



OMI INFORMATION OMI INFORMACION OMI INFORMAZIONE OMI NACHRICHTEN OMI WIADOMOSCI OMI

OMI Information No. 628 (English)

February 2024

**Letter of the Superior General
February 17, 2024: Pilgrims radiating our common charism
LJC et MI**

Dear Oblates and members of our charismatic family,

In two years, God willing, we will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the pontifical approval of the Constitutions and Rules and the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, just after living the Jubilee of 2025. Both events will help us to continue our pilgrimage in communion as missionaries of hope. In my previous letters, listening to the appeals of the last General Chapter, I recalled our commitment to care for our common home: our Mother Earth and our charismatic family. Today I would like to renew our commitment to go on pilgrimage with the laity who share the charism to continue taking steps in the direction proposed by the Chapter and the Second Congress of Lay Oblate Associations.

“May we understand well what we are!” wrote St. Eugene de Mazenod to his companions from Rome, commenting on the pontifical approbation of the Congregation and its new name: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In these 200 years of history, every Oblate, every layman and laywoman, consecrated men and women of our family, has helped us to better understand the beauty of our charism. Each one of us who live it today brings a new ray of light that radiates in the world, a new face of this marvelous polyhedron that is this charism given by the Holy Spirit to the Church and to the world to announce the Gospel of Jesus and his Kingdom to the most abandoned.

In these years, especially since the beatification and canonization of Eugene de Mazenod, the laity have played a very important role. Their passion for the charism and mission has helped us to try to live it more purely, has generated a new enthusiasm and has provoked a charismatic expansion in new associations and forms of Christian life. We now better understand the responsibility of each one of us to enrich and safeguard the inheritance that the Spirit has bequeathed to us in St. Eugene.

Reading this story from the different expressions in which the charism is incarnated, I feel a call to conversion and discernment. Conversion to better live this gift of the Holy Spirit that is very much alive and is transforming the lives of many people for the good of the Church, for the good of the poor. This gift of the Spirit needs to be discerned and incarnated more strongly in me, in us. Where is the Spirit leading us? I would like to propose three steps that can help conversion and discernment.

First of all, we are called to acknowledge by giving thanks: how good it is for us to discover and recognize in others the same gift that I have received! To recognize also that the gift of the Spirit is much greater than my group, congregation, institute or association. Recognizing ourselves in the same charism leads us to give thanks to God for the gift he has given us and also for the gift that is the other and the gift that is each group that incarnates it. This thanksgiving opens our hearts to receive

more light, to deepen our sense of belonging, to allow ourselves to be inspired by others and to know better what we are through the eyes of God.

This recognition leads me to learn the charism from others because what they have received belongs to me and helps me to live it better. An experience lived in September 2023 illustrates this second step. The Oblate Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate were closing their 25-year Jubilee with a Congress that they themselves convoked and whose theme was “the feminine genius of the charism”. The women who participated, lay and consecrated, shared what they live on a daily basis. A current of joy filled everyone as we learned from them something that belonged to all of us and that at the same time encouraged us to live our personal vocation better. How much we have to learn from the women who live the charism! How much we have to learn from each other to live our mission with the poor like them, from the merciful heart of Jesus that St. Eugene incarnated! How much we have to learn from each other to live our common vocation and mission better!

This is the third step. We need moments and structures to recognize ourselves as brothers and sisters in the charism. We need to celebrate our common charism giving thanks to God and to those who incarnate it. We need to create formation cells to learn our charism from the history and experience of other groups and ways of life. We need to discern together our common mission. The Second Lay Congress and the 37th Chapter propose several actions that I invite us to put into practice at all levels: local, national, regional and global. What else can we do?

On December 8, 2023, I shared with you a dream: the dream of sitting at charismatic round tables, convoked by Mary and inspired by the synodal dynamic. Tables where all the expressions of the charism can sit together with the poor to share and discern the next steps of our pilgrimage. There we will be able to recognize each other as brothers and sisters in

the charism, give thanks to God, learn from each other and decide what structures of coordination we want to give ourselves. My dream is to see this in all the local communities and to expand it to the national, regional, global level. Let us begin by reading together the materials of the Second Lay Congress and “Pilgrims of Hope in Communion”. Let us learn together to walk together, discerning the signs of the times and the inspirations of the Spirit.

Some express the fear that the great diversity among the groups in our charismatic family will paralyze us. Certainly the Holy Spirit has been very creative with us and the diversity he has given us is good. By listening together to the Spirit we will find ways to harmonize this diversity. The younger ones can illuminate this path that they have already traveled in recent years. Other experiences within and outside our family can also help us. This discernment should be done from the point of view of solidarity and subsidiarity. Solidarity invites us to share what we are and what we have with everyone, starting with the most vulnerable. Subsidiarity makes us respect the autonomy of each group and asks us to empower everyone so that they can make their own decisions without paternalistic dependencies. Respecting these principles we will find what we need to grow in missionary communion.

My concern is another: falling into “charismatic self-referentiality”. It is a temptation that we must reject. We could be so busy discussing our identity, our history, the criteria to say who does or does not belong to our charism that we stagnate ourselves in a self-referential dynamic. We were born to respond to the most urgent needs of the Church, to be and to announce the Gospel to the most abandoned. Our common pilgrimage will be good if it bears fruit, that is, if it leads us to a more evangelical life and makes us better missionaries to the poor. It will be good if it brings us into closer communion with the Church and in her with the other charisms that the Spirit has given to the world.

The laity are called to be the leaven of the Beatitudes in our world as the leaven of universal fraternity. Reading our documents we see that the laity have been invited to be present in the media, the ministry of JPIC (Fratelli Tutti and Laudato Si) and the defense of life and the family. May our charism radiate in our mission to the poor!

Layman Stefano Dominici, a member of the MAMI in Italy, has been appointed Coordinator of Lay Associates and Associations. He is already working with other lay people from the five Oblate regions and some Oblates in the wonderful task of weaving an ever-widening network of lay people and associates of our family, a network that will facilitate communication and help us to develop proposals with which to move forward. I have asked Stefano to write us a letter in which he will tell us what he needs. From his proposals we hope to generate new life and grow in our communion, formation and mission.

I ask all of us, Oblates and laity, to respond generously to his suggestions. I also ask the laity to think about how they want to relate to each other, to the Oblates and to the other forms of consecrated life that want to join the charismatic round tables.

I would now like to mention the two lay people beatified with our Oblate martyrs: Blessed Cándido Castán and Blessed Paul Thoj Xyooj. Both of them, associated with the Oblates through martyrdom, gave the highest witness of love.

