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205TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST VOWS OF NOVEMBER 1, 1818

In recent years, the General Committee of Oblate Brothers has been responsible for animating the anniversary of the first vows in the congregation (November 1, 1818).

Starting from the Constitution 163: “The Constitutions and Rules set out a privileged means for each Oblate to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. ... Thus, they allow each Oblate to evaluate the quality of his response to his vocation and to become a saint.” This Constitution is recalled in the Acts of the 37th chapter (PHC 7.2)

To offer you this reflection, the committee was inspired by the Founder’s retreat notes at the end of October 1831 [cf. Spiritual Writings 1812-1856, n° 162 and 163].

In his first letter to Father Tempier, October 9, 1815, the Founder wrote: “... this holy society, which will have but one heart and one soul; part of the year will be spent for the conversion of souls; another part in retreat, study, our personal sanctification [...] This is enough to give you a taste of the spiritual delights that we will taste together.”

The General Committee of Oblate Brothers would like to propose to you a community day of recollection which would include several stages. Principally a time of adoration: do not hesitate to sign up for the 24 hours of adoration at the School of the Savior, which is suggested to the Mazenodian family between October 31 at 12 noon and November 1, 12 noon (Roman time).

Concerning adoration, Saint Eugene wrote to Father Tempier on July 26, 1817: “Almost every evening, I am with you in front of the Blessed Sacrament during your evening prayer ...”

The passage from the first letter of Saint Paul the Apostle to Timothy (1 Tim 4: 16), which we find in the preface to our CCRR, could serve as a guide: “Attend to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in both tasks, for by doing so you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.”

In his retreat notes of 1831, the Founder, began with this remark: “What a shame to have such a perfect rule in your hands, and not understand the meaning ...” The 37th Chapter also mandated: “That Superiors and their Councils ensure the implementation of animation in their respective Units in tune with this Chapter recommendation.” (PHC V, B, 3).

“The end of our congregation is the same as that of the Son of God,” wrote the Founder. “The glory of his celestial Father and the salvation of souls. And we are established precisely to work for the conversion of souls, and especially to evangelize the poor.”

This triptych: the glory of God, love of the Church and salvation of men is the heart of our spirituality. We find it in the preface and multiple times in the writings of our Founder. In particular, in his letter of March 20, 1826, to Father Tempier, where he expressed his joy for the approval of the rules: “We will never be able to appreciate it, other than by fidelity in all

adversity, by an increase of zeal and dedication to the glory of God, the service of the Church and the salvation of souls, especially the most abandoned, in accord with our vocation.”

The trilogy of our vocation as Missionary Oblates which we find at the beginning of our Constitutions:

“The call of Jesus Christ, heard within the Church through people’s need for salvation, draws us together as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.” (C 1).

The Founder invites us to become other Christs through contemplation and action. Let us take the time to reread the three texts which are found after the Preface and which influence our Constitutions:

Co-workers with the Saviour (1818)

What more sublime purpose than that of their Institute? Their founder is Jesus Christ, the very Son of God; their first fathers are the Apostles. They are called to be the Savior’s co-workers, the co-redeemers of mankind; and even though, because of their present small number and the more urgent needs of the people around them, they have to limit the scope of their zeal, for the time being, to the poor of our countryside and others; their ambition should, in its holy aspirations, embrace the vast expanse of the whole earth.

To preach Christ crucified (1826)

Like the Apostle, to preach “Jesus Christ, and him crucified... not in loftiness of speech, but in the showing of the Spirit,” that is to say, by making manifest that we have pondered in our hearts the words which we proclaim, and that we began to practice before setting out to teach.

With Jesus on the cross (1826)

Since the ministers of the Gospel will never reap abundant fruit from their labours, unless they hold in highest esteem, and, so to speak, constantly bear about in their own body the

death sufferings of Jesus, the members of our Society will earnestly strive to keep their passions in check and to deny their self-will in everything; like the Apostle, they will glory in their weaknesses, in insults, persecutions and distress endured for the sake of Christ.

These texts remind us that the heart of the apostolic spirituality of Eugene de Mazenod is the very person of Christ the Savior, whose cooperators we will only truly be to the extent that we imitate him in everything. Not only by an external imitation but by a profound interior transformation which consists of “forming Christ” in us, the “sequela Christi” on which the decree *Perfectæ Caritatis* insists.

The second point of our triptych: “The Church, this beautiful heritage of the Savior...” (Preface)

The Founder heard the call of Jesus Christ through the situation of the Church. He wrote to his mother on October 11, 1809: “Do not begrudge this poor Church, so horribly neglected... and which nevertheless gave birth to us all in Jesus Christ, the homage that two or three individuals in all of France (of which small number I consider myself so happy to be) want to make her their freedom and their life. And why would you want me to delay any longer in committing myself, in devoting myself to the Bride of Jesus Christ.”

Father Jetté, in his commentary on the Preface, writes: “It is not for this or that particular group that our Founder founded the Oblates – even if the poor, the most abandoned have his preference – but it is for the Church, for love of the Church.” And Father Jetté ended by recalling the words of Pope Paul VI, during the beatification of the Founder: “He was passionate about Jesus Christ and unconditional about the Church.”

Our Founder wrote in his Episcopal Mandate of February 16, 1860: “How would it be possible to separate our love of Jesus Christ from that which we owe to the Church? These two loves merge; to love the Church is to love Jesus Christ and vice versa...”

“The Rule,” wrote our Founder, “we received it from the Church through the hand of Pope Leo XII and thus our life should only be obedience to the Church.” He recommends that we absorb our Rule of life: “It is only in this way that we will be what God wants us to be, and that we will make ourselves worthy of our sublime vocation.”

Touched by the situation of the Church, the Founder put himself into the school of Christ; he returned to the pillar of our vocation: “How, indeed, did our Lord Jesus Christ proceed when he undertook to convert the world? He chose a number of apostles and disciples whom he himself trained in piety, and he filled them with his Spirit. These men he sent forth, once they had been schooled in his teaching, to conquer the world which, before long, was to bow to his holy rule.” This brings us back to Constitution No. 3 and our community dimension as Missionary Oblates. Our first Fathers were certain that it was necessary to form apostolic men. The way of the apostolic man is to follow Christ after the manner of the Apostles, working seriously to become saints.

In *Gaudete et exultate*, the Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness in today’s world, Pope Francis appeals to us: “Do not be afraid of holiness, it will not take away your strength, nor your life, nor joy”... “do not be afraid to aim higher, nor to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit.” In number 14 he states: “We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. Are you a consecrated person? Be holy by living your commitment with joy...”

In his retreat notes of 1831, the Founder insisted: “The end of this little Society of Missionaries... is... that the Priests came together... and as brothers living as one, gave their main attention to the evangelization of the poor, following the CONSTANT IMITATION OF THE VIRTUES AND EXAMPLES OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. [...]

