and helped to become fully human, Christian and holy! Furthermore, how much we will learn from the poor if we allow them to be at the center of our community and missionary life! A community, like that of Jesus with the Apostles, in which the marginalized and abandoned occupy the center of the common table, where we share everything we are and have in order to live the Gospel together.

We are called to “to be a leaven of the Beatitudes at the heart of the world,” (C.11) and our local communities, always on the move, must live the Beatitudes together and go out to announce them.

We must convert all the paths we trod into an announcement of the Beatitudes of the Kingdom. For Jesus, that was so important that he did not hesitate to give his life, to live his love to the extreme in his own oblation. As missionaries, we must remember that our lifestyle must be in harmony with our Oblate identity and live evangelically: we must choose to cultivate our relationships in an evangelical stance of fraternity, while our houses adopt simple forms that are not counter-testimony to what we preach. That is why it is urgent that each community ensure the protection and safeguarding of the most vulnerable and continue updating the practices and policies that guarantee this protection. This should also be a missionary concern of the first order in all local communities!

Let's make our houses become missionary homes, centered on Jesus Christ, living the Gospel, welcoming and protecting the most vulnerable and going out as pilgrims of hope in communion.

Remodeling our common home.

To make our houses true homes, sometimes we need to remodel them. With the arrival of the children, you must think about how to remodel the house to welcome them, protect them so that they can develop. Even those who live in a nomad or refugee tent should think about expanding their space to adapt to a growing family (Is 54,2-3). On other occasions, houses are remodeled so that the elderly or sick can live and be cared for. Sometimes they are small jobs; others are more complex. If everything is done well, the house, without losing its identity, will be a better home, adapted to the needs of the family. Well then, the General Chapter challenges us to **remodel our common home** in two directions: the global project of restructuring the Congregation of Oblate religious and the search for adequate structures to make missionary communion grow among the members of our charismatic family, especially with the laity.

The capitular document Pilgrims of Hope in Communion (PHC) speaks to us about the **interdependence** that is a consequence of the dynamics of communion which evangelical life generates as a response to a common vocation. Interdependence calls for the implementation of concrete actions that seek the common

good of the family. These actions must be guided by the principles of **solidarity and subsidiarity**. Solidarity invites us to share, even what is necessary, to seek the common good. Subsidiarity is the principle by which each level of authority must be respected and helped to fulfill its responsibilities. These two principles can help us live interdependence in a dynamic and just way.

The little or the much that we do affects, for better or for worse, our family as a whole and, at the same time, what others do and experience belongs to us. We must discern what we must do, but let us be aware that passivity, doing nothing, is putting our family in danger. What to do and how to do it together? It is not just a matter of changing external structures; it is above all a call for personal and community conversion. It would be useless to embellish the "house" if those who inhabit it do not set out to improve their relationships in the light of the Gospel. I believe that the first and most important step is taken in our personal lives and in the life of our local community.

C. 29 invites us to "help each other find joy and fulfilment in our community life and in our apostolate." Here I find that homey warmth that we need: to help each other, in truth and charity, to find fullness of life and joy in our missionary and community vocation. Many times, the first step of our pilgrimage will consist of finding the brother next door to help us mutually live our vocation with joy and thus be able to start the journey together. That short step is sometimes not easy and perhaps seems impossible. Let us trust in Jesus and his Spirit to walk this path that will sometimes require moments of reconciliation and forgiveness.

I am astonished at how categorically C. 91 states: "Every Oblate has the right and duty to belong to a local community and to participate in its life and mission." Living in a community is a right that everyone must respect and promote at all levels. We must try everything, making courageous decisions, so that each Oblate in vows develops this right and this obligation. The required minimums are found in the Constitutions and Rules, and are, among others: "communities where you pray and reflect on how to live the

Gospel in a more radical way; where you grow in fidelity to your vocation; where you live a community project; where there are at least three Oblates living together; and there is a superior who animates and guides” (C.91 - 93). I ask all the members of our charismatic family to help us live these minimums.

Someone will tell me that it is not enough to live under the same roof for the community to be a missionary home. That’s true. For this reason, while we are designing the “general plan of action” called for by the 37th Chapter, with the humility of recognizing that I am the first who must set out, I dare to propose some steps to take together to rediscover the beauty of our vocation and to move forward, caring for our common home to turn it into a missionary home like the one in Aix.

Some proposals for our common pilgrimage:

1.- I invite each member of our family to try everything so that those who live the charism in their local community find joy and happiness in their vocation and mission (C.29).

2.- I invite all members of the charismatic family to evaluate their lifestyle and the lifestyle of their local community in the light of the CCRR and the Gospel.

3.- I invite each local community to elaborate its community and missionary project, in collaboration with other members of the charismatic family. A simple model is suggested by the document of the Chapter “PHC”: **pilgrims** (Continuing Formation and Constitutions and Rules) of **hope** (Common Home, Laudato Si and Interdependence) **in communion** (Restructuring and Laity and Charismatic Family). Other models can be found in the document “Support and discern the Oblate Mission.”

4.- That each Mission, Delegation and Province evaluate the community life of its Unit in light of the CCRR (communities with a minimum of three Oblates, with a specific community and missionary project, sharing what one is and has, with a superior and a structure adapted to its context) and implement the changes to the CCRR approved at the 37th General Chapter before the next Intercapitular meeting.

5.- That the mandate of the 37th General Chapter in relation to lay associates (PHC, H) and the protection of vulnerable people (PHC, E) be put into practice in the local communities and in the Units.

6.- As the Central Government, in addition to the implementation of all of the above at our level, we commit ourselves to implement the mandate of the General Chapter on the remodeling of the Congregation (PHC, K Restructuring) by presenting proposals at the next Intercapitular meeting, to be discerned in the years preceding the 38th General Chapter.

7.- As the Central Government, we will support each Unit in animating and living evangelical community according to our CCRR and in remodeling the Units according to their criteria before the next General Chapter. We will also seek, synodally with the laity and other members of the charismatic family, the most appropriate structures for their reality to journey together in our common vocation.

We are already on our way. A journey of faith, hope and charity from which we expect many missionary fruits. If all of us, in a synodal, supportive and subsidiary way, follow the path proposed by the CCRR and the 37th General Chapter, I am convinced that we will find the way to build those missionary homes dreamed of by the Founder and that we will be able to remodel our common home to continue to be the closest family on Earth. Thank you for embarking on the path, thank you for your gift of self.

May Mary Immaculate, who is on pilgrimage with us, teach us to make our homes and our world a home for Jesus and for the poor and most vulnerable.

May Saint Eugene and the Blessed Oblates give us the strength to journey like them, docilely open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.

May we all find fullness of happiness and joy in our community life and in our mission as pilgrims of hope in communion.