Cándido Castán encourages us to live in our families the Gospel spirit and to be aware of our responsibility in society: besides having a life of intense piety, he was a union leader, participated in political life and promoted the dignity of the workers by also giving witness to the Gospel in his work place. Paul is an example of missionary collaboration, taking his ministry as a catechist to its ultimate consequences and defending the missionaries to the point of death. Both are beautiful, complementary examples of the mission of the laity in the Church and in the world. To both Blesseds I ask their intercession so that all our charismatic family may announce the Gospel with their lives, being missionaries with the poorest. May the Lord bless us all, pilgrims of hope in communion.

Your brother and pilgrim,

*Luis Ignacio ROIS ALONSO, OMI
Superior General.*

San Antonio (Texas), February 17, 2024

Letter from the Coordinator of Lay Associates and Associations LJC et MI

Dear laity, consecrated Oblates and all members of the charismatic family,

Joyfully accepting the invitation extended to me by the Superior General, I am here to write a few lines to share with all of you the spirit of celebration on the anniversary of the approval of the Constitutions and Rules.

The Superior General, since he took office, has always addressed the entire charismatic family, to each person who commits to living, in their own state of life, the charism given to the Church by Saint Eugene de Mazenod.

This year in particular, the Superior General dedicated his letter of February 17 to the theme of Lay Associates. I am profoundly grateful for this attention that has been given to us, starting with the Second World Congress of the Laity and the last General Chapter.

My very appointment as coordinator of the laity represents a tangible sign of this attention. I carry out this service relying on the help of the Holy Spirit and trusting in the richness of the experiences lived by lay persons all over the world, as attested during the congress.

It gave us the opportunity to get to know each other and to see how, in all parts of the world, we live our baptismal vocation in different ways at times, but always with the same Oblate spirit. We are truly part of a family as big as the world!

I asked to be able to carry out my service together with other lay persons, representatives of the regions, and three oblates. They are the same persons who participated in the preparation of the congress and were present at the General Chapter. I asked this, not only to be able to count on precious collaboration throughout the continents, but to be able to work “in a synodal style community”, laity and consecrated together.

Throughout my life as a lay Oblate, I have had the grace of living this community and synodal spirit, and I have had the opportunity to appreciate its importance and the fruits it brings.

Even the hours that I spend for my service at the General House are in this style. Thanks to the hospitality of the community that lives there, working, talking, praying and sharing dinner together are so many small, simple gestures that “make a family”.

In light of this, as we approach two imminent and important stages of the journey, the celebration of the Jubilee in 2025 and the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the papal approval of the Constitutions and Rules in 2026, I share this invitation to you to reflect and share with the others some food for thought, also born in the wake of the three steps launched by the Superior General in his letter, “To recognize by giving thanks, learn, create common spaces and moments”:

How do I describe the Spirit that attracted me to the charism of the Oblates? What attracted me to the charism? How can I keep this fire burning?

As a community, what is our current ministry serving the poor? How can we be increasingly in unity and communion with other laity and with the OMIs?

What is the next step to take in our pilgrimage together as laity and consecrated Oblates?

Finally, to give substance to our desire to walk and progress together, some practical suggestions:

I invite the laity and the Oblates to refer to the representatives of the regions (the list is at the bottom of the page) to maintain and strengthen the network of relationships that was started with the 2nd Congress of the Laity;

I invite us to make known in advance (always through the regional representatives) the significant moments of life as lay persons: any meetings or gatherings at the unit or regional level;

I invite us to communicate to the regional representatives the names of the lay groups present in the units and, if possible, a point of contact. Let us move forward like this, together with the priests, Brothers, youth and consecrated women of our charismatic family, Pilgrims of Hope in Communion.

May the Lord bless us all,

Representatives of the regions

-Stefano Dominici (Europe Italy)
layassocoordinator@omigen.org

-Sandra Prather (North America Canada):
sandramprather@gmail.com

-Sebastian Cortes Cruz (Latin America Chile)
sicortescruz@gmail.com

-Pauline Thomas (Europe United Kindom)
paulinepasassoc@btinternet.com

-Michèle Mbami Mbeukeu (Africa Madagascar)
michelebeukeu2022@yahoo.com

-Mildred March (Africa Madagascar)
mildred.march@absamail.co.za

-Gigi Velasquez Espinosa (Asia Oceania Philippines) ggn5boys@yahoo.com

Fr. Peter Stoll - pstollomi@gmail.com
Fr. David Lopez - dlmomi@hotmail.com
Fr. David Munoz - dmunoz@omiusa.org

Stefano Dominici
Coordinator of lay associations and lay associates

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Celebrations of Oblate History and Charism

These past few days commemorating the 198th anniversary of the Papal Approval of our Constitutions and Rules have been filled with celebrations of Oblate history and charism. Our Superior General delivered the annual Kusenburger Lecture in San Antonio, while many members of the General Administration actively participated in local events alongside communities.

Fr. Paul DECOCK, OMI, and I had the honor of presiding over the vow renewals of 30 Oblates at St. Joseph Theological Institute on February 15. The following day, we installed Fr. Thabani SHOBA, OMI, as the new Superior of the same community, with the presence of dignitaries, including His Grace, Archbishop Siegfried Mandla Jwara, CMM, of the Durban Archdiocese,

and our Oblate Bishops Vusi MAZIBUKO and Neil FRANK, among others from MAMI and other religious communities of SJTI.

On February 17, I had the privilege of receiving the promises of a class of 5 new Prenovices at the formation house in Cleland, Pietermaritzburg. Each event was characterized by joyous liturgical ceremonies and festive gatherings, with the invaluable support of the laity enriching our lives and mission.

Whether near or far, in whatever capacity you celebrated, let us continue our Lenten journey together with “one heart, one soul,” placing our trust in the fulfillment that is always within reach.

Jim BROBST, OMI
General Councilor for Canada-U.S Region.

Calling all Oblates in First Formation!

As we gear up to celebrate the monumental 200th anniversary of our cherished Constitutions and Rules, the Roman International Scholasticate community (IRS) is organizing an event, virtually via Zoom, that will bring together all the Oblates in First Formation, on February 16th, 2024, at 15:00 CET/Rome time, promising nothing short of a profoundly enriching and transformative experience.

Get ready for an exhilarating journey into the mystery of Apostolic Community as the Normal Place for First Formation! As we gear up to celebrate the monumental 200th anniversary of our cherished Constitutions and Rules, we couldn't be more thrilled to extend a heartfelt invitation to you. Join us for an inspiring sharing session on the theme of “Apostolic Community as the Normal Place for First Formation.”

This isn't just any gathering; it's a global convergence of Oblates in post-Novitiate houses of formation, all coming together virtually via Zoom on February 16th, 2024, at 15:00 CET/Rome time,

promising nothing short of a profoundly enriching and transformative experience.