Let us engrave these words in our hearts, let us write them everywhere so that we always have them before our eyes.”

Our spirituality is indeed to contemplate Christ, to reproduce his virtues and thus fulfill our apostolic ministry: the salvation of all. The salvation of all, not only through our ministry, but above all through our way of living which is rooted in the manifestation of the Spirit. Our life must reflect the contemplation and meditation of the Word of God, abandoning everything in following Jesus Christ...” (Constitution No. 2) An action which is called to be constantly renewed.

The third point of this trilogy: “the salvation of souls, especially the most abandoned”.

The Founder emphasizes this in his writings of 1831: “The main goal of the Institute is to provide for the needs of the most abandoned souls. This is why those miserable in prison have a legitimate right to our charity.”

Recently, the appeal of the General Chapter repeated: “We must not forget that the cry of the earth is the cry of the poor to whom we must give preference”, in reference to Constitution No. 5 (PHC 11,2) . Father General titled his letter of February 17, 2023: “Taking care of our common home to be a missionary home for the poor.” And in his letter of August 15, he described his second point of conversion: “The Missionaries of the poor in dialogue and in moving outward”.

Let us dare to take a moment as a community to review the place we give to the poor with their many faces, starting from Constitution No. 5, in order to be first of all wherever life places us at the wall of human dignity:

Our principal service in the Church is to proclaim Christ and his Kingdom to the most abandoned. We preach the Gospel among people who have not yet received it and help them see their own values in its light. Where the Church is already established, our commitment is to those groups it touches least.

Wherever we work, our mission is especially to those people whose condition cries out for salvation and for the hope which only Jesus Christ can fully bring.

These are the poor with their many faces; we give them our preference. Without forgetting that we have to recognize hope among the poorest, as Pope Francis tells us in his message in the 37th Chapter: "Letting yourselves be evangelized by the poor whom you evangelize, they teach you the path of hope, for the Church and for the world."

"Community life is a missionary gift that we must make fruitful by collaborating with the Holy Spirit: such is our task," wrote the Superior General in his letter of February 17, 2023. This discernment is not an individual task, but community discernment. "It is in and through the community to which we belong that we accomplish our mission. Our communities therefore have an apostolic character." (Constitution No. 37)

It is "the entire community which takes responsibility for the mission that the Church has entrusted to it," says the document Identity and Mission of the religious Brother in the Church, at No. 23. Let us remember what Pope Francis told us during the last General Chapter: "May your Founder, the charism he transmitted to you, and his missionary vision be and remain points of reference for your life and your work; to stay rooted in your missionary vocation, above all by living the testament of your Founder, in mutual love among yourselves and in zeal for the salvation of souls. It is the heart of your mission and the secret of your life, and this is why the Church still needs you.

In the immense field of the mission that is the entire world, may Jesus always be your model, as he was for Saint Eugène. Before the crucified Saviour, he decided one day to offer his own life so that everyone, especially the poor, might be able to experience the same love of God that had restored him to the path of faith."

Let us end by turning to her who, through her response of faith and her total availability to the call of the Spirit, is our model, our Mother and Mother of the Church, with this prayer from Pope Francis (Encyclical LUMEN FIDEI, from June 29, 2013):

Mother, help our faith!

Open our ears to hear God's word and to recognize his voice and call.

Awaken in us a desire to follow in his footsteps, to go forth from our own land and to receive his promise.

Help us to be touched by his love, that we may touch him in faith.

Help us to entrust ourselves fully to him and to believe in his love, especially at times of trial, beneath the shadow of the cross, when our faith is called to mature.

Sow in our faith the joy of the Risen One. Remind us that those who believe are never alone.

Teach us to see all things with the eyes of Jesus, that he may be light for our path. And may this light of faith always increase in us, until the dawn of that undying day which is Christ himself, your Son, our Lord!

*Benoit DOSQUET, OMI
Permanent Secretary of the Committee*

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Pilgrimage of Hope: Superior General's Message of Gratitude

From Aix-en-Provence, the Superior General, Fr. Chicho, sends a message of gratitude to the entire charismatic family after his fruitful pilgrimage to the Province of Notre-Dame-Du-Cap.

A pilgrim's heart is always filled with gratitude because everything is a gift from God. The pilgrim knows that he never truly travels alone. The journey is a constant series of encounters.

“As my visit to the Province of Notre Dame-du-Cap draws to a close, I am humbled and thankful to all those who organized and participated in this memorable occasion. I want to give a special thanks to the Provincial Jacques LALIBERTÉ who went above and beyond by driving me over 3,000 kilometers.

My time with the Innu communities, the parishes we serve, our historic homes for aging or ill Oblate missionaries, the Saint-Paul

University community celebrating 175 years of existence with a symposium, and meeting with all the Oblate missionaries and lay people has at every moment reaffirmed that shared Charism that unites us. I am also grateful to the Oblate missionaries from our three provinces in the Ottawa region of Canada who joined with their three Provincials for a fraternal gathering that filled me with hope.

Now, as a Pilgrim of Hope in Communion, I eagerly make my way to Aix for the final stage of the Mazenod Experience in English. And this month, we have the joy of welcoming 18 new Major Superiors in Rome, which will further strengthen our familial ties and inspire us in our mission to serve the poorest of the poor.

To the entire Charismatic family, I am truly appreciative of your prayers and support. Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey.”

*Luis Ignacio ALONSO ROIS, OMI
Superior General*

Rome: Meeting of The Ad Hoc Restructuring Committee

The Ad Hoc Restructuring Committee, which is also the Permanent Committee of the Constitutions and Rules met in Rome from 9 to 12 November 2023 for the first time in person, after two Zoom online meetings.

The objectives of the meeting were to review, in the light of the letter and questionnaire of the Superior General, the proposals on restructuring that were presented to the Congregation in 2010. In his Letter and questionnaire regarding restructuring the Superior writes,

“I would like to continue the discussion which I already initiated in my previous letter on the occasion 197th anniversary of the papal approval of our Constitutions and Rules, as mandated by step one (1) to envision new

structures that may serve the mission of our Congregation. To respond to the call of the General Chapter, besides some proposals, I gave in the said letter for our common pilgrimage, we need to continue asking ourselves sincerely about the status quo of our community life and mission, and how we can renew our community life and mission. Which kind of governance structures would be adequate?”

Correspondingly, the committee discussed strategies on how to manage the data that will come out of the responses to the questionnaire to achieve a synodal process. After gathering the data, the committee will meet again in April 2024 to study the gathered data and to put together some concrete structural proposals to be presented to the Superior General in Council for his continuing engagement with the entire Congregation.

Rome Welcomes 18 Newly Appointed Major Superiors

The General House is preparing for the 2023 Orientation Session for Major Superiors in Rome from November 17th to December 2nd. This annual gathering, organized by the Central Government, welcomes newly appointed provincials, vicar provincials, and delegation superiors to a two-week program to facilitate their transition into their new ministries.