Your pilgrim brother,
Luis Ignacio Rois Alonso, omi.
Superior General

GENERAL STATISTICS 2022

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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 – Comparison between January 2022 and January 2023

JANUARY 2022						JANUARY 2023						
Fr	B1	B2	PD	Schol.	Total		Fr	B1	B2	PD	Schol.	Total
36	2	0	0	0	38	General Admin.	39	2	0	0	0	41
595	44	3	0	266	908	Africa-Madagascar	597	45	6	0	271	919
327	27	1	0	57	412	Latin America	325	25	1	0	54	405
597	24	10	2	215	848	Asia-Oceania	610	24	14	2	194	844
437	59	0	0	4	500	Canada-USA	415	54	0	0	5	475
656	78	5	3	45	787	Europe	632	70	5	4	35	746
2648	234	19	5	595	3493	Total	*2618	220	26	6	560	*3430

**Of whom 1 is cardinal, 8 are Archbishops, 36 are bishops, 2 are Apostolic Prefects.*

In the above table, each Oblate is counted in the Region to which he belongs. For example, the Oblates in Zambia are counted only in Africa-Madagascar, although they are members of the United States Province. The scholastics in Rome are listed in their home Region. “B1.” indicates perpetually professed Brothers, and “B2” the Brothers who are still in first formation. PD refers to an Oblate Brother who is a permanent deacon.

SUMMARY (as of January 2023)

MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE	January 2023	January 2022
Cardinals	1	1
Archbishops	8	7
Bishops	36	36
Prefect Apostolic	2	2
Priests	2570	2602
Priests with temporary vows	1	0
Brothers with perpetual vows	220	234
Brothers who are permanent deacons	6	5
Brothers with temporary vows	26	19
Scholastics	560	587
Total number of Oblates	3430	3493

**PERSONNEL BY UNIT
(As of January 2023)**

The next table shows the number of Oblates according to the Unit to which they belong. For example, all the Oblates attached to the Senegal Delegation are listed there, even though they are juridically members of the Mediterranean Province or may be temporarily living elsewhere. Some of the Senegalese scholastics are in Cameroon, others in Congo. etc.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P. D	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card.	Total
Total	39	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41

AFRICA - MADAGASCAR

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P. D	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card	Total
Angola	12	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	14
Botswana	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Cameroon	74	0	11	1	47	0	0	1	0	0	134
Southern Africa	93	0	5	1	20	0	0	4	2	0	125
Congo	99	0	10	1	45	0	0	1	0	0	156
Ghana	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Kenya	12	0	2	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	26
Lesotho	74	0	5	0	6	0	0	2	1	0	88
Madagascar	50	0	2	1	39	0	0	0	0	0	92
Namibia	35	0	1	1	11	0	0	2	1	0	51
Nigeria	11	0	0	0	47	0	0	0	0	0	58
Western Sahara	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Senegal-Guinea Bissau	43	0	3	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	68
Zambia	43	0	2	0	16	0	0	2	0	0	63
Zimbabwe	17	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	23
TOTAL	580	0	45	6	271	0	1	12	4	0	919

LATIN AMERICA

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P. D	Pr.Ap.	Ep.	ArEp.	Card	Total
Baja California	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bolper	24	0	8	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	41
Brazil	57	0	2	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	65
Colombia	12	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	15
Cruz del Sur	53	0	3	1	5	0	0	2	0	0	64
Cuba	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Guatemala	11	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	18
French Guyana	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Haiti	98	0	7	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	121
Mexico	38	0	1	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	50
Puerto Rico	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Venezuela	8	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	12
TOTAL	319	0	25	1	54	0	0	6	0	0	405

ASIA - OCEANIA

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P.D	Pr.Ap	Ep.	Ar.Ep	Card.	Total
Australia	37	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	38
Bangladesh	28	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	31
China	13	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	18
Colombo	99	0	5	1	29	2	0	1	0	0	137
India	114	0	1	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	135
Indonesia	30	0	0	7	20	0	0	0	0	0	57
Jaffna	87	0	2	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	111
Japan – Korea	16	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Korea	6	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	10
Pakistan	33	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	41
Philippines	78	0	7	0	13	0	0	2	0	1	101
Thailand & Laos	22	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	26
Turkmenistan	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Vietnam	37	0	7	5	71	0	0	0	0	0	120
TOTAL	602	0	24	14	194	2	1	5	1	1	844

CANADA - UNITED STATES

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P.D	Pr.Ap	Ep.	Ar.Ep	Card.	Total
Assumption	51	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	55
Lacombe	98	0	14	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	119
Notre-Dame-du-Cap	75	0	26	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	106
United States	178	0	11	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	195
TOTAL	402	0	54	0	6	0	0	10	3	0	475

EUROPE

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P. D	Pr.Ap	Ep.	Ar.Ep	Card.	Total
Anglo-Irish	59	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	64
Belgium & Netherlands	32	0	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	40
Byelorussia	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
Central European	75	0	14	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	94
France	72	0	10	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	85
France & Benelux	25	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	25
Mediterranean	127	1	5	2	5	1	0	1	0	0	142
Poland	205	0	28	1	18	0	0	0	0	0	252
Romania	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Ukraine	26	0	2	0	4	1	0	2	0	0	35
TOTAL	628	1	70	5	35	4	0	3	0	0	746

	Fr.	Fr.T	Br.	Br.T	Sc.	P. D	Pr.Ap	Ep.	Ar.Ep	Card.	Total
TOTAL	2570	1	220	26	560	6	2	36	8	1	3430

Legenda: Fr.=Father; Fr.T.=Father with temporary vows; Br.=Brother; Br.T.=Brother with temporary vows; Sc.=Scholastic; P.D.=Permanent Deacon; Pr.Ap.=Prefect Apostolic; Ep.=Bishop; ArEp.=Archbishop; Card.=Cardinal.

Perpetual Oblations – (*reported in 2022*)