Expect riveting insights and wisdom from none other than our own expert on the Oblate charism, Fr. Frank SANTUCCI, alongside words of encouragement from Fr. Henricus ASODO, 2nd Assistant General for Formation. But here's the real magic: as Oblates in first formation, YOU will take center stage, sharing your own unique perspectives and experiences of living out the Constitutions and Rules.

But wait, there's more! It's an open invitation to ALL Oblates in first formation. Whether you're in a post-Novitiate community or charting your journey elsewhere, we invite you to join us for this reflective and profoundly enriching experience. Mark your calendars, spread the word, and get ready to dive deep into the essence of our Oblate mission – see you there!

Bonaventure IKYOHIA, OMI

IRS Community Visits The Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

Have you ever wondered who's behind the scenes ensuring the rich tapestry of Catholic liturgical life remains vibrant and authentic? Well, on Tuesday morning, February 13, 2024, we stepped into the world of The Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, or Dicasterium de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum in Latin.

Fr. Alexander Mariadass and Dr. Adelindo Giuliani welcomed us into the inner workings of this unique dicastery, uncovering its profound impact on the liturgical life of the Catholic Church. With a mission to promote and safeguard the sacred celebrations of the Liturgy, Eucharist, and sacraments across the Church's diverse rites, it serves as a unifying force, ensuring adherence to liturgical norms and guidelines.

This dicastery reviews and approves every liturgical text, from Missals to rituals and translations of sacred books, infusing each word with the reverence and authenticity essential to Catholic worship. Moreover, it serves as a beacon of clarity, providing guidance on the interpretation and application of liturgical laws and regulations.

Our visit offered a profound glimpse into the vital role played by this dicastery in upholding the integrity and sanctity of Catholic worship and sacramental life. The insights shared by Father Alexander Mariadass and Dr. Adelindo Giuliani, members of this dicastery, deepened our understanding of its multifaceted responsibilities and unwavering commitment to preserving the sacred traditions of the Church.

Bonaventure IKYOHIA, OMI

Rome: General Committee for Formation Convenes

Every year, the General Committee for Formation (GCF) gathers members from various regions at the General House in Rome. This year their gathering will take place from February 19th to 24th. Following the directive of the 37th General Chapter, this year, an Oblate Brother joins the committee.

The participants will include:

- Fr. Frank KUCZERA (Novice Master, Godfrey, USA – Canada-US Region)
- Fr. Sebastian LUSZCZKI (Post-Novitiate Superior of Obra, Poland – Europe Region)
- Fr. Edward TERREROS INGA (Pre-Novitiate Director of Lima, Peru – Latin America Region)
- Fr. Gabriel Pathou MATAKUMBA (Post-Novitiate Superior of Kinshasa, RD Congo – Africa-Madagascar Region)
- Fr. Gulshan BARKAT (Post-Novitiate Superior of Karachi, Pakistan – Asia-Oceania Region)
- Bro. Jean-Marie DIAKANOU (Aix-en-Provence Community – Oblate Brothers)

The meeting aims to tackle essential topics, including implementing the mandates and recommendations from the 37th General Chapter. These topics include (1) Restructuring Formation, (2) Missionary & Intercultural Formation (MIF), (3) Animation of CCRR in light of the 200th anniversary of Papal Approval, and (4) Ongoing Formation.

Under the guidance of Fr. Sakubita LIKE LAWRENCE, Procurator General, discussions on restructuring involve insights from a congregation-wide questionnaire. Each member presents regional perspectives on formation restructuring. Similarly, discussions on MIF focus on aligning with the 37th General Chapter's directives, with participants sharing regional initiatives.

The Animation of CCRR involves sharing plans to celebrate the 200th anniversary of papal approbation, with participants detailing regional strategies for the coming years. Ongoing Formation discussions lead to the congregation's proposed guidelines, with each participant outlining regional plans.

Amidst the packed agenda, on Wednesday morning, Fr. Diego SAEZ MARTIN leads a pilgrimage tracing the footsteps of the Founder in Rome, visiting significant sites like the Church of Santa Maria in Campitelli and the former Papal Palace at Quirinale.

Despite the demanding schedule, the week offers an opportunity for spiritual reflection and pilgrimage in the Eternal City, following in the footsteps of St. Eugene.

Asodo ISTOYO, OMI

Fr. Chicho Addresses the Formation Committee

Before leaving for his pilgrimage to the Congo, Fr. Chicho, the Superior General, spent the morning with the General Committee for Formation.

He began this morning with the celebration of the Eucharist, at which he presided and preached. He called on the members of the committee to be lovers of the Church, authentic witnesses of the Gospel, and to be guided by Christ, the Good Shepherd. He later gave a profound address to the committee members, followed by a fraternal exchange.

In his address, the Superior General emphasized the importance of improving the quality of community life within the formation process of the Oblates and their communities. He stressed that the renewal of the Congregation comes first and foremost from a well-lived local community life and must be instilled from the beginning of First Formation.

Fr. Chicho emphasized the need for community formation and explained that the candidates must experience the richness and beauty of community life because Oblates are missionaries in and through the community. Historically, living alone has never been the norm. He reminded the committee members that their service goes beyond the boundaries of their particular province and region. Instead, their work is to animate the entire congregation.

Regarding the mandates of the General Chapter, Fr. Chicho emphasized the need to implement the call of the Chapter. He shared that the focus of his administration is to implement the mandates

regardless of personal opinions or preferences. He emphasized the need for time and authentic commitment in the implementation process and cautioned against superficial approaches. He reiterated the Chapter's call for ongoing formation, defining it as a daily conversion to the Gospel.

The discourse expanded to the topic of interculturality, with Fr. Chicho calling for a deeper understanding beyond mere multiculturalism and calling for a transformative blending of cultures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Chicho addressed concerns about the formation process and raised questions about Oblate Identity and the preparation of candidates for missionary life. He emphasized the importance of discernment and personal accompaniment in the formation journey and pointed out the complexity and challenges involved in the process.

In conclusion, the Superior General thanked the formators for their service and paid tribute to their particular role as formators of missionaries. He reaffirmed the great responsibility of formators in accompanying people on their vocational journey and emphasized the mystery inherent in every vocation and the importance of the personal formation process.

Bonga MAJOLA, OMI

OIP launches a Net Zero Climate Transition Portfolio

In 2024, the OIP Investment Trust unveiled a new initiative: a net-zero climate transition portfolio to reduce carbon emissions across industries.

The OIP is an Investment Trust, established by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, it provides faith consistent investment management of the long-term financial assets of the Oblate Congregation and of Roman Catholic related organizations, ministries, religious orders and dioceses located throughout the world. The OIP Investment Trust is a United States domiciled nonprofit tax-exempt charitable trust.

The Oblate Investment Trust understands its dual responsibility: to excel in fund management, ensuring favorable financial returns for participants, which enable the missionary activities of Oblates throughout the world, while also promoting positive impact through its investment strategy—promoting good and not just avoiding harm!