The upcoming session will be attended by 18 participants, comprising nine provincials from various regions (Colombo, Jaffna, India, Poland, Assumption, Haiti, France, Namibia, Southern Africa), five delegation superiors (Guatemala, BOLPER, Madagascar, Zambia, Ukraine), and four vicar provincials (Southern Africa, Namibia, Colombo, Poland).

The program is designed to be dynamic, enriching, and practical. It is meant to introduce these new Major Superiors to the resources available to support their mission within the Congregation and their respective units.

One of the primary objectives of these Orientation Sessions is to foster a sense of fraternity and dialogue by providing a space and time for the Major Superiors to interact with one another and engage with the Central Government. They will have opportunities to dialogue not only with Father General but also with the members of the Central Government.

This year's guest presenter is a Marist brother and former Superior General, Brother Joseph McKEE. Brother McKee has years of experience in helping religious communities build and sustain effective leadership by providing invaluable insights and tools for management.

The 37th General Chapter emphasized the importance of reading, reflecting, and engaging with the Constitutions and Rules. To facilitate this, Fr Paolo ARCHIATI, former Vicar General, will guide the participants in sessions aimed at equipping them with valuable resources available to promote active engagement with the Constitutions and Rules.

A number of sessions will also cover important administrative and legal matters, as well as best practices for finances, stewardship, mission, and formation within the Congregation. Participants will be introduced to the various General Services of the Congregation, such as the General Secretariat and Archives, Postulation, Oblate Studies, JPIC, Procurator, and Communication.

One of the session's pivotal moments will be the celebration of the Eucharist at the tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican, which will be followed by a guided tour of the excavations under St. Peter's Basilica.

We extend our warmest wishes to all the Major Superiors currently traveling to participate in the 2023 Orientation Session for Major Superiors. We hope this experience will be a fruitful and profound spiritual experience that will equip them with the necessary resources to be effective leaders in their respective units for the benefit of the poor and the Congregation.

*Antoni BOCHM, OMI
Vicar General*

Rome: 2023 Orientation Session Begins

The 2023 Orientation Session for Major Superiors officially began today, November 17, 2023.

Nine Provincials – Harry ABISHEGAM (India), Jolicoeur DOMINIQUE (Haiti), Lizwelinjani MLOTSHWA (Southern Africa), Rufus NEKONDO (Namibia), Jacek NOSOWICZ (Assumption), Marek OCHLAK (Poland), Jeyanthan PACHCHEK (Jaffna), Renuad SALIBA (France), Roshan SILVA (Colombo)

Five Delegation Superiors – Roberto CARRASCO (BOLPER), Peter CHIBESA (Zambia), Felix GARCIA MARTINEZ (Guatemala), Witalij PODOLAN (Ukraine), Alphonse RAKOTONDRVELO (Madagascar) – and, Four Vicars provincial – Thimoteus HAUSIKU (Namibia), James JAYASINGHE (Colombo), Bartosz MADWJAKI (Poland), Jonathan PETERSEN (Southern Africa) are present in Rome for this event.

The participants and members of the Central Government gathered in the General House chapel for the opening prayer service. Led by the Superior General, Fr. Luis Ignacio ALONSO ROIS, carrying the Cross of the Founder, and

singing the Veni Sancte Spiritus, they all went in procession to the conference room where the sessions will be held.

The Superior General formally welcomed the participants, reminding them of the important role they hold within the Congregation. This session, he reminded them, is meant to create community, share experiences, create networks among them and with the Central Government, and provide them with some information.

The Vicar General, Fr. Antoni BOCHM, presented the program of the whole session, gave some practical information, and guided the participants on a tour of the General House. In the afternoon, six (6) participants presented themselves, shared their vocation stories, gave some information on their unit, and described the blessings and challenges in their lives. The self-presentations will continue tomorrow, November 18.

The first day concluded with the celebration of the Mass in the General House chapel. Fr. BOCHM presided and preached the homily. Frs. DOMINIQUE and MLOTSHWA were the main con-celebrants.

OMIWORLD

Major Superiors: Mission-Inspired Leadership in an Emerging World

On Monday, November 20, 2023, the Major Superiors reconvened after a brief sabbath recess to resume their work.

The day commenced with an address by Fr. Thomas BANG, the delegate for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults in the Congregation. In his presentation, Fr. Bang outlined his plans for the implementation of the Chapter Mandates concerning the protection of minors and vulnerable adults, emphasizing the congregation's commitment to ensuring a safe and secure environment.

Following this important discussion, the session transitioned into a 3-day leadership workshop facilitated by Br. Joseph McKee, F.M.S. The workshop, titled "Called to Spirit-Filled, Mission-Inspired Leadership in an Emerging World," aims to guide major superiors in cultivating effective leadership skills in the ever-evolving landscape of the Church and society.

Br. McKee, a respected Scottish Marist Brother and former Vicar General of his Congregation, brings a wealth of experience to the workshop. His previous facilitation of similar sessions has been well-received, earning appreciation for his insightful guidance.

The workshop is poised to provide major superiors with valuable insights into the evolving role of leadership in the context of the congregation's mission. As they delve into the sessions led by Br. McKee, the Major

Superiors are expected to gain practical tools and perspectives to navigate the challenges of contemporary leadership within the spirit and mission of their religious community.

OMIWORLD

The Superior General participates at the 100th Assembly of the USG

Fr. Chicho participates in the 100th Assembly of the Union of Superior Generals (USG) which is currently taking place at Fraterna Domus, in Rome, November 22-24.

The central theme, "Synodality: A Renewed Call to the Prophecy of Hope," signifies a focus on collaboration, shared wisdom, and a prophetic response to the challenges faced by society, the Church, and religious families.

The assembly, attended by Delegates of the UISG Constellations, began their joint session at Fraterna Domus on November 19. On November 22, additional Superiors General will join, bringing the total number of participants to 120, fostering a collaborative atmosphere akin to previous USG meetings.

A momentous occasion during the assembly will be the meeting with Pope Francis on the morning of November 23. This gathering not only celebrates the first face-to-face meeting of the two Unions but also marks the 100th Assembly.

It promises to be a unique opportunity for the Superiors General to engage with the Holy Father, reinforcing the spirit of unity, shared purpose, and hope that underpins the mission of the religious families represented.

This assembly stands as a testament to the ongoing commitment of different religious congregations to synodality, prophecy, and hope in the service of the Church and the world.

OMIWORLD

AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

Defying the odds: The Oblate Mission in Zimbabwe thrives

For forty years, the Oblates have been serving the People of the young nation of Zimbabwe. And they are only getting started.

In 1983, a group of Oblates from South Africa answered the call of Zimbabwean bishops and began ministering to those on the fringes of society in the Bulawayo area.

Today, this vibrant mission is thriving, with an intercultural community of 13 Oblates ranging in age from 32 to 65, representing not just South Africa but also Australia, India, Paraguay, and the Czech Republic.