ID OMI	Title	Surname	Name	Date	Unit
15137	Sc.	Ramírez Omaña	Jeikov Alveiro	19-02-22	Mediterranean
15136	Sc.	Totomalaza	Docellin Antonio	20-02-22	Madagascar
15138	Sc.	Nsiantima Nkusu	Alexandre	01-05-22	Congo
15139	Sc.	Ekka	Neelam	01-05-22	India
15141	Sc.	Uzuanwu Ugochukwu	Christopher	01-05-22	Nigeria
15140	Sc.	Sechogela	Keorapetse Louis	01-05-22	Southern Africa
15142	Sc.	Capará	Marcelo Javier	11-06-22	Cruz Del Sur
15143	Sc.	Zavala Revatta	Gonzalo Andrés del Carmen	24-06-22	Bolper
15144	Sc.	Troncoso Tola	Omar	16-07-22	Bolper
15160	Sc.	Talabon	Fidel	01-08-22	Philippines
15161	Sc.	Veñarta	Jericho B.	01-08-22	Philippines
15162	Sc.	Nguyen Quoc Dat	Augustin	17-08-22	Vietnam
15163	Sc.	Nguyen Thanh Duoc	Joachim	17-08-22	Vietnam
15164	Sc.	Nguyen Tien Thanh	Thomas	17-08-22	Vietnam
15166	Sc.	Phan Van Tinh	Jean Baptiste (Pio)	17-08-22	Vietnam
15165	Sc.	Tran Ly Huynh	François Xavier	17-08-22	Vietnam
15147	Sc.	De Oliveira	Geovani Pereira	20-08-22	Brazil
15146	Sc.	Ferreira Barbosa	João Vitor	20-08-22	Brazil
15145	Sc.	Lins Fernandes	George	20-08-22	Brazil
15196	Sc.	Rozario	Plabon Manuel	22-08-22	Bangladesh
15199	Sc.	Moloi	Justinus Khahliso	28-08-22	Lesotho
15181	Sc.	Kanyetu	Pedro Nguuru	28-08-22	Namibia
15180	Sc.	Saukani	Joseph	28-08-22	Zambia
15149	Sc.	Egguenani Haman	Bernard	08-09-22	Cameroon
15171	Sc.	Guidana	Alphonse	08-09-22	Cameroon
15169	Sc.	Nkan Kong	André	08-09-22	Cameroon
15167	Sc.	Thaiwe	Nestor Pacômes	08-09-22	Cameroon
15158	Sc.	Tsowa	Douglas Meli Belly	08-09-22	Cameroon
15151	Bro.	Woudini Toumba	Joachim	08-09-22	Cameroon
15172	Sc.	Mbadiko	Christian	08-09-22	Congo
15173	Sc.	Ndala	Manuel	08-09-22	Congo
15174	Sc.	Osut	Fabrice	08-09-22	Congo
15152	Sc.	Ranaivoson	Hasimpandresena Hyacinthe	08-09-22	Madagascar
15148	Sc.	Adinnu Ejike	Emmanuel	08-09-22	Nigeria
15150	Sc.	Egwuye Iko	Michael	08-09-22	Nigeria
15170	Sc.	Nwagwu Chinonso	Jude	08-09-22	Nigeria
15168	Sc.	Okunmeh Obinna	Emmanuel	08-09-22	Nigeria
15159	Sc.	Umunna	Hyacinth Chinonso	08-09-22	Nigeria
15153	Sc.	Dzalak	Kamil Kazimierz	08-09-22	Poland
15154	Bro.	Król	Jakub	08-09-22	Poland
15155	Sc.	Krotosik	Kamil Stanislaw	08-09-22	Poland
15156	Sc.	Pawlak	Artur Piotr	08-09-22	Poland
15157	Sc.	Zatorski	Mikolaj	08-09-22	Ukraine

15177	Sc.	Ranaivopananarivo	Tsiory Faniry	30-10 -22	Madagascar
15178	Sc.	Randrianandrasana	Jean Joseph	30-10 -22	Madagascar
15179	Sc.	Ravelona	Jean Brunot	30-10 -22	Madagascar
15176	Sc.	Ewen Emediong	Patrick Polycarp	30-10 -22	Nigeria
15200	Sc.	Amir	Adeel	09-11-22	Pakistan
15201	Sc.	Nawaz	Tasneem	09-11-22	Pakistan
15189	Sc.	Boucal	William	19-11-22	Cameroon

Obediences 2022
(* - first obedience)

Date	Title	Family Name	First Name	Origin	Destination
03-Jan	Sc.*	Coc Jolomna	Rony	Mexico/Guatemala	Mexico/ Guatemala
31-Jan	Fr.	Pachchek	Paul Jeyanthan	Poland	Jaffna
03-Feb	Fr.	Pasko	Piotr	Central European	Poland
03-Feb	Fr.	Poddebniak	Wladyslaw	Central European	Poland
04-Feb	Fr.	Ornopia	Dennis C.	Anglo/Irish	Philippines
10-Feb	Sc.*	Mtshali	Muzikayise	OMI Southern Africa	OMI Southern Africa
10-Feb	Sc.*	Mzizi	Thamsanqa Petrus	OMI Southern Africa	OMI Southern Africa
10-Feb	Sc.*	Njovane	Zukisane Mhle	OMI Southern Africa	OMI Southern Africa
14-Feb	Sc.*	Torres Rodriguez	Daniel	Mexico	Mexico
17-Feb	Fr.	Corteau	Allen	Poland	Anglo/Irish
17-Feb	Fr.	Fernando	Santhiyogu Christy Joy	Poland	Anglo/Irish
17-Feb	Fr.	Kertz	Leo	Poland	Anglo/Irish
17-Feb	Fr.	Marx	Paul	Poland	Anglo/Irish
17-Feb	Fr.	Saveripillai	Edmund Reginald	Poland	Anglo/Irish
17-Feb	Fr.	Soosaipillai	Alrin	Poland	Anglo/Irish
01-Mar	Fr.	Hahn	Francis	OMI Southern Africa	USA
03-Mar	Fr.*	Charles	Sténio	Haiti	Haiti
03-Mar	Fr.*	Léon	Aldayir	Haiti	Haiti
03-Mar	Fr.*	Nelson	Frednaud	Haiti	Haiti
03-Mar	Fr.*	Pierre	Jameson	Haiti	Haiti
15-Mar	Fr.	Daniel	Nadeem	Colombo/Pakistan	Australia
15-Mar	Fr.	Gibbons	Jaime (James)	Brazil	USA
15-Mar	Sc.	Iorbee	Aondongu James Emmanuel	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Emekamihe	Arinze Casmir	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Hamadou Deri	Daniel	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Madi	Claude Marie	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Nguele	Minkos Anicet	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Vondou Hamane	Paul	Cameroon	Cameroon
15-Mar	Sc.*	Yaouba Oumarou Nirou	Gabriel	Cameroon	Brazil
16-Mar	Sc.*	Omattah	Stephen Ojonugwa	Cameroon	Lesotho

19-Mar	Fr.	Châu Hoàng Anh Phuong	Joseph	France/Vietnam	Central European
19-Mar	Fr.	Đoàn Giai Bình	Jean	France/Vietnam	Central European
19-Mar	Fr.	Klosterkamp	Thomas	Central European	USA
04-Apr	Fr.	Lacasse	Roberto	Bolivia	USA
20-Apr	Fr.	Rojek	Marek	Poland/France Benelux	France
20-Apr	Fr.	Tyberski	Kazimierz	Poland	Assumption Province
20-Apr	Fr.	Lachowski	Andrzej	Gen. Admin./Aix- en-Provence	Poland/France Benelux
25-Apr	Sc. *	Arockiasamy	Antony Muthu Albert	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Arulanantham	Paul Raj	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Irudaya Dhasan	Maria Aron Dhas	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Madhalai Muthu	Samson Ilavarasan	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Sahaya Raj	Sasi Renaldo	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Maria Selvam	Santhosh	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Thiru Selvam	Maria Sebastin Infant Raj	India	India
25-Apr	Sc. *	Tirkey	David Rosan	India	India
02-May	Sc. *	Peter	Robinson Mehtab Gill	Colombo/Pakistan	Mexico/Guatemala
03-May	Sc. *	Amal Raj	Prem Gladin	India	India
03-May	Sc. *	Lengoasa	Alex Ntjalireng	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Masupha	Gerard Thapelo	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Matekane	Denicias Ntsele	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Nong	Zane Fani	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Rantlo	Elias Lehlohonolo	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Mabitle	Simon Molefi	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Mokhofu	Emmanuel Lebeso	Lesotho	Lesotho
03-May	Sc. *	Malitse	Francis	Lesotho	Lesotho
05-May	Sc. *	Lourdusamy	L. Johnson	India	Anglo/Irish
05-May	Sc. *	Jesuraj	Arockia Ilangovan	India	Anglo/Irish
05-May	Sc. *	Kurapati	Rajasekhar	India	BolPer
05-May	Sc. *	Tulimelli	Naveen	India	Mediterranean/ Romania
05-May	Fr.	Narbert Antony	Rathis Babin	India	Mediterranean/ Romania
06-May	Sc. *	Król	Mateusz	Poland	Poland
06-May	Sc. *	Organ	Maciej	Poland	Poland
06-May	Sc. *	Swiderski	Ernest	Poland	Poland
06-May	Sc. *	Zys	Mateusz	Poland	Poland
12-May	Fr.	Siluvai	Antony Vijilan	Philippines	India
27-May	Sc. *	Nash	Joshua Michael	Australia	Australia
10-Jun	Fr.	Frias	Benedicto	Gen. Admin/I.R.S.	Mexico
21-Jun	Fr.	Obieje	Basil Ebubechukwu	Congo	USA
28-Jun	Sc. *	Johya	Phelix Oliver	OMI Lacombe/ Kenya	OMI Lacombe/ Kenya