In 2024, the OIP Investment Trust unveiled a new initiative: a net-zero climate transition portfolio to reduce carbon emissions across industries.

This innovative approach involves actively engaging with companies (which have shown

some goodwill), including those previously avoided, to advocate for and incentivize positive climate action. By setting and monitoring change-goals, the trust aims to reward them through on-going investments in these types of companies that recognize the importance of climate change initiatives within the process of making profit.

We acknowledge that the spirit of Laudato Si calls us to a community engagement process, which builds human relationships within business-activity and places ‘mutual-benefit’ as an integral principle for successful business activity in the long-term.

We realize the need to engineer solutions that benefit the poor and our Common Home. The disconnect between business activity and the quantum of resources it consumes can be bridged by entering into an engaged relationship where we begin to see each other as equals.

This initiative is a short reflection on how our investment strategy is aligned to implementing the 2022 General Chapter, which called us to recognize how the principles of Laudato Si relate to our own Oblate Charism in the world today.

*Charles RENSBURG, OMI
Treasurer General*

Statistics of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate – 2024

The Oblate statistics presented herein draw from a comprehensive database housed within the General Secretariat at the General House.

This database is continually updated and refined through the integration of reports from diverse Oblate Provinces, Delegations, and Missions. Each year, the compilation of data is informed by daily submissions received in Rome, detailing first vows, final vows, ordinations, departures, and deaths within the Congregation.

However, due to varying circumstances, these records may occasionally experience delays in reaching the Secretariat.

As a result, the figures featured in this publication, particularly those concerning scholastics, vows, ordinations, and departures, not only encapsulate the statistics of the preceding year but also encompass data from previous years.

See more on: www.omiworld.org.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Superior General's Upcoming Pilgrimages

Dear Oblates and members of our beloved charismatic family,

I would like to reflect on the recent conclusion of our 5-week Plenary Session. Your prayers provided support during our deliberations and discernment, for which I am deeply thankful.

I am excited to announce my forthcoming travels, during which I will have the privilege of connecting with various Oblate communities and experiencing significant moments of our Oblate family.

Firstly, I am humbled and honored by the invitation extended by the US Mazenodian Family to deliver the 2024 Kusenberger Chair of Oblate Studies Public Lecture. From February 10th to 19th, I will be in San Antonio for this prestigious opportunity to share my thoughts and love for our Oblate Family.

Following this, I will journey with members of the Central Government to visit different Units within the Africa-Madagascar region. This is in preparation for the Joint Session scheduled to take place in Senegal in March. From February 22nd to March 14th, I will be blessed to be among my brothers in Congo.

Subsequently, I will proceed to Senegal from March 14th to 24th, where the Central Government will convene with our brothers from the region. Together, we will delve into the implementation of mandates of the 37th General Chapter in 2022, held in Rome. Through a process of discernment, the Joint Session aims to address the pressing challenges faced by our world and explore how our region can effectively respond.

I request your continued prayers for the Central Government as they continue to inspire, motivate, and unite our Charismatic family worldwide. Gratefully yours,

Fr. Chicho, OMI

OMIWORLD Launches OMI Activities Corner

At OMIWORLD, we're always looking for exciting ways to inform, inspire, and bridge the digital gap within our Charismatic family. And here's our latest masterpiece: the OMI Events page!

More than just another webpage, it's a pulsating hub where members of the Charismatic family can come together, communicate, and share the richness of our collective journey. Whether it's conferences, workshops, retreats, or local gatherings, the OMI Events page is your go-to source for staying in the loop.

Here's why you'll love it:

Stay Connected: No matter where you are in the world, you can stay connected with your Charismatic family through the OMI Activities Page.

Be Inspired: Dive into various activities and

draw inspiration from the Oblates' closeness to the poor and the most abandoned.

Easy Browsing: Find upcoming events effortlessly with location or category filters, and access comprehensive details and registration links in a snap.

Share the Joy: Spread event updates, photos, and insights with fellow Oblates, lay associates, and our broader Charismatic family.

Let's cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity together! Make the OMI Events page your frequent stop to stay informed about future family-friendly events. Let's harness this platform to unite, sharing the richness of our Charism and the highs and lows of our missionary journey. Let's share our experiences as pilgrims of hope in communion.

Have an event to share?

Send us your links and listings at omiworld@omigen.org, and let's keep this vibrant community thriving!

Bonga MAJOLA, OMI

AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

Pastoral Ethics: Young Oblates in Congo Share their Experiences

The Oblate Province of Congo organized an ongoing formation session for Young Oblates. The session aimed at empowering Young Oblates to respond effectively to contemporary missionary challenges in their missionary context. The session took place from February 5 to 8.

Our society is facing several crises. Wars, exploitation of the weakest, poverty, the crisis of the family, the economic crisis, the moral crisis, the crisis of faith, and even the crisis of the Magisterium are present, they are some realities of our times which demand certain contextual consideration for the mission. What type of a response do the People of God expect from a missionary? What missionary methodology should apply to our days? What types of Missionary Oblates do we need for our days? These are some questions that come to the mind of a Missionary Oblate.

To ensure the effectiveness of the evangelization mission of the Church, we need to take into account the cultural context. It is in this sense that Father Constant KIENGE-KIENGE organized a session on pastoral ethics in the context of today's Church.

This session saw the Oblates of the Province of the Congo come together, those Oblates with less than 10 years of ministry. The principal aim of this session was to build up the capacity of young Missionary Oblates, in order to enable them to respond effectively to missionary questions of our times, in the context of the mission.

The session was animated by Father Thomas BANG, OMI, of Cameroon, and Father Constant KIENGE-KIENGE, OMI, Provincial of the Oblate Province of the Congo. The animators of the session, step by step, examined the following: today's pastoral context; the necessity of a particular need; the question of abuse and its impact on our pastoral ministry; the consequences of, or the impact of abuse of minors; priests and religious, authors of sexual abuse; the knowledge of self as a means of protection.

For the young Oblates working in the Province of the Congo, this was a good moment of sharing and mutual enrichment. Each one shared his weak points, his fears, and also his experiences regarding certain cases. This was like a collective examination of conscience for the young Missionary Oblates. The session began on February 5th, and ended on February 8th. This time, which seemed very short due to the intensity of the interactions, was very rich according to the testimonies of the participants.

Thomas BANG, OMI

But what are the Oblates doing in the Sahara?

Fabio CIARDI, Director of the General Service for Oblate Studies is currently visiting the Oblate community in the Sahara, he preached a retreat for the local community, and he shares with us his rich experience of being in the Sahara.