It is a testament to the interculturality of our Mazenodian family. However, as the mission continues to flourish, there is a growing need for more missionaries from different parts of the world to serve in this beautiful country.

While focused on traditional parish ministries, the Oblates go above and beyond the walls of the Parish! They have embraced new initiatives like working with charismatic groups, promoting adoration and devotions, organizing youth rallies, conducting retreats, and collaborating with other religious organizations to train new formators.

Moreover, they have adopted an innovative, holistic approach to ministry, taking on development projects such as providing counseling, drilling boreholes for clean water, and helping establish community gardens and farms. Their efforts have made a significant impact on the lives of those they serve, bringing hope and compassion to those in need.

Recently, the Oblates have been entrusted with two new mission stations in rural areas, expanding their reach beyond Bulawayo. These missions, St. Kizito and St. John in Maraire, reflect the dedication, perseverance, and vision of the Oblates in Zimbabwe.

Namibia: Lay Associates in Action

The Province of Namibia boasts of nearly 300 committed Oblate Lay Associates in five districts throughout the country. They are accompanied by the National MAMI Director Fr. Raymund SHIKESHO, OMI, and district leaders who facilitate, encourage, and support the many initiatives and projects at all levels.

Namibia is currently preparing for a national MAMI conference, promising a structured approach to help coordinate the various MAMI activities.

The Oblate Lay Associates of Namibia are characterized by their spirit of communion, prayer, and apostolate. They express their passion for their ongoing formation in regular meetings that explore Oblate history and spirituality. They are committed to working closely with professed Oblates to “proclaim Christ crucified” to the most

Despite the challenges presented by Zimbabwe’s economic difficulties, including high inflation and unemployment rates, the Oblates remain steadfast in their commitment to the people. They continue to provide support and encouragement, remaining close to the people they serve.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to visit Zimbabwe and witness the incredible work of the Oblates. I thank Bro. Njabulo TAVOTSEDA, Fr. Douglas SHOLTO (Mission Superior), and all the people who warmly welcomed me. The experience has left a lasting impression, with the sound of African drums and songs of joy still ringing in my ears. Zimbabwe has truly touched my heart.

*Kapena SHIMBOME, OMI
General Councillor, Africa-Madagascar*

abandoned, and, as such, they are proud of their unique and vibrant role they play within the Mazenodian Family.

The Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate (MAMI) of the Swakopmund, traveled to Holy Redeemer Parish in HentiesBay with a mission to spread the flame of the Oblate Charism by sharing the vision, love, and spirit of the Oblate Lay Associates, who have embraced the Oblate charism, love for St. Eugene de Mazenod, and Mary Immaculate. As a result, their visit to HentiesBay proved to be fruitful with 5 new members, and this is only the beginning! Likewise, other districts throughout the nation are actively involved in similar projects, working tirelessly for the mission and in service to and with the poor and most abandoned.

Journeying with MAMI: My Experience

Mr. Laurentius Shilongo has been a MAMI member for more than ten years.

He generously shares with us his journey of profound spiritual growth:

My name is Laurentius Shilongo, and I want to share my journey as a member of the Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate (MAMI) for over a decade. My experiences have been a mosaic of unforgettable events and moments of profound spiritual growth that have significantly shaped my faith and worldview.

During one of our retreats, the facilitator asked a thought-provoking question: “Why did you choose to become an Oblate Associate?” Everyone had their own reasons, but what resonated with me was the idea that our commitment was not just about what we could offer the Oblates but more about the personal growth we experience as members ourselves.

We have two or three retreats yearly, which are opportunities to learn and gain a deeper understanding of our faith. It is only when we know and understand our faith that we are able to share and impart it to the next person. One retreat focused on the theme “A Call to be Instruments of the Good News.” It reminded us that we’re like clay in the hands of God, with Him as the potter. His goal is to shape us into instruments of His love and to spread that Good News to the world.

Another retreat explored the desert experience of Jesus in the desert, emphasizing our dependence on God for survival amidst life’s adversities while stressing the heavenly wisdom required to navigate those “desert experiences.” In Mathew 11: 28-29, Jesus calls us to come to Him, to place all our burdens on Him, and to learn from Him. After learning from Him, in Luke 10: 1-20, He then sends us out two by two to places where He Himself is about to go, that is, to the ends of the earth and to the peripheries of our own areas where the poor; the hungry and the marginalized are based in their many faces.

It’s a calling we, as MAMI, can’t ignore. This is the foundation of the Oblate spirituality. We are taught to fulfill these roles because we have learned the Oblate Charism, so we strive to live it.

As MAMI members, we are privileged to live close to the Oblates, learning from them, and celebrating their ordinations and other joyous occasions. We often contribute in small ways to these celebrations, embodying the African culture of sharing and aligning with the teachings of the Acts of the Apostles 2: 44-47 on sharing possessions among ourselves and with the needy.

In my decade-long journey with MAMI, I found the experience immensely positive and nourishing. My faith has deepened, my knowledge expanded, and my commitment to service encouraged. I am confident that the journey ahead holds even greater spiritual blessings.

“If the Son of God loved me so much that He suffered and died for me on the cross, why can’t I love him as much? (Eugene de Mazenod)”.

We pray through the intercession of St. Eugene de Mazenod they continue to grow in faith and understanding of the Oblate charism and spirituality.

*Mrs Filippa Dina Amupadhi and
Mrs Elizabeth Pahula
Swakopmund, Namibia*

 ASIA - OCEANIA

Australia: Mazenodian Family, “Pilgrims Celebrating Community”

The De Mazenod Family National Gathering was held at Mazenod College Victoria from November 9 -12. The theme this year was “Pilgrims Celebrating Community”.

Fifty people attended, representing all our ministries in Australia, staying at the Novotel, Glen Waverley, where we opened our Gathering over drinks and canapes, then proceeding each morning to Mazenod College by bus to hold our sessions.

Opening our first full day together was a video call with the Superior General, Fr. Chicho. We are very grateful to Fr. Chicho for giving up some of his time (and sleep) in Aix-En-Provence to be with us live. The group listened intently as Fr. Chicho shared his experience on being elected as Superior General and what it means to be a missionary.

Over the next three days participants shared and discussed their connection and experience of the charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod in their various ministries. The highlight of our time together was the launch of the “De Mazenod

Family Australia Lay Associations Guidelines”. Participants were given the opportunity to break open the document and reflect and discuss each of the components within the guidelines.

Each day began with prayer, and we were fortunate to celebrate Mass in the Mazenod College Chapel with the Oblates each afternoon. Over the three and a half days participants from each state developed and deepened friendships while immersing themselves in the charism of St Eugene de Mazenod, truly being pilgrims celebrating community.

A big thanks is due to Edward Bartels and Sonia Mohanaraj for the music over the weekend and thank you to the SJV Oblate Youth Group who joined us on the last day. A special thank you goes to the De Mazenod Family Committee and all those who shared their experience of the De Mazenod family throughout the Gathering.