28-Jun	Bro.*	Cavataio	Didier Eugène Jean-Pierre	France	France
28-Jun	Fr.	Soosaipillai	Alrin	Anglo/Irish	Jaffna
01-Jul	Fr.	Che Paau	Antonio	Mexico/Guatemala	Gen. Admin/I.R.S.
01-Jul	Fr.	Rozario	Arun William	Gen. Admin./Gen. House	USA
08-Aug	Sc. *	Ahit	Salutillo Adrian	Philippines	Philippines
08-Aug	Sc. *	Ani	Chikwado John Jonathan	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Aug	Sc. *	Beyene Beyene	Raphaël	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Aug	Sc. *	Kalaki	Joel	Congo	Congo
08-Aug	Sc. *	Mar	León	Mediterranea/ Senegal-Guinea B.	Mediterranea/ Senegal-Guinea B.
08-Aug	Sc. *	Ogbu Onah	Felix	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Aug	Sc. *	Rios Salhuana	Gerson Javier	BolPer	BolPer
08-Aug	Sc. *	Tobindi Logsi	Honoré	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Aug	Sc. *	Ukaigwe	Chigozie Emmanuel	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Aug	Sc. *	Wayang	Colbert	Cameroon	Cameroon
12-Aug	Sc. *	Apouvi	Jean Baptiste	Mediterranea/ Senegal-Guinea B.	Gen. Admin/ Ghana
22-Aug	Sc. *	Fung	Dominic King Ho	Australia/China	Australia/China
22-Aug	Fr. *	Teixeira De Carvalho	Rivaldo	Brazil	Brazil
30-Aug	Sc. *	Gumban	Elmer	Philippines	Philippines
30-Aug	Sc. *	Zimora	Phillip Anesu	OMI Southern Africa	OMISA/ Zimbabwe
02-Sep	Fr.	Ramaqele	George Rakotsoane	Cameroon	Lesotho
05-Sep	Sc. *	Alugodhi	Antonius	Namibia	Namibia
08-Sep	Bro. *	Król	Jakub	Poland	Poland
15-Sep	Fr.	Delbeke	Gerard	Congo	Belgium & Netherlands
27-Sep	Fr.	Kapp	Aloys	Namibia	Central European
23-Oct	Fr.	Monsavane	Antoine	Philippines/ Thailand-Laos	France
01-Nov	Fr.	Rojas Mendoza	German	Haiti/Colombia	Cruz del Sur
01-Nov	Fr. *	Đào Đức Minh	Jean/Baptiste	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
01-Nov	Fr. *	Lê Khắc Tuyển	Paul	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
01-Nov	Fr. *	Ngô Thanh Tùng	Joseph	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
01-Nov	Fr. *	Nguyễn Minh Hùng	André	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
01-Nov	Fr. *	Nguyễn Trọng Mạnh	Joseph	France/Vietnam	France
01-Nov	Fr. *	Nguyễn Văn Nghiêu	Antoine	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
01-Nov	Fr. *	Trần Anh Dũng	Joseph	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
20-Nov	Sc. *	Kanjimi	Olaf Sivhute	Namibia	Namibia
20-Nov	Fr. *	Hoang Van Sac	François/Xavier	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
20-Nov	Fr. *	Ho Chi Nhan	Joseph	France/Vietnam	France/Vietnam
20-Nov	Fr. *	Ngueche	Hugues	Cameroon	Cameroon
08-Dec	Sc. *	Kanyetu	Pedro Nguuru	Namibia	Brazil

Oblates in First Formation - 2022
(Reported as of January 2023)

Year	Scholastics	Bros. In Temp. vows	First Vows	Perpetual Vows	Ordinations
2022	560	26	77	63	61
2021	587	19	85	81	70
2020	598	24	96	71	55
2019	598	23	103	50	55
2018	601	20	106	69	42

Deaths and Departures - 2022

Deaths reported in 2022: 97 (84 Priests, 12 Brothers, 1 Scholastic)

2021: 93 2020: 87 2019: 87 2018: 92 2017: 91

Departures reported in 2021: 49 (2 priests, 47 scholastics)

- Expiration of Temporary Vows (44 Scholastics)
- Dispensation from Temporary Vows (3 Scholastics)
- Laicization Completed (1 Priest)
- Secularization (1 Priest)

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The General House formulates Guidelines on the protection of Minors

“Evangelizzare pauperibus misit me” – “He sent me to evangelize the poor”

This beautiful charism of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate has inspired the sons of St. Eugene de Mazenod for well over two centuries, to be close to the poor and the most abandoned wherever they are.

Even today, with nearly 3500 members in their family spread across the five continents, the Oblates continue to be faithful to their call and mission. They continue to read the signs of the times and identify the new faces of the poor.

“They are new because new social, political, religious and economic realities deprive them of their dignity, or because our more courageous reading of the signs of the times helps us to recognize them more clearly.” (Acts of the 36th General Chapter 2016, no. 5)

In that regard, the Oblates have very clearly recognized that being committed to the defence of minors and the most vulnerable

constitutes an indispensable part of their God-given charism and mission.

That is why the OMI General Administration, especially through the General Service of Procuration to the Holy See, has been working tirelessly over the past few years, organizing many programmes of ongoing formation, encouraging every Oblate Unit to set up guidelines in order to define our ministerial praxis and lifestyle in accordance with the mission and doctrine of the Church.

Complying by those measures, on 3rd of February 2023, the members of the Central Government of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate signed and acknowledged the document “Guidelines on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults”, which elaborates the safeguarding procedures, which the Oblate General House will follow.

In preparation for the acknowledgment of the aforementioned document, a two-day session was conducted by the following three experts:

- Msgr. John Joseph Kennedy, the head of the office of the Disciplinary Section of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith

- Fr. Salvatore Franco, OMI, psychologist and psychotherapist.

- Fr. Thomas Bang, OMI, doctoral student in Canon Law currently doing research on judicial penal procedure in cases of sexual offenses in the Cameroonian context.

