



Information No. 473 (English)

February 2008

Father General's Letter to the Congregation for February 17, 2008

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household.” (Eph 2:19)

Dear Brother Oblates and Oblate Associates,

We live in a time when, in some parts of the world, people have reached a high degree of personal freedom and enjoy many opportunities to develop their individual talents - a reality from which religious life has profited. We rejoice that humanity has come such a long way since the Declaration of Human Rights which celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this year; at least in some parts of the world these rights are recognized and are becoming effective. But people, and also we religious, have begun to realize that having reached a fuller respect of our Human Rights is not enough. Among other things, many of us have discovered that alongside the need of freedom there is the need for belonging, of being members of something larger than ourselves. Would this have something to do with our annual Oblate feast? The answer is a clear “yes”, for on February 17, we remember how much the first Oblates wanted to feel that they fully belonged to something, in this case the Church.

Our small congregation had gone through a crisis: we were not readily accepted by some of the local pastors, our missionary practices were questioned and members were being called back to their dioceses. So they came to ask themselves: *do we have a place in the church or not; does our congregation belong to it or not?* It is true that from 1816 onwards, Saint Eugene was able to continue in his purpose, thanks to his strong faith, and that he had even been encouraged by a mystical

experience. He felt confirmed as founder of the congregation when he was praying in front of a statue of Our Lady on 15th of August, in the year 1822. The statue, the Oblate Madonna, is still with us as a witness of this encouragement given from above. However, some other exterior sign was needed to assure Eugene and his fellow missionaries that they were not acting just out of personal convictions and individual strength. They needed to know more clearly that they had been sent as missionaries in the name of Christ and that they fully belonged to His body, the Church. The impatiently awaited confirmation by the highest authority of the Church arrived on February 17, 1826, an event we still celebrate each year. We can still feel, along with Saint Eugene, his excitement when he wrote back from Rome:

“See then our little flock, to whom the Father of the family has kindly wished to open wide the field of the holy Church, given a place in the hierarchic order, associated with the venerable Congregations which have spread throughout the Church so many great benefits.” (March 25, 1826, *Oblate Writings* Vol. VII)¹

From that time on, we were able to feel that we were truly part of the church, equals along with all the other, older congregations. A biblical text comes to mind: “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household”. (Eph 2:19)

This has been our history for more than 180 years and nobody within the Church would question any more that the O.M.I. really belong to it. But looking back, we should perhaps ask ourselves: is our desire

to belong to the Church - and to the Congregation as part of it - still as lively as at the beginning?

It is a normal thing that people belong to multiple groups: we form part of families, cultures, nations, associations, communities, etc. Today, liberated by the recognition of our Human Rights, we enjoy more freedom than ever to pick and choose any group into which we want to integrate. Therefore the question becomes most pertinent: *What place does a given group occupy in my personal hierarchy of belonging? What comes first, and what is secondary?*

If we bear the name of religious and missionaries, then once in a while we should question ourselves: Is our first loyalty still to Jesus Christ and His body, the Church – or have we come to belong more to other communities, for instance our natural family, or our cultural group, or a circle of friends? Is our commitment to God who has called us into the OMI Congregation actually like an “oblation”, a total self-giving – or just like taking on a job to be done? In

other words, do we belong to our Congregation in such a way that we deserve the name of Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate? Does it mean that we are people totally committed to a common mission and forming that one, united family around Christ the Savior and Mary our mother, which our Founder envisioned?

February 17th is the celebration of our belonging: as Congregation to the Church, and as members, to the Congregation. The intensity of this “being part of” depends on each one’s free, individual choice. We should be proud to belong to a group which since 1826 occupies a place of honor in God’s household. Let us keep working on becoming ever stronger and healthier members of our Congregation, thus contributing to the vigor of Christ’s body, the Church. In the world of today, he has no other limbs he can use but people like us.

I wish to all of us a Happy Feast Day of February 17th!