We heard amazing stories of the charism of St. Eugene being lived out in ministries and gained inspiration from others in extending the De Mazenod Family as we go forward.

Emma Rice

General Councillor Visits Indonesia

Eugene BENEDICT, General Councillor for Asia-Oceania, visited Indonesia from October 16 - 30, 2023, with an intention to support and encourage our Oblates in the Province. He shares his rich experience with us.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world but all religions live amicably and peacefully. There is freedom to profess and practice one’s own faith. The people are very hospitable and welcoming. There is love and respect to all.

The Oblate presence began in 1971 with the arrival of vibrant Australian Province. Later when the Oblates were expelled from Laos, it was Indonesia which gave shelter to the eight Italian and French missionaries who joined the Oblates who were already involved in the evangelization activities.

At present, the Oblates are very vibrant, totally committed, focused on the mission single-mindedly, and living a simple-life style. The mission is carried out in and through communities. The Oblates give special attention to the poor and the most abandoned in all their ministries.

Being inspired by the very life of our Founder, St. Eugene de Mazenod, they constantly strive to become holy by regular renewing themselves through various spiritual exercises like prayer, meditation, Oraison, contemplation, Eucharist, visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Eucharistic adoration, scripture reading, Marian devotion, recollections, and retreats.

I was able to meet the Oblates individually and as communities. It was a visit to the missions, parishes, formation houses, and institutions, schools and other places of ministry.

It was also a visit to support and encourage our Oblates in the Province.

I really cherished the hospitality of our Oblates and I am profoundly grateful.

May God bless the Province of Indonesia.

*Eugene BENEDICT, OMI
General Councillor for Asia-Oceania*

General Councillors Visit Vietnam

November 2–15, 2023, Raymond MWANGALA and Eugene BENEDICT visited the Oblate Delegation in Vietnam, it was a fraternal visit intended to introduce the General councillors to the Delegation and to strengthen the bonds of unity between the Oblates of the Delegation and the rest of the Congregation.

I, Fr. Raymond MWANGALA, First Assistant General, together with Fr. Eugene BENEDICT, General Councillor for the Asia-Oceania region recently visited the Delegation of Vietnam for 2 weeks, November 2 to 15, 2023. This was the first visit to the country for both of us. It was a fraternal visit intended to introduce us to the Delegation and to strengthen the bonds of unity between the Oblates of the Delegation and the rest of the Congregation, represented by the Superior General and his council.

We were met on our arrival at the Tan Son Nhat International airport, in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) by Fr. Antoine Binh Xuan Hung, the Delegation Superior, in the company of Fr. Roland Jacques, and 2 other Oblates. Roland served as our translator and Antoine and the Delegation Secretary, Antoine Nguyen Van Nghieu, were our constant companions throughout our stay.

Vietnam is a country which is under the rule of a Communist Government. Religious activities, including the ministries done by the Oblates, must receive State authorization. Poverty levels are very high and noticeable, especially among the migrant populations who have moved from the high lands into the cities. About 10% of the population is considered ethnic minorities. These minorities also suffer high levels of poverty. The Oblates serve among some of this population.

The cities seem overcrowded with people on motor bikes and buildings erected close to each other. The countryside, on the other hand, is spacious with plenty of green all over. The people were overly friendly and generous. Everywhere we went we were treated with much generosity both among the Oblates and by strangers alike.

Participation in religious activities is high. Many Catholic churches and religious congregations and orders visible in Vietnam, even though Catholics are only about 7% of the population. A noticeable feature of the population is the support offered to the Church, including to the Oblates. We visited several churches which were constructed in the last 10-20 years or which are still under construction.

On Sunday, November 5, we met with the Bishop Joseph Tuoc in Phu Cuong. He spoke highly of the Oblates and their ministry. According to the November 1, 2023, Pictorial Personnel of the Delegation, the Delegation has 77 members who have completed initial formation, 54 scholastics, 7 novices and 8 prenovices. The Delegation also has a residential Come and See program. This year, 2023, there are 15 candidates who are accompanied by 3 Oblates.

The Delegation has 4 houses of formation, a Come and See house, Prenovitiate, Novitiate and post-Novitiate house. Due to the high number of candidates in the post-novitiate phase of formation, the community lives in 2 separate houses. However, they remain one community and have daily prayers, meals and meetings in common. Many of the Oblates we met have learnt some English or French and some are even fluent in these European languages.

The Delegation has 7 Brothers, some of whom are above the age 60 and others are younger. 1 Brother is a superior of a local community, another is a formator at the novitiate, 1 is responsible for hospitality at the Central House, 2 work at the orphanage, 1 is involved in missionary work and another doing professional studies.

We spent the first part of our visit visiting the formation houses of the Delegation. On Monday, November 7, we began visiting the different ministry sites. Our first stop took us to Kontum Community. Here, the 5 Oblates serve mainly indigenous populations. We were able to visit 3 of the Mass centres. The communities served by the Oblates are characterized by high levels of poverty. The Oblate community has welcomed 24 primary school children, offering them accommodation, food, and religious education while they attend school. During our meeting with the community, they shared with us the joys and the challenges of doing ministry in this highly controlled environment. A new community house is under construction about 5 kms away from the present house.

We spent most of November 7, travelling, by road and by plane, to the mountain country in the north. We arrived at the Ben Den community in the late afternoons, after more than 9 hours of travel. Here, we were met by the community of 8 Oblates (6 priests, 1 deacon and 1 scholastic). Together, we celebrated Mass, shared a meal and had a meeting at which they shared with us their ministry. Several things stood out from the visit to this community: the sense of community as the place of ministry; commitment to serve the minorities, especially the Hmong; works of charity; cooperation with associates; working with the local clergy. As previously noted, religious activities in Vietnam are tightly controlled by the government. All pastoral activities must have prior approval of government and diocesan authorities, limiting what can be done.

Throughout our visit, we met with some of the Lay Associates who work closely with the Oblates. We continued with visits to the communities which the Oblates are serving for several days, going through potholed roads and mountain trails. On November 14, we concluded our visits at the OMI Orphanage in Saigon. Here, the Oblates look after 82 children between the ages of 4 and 16, from poor family. Their dwellings are simple, in the middle of high-density area.

At the end of our visits, we had a debriefing meeting with the Delegation Superior and his council. In the morning of November 15, we participated in a Mass of Thanksgiving for the recently ordained Fr. Joseph Martin Vuong. This was followed by a festive meal.

My predominant emotion after the visit is gratitude – gratitude for the hospitality of some many who went out of their way to make us feel at home, gratitude also for the fruitfulness of the Oblate vocation in this land of many contrasts. Vietnam is a land of mission, and the Oblates are missionaries among some of the poorest and most abandoned. St. Eugene de Mazenod would be proud of his sons in Vietnam!