It's still dark. The armored police vehicle is permanently outside the station door for our "protection". The policeman is alone. The others are located at the four sides of the house. It's time for the first prayer of the day. I see him prostrate himself on the ground, in the direction of Mecca, and saying his prayer. Shortly afterwards the Oblates find themselves in their deserted church; they recite Lauds and continue in prolonged silent prayer.

God listens to the prayer of the Muslim and the Christian... he is the Father of all.

They established Caritas; they take care of immigrant Christian workers from many African countries; they take care of prisoners; they help at the center for the disabled; they are active in dialogue with Muslims... They do many things. But, what do they really do?

The church in Dakhla is a small architectural jewel. When I arrived at the airport, at passport control, I should have given the address of my stay. I found myself in difficulty because I didn't have it. Finally, after much talking, the officer shouted at me: Igreja [church]! As if to say: did it take that long to tell me you're going to the church?

There is no need for a more precise address. In the entire Moroccan Sahara, there are only two Christian parishes, one in Dakhla and one 500 kilometers further north, in Laayoune. The two parishes are in the hands of the same Oblate community. And it is a territory as large as Italy.

So, the church of Dakhla. When I'm inside, all day in solitary silence, I understand what the Oblates are doing in the Sahara. They simply keep the presence of Jesus alive in this Muslim land. They are the Church!

They are so legally, because Fr. Mario is the Apostolic Prefect, the one who represents the Pope here. But they are so, above all, because they keep the presence of Jesus alive. Jesus in the Eucharist, in the tabernacle; Jesus alive among them; Jesus alive in the small Christian community made up of poor foreign workers... But it is Jesus alive! They make Jesus present in this great country. "Silent presence. A drop of the Gospel in the sea of Islam," as Fr. Carlo says.

What was Jesus doing for thirty years in Nazareth, in silence; was that insignificant? It was Jesus! 30 years of hiding versus 3 years of preaching. That's 30 years! He lost a lot by doing nothing...? No, being Jesus.

Fabio CIARDI, OMI

Honoring Faith and Tradition: Oblates in Zimbabwe

On February 17, 1826, Pope Leo XII granted approval to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a significant decision that not only confirmed our way of life, but also assigned us an important role within the Church and filled our hearts with deep gratitude and joy.

In a solemn celebration, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Zimbabwe together with the Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate, parishioners, Archbishop Alex Thomas, SVD, of Bulawayo and religious brothers and priests of the Archdiocese gathered at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Khumalo on Saturday, February 18, 2023. The occasion was a double celebration: the 198th anniversary of the papal approval of our Congregation and its Constitutions and Rules and 40 years of Oblate presence in Zimbabwe.

Fr. Jonathan PETERSEN, Provincial Vicar, Rodney GEORGE, Provincial Administrator, and Mildred, a representative of the Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate in South Africa, were in attendance. During the Mass, Father Jonathan, OMI, gave a moving homily in which he challenged the Oblates in Zimbabwe to honor their heritage by embracing the values enshrined in the Constitutions and Rules of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and to promote unity among our Mazenodian Family.

A highlight of the ceremony was Brother Tyson NDLOVU, one of our Scholastics, renewing his vows, symbolizing a deep commitment to the Oblate mission. Additionally, Lucky MANDAVA shared a brief reflection, shedding light on the journey of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Zimbabwe, recounting the missions and parishes served over the decades.

In conclusion, Archbishop Alex Thomas, SVD, of Bulawayo expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the 40 years of work of the Oblates in the Archdiocese and in Masvingo and expressed hope for continued collaboration and a lasting cordial relationship in the years to come.

The resonance of the celebration at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was a testimony to the enduring legacy of faith and service embodied by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Njabulo TAVODZERA, OMI

Beacons of Hope: Young Oblates take the lead

The members of the Central Government are currently on pilgrimage, visiting various Oblate Units within the Africa-Madagascar region. Kapena SHIMBOME, General Councillor for the Region, spent the past two weeks in Senegal, he shares with us how young Oblates are at the forefront of the Delegation's mission, serving as beacons of hope for the poor and most abandoned.

A visit to the Senegal-Bissau delegation reveals a striking demographic change, with young Oblates making up most of the delegation. In the past, the leadership lay with the older Oblates, who laid the foundation for the mission in Senegal. But as the mission has blossomed, the new generation of Oblates has begun to drive the delegation forward. These young Oblates are at the forefront of the Delegation's mission, serving as beacons of hope for the poor and most abandoned. They are involved in parishes and shrines, educational initiatives, youth work, promotion of vocations, and ongoing formation.

This week, I am visiting the various Oblate missions across Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, where a common thread is seen: communities of more than three Oblates. It is evident that the restructuring of community life, as advocated by the 37th Chapter, is well underway in Senegal. Moreover, the Oblates in Senegal are heeding Pope Francis' call to minister in the peripheries. They are committed to social justice and compassion by addressing the needs of the socio-economically and spiritually deprived.

This new generation is keen on building intercultural communities by drawing together Oblates from various backgrounds, including Senegal, Italy, DR Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, and Zambia. This multicultural dynamic enriches their mission and fosters greater understanding and solidarity.

In Senegal, one particularly impactful ministry is the creation of spaces for encountering the divine. Through shrines and the active involvement of the laity in communal prayers, the Oblates are nurturing spiritual growth and fostering a sense of community.

The new generation of Oblates in the Senegal-Bissau Delegation carries on the Oblate mission while embodying the spirit of innovation, inclusivity, and compassion essential for living the Oblate charism in today's world.

Kapena SHIMBOME, OMI

 ASIA - OCEANIA

India: Mazenodian Family “Live-in Session”

The OMI St. Eugene Province of India recently hosted the first “Mazenodian Family Live-in Session” at St. Joseph Bhavan OMI Provincialate in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, from January 24-26, 2024.

Guided by Fr. Jeevaratnam, OMI, Participants included members from various congregations:

Fr. Harry Immanuel, OMI (Provincial, St. Eugene Province, India)

Sr. Jeya, HFB (Provincial, Chennai)

Sr. Arul Seeli, DMI (Provincial, Chennai)

Fr. Jerald, MMI (Provincial, Chennai)

Fr. Churchill, IVD (Director, Tamil Nadu)

Fr. Justin Raj, CR (General, Bangalore)

Sr. Rose Mary, CR (Vicar General, Tamil Nadu)

Sr. Sebasty, OMMI (Delegate, Bangalore)

Fr. Antonysam, SDM (General, Chennai)

Commencing on the evening of the 24th with a prayer service and a warm welcome from the Provincial House Community, participants were

treated to a recorded message from the Superior General, Rev. Fr. Luis Ignacio Rois Alonso, OMI. Fr. Harry Immanuel then presented on “Mazenodian Spirituality.”