The document "Guidelines on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults" is expected to be signed by all the members of the General House community, as well as by the formation staff of the International Roman Scholasticate (IRS), in the coming days.

AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

CONGO

An Oblate accompanies the Pope to Congo and South Sudan

On Tuesday, January 31, the Pope began his fortieth apostolic journey to Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and then to Southern Sudan. The only African journalist on Pope Francis' plane is an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Father Jean-Baptiste MALENGE. The National Episcopal Conference of Congo (CENCO) delegated our colleague on the papal flight.

A former secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Social Communications, he is now a contributor to the Catholic diocesan radio Elikya in Kinshasa. He has been a correspondent for Radio Vatican for 30 years. He teaches Philosophy and Communication. His latest book published in 2022 is: "Communication will save Africa."

Jean-Baptiste Malenge was an elected delegate in the recently concluded 37th General Chapter. He was also chosen as a member of the editorial board that prepared the final Chapter Document.

CONGO

Oblate arrested and later released

(www.catholicnewsagency.com)

Oblate and Five Students Arrested for 'We Refuse Corruption' Chants Against Congolese President After Pope Francis Event in DRC.

The five students from the Institute Saint Eugène de Mazenod in Kinshasa and Father Owab Guy-Julien MULUKU, a Congolese member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, were detained nearly 34 hours before being released shortly before 10pm on Feb. 3.

Fr. Muluku and five students were arrested after an event Thursday morning with Pope Francis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, allegedly for criticizing the country's president. The Congolese Oblate and the students were detained nearly 34 hours before being released shortly before 10pm on Feb. 3.

The arrest and subsequent release was confirmed by the Province of Congo of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

The six were arrested around noon by the president's intelligence service after Pope Francis' gathering with Congolese youth at Martyrs' Stadium in Kinshasa, DRC, on Feb. 2. When Pope Francis spoke against corruption during the Feb. 2 event, part of the crowd broke into a chant in the Lingala language directed at the country's president and saying his mandate was over, according to The Associated Press.

DRC President Felix Tshisekedi, who took office in January 2019, will be up for reelection in December. Father Jean Baptiste MALENGE, a delegate for the Congolese bishops' conference and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, told EWTN News that a group of students from the Institute Saint Eugène de Mazenod in Kinshasa broke out in a song they learned from the late Congolese Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo: "Corruption, we refuse corruption," adding, "Thief, beware."

Father Muluku, who is academic secretary-general at the graduate school, was arrested with five of these students when he tried to protect them during the arrest.

ANGOLA**The mission of Angola at the rhythm of the orientations of the 37th General Chapter**

P. Thomas Bang, OMI

Concerned about the animation of the orientations of the 37th General Chapter of our congregation in the mission of Angola, the superior of this Oblate unit, Father David Ibwidi, OMI, turned to the General Procure of OMI.

Indeed, the superior of the mission of Angola has requested that a session on the issue of the protection of minors and integrity in ministry be facilitated in his mission. The session on the protection of minors and vulnerable persons did not interest only the Oblates who work in Angola but also the laity. Collaboration in ministry between Oblates and lay people is increasingly encouraged. It is together with the laity that we make our pilgrimage of hope.

The session that took place from January 7 to 10 was in two phases: from 7 to 8 with the laity and from 9 to 10 with the Oblates.

The meeting at the Saint Anne Center with the laity brought together more than 200 people. Among the participants, there were mainly women (mothers) and young people. The meeting had two main parts: A presentation made by us, and questions and answers. Our presentation was based on the following points:

1- Types of abuse in families, schools and parish activities.

2- The role and responsibility of parents in prevention, awareness and denunciation.

3- The means of defence in case of abuse, the right and the duty to report abuse.

4- The consequences of the abuse on the victim, the family, the Church and society.

5- The places of reporting.

6- Red flags that there has been abuse or that person could be a potential abuser.

After this presentation, some participants shared their experiences and also some types of sexual abuses that we encounter in cultures. For example:

- In some cultures, when a girl reaches puberty, she must have sex with one of her uncles. It is only after this sexual act that the girl is deemed fit and mature for marriage.

- Sexual intercourse during the initiation rites of young girls.

Sunday January 08, 2023 Parish Center St. Anne of Luanda

During the mass, we gave the end of training certificates to 15 young girls and boys who followed in November, training on awareness techniques against abuse in the family and in schools.

After mass, we had a meeting with two different groups (young people and mothers) who raise awareness against the different forms of abuse in families, schools, and in their different living environments.

They presented what they do and the multifaceted difficulties they encounter. Suggestions have been made. We promised to support them in continuous training to build their capacity.

Meeting with the Oblates

From Monday January 9 to Tuesday January 10, we had a session with the Oblates of the Angola mission. They were 9 in total to follow the session.

We spoke in turn about the state of the problem of sexual abuse in the Church in general and in the local Church of Angola in particular. We talked about the types of abuses, the consequences and the means of prevention. A point was made on the indices of abuse, the Red Flag. A presentation was made on the handling of cases and the role of the person in charge of the protection of minors and vulnerable persons.

The method used during this session was: presentations, group discussions of 4 and 5, sharing of experiences and questions and answers.

It was in a very fraternal atmosphere that the session ended on the evening of Tuesday, January 10, 2023.

ASIA-OCEANIA

PAKISTAN**Golden Jubilee of Pakistan Delegation**

The Oblate Delegation of Pakistan celebrated the Golden Jubilee (14 Feb 1971-14 Feb 2021) of its presence in Pakistan on 16 February 2022 at Mazenod College, Lahore. The Holy Mass at the College was presided over by Papal Nuncio in Pakistan His Excellency Christophe Zakhia El-Kassis along with Fr. Khan Paulus OMI, Delegation Superior of Pakistan, His Eminence Joseph Coutts, Archbishop Emeritus of Karachi Diocese, His Grace Sebastian Francis Shaw OFM, Archbishop of Archdiocese of Lahore, His Excellency Samson Shukardin OFM, Bishop of Hyderabad Diocese, Fr. Inayat Gill OMI and Fr. Vernon Derrick OMI. Beside the whole delegation membership, many priests and religious from Lahore and other dioceses shared the joy of the occasion. In the following briefly is presented a fifty-year-service of the Oblates in Pakistan.

Short History of Oblate Mission in Pakistan

At the invitation of Dominican Bishop Benedict Cialeo of Lyallpur Diocese (Faisalabad Diocese since 1977) and with the recommendation of Fr. Leo Deschatâtelets (1899-1974), the then Superior General of the Congregation (1947-1972), Fr. Lucien Schmitt (1921-2007), the Provincial of the Province of Ceylon (1968-1974) accompanied his three energetic pioneer Oblates namely Late Fr. Lester Silva (1939-), Fr. Job Basil Silva (1939-2022) and Fr. Joseph Theogenes (1939-2022) to West Pakistan from Sri Lanka. They arrived on 14 February 1971. These three pioneer Oblates were infused with the charism of their founder St. Eugene De Mazenod and motto of the Congregation, “Evangelizare pauperibus misit me. Pauperes evangelizantur” which means “He has sent me to evangelize the poor. The poor are being evangelized.”