*Raymond MWANGALA, OMI
Assistant General (Mission)*

 CANADA - US

Pilgrimage of Hope: Father General meets with Canadian Oblates

From October 17 to November 1, 2023, Fr. Luis Ignacio ROIS ALONSO, OMI, Superior General, undertook a pilgrimage of hope in communion with his brothers and sisters in Canada.

Retracing the footsteps of those first Oblates, Fr. Chicho landed in Montreal on October 17, 2023, just as the first Oblates in 1841. He then traced their journey through Richelieu and Quebec, along the Saint Lawrence River, meeting with the Innu people and other residents of the North Shore. After completing his journey along the North Shore, passing through the missions in Trois-Rivières and Montreal, he reached Ottawa, where he was eagerly anticipated for the 175th anniversary of Saint Paul University.

When the Oblates arrived in Ottawa in 1844, they began to serve the Irish, French, and likely the Algonquin people (Vaulx 1961, 28–30). They quickly became engaged in the spiritual and academic formation of the Catholic communities in the Canadian capital, establishing the Parish of Bytown, Bytown College, and St. Joseph Parish in present-day Ottawa.

This Oblate mission would become the gateway to other parts of North America. Today, the Oblates of North America have several missions that reflect the Oblate charism in the North American context. Upon his arrival in Ottawa, Father Chicho made it his priority to meet with all the members of the Mazenodian family. After meeting with members of the Oblate Parishes, he met with all the Oblates ministering in Ottawa. This inspiring and encouraging moment allowed him to converse with those who continue the work of the first Oblates on this continent.

After 175 years since the founding of Bytown College, the community of Saint Paul University in Ottawa reflects on its rich history of research and leadership formation for Canadian society and the world. Over the years, this Oblate ministry has educated men and women for the Universal Church and society, creating initiatives that continue to shine the Oblate charism today.

During his stay in Ottawa, Father Chicho had the opportunity to explore Saint Paul University, its faculties, schools, and numerous services. On October 30, he devoted the whole day to visiting different parts of the University community. The following day, a symposium celebrating the rich history of Saint Paul University took place, featuring several presentations on its history, commitment to the Church and Canadian society, and ongoing efforts for reconciliation with the indigenous peoples of Canada.

In his message of gratitude, Father Chicho encouraged the entire University community, urging them to continue to walk together, to be passionate, and to envision a hopeful future. He also encouraged them to learn from the wisdom of the poor and bring hope to the world.

Nnaemeka ALI, OMI

Notre-Dame-Du-Cap: Testimonies of Fr. General's Visit

From October 17 to November 1, 2023, the Superior General, Fr. Chicho visited the Oblate Province of Notre-Dame-du-Cap in Quebec and Ottawa. This visit was an opportunity to meet his confrères and their communities; it was a Pilgrimage of Hope.

Here are some of the heartwarming testimonies of those Oblates who were able to meet and accompany the Superior General in his pilgrimage of Hope.

A STEP INTO THE OBLATE HISTORY OF THE NORTH COAST

On October 20, Father General visited Pessamit. During his visit, we went to the old cemetery to pray at the tomb of the Oblate pioneers on the North Coast. We were also guided by three Innu to visit a traditional site where several elements of Innu culture are illustrated. The Band Council received us for a dinner in the company of elders and several members active in the pastoral ministry of the parish. We celebrated the Eucharist together. On October 21, on the way to Sept-Îles, we met the local community team in Ragueneau. A stop was made in Baie-Comeau to meet Bishop Jean-Pierre Blais who expressed his joy that the Oblates were working in his diocese, particularly with the Innu.

Gérard BOUDREAULT, OMI

ECHO OF MALIOTENAM AND UASHAT

The visit began on October 21 in Shaputuan where we received some general information on Innu culture. Afterwards, at the parish of Maliotenam, we celebrated the Eucharist, followed by a meal offered by the two communities of Maliotenam and Uashat. During this meal, the two communities gave a gift to Father General as a souvenir of his visit to us. The visit to Uashat and Maliotenam ended with the mission's Sunday mass on October 22 at the Maliotenam church. In his homily, Father General reminded everyone, lay people and priests, of our mission to bear witness to the love of Christ in our world which is torn apart by several evils. At the same time,

he invited us to pray constantly for peace in the world which needs it so much.

Alfred RAVELOMAMPISANDRAIBE, OMI

THE MINGANIE REGION

The visit began, on this Missionary Sunday, with mass in Rivière-au-Tonnerre. Father General presided at 4 p.m. and Father Provincial preached. After mass, we stopped at Longue-Pointe-de-Mingan to see the church, then on to Mingan. We arrived in Havre-Saint-Pierre for dinner. Monday, after breakfast, we left for Nutashkuan. At 5 p.m., there was a meeting with community leaders in Minganie: from Rivière-au-Tonnerre to Natashkuan. There were 23 of us: factory representatives, groups working in pastoral care and volunteers. We shared with Father General the joys and difficulties that we encounter in our work with our communities and he, giving a beautiful testimony of his family and his missionary work, encouraged us to be a living Gospel and to keep our hope.

Krzysztof SZABLAWSKI, OMI

THE NUTASHKUAN COMMUNITY

On October 23, Father General, accompanied by the provincial, Father Jacques Laliberté, and Father Krzysztof Szablowski, visited the community of Nutashkuan. An extraordinary event which mobilized the entire population. The elders wore traditional dress for mass; the school students came in large numbers to the church to pray and greet Father General. After the mass, the Band Council offered a traditional meal with the menu: caribou, beaver, goose, salmon and bannock, with cloudberry and red seed tarts. To end his visit, Father General blessed the statue of the Virgin Mary at the entrance to the village and asked Our Mother to watch over the young people and the entire population. Very moved by the presence of Father General, the elders wanted to thank him by offering him gifts of objects made by the people here. Some memories of a community which wanted to express its joy and its love for the presence and the Oblate mission among them.

Gérard TSATSELAM, OMI

A VISIT THAT DOES GOOD...

It is with great joy, in Sept-Îles, that we welcomed the visit of our Superior General, Father Chicho, and our provincial, Father Jacques Laliberté. It was a great opportunity to bring together the missionaries of the Coast and the associates. There were fifteen of us around the table to share with our two visitors under the theme “Pilgrims of hope in communion”. Our time of discussion allowed us to discover the greatness of soul of Father Chicho, his missionary experience and his remarkable simplicity.

All the participants expressed themselves in a spirit of true synodality, recognizing the big family that we formed. And to conclude, we continued our discussions around a festive meal. Note that our Superior General presided over the Sunday Mass, as well as the celebration of October 24, the day of our gathering. Gratitude to our provincial, Father Jacques, for allowing us to experience this moment of grace...