In Christ and Mary Immaculate

Fr. Wilhelm Steckling, OMI
Superior General

General Statistics

<u>JANUARY 2008</u>					<u>JANUARY 2007</u>				
Total	Fr.	B1	B2	Schol.	Total	Fr.	B1	B2	Schol
40	34	6			41	33	8		
868	524	57	18	269	880	524	61	16	279
471	338	30	3	100	473	329	29	4	111
678	494	25	2	157	679	476	24	4	175
992	832	140	2	18	1029	861	148	2	18
1251	979	137	4	131	1282	995	143	4	140
4300	3201	395	29	675	4384	3218	413	30	723

of whom 42 are bishops

of whom 43 are bishops

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

SUMMARY as of December 31, 2007

MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE	January 2007	January 2008	+ / -
Cardinal	1	1	
Archbishops	10	10	
Bishops	32	31	- 1
Prefects Apostolic	2	2	
Priests	3173	3157	- 16
Brothers with perpetual vows	413	395	- 18
Brothers with temporary vows	30	29	- 1
Scholastics with perpetual vows	114	92	- 22
Scholastics with temporary vows	609	583	- 26
Total number of Oblates	4384	4300	- 84

PERSONNEL BY UNIT LEVEL

December 31, 2007

The next table shows the number of Oblates according to the Unit to which they belong. For example, all the Oblates attached to the Zambia Delegation are listed there, even though they are juridically members of the United States Province, or may be temporarily living elsewhere. Some of the Zambian scholastics are in Cedara, others in the U.S. etc.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
	0	0	0	0	0	34	6	0	0	0	0	40
Total:	0	0	0	0	0	34	6	0	0	0	0	40

AFRICA-MADAGASCAR

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Angola	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	7
Botswana	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	1	9
Cameroun	0	0	4	0	0	61	10	8	0	6	32	121
Central S. A.	0	0	2	0	0	40	2	0	0	1	7	52
Congo	0	0	1	0	0	80	12	2	0	7	44	146
Kenya	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	0	0	6	13
Lesotho	0	1	1	0	0	81	18	0	0	4	34	139
Madagascar	0	0	0	0	0	28	3	0	0	3	18	52
Namibia	0	1	2	0	0	27	6	3	0	0	9	48
Natal	0	1	1	0	0	55	1	0	0	1	12	71
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	1	0	4	8	24
Northern S. A.	0	1	1	0	0	47	1	0	0	0	7	57
Qwa-Qwa	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Sahara	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Senegal	0	0	0	0	0	26	1	1	0	1	9	38
Zambia	0	0	1	0	0	20	1	1	0	4	35	62
Zimbabwe	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	1	0	3	12	24
Total:	0	4	13	1	1	506	57	18	0	34	235	868

LATIN AMERICA

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Argentina-Chile	0	0	1	0	43	1	0	0	1	2	48	
Baja California	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	5	
Bolivia	0	0	0	0	21	9	0	0	2	5	37	
Brazil	0	0	0	0	51	6	0	0	0	9	66	
Brazil Central	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	1	1	14	
Colombia	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	1	2	11	
Cuba	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	
French Guyana	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	2	11	24	
Haiti	0	1	1	0	72	8	2	0	2	37	123	
Mexico	0	0	0	0	33	1	0	0	0	10	44	
Paraguay	0	0	1	0	27	2	0	0	1	6	37	
Peru	0	0	0	0	18	2	1	0	2	4	27	
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Uruguay	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	1	13	
Venezuela	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	9	
Total:	0	1	4	0	333	30	3	0	12	88	471	

ASIA-OCEANIA

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Australia	0	0	0	0	47	0	0	0	1	1	49	
Bangladesh	0	0	1	0	19	0	0	0	1	10	31	
China	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	1	13	
Colombo	0	0	1	0	115	14	0	0	2	31	163	
India	0	0	0	0	55	1	2	0	2	19	79	
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	33	0	0	0	0	10	43	
Jaffna	0	0	0	0	68	0	0	0	1	33	102	
Japan	0	0	0	0	23	1	0	0	0	0	24	
Korea	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	2	8	
Pakistan	0	0	0	1	19	0	0	0	2	7	29	
Philippines	0	1	1	0	71	8	0	0	2	29	112	
Thailand	0	0	1	0	18	1	0	0	1	2	23	
Turkmenistan	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Total:	0	1	4	1	488	25	2	0	12	145	678	

CANADA-UNITED STATES

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Assumption	0	0	0	0	49	1	0	0	0	1	51	
Lacombe	0	3	4	0	227	34	0	0	0	0	268	
Notre-Dame-du-Cap	0	0	4	0	196	78	1	0	1	1	281	
United States	1	1	1	0	346	27	1	0	4	11	392	
Total:	1	4	9	0	818	140	2	0	5	13	992	