After studying the national language Urdu for few months in a mountain resort city in the north of Pakistan named Murree, the three Oblates came down to Lyallpur diocese and were assigned to serve in different parishes. They were put under the guidance of experienced local priests, in order to familiarize themselves with the language, culture, and lifestyle of the

people. Fr. Lester Silva besides being appointed Mission Superior of Pakistan was assigned with a diocesan priest Fr. Rufin Anthony (1940-2016) in Gojra. Fr. Rufin Anthony became the bishop of Islamabad-Rawalpindi Diocese in 2010. Fr. Theogenes Joseph was assigned in St. Anthony’s Parish, Chak 10/4-L, Antoniabab in Okara with a diocesan priest Fr. James Archangelus and Fr. Job Basil Silva to St. Pius X Parish, Chak Jhumra with a Dominican priest. Later Fr. Theogenes was appointed as parish priest in Chak Jumra with a Dominican priest assisting him where Oblate presence was only for a few years.

In 1974 Sacred Heart Parish, Gojra was handed over to the Oblates which served as the headquarters of the Oblates until 1985. Oblates were also given the adjoining parishes, Immaculate Conception Parish, Toba Tek Singh in 1975 and Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Chak 6/4-L, Okara in 1976, not too far from Gojra. On one hand, the increase in diocesan clergy in Faisalabad permitted the Oblates to hand back Our Lady of Mercy Parish in 1982 and Toba Tek Singh in 1989 to the diocese. On the other hand, there was a decline in the number of missionaries and the expansion of Oblate mission in other regions of Pakistan especially Multan diocese had taken its attention.

Having served for 25 years from 1971 to 1996 with commitment, dedication and missionary zeal, the Oblates handed Gojra parish back to Faisalabad diocese stating “We the missionaries have built the parish, now we move to another under-developed parish or we would start from the scratch in another area.”

Having left Gojra, Oblates moved to St. Eugene’s Parish, Pir Mahal which was carved out of Immaculate Conception Parish, Toba Tek Singh on 15 October 1996. Fr. Alfred Rayappu (1941-2002), an Oblate Brother for 35 years, and ordained priest in July 1996 in Multan, was appointed as parish priest. In these parishes, Oblates focused on mission, faith formation, development through Basic Christian Community Development Program (BCCD), housing projects and education. With the death of Fr. Alfred Rayappu on 16 January

2002, Oblates left Pir Mahal as well, although for a short period Fr. Joseph Alex from Oblate Juniorate, Multan was going for Sunday Masses. After leaving Pir Mahal, Oblate presence in Faisalabad diocese also ceased, where all missionary work had begun and taken root.

In 1979, Oblate Mission in Pakistan was upgraded to the status of Oblate Delegation of Pakistan. Fr. Victor Gnanapragasam (1940-2020), who till then was the Mission Superior, became the Delegation Superior for two terms until 1985.

Setting Foot in Multan Diocese

While apostolic service was at its peak in Faisalabad diocese, Oblates were invited to serve in other dioceses when bishops saw their missionary services. At the request of Bishop Ernest Bertrand Boland OP of the Diocese of Multan, in September 1978 the Oblates entered Multan diocese and took charge of St. Joseph's Parish, Khanewal. In 1985, the Oblates shifted from Khanewal Parish to Ibn-e-Mariam Parish in Rangpur, with Derekabad and Azizabad as its outstations. In 1988, Derekabad was established as a separate parish with the name of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Azizabad being its outstation. Fr. Temsey Croos (1940-1995) was appointed as its first parish priest who remained in this position until his unfortunate death in a fatal traffic accident on 27 December 1995. This area commonly known 'Thal Desert' is a government land. Christian families, expelled by their landlords opted to settle down on it with the hope of obtaining land rights from the government at some stage. They had no food, no clean drinking water, no roof, and no toilets. Oblates came to their aid by providing them necessary things to cultivate land and earn for themselves. Besides that, Oblates since then have worked tirelessly to get the land rights for the Christian community which has now turned the unproductive land into an arable land. Very few Christian families have got land rights while some are compelled to leave the area due to forced eviction and land grabbing by the powerful. Fr. Temsey built a gigantic 'Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine' adjacent to the parish house, which has become a symbol of unity for the Catholics of the region. Presently Oblates have bought a 15 acres land in front of the shrine and have started building a Catholic settlement called 'Mariam Colony'.

After 40 years of its presence in Multan diocese, the Oblates took over another parish, namely St. Martin de Porres Parish, on 29 July 2018 at the invitation of the then Bishop Benny Mario Travas of Multan diocese. It is located in the city of Hasilpur, 141 km from Multan in Southern Punjab. After signing of the agreement between the Ordinary and the Delegation Superior, Fr Khan Paulus, Fr. Akmal Patras (Parish Priest) and Deacon Daniel Sabir were the first Oblate appointments in the parish. Oblates continue to serve in this parish with commitment and vigour.

Moving into Balochistan

The Order of Friars Minor (OFM) took over Quetta from Jesuits in 1935 and administered it till 1982. In 1981 the Oblates moved into Quetta, at the request of Bishop Bonaventure Paul OFM (1929-2007), Bishop of the Diocese of Hyderabad from 1971 to 1990. In 1982 the Franciscan Friars officially handed over the Holy Rosary Parish, Quetta to the care of the Oblates. This was the only parish which covered almost whole of Balochistan province. Presently Quetta city has a population of 1,160,000 inhabitants. It was part of the diocese of Hyderabad. Hyderabad diocese covering an area of 278,529 sq km comprised three divisions in Sindh namely Hyderabad, Larkana and Sukkur and whole of Balochistan. About one-third of Catholics in Balochistan live in Quetta, which was 700 km from Hyderabad. Bishop Joseph Coutts, Bishop of Hyderabad diocese between 1990 and 1998, with the support of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples wished Quetta to be established as an Apostolic Prefecture and confided to the Oblates. The first request was turned down due to an acute shortage of personnel. But given the situation of Quetta, "neglected by both the Church and the government," the offer was finally accepted by the Superior General (OMI Information #365, March 1998).

With all the due consideration for the better interest of the Church in Pakistan at large and Balochistan in particular, the Apostolic Prefecture of Quetta, consisting of the whole of the Province of Balochistan was erected as a separate ecclesiastical unit on 9 November 2001. The official promulgation in Quetta was made on 7 December 2001. Archbishop

Alessandro D'Erico, Apostolic Nuncio in Pakistan and the bishops of Pakistan, together with many priests, religious and laity were present on this occasion. On the same day, Fr. Victor Gnanapragasam was installed as the first Apostolic Prefect of Quetta.

The Apostolic Prefecture of Quetta absorbed territories taken from the Archdiocese of Karachi and the Diocese of Hyderabad. It consists of the whole of the Province of Balochistan, the biggest Province, covering 44% of the land area of Pakistan, but sadly the least developed and thinly populated province. Major part of the province is covered with arid mountains, deserts and sand dunes. The border of the province touches Punjab Province in the northeast, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in the north, Sindh Province in the southeast Afghanistan in the West, Iran in the southwest and the Arabian Sea in the south. The province of Balochistan is rich in natural resources of gas, gold, silver, marble, coal, chromium, copper, uranium, platinum, black pearl, oil, valuable stones etc.