Réjean VIGNEAULT, OMI

These testimonies were originally published on the Bulletin of Notre-Dame-Du-Cap Province, INFO OMI, 01/11/2023

Marcel DUMAIS, OMI (1936 – 2023) : A Life Devoted to Faith and Learning

On November 5, surrounded by his brother Oblates, Marcel DUMAIS, former General Councillor for Canada-US Region (2004 – 2010), peacefully passed away in Richelieu. Oblates pay tribute to a distinguished leader and a devoted servant of God, whose passing has left a void in the hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Born on May 5, 1936, in Drummondville, Canada, Marcel was the second of two sons in a loving family. From an early age, he felt a calling to be a missionary and to help people become saints. This desire led him to the Oblates, known for their dedication to spreading the gospel to the most abandoned.

Marcel's journey of faith and education took him from primary school in Drummondville to the Chambly and Nicolet Seminaries, where he excelled in his classical studies. In 1963, while at the International Scholasticate in Rome, he obtained bachelor's degrees in philosophy and theology.

Returning to Canada, Marcel embarked on a long and esteemed career as a professor.

He taught philosophy at the University of Ottawa and later became a professor of Sacred Scripture at Saint Paul University.

He furthered his education in Rome, obtaining a license in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in 1966 and a doctorate from the Catholic Institute of Paris in 1974. During this time, he also taught at the College of Jonquière in 1967-1968. Marcel's thirst for knowledge and his deep love for scripture led him to master nine languages, modern and ancient.

Throughout his life, Marcel published numerous volumes and articles, spreading Christ's message through scholarly work. He also shared his wisdom through teaching, conferences, and retreats around the world. His contributions were recognized when he was appointed as a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission by Pope John Paul II.

Marcel's love for the Congregation was evident through his various positions of responsibility, including Provincial Superior and General Councillor for the Canada-US Region. Even after retiring, he continued to serve as the president of the Canadian Bible Society.

In his final years, Marcel resided in Richelieu, where he found joy despite his memory fading. On November 5, surrounded by his brother Oblates, Marcel peacefully passed away. A funeral will be held on November 18, 2023, to honor his life and legacy.

Marcel DUMAIS will be remembered for his dedication, enthusiasm, and profound impact in spreading the Gospel's message. He leaves behind a lasting legacy of faith, learning, and love. May his soul and the souls of all the faith departed rest in peace!

OMIWORLD

R.I.P. Marcel DUMAIS : A Life of Faith, Leadership, and Grace

Fr. Marcel's legacy is not only defined by his dedicated service as the first General Councillor for the Canada-U.S. Region, but also by a childhood miracle that shaped his future calling.

Fr. Warren BROWN shares two pivotal chapters in the life of this beloved Oblate: the establishment of the Association of Oblate Institutes of Higher Learning (AOIHL) and a deeply personal encounter with St. Brother André Bessette, which occurred when Fr. Marcel was just seven months old and faced a life-threatening situation.

Fr. Marcel Dumais was the first general councillor for the newly formed Canada-US Region elected at the 2004 General Chapter. The Chapter recommended that the Congregation might play more of a role in facilitating cooperation between our various institutions of higher learning. Following the approval of the Superior General Fr. Guillermo Steckling and the General Council, Marcel proceeded to organize the first gathering of the Oblate Institutes of Higher Learning for a meeting in Rome in May 2008.

His work with the group that met in Rome helped to produce the first statutes of the Oblate Institutes of Higher Learning and brought together in Rome for the first time the rectors or presidents of the Oblate Institutes. The present day AOIHL owes a debt of gratitude to Fr. Marcel Dumais for his pioneering coordination and organization of this group which has continued to this day.

Gratitude for a Sainly Miracle Which produced an Oblate Vocation

After the 35th General Chapter of 2010, Fr. Marcel Dumais concluded his service to the Congregation as General Councillor for the Canada U.S. Region. For a week following the General Chapter, Fr. Marcel remained in Rome for the transition period between the former administration and the new one. This provided him with a wonderful opportunity that he held secretly in his heart: to attend the canonization of Blessed Brother André Bessette, CSC.

Brother André was a Holy Cross Brother, known to everyone in Canada and the U.S. for his extraordinary devotion to St. Joseph and for building the beautiful and enormous oratory of St. Joseph on Mount Royal, Canada.

In a very private and intimate way, with a trembling voice and tears coming down his eyes, Fr. Marcel shared with another Oblate about the miraculous intervention of Blessed André in his life when he was still an infant. Marcel was embarrassed by the emotion this evoked in him.

Marcel Dumais was born in May of 1936 and as an infant, not yet a year old, he contracted the flu, with the accompanying effects of a devastating fever, cough, congestion, and inability to breathe. The 7-month-old boy was dying, the doctor told his mother. There was nothing that would save the little one.

In December of 1936, word was spreading that Brother André was on his death bed.

Mrs. Dumais, a woman of great faith, knew of Brother André and his gift to help people in distress. At the beginning of January 1937, Mrs. Dumais went to the convent of the Holy Cross Fathers and Brothers at the Oratoire Saint Joseph. She asked to be able to see Brother André.

She was permitted to go in a long line that went down the corridor to his room. It was a long procession of faithful who were there praying and going, one by one, to kiss Brother André's hand and to ask for graces through his intercession.

Mrs. Dumais waited patiently for her turn to see the holy man. Brother André's eyes gleamed from his bed and with the suggestion of a smile, assured Mrs. Dumais that her infant would be taken care of in God's tender love.

That dark afternoon, Mrs. Dumais went home through the bitter cold and windy winter. When she got home, she found Marcel, emaciated from his sickness, but surprisingly with a very bright face, full of life, laughing, sitting up and playing with some little wooden blocks. Marcel was cured!

Some days later, On January 6, 1937, Brother André died. Mrs. Dumais thanked St. Joseph and Brother André, and in her heart, she made a promise to God that Marcel would be God's servant, that he would become a priest. It was only many years after Marcel was ordained as a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate that his mother told him the story of how he was healed through the intercession of Saint Joseph and Brother André and of her promise to God that he would become a priest.

The canonization of Saint André Bessette was a truly emotional experience for Fr. Marcel and a great grace. He felt very united with St. André and with his own beloved Mom on that special day!

Marcel DUMAIS, OMI, former General Councillor for Canada-US Region (2004 – 2010), peacefully passed away in Richelieu, on November 5, surrounded by his brother Oblates. May he Rest In Peace!

*Warren BROWN, OMI
Former General Councillor*

EUROPE

European Commission for Youth and Vocations: Reflections, Inspirations, and Excitement

The Oblate Community of Nickolauskloster in Germany hosted the annual gathering of the European Commission for Youth and Vocations. This event brought together Oblate representatives and young people from each European Oblate unit to share experiences from the past year, reflect on a specific theme, and plan summer activities.

Each morning, the participants captivated everyone with engaging videos showcasing their exceptional pastoral activities. This year's guest speaker was Father Thomas KLOSTERKAMP, OMI, who joined in the afternoon sessions all the way from San Antonio, Texas.