EUROPE

	Card.	Ar.	Ep.	Ep.Pr.	Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Anglo-Irish	0	0	0	0	86	6	0	0	0	0	92	
Belgium/Netherlands	0	0	0	0	104	21	0	0	0	0	125	
Byelorussia	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	

	Card.	Ar.Ep.	Ep.	Pr.Ap.	Fr.	Br.	Br.T	Fr.T	Sc.P.	Sc.T.	Tot.
Central European	0	0	0	0	119	28	1	0	0	7	155
France	0	0	0	0	174	27	0	0	1	14	216
France & Benelux	0	0	0	0	40	2	0	0	0	0	42
Italy	0	0	1	0	136	11	0	0	1	4	153
Lourdes	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Poland	0	0	0	0	250	33	2	0	24	65	374
Romania	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	6	11
Spain	0	0	0	0	30	6	0	0	1	2	39
Ukraine	0	0	0	0	25	3	0	0	2	4	34
Total:	0	0	1	0	978	137	4	0	29	102	1251

Total: 1 10 31 2 3157 395 29 0 92 583 4300

Legenda: Card=Cardinal; Ar.Ep.=ArchBishop; Ep.=Bishop; Pr.Ap.=Prefect Apostolic; Fr.=Father; Br.=Brother; Br.T.=Brother with temp. vows; Fr.T.=Father without Oblation No.; Sc.P.=Scholastics with perp. vows; Sc.T.= Scholastics with temp. vows

PERPETUAL OBLATIONS 2007
(2006: 2 Scholastics; 2007: 53 Scholastics and 2 Brothers)

Obl. No.	Name	Prov. of Origin	Date	Diocese of Origin
14137	GOMES Subash Hubert	Bangladesh	06.01	Dhaka
14138	KAPUNAN Ross	Philippines	06.01	Marbel
14139	ORTIZ Marco Antonio	U.S.A.	06.01	San Antonio
14140	MARRONE Carmine	Italy	14.01	Napoli
14141	CARLEO Claudio	Italy	14.01	Aversa
14142	CACERES TAPIA Mauricio	Chile	08.01	Arica
14143	RYU Anselm Hi Gu	Korea	02.02	Dae Jun Kyo Gu
14144	PITSO Pascalis Pali	Lesotho	09.02	Urebe
14145	TSHITHIGONA Mathias	Namibia	09.02	Windhoek
14146	YANG Antoine Tchy	France	17.02	Luang Prabang
14147	PEREIRA MORINIGO Fernando	Paraguay	28.01	Asunción
14148	KINZE Gaby	Congo	13.08.06	Idiofa
14149	MUKIRAMFI Thomas	Congo	13.08.06	Kikwit
14150	KUPPALA Arokiaraj Anthonysam	India	17.02	Chennai Mylapore
14151	SAVERIMUTHU Martin	India	17.02	Trichy
14152	ARUL DHANASINGH Andrew	India	17.02	Madras Mylapore
14153	JAYARAJ Mathew Raj	India	17.02	Madurai
14154	CHAPALE John Devaji	India	17.02	Chanda
14155	IRUDAYA RAJ Joseph	India	17.02	Velore
14156	CHODAGIRI John David Raj	India	17.02	Eluru
14157	JOHN CHARLES Mariarajan	India	17.02	Madras Mylapore
14158	DEIVANAYAGAM Arokia Vijay	India	17.02	Pondicherry
14159	ALPHONSE Peter Rajan	India	17.02	Palayamkotin
14160	THOMAS Albert Jayakumar	India	17.02	Madras Mylapore
14161	JOSEPH Fanès	Haiti	17.02	Les Cayes
14162	CHEN Andrew Vincent	Australia	18.05	Fuzhou