The Oblates in Quetta Prefecture along with Salesians and diocesan clergy and religious sisters served the faithful of Balochistan with commitment and dedication. On 29 April 2010, on the feast of St. Catherine of Siena, the Apostolic Prefecture of Quetta was raised to an Apostolic Vicariate and entrusted the solicitude and authority again to the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. At the same time Fr. Victor Gnanapragasam was appointed as the Apostolic Vicar and was ordained bishop on 16 July 2010.

As regards Christian communities in this province, they are Punjabis who migrated from the Punjab Province generations ago and consider themselves people of the soil. Except for Quetta city where there is a concentration of Christians, they are scattered all over the province in small groups for the sake of job opportunities. The majority of them are sanitary workers, but the situation is gradually improving with the impact of education. Quite a number of Christians in Quetta city are holding respectable posts in government and private sectors.

An important chapter in the life of the Oblate Delegation of Pakistan came to an end when Bishop

Victor Gnanapragasam of Quetta Vicariate died at the age of 80 on 12 December 2020. "He was a humble and worthy servant of the Lord who during his eighty years of earthly life, dedicated nearly fifty-five years to priesthood and out of which almost eleven years to episcopacy," Archbishop Joseph Arshad of Islamabad-Rawalpindi diocese said in a homily at Bishop Victor's funeral Mass. The archbishop said further, "He was the follower of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd and a true son of Mother Mary." Highlighting his love for the Church and his missionary zeal he continued, "He defended the Catholic faith and fought a good fight. As Church is missionary in its very nature, Bishop Victor was passionately missionary." The archbishop praised Gnanapragasam saying "He was a responsible person in all responsibilities entrusted to him either by his own Congregation or by the Universal Church. As Prefect he built the structure of the Prefecture and as Bishop, he created parishes and commissions and strengthened finances."

Oblates continue to offer their apostolic, missionary and administrative services in the Vicariate of Quetta under the leadership of Khalid Rehmat OFM Cap, ordained bishop on 25 March 2021. Presently Oblates are serving in Holy Rosary Cathedral Parish, St. Pius X Parish and St. Eugene's Parish, Nawankilli. Besides these responsibilities, Oblate priests namely Fr. Inayat Michael Gill and Fr. Basharat Exupear serve as Vicar General and Procurator of Quetta Vicariate, respectively.

Local Vocations to the Oblate Way of Life

Speaking about formation, Oblates took initiative to take vocations for Oblate life by late 70s, since many young boys were impressed by the witnessing life of the missionaries and were drawn to become like them. In 1979 the Oblates bought a house in Karachi which became the scholasticate for the students of philosophy and theology as both disciplines at that time were taught in Christ the King Seminary, Karachi. Earlier aspirants to join the Oblates would stay with Oblate priests in parishes and receive basic instructions on Oblate life before being sent to Sri Lanka for pre-novitiate and novitiate. Later to formalize formation, an arrangement was made with the Franciscan friars who accepted Oblate candidates for their initial training in Franciscan minor seminary namely Dar-ul-Naim in Lahore

before proceeding to Sri Lanka for further formation. At some point Oblates realized that formation of candidates to oblate life in Dar-ul-Naim was not meeting required expectation. So, in 1985, an Oblate Juniorate, a Minor Seminary of the Oblates was built in Louis Colony, Multan. Later, in 1997, the building of Oblate Philosophate was constructed in Youhanabad, Lahore, as the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Pakistan in 1990 had decided to shift faculty of Philosophy from Christ the King Major Seminary, Karachi to Youhanabad, Lahore. Classes of philosophy at the newly constructed St. Francis Xavier Seminary in Youhanabad began from 1 September 1994. Thus, a full-fledged oblate formation program since then continues until today.

Parish Ministry

Oblates began their mission in Faisalabad diocese with parish ministry and later expansion took them to the dioceses of Multan and Hyderabad in late 70s and early 80s. Besides having formation houses in the archdioceses of Lahore and Karachi, Oblates were invited by the Ordinaries to offer their missionary services in their parishes as well. Thus, St. Luke's Parish in the archdiocese of Karachi was handed over to the Oblates in 2006, while in the Archdiocese of Lahore Oblates were given Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Kasur in April 2007 and Holy Spirit Parish, Sangla Hill on 14 September 2009. Oblates entered for the first time in Islamabad-Rawalpindi diocese by taking over Holy Rosary Parish in Gujrat in 2016.

As the Delegation was celebrating the 50th year of its presence in Pakistan, a historic event took place when Oblates set foot once again in Faisalabad Diocese after 18 years. It was in this diocese that all of its missionary venture had begun in 1971. By leaving St. Eugene's Parish, Pir Mahal in 2002, the last remaining station of their presence, Oblates said goodbye to Faisalabad Diocese as well. Their return to this diocese was not in parishes where they had already offered their apostolic services, but in a newly carved out parish. With the successful discussion and agreement signed between Bishop Joseph Indrias Rehmat of Faisalabad Diocese and Fr. Khan Paulus, Delegation Superior, on the memorial of the Dedication of the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles, on 18 November 2020, Bishop Indrias Rehmat inaugurated St. Mary's Parish in

Chak Nos. 36-37/2-RA, Okara. He welcomed the return of the Oblates to Faisalabad Diocese stating that the Oblates would offer their spiritual and pastoral services to bring the faithful closer to God while remaining faithful to their charism. Fr. Amanat Chaman as Parish Priest and Fr. Basharat Exupear as Assistant were appointed the pioneer missionaries.

Where do We Stand?

In conclusion, one can divide the Oblate presence in Pakistan into six periods comprising six decades with particular focus/foci of that period seeing the present status of the delegation.

The first decade (1971-80) of Oblate presence in Pakistan concentrated on establishing itself according to a new cultural, religious, political and economic milieu focusing primarily on parish ministry. Charism of the Oblate Congregation was translated into action through establishing Basic Christian Communities Development Program in parishes, faith formation of the parishioners, witnessing life of community, and expression of oblate charism. Towards the end of the decade expansion of Oblate Mission outside of Faisalabad Diocese took it to the neighboring Diocese of Multan.

During the second decade (1980-1990), together with mission, focus turned to formation. Besides important expansion of Oblates in the province of Balochistan in 1981, formation of candidates to Oblate life began in an orderly manner with buying of a house for scholastics in Karachi in 1979 and construction of Oblate Juniorate in Multan in 1985. Two local Oblates, Frs. Inayat Gill and Yousaf Gill were ordained priests during this decade, the first fruits of the Oblate mission in Pakistan.

The third decade (1990-2000) was a period of new hope and transition. Two more local Oblates Frs. Victor John and Abid Samuel were ordained priests. Fr. Yousaf Gill was appointed Superior of the Pakistan Delegation in 1994. It was the first ever appointment of the local as leader of the Oblates in Pakistan. Oblate Philosophate, a formation house for philosophy students was built in Lahore in 1997. This decade saw some setbacks too; death of Fr. Temsey Croos in a road accident and leaving of oblate and priestly life by three local Oblates namely Frs. Yousaf Gill, Victor John and Abid Samuel was a big blow to the Delegation.