The following days featured profound sharing of life experiences, missions, and apostolates, fostering an inspiring exchange. Moderated by Fr. Maria Selvam, OMI, and Fr. Rayappan, OMI, discussions centered on concerns and challenges faced by religious, including vocations, formation, and profession.

Key proposals emerged from the sessions:

- Regularly organize input sessions on Mazenodian Spirituality.
- Encourage participation in programs at De Mazenod Center, Aix-en-Provence, France.
- Promote the exchange of Formation Personnel.
- Facilitate gatherings for formandees within the Mazenodian Family.
- Initiate more programs for networking, collaboration, and active participation among members.

Sasi RENALDO, OMI

Jaffna: Fr. Ramesh OMI Advocate for Social Justice and Human Rights

In a ceremony at the International Center for Human Rights Protection (IHRM) in Colombo Bandaranaike International Conference Hall on January 14, 2024, Fr. Sathees Kumar YACOP, OMI, (Ramesh) was honored for his remarkable efforts.

Among government officials, social workers, trustees, and clergy, Fr. Ramesh symbolized compassion and dedication. Recognized for his commitment to humanitarian causes and advocating human rights nationwide, Fr. Ramesh OMI received the prestigious ‘Deshabandhu Humanitarian’ Award from the Government of Sri Lanka. This award acknowledges his outstanding contributions to society.

During the ceremony, Fr. Ramesh OMI was appointed Vice President for Kilinochchi District of the International Center for the Protection of Human Rights and became a member of the advisory board for the Jaffna District Co-existence Organization. These appointments highlight his leadership and dedication to fostering unity within communities.

Fr. Ramesh OMI’s journey epitomizes the transformative power of compassion. As we celebrate his achievements, let us renew our commitment to promoting justice and human rights for all and everywhere.

OMIWORLD

Honoring Everyday Heroes: Fr. Vincenzo Bordo OMI

Among the countless unsung heroes worldwide, one name shines brightly among Italy's 30 "everyday heroes" set to be honored in Rome by President Sergio Mattarella.

In a gesture that honors the essence of humanity, President Mattarella will bestow the prestigious Order of Merit of the Italian Republic upon thirty Italian citizens whose tireless efforts have forged paths of hope and resilience. These individuals stand out for representing the treasured values upheld by the Republic of Italy.

Fr. Vincenzo Bordo, OMI is among these "everyday heroes," whose enduring commitment to South Korea's marginalized and impoverished for over three decades embodies the values of our Oblate Charism.

Integrated seamlessly into Korean society, Fr. Bordo's establishment of the "House of Anna" serves as a beacon of hope, offering vital support and sustenance to those on society's periphery.

As we reflect on the achievements of these unsung heroes, let us be reminded of the enduring power of compassion, community, and love of the Poor. Join us in celebrating the contributions of our Oblate Charism in individuals like Fr. Vincenzo Bordo, who epitomizes the core values of our Charismatic Family.

This article was originally published in Italian @ www.rainews.it
Pic@Fb/ Vincenzo Bordo

OMIWORLD

Chennai: A Brief Report of the AORC Meeting

The 2024 Annual Meeting of Asia-Oceania Regional Conference (AORC) was held at the OMI Provincial House in Chennai, India, from February 18 to 23, 2024.

I. The AORC Meeting

The first day was passed with an Orientation Session on the Theme "See, Seek, Shift and Serve: Synodality- Spirited Leadership by Fr. Robin Sahayaseelan, SJ. That was inspirational and thought provoking input. The second day was animated by Fr. Charles RENSBURG, Treasurer General from Rome, who focused and shared his session on "Financial Sustainability" taking into account the demographic and statistical status of the region.

On the third day, the main agenda was the presentations of the Unit reports by the respective Major Superiors. Having completed with the reports, the rest of the half a day was covered by Fr. Eugene BENEDICT, the General

Councilor for the Region. His presentation was focused on the Mandates of the 37th General Chapter in the light of the call of the Church on the spirit of the Synodality. He kept informed the Major Superiors of their roles, functions and responsibilities and to be in regular communication with the Superior General as well as to cultivate relationships with other Provinces, especially those of their own Region.

The fourth day was spent by all the participant visiting the Oblate communities in and around Chennai and Kancheepuram. They visited our Aanmodaya Ashram, the Parishes of Kancheepuram, Poonamalee, the De Mazenod Institute of Philosophy at Perambakkam and Oblate the Scholasticate. The day came to a close with some shopping and the dinner.

The last day was dedicated on the Business Session electing the New President, Chairpersons and other members for various committees. All the participants wholeheartedly thank Fr. Christian FINI, the outgoing President and warmly welcomed Fr. Gerry De LOS REYS the New President of the AORC.

Finally the meeting of the AORC came to an end with the drafting our reflections and the Recommendations on the updates of the responses on Restructuring. The five days of meeting was a time of fraternal sharing, planning and discerning together.

II. The Reality of Plurality in the Region

A Rich Heritage:

Asia-Oceania as the largest and most populated continents is characterized and blessed with rich cultural, spiritual heritage, languages and pluralism. It is a fact that the diverse religious, cultures, and socio-political systems do manifest a great heritage and religions play a very vital role in shaping the mind and life of the people of this region.

Religious Pluralism:

Religious pluralism is a significant factor in South Asian Society. It is from Asian soil that four major religions and several other religious movements have originated. Centuries old teachings and traditions in these religions have had a great influence on the thinking patterns and literature, architecture, manifold festivals and liturgies, religious educative systems bear witness to the role of religion in shaping the live of the community.

Challenges:

There are serious and acute problems concerning co-existence within the same territory. Poverty, religious fundamentalism, natural calamities, casteism, oppression of women and children, wide-spread illiteracy, wars, crimes are common factors which are rampant in this region. So much of hatred and violence has become a burning problem. But there has been a co-existence within common activities in socio-political, cultural and educational spheres.

The Mission in the Region:

Building unity, working for reconciliation, forging bonds of solidarity, promoting dialogue among religions and cultures, eradicating prejudices and engendering trust among peoples

are considered essential for the evangelizing mission of the Units in the Region.

III. The Region of Asia Oceania

- 6 PROVINCES: Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Colombo, India and Jaffna.
- 6 DELEGATIONS: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam, China – Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan-Korea
- 2 MISSIONS: Korea and Turkmenistan
- 832 Total number of Oblates
- 16 Total number of Countries in the Region

There is no ministry, however, which is foreign to us. Accordingly the region is involved in the following ministries:

Parishes, preaching missions, novena preaching, hospital chaplaincies, prison chaplaincies, formal and non-formal education, counselling, technical schools, specialized ministries, retreat preaching, formation, ongoing formation, JPIC, youth ministry mission through media, interreligious dialogue, animation, and sending missionaries abroad, ministry to the drug and alcohol addicts.