This year's guest speaker was Father Thomas KLOSTERKAMP, OMI, who joined in the afternoon sessions all the way from San Antonio, Texas. His talk centered around the history of the Youth Congregation of Saint Eugene de Mazonod.

One of the evenings was dedicated to the "Festival of Nations," where everyone shared typical products from their home countries, and an evening filled with lively dancing and singing, creating an unforgettable atmosphere of community. Additionally, one afternoon was reserved to explore the beautiful city of Cologne.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce that we will gather in Madrid in the summer of 2023 for a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

Antonio DIODATI, OMI

Towards Jubilee 2025: Shrine of Mary Immaculate, Aosta

Grzegorz GLABAS OMI, Rector of the Shrine of Mary Immaculate in Aosta, recently participated in the 57th General Assembly of National Sanctuaries and the 2nd International Meeting of Rectors and Operators of Sanctuaries, which took place at the Vatican.

From November 8th to November 11th, 2023, Rome hosted two meetings for representatives and rectors of Italian and global sanctuaries. This included the 57th General Assembly of National Sanctuaries and the 2nd International Meeting of Rectors and Operators of Sanctuaries, both with the theme “The Sanctuary: A House of Prayer. On the Path to Jubilee 2025.” With participants from 43 countries, approximately 600 people attended from around the world.

The first meeting, organized by the “Collegamento Nazionale Santuari” (CNS) and led by Monsignor Domenico SORRENTINO and Fr. Mario Magro, focused on the rectors of Italian sanctuaries. The second meeting meant as a preparation for the Holy Year of 2025, was organized by the Dicastery of Evangelization in the World and its Prefect Monsignor Rino Fisichella. Grzegorz GLABAS and numerous regional delegates and sanctuary rectors represented the Northwest region of Italy, including Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria, and Aosta Valley.

Guest speakers at the meetings included Fr. Ermanno Barucco, OCD (Professor at the Pontifical Theological Faculty “Teresianum”); Cardinal Angelo Comastri (Emeritus Archbishop of St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican); Fr. Paul Brendan Murray, OP (Professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas); Monsignor Marco Frisina (Composer and Rector of the Basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere); David López Ribes; Daniel Cuesta Gómez, SJ; and Professor Giustina Aceto.

The conference concluded on November 11th, 2023, with a speech by Monsignor Rino Fisichella, the Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery of Evangelization, “The Sanctuary towards the Jubilee of Hope.” An audience with the Holy Father followed it.

In his address, Pope Francis emphasized the importance of sanctuaries as “special places, truly privileged places of prayer” that attract millions of people annually. He provided recommendations focusing on celebrating the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Pope stressed the need for abundant expressions of God’s mercy in the sanctuaries. He also highlighted the significance of Adoration and the need to restore the sense of worship. The Pope called for providing pilgrims with the experience of contemplative silence and guiding them to focus on the essential aspects of faith.

Additionally, the Pope emphasized the importance of Consolation, making God’s mercy tangible, and the Warm Welcome of pilgrims in sanctuaries. As we approach 2024, Pope Francis desires it to be dedicated entirely to prayer. Meanwhile, sanctuaries, priests, collaborators, and the entire Church eagerly await the Bull that announces the Jubilee. This document, as always, will be issued in the previous year, coinciding with the Feast of the Ascension. For the Jubilee of 2025, we expect its publication on May 9th, 2024.

At an interregional level, the next stage of the journey in our Northwestern region of Italy will involve regional delegates to engage as many sanctuaries as possible within our territories.

Grzegorz GLABAS, OMI

ANNIVERSARIES FOR DECEMBER 2023

70th Anniversaries of Ordinations

| | | | |
|------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 19/12/1953 | 08403 | Fr. Desmond O'Donnell | Anglo-Irish |
|------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------|

65th Anniversaries of Vows

| | | | |
|------------|-------|-------------------|------------------|
| 08/12/1958 | 11181 | Bro. Paul Görlich | Central European |
|------------|-------|-------------------|------------------|

65th Anniversaries of Ordinations

| | | | |
|------------|-------|---------------------|--------|
| 27/12/1958 | 09939 | Fr. Joannès Rivoire | France |
|------------|-------|---------------------|--------|

60th Anniversaries of Vows

| | | | |
|------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 08/12/1963 | 11803 | Bro. Jean-Paul Picard | Notre-Dame-du-Cap |
|------------|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|

60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

| | | | |
|------------|-------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 21/12/1963 | 10710 | Fr. Albert Bouffard | Lacombe |
| 21/12/1963 | 10307 | Fr. Robert Châteauneuf | Notre-Dame-du-Cap |
| 21/12/1963 | 10889 | Fr. Marcelo Gauthier | Notre-Dame-du-Cap |
| 21/12/1963 | 10715 | Fr. Camille Pich, | Lacombe |
| 21/12/1963 | 10323 | Fr. Vaughan Quinn | Lacombe |
| 22/12/1963 | 10525 | Fr. Isa e Blanchette | Lacombe |
| 22/12/1963 | 10187 | Fr. Denis Paquin | Notre-Dame-du-Cap |
| 26/12/1963 | 10677 | Fr. Donaat Bohe | Southern Africa |
| 26/12/1963 | 10557 | Fr. Gerard van den Beuken | Belgium & Netherlands |
| 26/12/1963 | 10560 | Fr. Alfons Van Loenhout | Belgium & Netherlands |

50th Anniversaries of Ordinations

| | | | |
|------------|-------|------------------|--------|
| 23/12/1973 | 11969 | Fr. Michel Brune | France |
|------------|-------|------------------|--------|

25th Anniversaries of Ordinations

| | | | |
|------------|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 06/12/1998 | 13534 | Fr. Wedner Berard | N-D-du-Cap |
| 06/12/1998 | 13525 | Fr. Adrien Pierre | Haiti |
| 06/12/1998 | 13527 | Fr. Jean-Fran ois Printemps | Haiti |
| 16/12/1998 | 13404 | Fr. Lamulumundeni E. Memela | Southern Africa |
| 19/12/1998 | 13552 | Fr. Pier Francesco Purpura | Mediterranea |

Suffrages for our Deceased - NOVEMBER 2023

No. 59-63

| NAME | DATE | DIED AT | BORN | PROV/DEL |
|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Fr. Luigi D'ANGELO | 04/11/2023 | Rodò | 27/04/1961 | Cruz del Sur |
| Fr. Marcel DUMAIS | 05/11/2023 | Richelieu | 05/05/1936 | ND-du-Cap |
| Fr. Anton Felician FERDINANDO | 13/11/2023 | Kohuwala | 11/07/1944 | Colombo |
| Fr. Antoni SKWIERAWSKI | 15/11/2023 | Lubliniec | 03/06/1933 | Poland |
| Fr. Martin O'KEEFFE | 16/11/2023 | Dublin | 30/08/1934 | 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 the Founder to Fr. Courtès, 22 July 1828)

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