

ON THE OBLATE SPIRIT (AN EXTRACT)

After the first moment of surprise, emotion and natural anxiety at my election [as Superior General], I remembered that I no longer belonged to myself, that on the day of my Oblation I gave myself entirely to the service of Our Lord and His Divine Mother, and that the only important thing for me to do is the holy will of God. (...)

At the beginning of my term as General, there is no need to speak of an action program; it is clear in our Holy Rules and our Traditions "Evangelizare pauperibus misit me," and on my last day when I will give account to God of my management, I hope to be able to say as my venerable predecessors did, "Pauperes evangelizantur ". (...)

The Oblate spirit is reflected not only in the external union of our efforts and wills in the apostolate; it is also reflected in the need that is felt to know each other better and to stay closely united by the bonds of the same charity. (...)

In the past as in the present, our family has been composed of men "ex omni tribu, lingua, et populo, et natione"; and yet the work of evangelization was always successful because it was done "more Oblatorum". We were not concerned then to channel our efforts based on our nationality: an Oblate went wherever obedience called him, and he gave himself entirely to the work of God and the Church, to the evangelization of the poor, without asking whether or not his companions were from the same country as himself. They were Oblates: that was enough, and the union of hearts created the union of forces. (...)

That is the glorious tradition of our religious family; it is there, in each one's dedication to the common work that we must seek the true good that will unite us all. (Circular 152, December 3, 1932, vol. 4, p. 236, 238-239) A. Desnoyers, Le T.R.P. Théodore Labouré, o.m.i., « Études Oblates » 3 (1944), p. 69-73.