Eugene BENEDICT, OMI
General Councillor for the Region of Asia
Oceania

CANADA - US

Former Oblate, Justice and Peace Leader, Dies

J. Paul Martin, an Oblate priest for six years and Justice and Peace world leader for over 50 years, died at age 87 on Jan. 7, 2024, in New York City, USA, from pneumonia complicated by covid. Although his first name was Joseph, he never used it.

Born in England on June 28, 1936, Paul served as a young officer in the British Army, 1954-56. He then entered the Oblate novitiate of the Anglo-Irish Province in 1956, making his first vows on Sept. 29, 1957. He was then sent to the International Roman Scholasticate, where he attended the Angelicum, now called the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, earning Licentiates in Philosophy and Theology. He made his perpetual vows on Sept. 29, 1960 and was ordained to the priesthood on Feb. 22, 1964.

Paul was in Rome for the first two sessions of Vatican II, the autumn of 1962 and 1963. By that time he had learned French, and was able to understand the two French journals we listened to during our meals: *L'Information Catholique Internationale*, and *La Documentation Catholique*. These journals helped prepare us for the upheaval of Vatican II, as did the various Oblate bishops and theologians who visited the Scholasticate.

Interacting with Oblate Bishop Francis Taylor of Stockholm, Sweden, Paul was thinking that he would serve in Sweden, when the Superior General, Fr. Léo DESCHÂTELETS, asked him to go to Lesotho, Southern Africa, to teach and become dean of the men's residence at the new University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, to help in its transition from what had been an Oblate College to an independent public university.

While serving as dean of students and lecturer, Paul's superior was Anthony HALL.

After three years in Lesotho, he received a scholarship that enabled him to enroll in Columbia University, New York City, USA, in 1967. He earned his Doctorate in Philosophy with the Thesis entitled "Educating the Sotho, 1833-1884, a study of the work of Protestant, Catholic and Anglican missionaries." During his time at Columbia, he visited Oblate houses both in the United States and Canada.

Paul fell in love, and left the Oblates after being in vows for 14 years. He and his wife, Roberta Isakson, raised two children, one of whom is a Research Scientist in immunology and the other Director of exhibits at a New York City museum. Bringing them up in the faith was a real challenge.

Over the years Paul has served as Eucharistic Minister in the parishes he attended. Paul authored numerous articles, including two in the Catholic journal *Commonweal*, and one with Harry WINTER, "Religious Proselytization," *Proselytization and Communal Self-Determination in Africa* (ed. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naiim, (NY: Orbis, 1999), pp. 20-50.

In 1978 he founded and directed for 27 years Columbia University's Center, now Institute, for the Study of Human Rights. Among its programs, the Human Rights Advocates Program, founded in 1989 and still continuing today, has brought to the university annual groups of human rights advocates from the Global South for four months to study under his direction and to make the contacts needed to support their work at home.

On the trips to Washington, D.C., USA, they would meet with George McLEAN OMI's students at the latter's Center for the Research in Values and Philosophy Program.

Paul has also written on human rights and religion in one of McLean's own publications. He has edited three collections of human rights documents and contributed to the Oxford Encyclopedia on Political Science and the Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East.

In the 1990's, Paul designed and directed a \$1.8 million project to familiarize activists and government officials from the former Eastern Bloc with Western ideas about religious freedom. Four groups came to New York for four months study. Three international conferences on religious freedom were held in Sofia, Budapest and Cracow.

Throughout his years at the Institute, Paul traveled extensively in Third World Countries, helping to establish programs in human rights education in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Brazil, Liberia and Ecuador among others. One of his ongoing concerns was Haiti, where he has lectured at Notre Dame University in Port au Prince and been impressed by the quality of its students.

For the past twelve years he had taught and directed the Human Rights Studies Program at Barnard College, Columbia University. Until shortly before his death, he taught every Tuesday and Thursday.

Paul cherished his Oblate Cross and made sure in April, 2020, that it was sent to our Scholasticate in San Antonio, TX, to be passed on to a future Oblate. He also cherished his Oblate brethren, keeping in touch with his Swiss classmate, Jean Pierre Caloz, and visiting at the retirement center in Tewksbury, MA, Paul Daly, Will Harvey and myself, on March 8-9, 2020.

Paul's unexpected death deprives Barnard College of an unequalled activist who trained so many experts in Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. But those thousands he did train will carry on his work.

May he Rest In Peace!

Harry E. WINTER, OMI

LATIN AMERICA

Laity: The Heroes of the Heroes

In the annals of missionary life, the spotlight often shines on the courageous deeds of missionaries braving adversity to spread the Gospel. Yet, behind every missionary's tale of heroism lies a lesser-known narrative – the support and inspiration provided by the local laity.

Jim BROBST, OMI, General Councilor for Canada & U.S. Region, reflects on the profound impact of the laity in the lives and ministry of missionaries, particularly in the context of the former Central U.S. Province's missions in Recife, Brazil. Through stories of sacrifice, resilience, and mutual admiration, Jim highlights the essential role played by the laity as the unsung heroes who strengthen the efforts of missionaries.

As a young Missionary Oblate candidate in the former Central U.S. Province, I was often inspired by the older Oblates returning from our own "Most Difficult Mission" in Recife, Brazil. Some of them had endured prison, even torture, at the hands of the government who could not tolerate such actions as bringing potable water pipes into slums, of teaching the poorest of the poor of their own dignity as God's children, or of giving shelter to abandoned, disabled street children.

One Oblate, even confronted a police force who were armed with bulldozers. The forces were ready to flatten the shanties of the poor yet again before they legally achieved "squatters rights" in the garbage dump where they were living.

Many of these heroic Oblates have passed on, some still live – and continue this kind of ministry. Many of these Oblates, when returning for visits or for new assignments, spoke of the Brazilian faithful whose example of faith and love inspired the Oblates to remain firm in their own call. A big portion of their hearts always stayed with those who remained when the Missionaries returned.

On my recent trip to Brazil for the Latin American Joint Session, I met many people in Brazil who still recall the Oblates I knew in my younger years. A tremendous gift I was able to share with the laity of Brazilian missions was to affirm how their stories were told, and are still told, by the Oblates who served them. They were, and are, “the heroes of the heroes!”

These people in turn remembered the specific Oblates I named and mentioned with great love and admiration. I witnessed a beautiful new church building rising on the grounds where a lanky priest, backed by the poorest of the poor, faced down the Brazilian army with a broom – and won. (Talk about David and Goliath!) That parish is currently led by new courageous, dedicated Oblates in community.

Most Oblate units have sent men to difficult missions. Places and missionaries all throughout the Oblate world are worthy of personal and collective sacrifice, and it is important to honor the Oblates and those who send them. They are truly heroes to all Oblates. But as heroic as these missionaries are, I hope to honor other heroes here – the laity who inspire the Oblates who serve, and who remain when Oblates move on.