The fourth decade (2000-2010), ushered a period of freshness, rise from setbacks and despair under the leadership of Fr. Joseph Alex as Delegation Superior (2001-2008). Arrival of non-Sri Lankan missionaries gave the delegation an international flavour, increase in local vocations at all stages of formation brought new life, priestly ordination of 15 local oblates was a big boost to the Delegation and the Congregation, and expansion of Oblate mission in Archdioceses of Lahore and Karachi gave missionary satisfaction. For the first time sending two scholastics namely Khan Paulus (2007) and Gulshan Barkat (2008) to the International Roman Scholasticate to do license in Biblical Theology and Church History respectively gave missionary confidence to the Delegation in Pakistan and at the Congregation level. As a whole this decade marked a period of stability, sustainability and healthy progress in the aspects of mission, vision and formation in the Delegation of Pakistan.

The fifth decade (2010-2020) continued to tread on the stability of the previous decade. Environment friendly projects like installation of solar power system in two of the formation houses and the Superior House were realized and transportation modes for the oblates were

improved. 14 more local Oblates were ordained priests during this decade which made it possible to bring in local leadership in all spheres of the Delegation. This was a period of transition from foreign to local leadership, Fr. Khan Paulus being the second local to be appointed as Superior of the Delegation of Pakistan in 2017.

2020 marked the beginning of the sixth decade. It sees the Delegation drawing its attention to human and social development of Christians as a whole and Catholics in particular by establishing institutions of higher learning in Youhanabad, Lahore, although Oblates educate students up to grade 10. Thus, Mazenod College for girls was established in 2020 while the foundation of Mazenod College for boys was laid on 25 August 2022 adjacent to the same building.

The present makeup of the Delegation of Pakistan stands as follows; 33 priests (out of which 3 are Sri Lankans), 7 scholastics (of which 2 are studying at International Roman Scholasticate), 7 novices in Sri Lanka, 7 philosophy students and 18 Juniorists.

Fr. Gulshan Barkat, OMI
Superior, Oblate Scholasticate
Karachi

ANNIVERSARIES - FEBRUARY 2023

65th Anniversaries of Ordinations

09/02/1958	09391	Fr. Luigi Russo	Mediterranea
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60th Anniversaries of Vows

17/02/1963	11374	Fr. Allan Moss	Southern Africa
22/02/1963	11500	Fr. Raúl Castro	Cruz del Sur

60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

02/02/1963	09971	Fr. Jean-Marie Pépin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
02/02/1963	10002	Msgr. Reynald Rouleau	Lacombe
17/02/1963	10367	Fr. Leo De Visscher	Congo
23/02/1963	10211	Msgr. Gerald Wiesner	Lacombe
24/02/1963	10389	Fr. Patrick Carolan	Anglo-Irish
24/02/1963	10092	Fr. Angelo Pelis	Mediterranea
24/02/1963	13692	Fr. Piergiorgio Scarpellini	Mediterranea

50th Anniversaries of Ordinations

19/02/1973	11816	Fr. John Wotherspoon	Australia
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25th Anniversaries of Vows

02/02/1998	13811	Fr. Rodney George	Southern Africa
02/02/1998	13886	Fr. Joseph Hatutale	Namibia
02/02/1998	13809	Fr. Muzi Eugene Madlala	Southern Africa
02/02/1998	13810	Fr. Lizwelinjani Mlotshwa	Southern Africa
02/02/1998	13808	Fr. Tshidiso Moleko	Southern Africa
02/02/1998	13880	Fr. Raymond Mwangala	Administration Generale
02/02/1998	13815	Fr. Victor Mwansa	United States
02/02/1998	14006	Fr. Ignatius Singini Nacidze	United States
02/02/1998	13825	Fr. Vincent Sakala	United States
02/02/1998	13890	Fr. Mandla Skhosana	Southern Africa
02/02/1998	13952	Fr. Donovan Wheatley	Southern Africa
14/02/1998	13790	Fr. Miguel Córdova	Bolivie

ANNIVERSARIES - MARCH 2023

65th Anniversaries of Ordinations

01/03/1958	11944	Fr. Louis Jolly	France
22/03/1958	09653	Fr. Philippe Alin	France
22/03/1958	09251	Fr. Amador Lopez	United States
22/03/1958	09252	Fr. José María Riega	Cruz del Sur
30/03/1958	09435	Fr. Gerhard Scheuermann	Central European Province

60th Anniversaries of Vows

19/03/1963	11728	Bro. André Allard	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
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60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

09/03/1963	10184	Fr. Marcel Dumais	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
09/03/1963	10212	Fr. John Greene	Lacombe
09/03/1963	10160	Fr. Wilfred Harvey	United States
30/03/1963	10269	Fr. Eutimio González Álvarez	Mediterranea
31/03/1963	10428	Fr. Pierre Buekens	Belgique et Pays Bas
31/03/1963	10364	Fr. Leovan den Berg	Belgique et Pays Bas

50th Anniversaries of Vows

04/03/1973	12185	Fr. Peter Karoly Stoll	Administration Generale
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50th Anniversaries of Ordinations

25/03/1973	12501	Fr. Monohor Corraya	Colombo
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25th Anniversaries of Ordinations

14/03/1998	13355	Fr. Cletus Tsepe Ranthamane	Lesotho
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Suffrages for our Deceased - January-February 2023

No. 01-13

NAME	DATE	DIED AT	BORN	PROV/DEL
Fr. Wilfried Rossel	04/01/2023	Hingene	01/03/1936	Belgium & N'lands
Bro. Willy Grüntjes	08/01/2023	Nuth	10/10/1938	Belgium & N'lands
Fr. Yalai Carlo Bertolini	09/01/2023	Balikpapan	23/10/1937	Indonesia
Fr. Henri Reignat	14/01/2023	Lyon	11/05/1925	France
Fr. Pierre Ven	19/01/2023	Pontmain	01/08/1930	France
Fr. Oscar Pauwels	22/01/2023	Vancouver	16/07/1926	Lacombe
Fr. Joseph Ferraioli	23/01/2023	Belleville	20/02/1949	U.S.A.
Fr. Gustave Pelletier	25/01/2023	Richelieu	15/11/1925	N-D-Du-Cap
Sc. Jean Mbuku Kabutu	05/02/2023	Kinshasa	08/12/1999	Congo
Bro. Luc Fortin	16/02/2023	Richelieu	03/08/1925	N-D-Du-Cap
Fr. Brian Edward Harris	23/02/2023	Brisbane	11/04/1934	Australia
Fr. Paolo Pesenti	28/02/2023	S. Giorgio Canavese	02/04/1941	Mediterranean
Fr. Cornelius Conor Murphy	26/02/2023	Dublin	06/06/1934	Anglo-Irish

“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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via Aurelia 290, 00165 Roma, Italy

Fax: (39) 06 39 37 53 22 E-mail: information@omigen.org

www.omiworld.org

Editor & Webmaster: Shanil Jayawardena

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