Every Oblate who has spent time in difficult missions knows countless persons whose faith and courage and tenacity outshine our own. No truly great missionary becomes great without the support of Oblate community, and of the often-humbling faith of those whom we are called to serve.

The laity are often “the heroes of the heroes.” You know who you are, and so do we! Thank you and God bless you for your faith and example, and for helping us to become the kind of missionaries Jesus and St. Eugene de Mazenod would have us be.

Jim BROBST, OMI
General Councilor, Canada & U.S. Region

Rt. Rev. Luis Alberto HUAMÁN CAMAYO, OMI, Appointed Archbishop

The Holy Father has appointed Bishop Luis Alberto HUAMÁN CAMAYO, O.M.I., as metropolitan archbishop of the Archdiocese of Huancayo, Peru, transferring him from the titular see of Tepelta and the office of auxiliary bishop of the same archdiocese.

Curriculum vitae

Archbishop-elect Luis Alberto HUAMÁN CAMAYO was born on 5 February 1970 in Tarma, Peru, in the diocese of the same name. He studied civil engineering at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, and philosophy at the Facultad de Teología Pontificia y Civil de Lima and the Universidad de Cochabamba, Bolivia; after attending the Pontifical Gregorian

University of Rome and the Universidad de Cochabamba, Bolivia; after attending the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome and the Universidad de Cochabamba, he was awarded a licentiate in spiritual theology from the Universidad Católica Boliviana.

On 10 January 1997 he gave his first religious vows in the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and subsequently gave his perpetual vows in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 6 October 2001 in Tarma.

He has held the following offices: parish vicar of Cristo Rey in Pueblo Nuevo, Chincha, diocese of Ica; promotor of the Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús Parish School, Chincha (2001-2003); superior of the “BOLPER” international post-novitiate in Cochabamba and teacher at the Interreligiosa

de Nazaret (2004-2008); parish vicar of San Eugenio in Villa Pagador, Cochabamba (2004-2005); prison chaplain in Cochabamba (2006-2007); bursar of the Delegation of his Congregation in Peru (2008-2010); professor at the Conference of Religious of Peru (2009-2011); parish priest of Nuestra Señora de la Paz in Comas, diocese of Carabayllo in Peru (2009-2013); superior of the General Delegation of

the Oblates of Peru (2014-2016); member of the General Council for Latin America and the Caribbean in Rome (2016-2021). On 21 May 2021 he was elected titular bishop of Tepelta and auxiliary of the archdiocese of Huancayo, receiving episcopal ordination the following 16 June.

Pg. (<https://press.vatican.va>)

OMIWORLD

Mexico: Aligning with the Church and the Congregation

Inspired by C. 35, “To put ourselves increasingly at the service of God in his people...” the Oblates of the Province of Mexico, gathered from February 5th to 9th in Tepoztlán, Morelos, Mexico.

It has become a tradition for Oblates working in Mexico to come together at the beginning of each year for a week to study current issues and align ourselves with the Congregation and the Church. The theme of this year’s study week was “Called to conversion for the renewal of community life and mission.”

In a fraternal and prayerful atmosphere, we reflected primarily on our personal conversion. Professor Agustín Tello, an honorary Oblate, facilitated and guided us in deep reflection throughout the week. We found ourselves challenged regarding our life as an apostolic community and how to walk in synodality with the Church.

In light of the Joint Session CIAL – Central Government, held in August of last year, we are more aware of the need to restructure mission sites and formation houses. All the Oblates who participated in the session agreed that we can benefit significantly by responding positively to a restructuring process that will strengthen our ministerial collaboration with the Delegation of Guatemala and the mission in Cuba.

Therefore, starting from a general overview of the Latin America region, considering the opportunities and challenges, and trusting in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We have seen as a priority, above all:
– Mission with youth. We have formed a Commission of Oblates to serve youth and promote vocations to missionary religious life.

– To better respond to current challenges according to our charism, the Oblates of Mexico have decided to withdraw from one of the missions, where we believe the diocesan clergy can adequately attend to it.

Finally, with one heart and one mind, we have updated our MISSION STATEMENT, taking into account our identity as a missionary family.

Cándido GONZÁLEZ GUZMÁN OMI

ANNIVERSARIES FOR MARCH 2024

75th Anniversaries of Vows

19/03/1949	09204	Bro. Bernard Durand	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
------------	-------	---------------------	-------------------

65th Anniversaries of Vows

07/03/1959	10607	Fr. Peter John McLaughlin	Australia
07/03/1959	10606	Fr. John Sherman Australia	
19/03/1959	11198	Bro. Roland Beaupré	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
19/03/1959	11197	Bro. Joseph-Elide Francoeur	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
25/03/1959	11199	Bro. Szczepan Pogodala	Poland

65th Anniversaries of Ordinations

14/03/1959	09466	Msgr. Ramiro Díaz Sánchez	Mediterranea
30/03/1959	09575	Fr. Stanislaw Cyganiak	Pologne
30/03/1959	09589	Fr. Jozef Kuroczycki	Poland

60th Anniversaries of Vows

19/03/1964	11819	Bro. Thomas Cavanaugh	Lacombe
19/03/1964	11820	Bro. Jean Sauv��	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

01/03/1964	10678	Fr. Albert Buchet	Belgique et Pays Bas
15/03/1964	10591	Fr. J��rgen Jagelki	Central Euro. Prov.
19/03/1964	10775	Fr. Gabriel Crugnola	France

50th Anniversaries of Vows

13/03/1974	12230	Fr. Yves Chalvet de R��cy	France
24/03/1974	12296	Fr. Vincent James	Lacombe

25th Anniversaries of Ordinations

20/03/1999	13279	Fr. Raymond Matete Leuta	Lesotho
------------	-------	--------------------------	---------

Suffrages for our Deceased - FEBRUARY 2024

No. 8 - 12

NAME	DATE	DIED AT	BORN	PROV/DEL
Bro. Proulx, Damien	29/02/2024	Richelieu	28/03/1930	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
Fr. Vivant, Lucien	12/02/2024	Nantes	25/11/1934	France
Bro. Aumond, Etienne	11/02/2024	Richelieu	11/02/1937	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
Fr. Chapuis, Jacques	05/02/2024	Sintang	12/08/1940	Indonesia
Fr. van den Beuken, Gerard	02/02/2024	Hulsberg	17/03/1938	Netherlands



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

(Letter of Founder to Fr. Courtès, 22 July 1828)

OMI INFORMATION is an unofficial publication
of the General Administration of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Via Aurelia 290, 00165 Roma, Italy
Fax: (39) 06 39 37 53 22 E-mail: information@omigen.org
www.omiworld.org
Editor & Webmaster: Bonga Majola