14163	DE LUCENA SOARES Carlos	Brazil-Central	06.01	Urmaçu
14164	DE JESUS FILHO José	Brazil	18.05	
14165	DANIEL Nadeem	Pakistan	21.08	Multan
14166	DOWLING Joseph	U.S.A.	05.05	Chicago
14167	EDWIN Thevathasan	Jaffna	07.05	Mannar
14168	CONFUCIOUS Augustine	Jaffna	07.05	Jaffna
14169	LEPAGE Rémi	ND-du-Cap	08.09	Baie-Comeau
14170	OWONO NDIH Ferdinand	Nigeria	15.08	Ngaoundéré
14171	OBIALOR Vincent	Nigeria	15.08	
14172	WENZE ESAS Jean-Marie	Congo	15.08	Idiofa
14173	OBOITE Clement Solomon	Nigeria	15.08	Jos
14174	ILONDO IPAKA Odilon	Congo	15.08	Idiofa
14175	KIANGA MBULUKU Jean-Claude	Congo	15.08	Idiofa
14176	NYAMI BUKOKO Armand	Congo	15.08	Idiofa
14177	BABOU Georges King Blaise	Cameroun	15.08	Mbalmayo
14178	THEUS Mariusz	Poland	08.09	Pelplin
14179	RU-YLO Sylwester	Poland	08.09	Zamosé-Lubaczó
14180	KRAUZE Lukasz	Poland	08.09	Poznan
14181	GOMULAK Pawel	Poland	08.09	Lublin
14182	ZIELIŃSKI Alekzander	Poland	08.09	Kaminiec-Podole
14183	MIELCAREK B ³ a _z ej	Poland	08.09	Poznan
14184	DEMBEK Pawel	Poland	08.09	Torun
14185	ALBINIAK Andrzej	Poland	08.09	Gdansk
14186	ZANIAMONSKI Dymitr	Poland	08.09	Grodzienska
14187	DE ASSIS SANTOS Eduardo	Brazil	04.02	Santo Amaro
14188	FRANCISCO DE SOUZA Macario	Brazil	14.04	Petrolina
14189	JEAN-JACQUES Michard	Haiti	08.09	Fort-Liberté
14190	FAN-FAN Antoine Mario	Haiti	08.09	Les Cayes
14191	FÉNÉLON Sylfrard	Haiti	08.09	Fort-Liberté
14192	ANDRÉ Wilson Exantus	Haiti	08.09	Port-de-Paix
14193	DENIS Serge	Haiti	08.09	Les Cayes

Oblates in First Formation

(as of 31 December 2007)

Year	Novices★	Scholastics	Bros. in Formation	First vows	Perpetual vows	Ordinations
2007	xxx	675	29	115	55*	69**
2006	xxx	723	30	156	71	50
2005	116	682	27	121	50	63
2004	138	671	28	129	66	63
2003	154	643	36	132	67	63
2002	159	657	29	130	78	76
2001	159	622	34	112	68	59
2000	130	638	41	114	60	59
1998	161	587	47	163	73	46
1996	131	560	42	141	56	69

*Total for 2007 includes 1 Brother who made first vows and 2 who made perpetual vows in 2006.

**Total for 2007 includes 1 ordained in 2005 and 2 ordained in 2006.

★The number of novices is not given in some years because some units did not send their report.

OBEDIENCES 2007*Asterisk (*) = First obedience*

Date	Name	Origin	Destination
08.01	RABEMANANTSOA* Jean Pascal R.P.	Madagascar	China
08.01	MARQUIS Raymond R.P.	Haiti	ND-du-Cap
08.01	RATAJCZAK* Pawel Sc.	Assumption	Assumption
12.02	FURUKAWA* Dominic Kenichi Sc.	Japan	Japan
12.02	SEBAMALAI* Peter Rajanayagam R.P.	Jaffna	Jaffna
12.02	DUMÉ* Joseph R.P.	Haiti	Guyana-France
12.02	JOSEPH* Fanés Fr.	Haiti	Haiti
12.02	MERILAN* Laudy R.P.	Haiti	Haiti
12.02	JOSEPH* Adley R.P.	Haiti	Haiti
12.02	LUBIN* Louis Josnel R.P.	Haiti	Colombia
12.02	MOROSE* Lucien Mittiado Hebe R.P.	Haiti	Colombia
12.02	MEYIWA* Nkululeko Romeo Sc.	Natal	Natal
12.02	OMPEY E-Mpey Jacques R.P.	Cameroon	Congo
12.02	LESZCZYNSKI Jozef R.P.	Cameroon	Poland
12.02	ROJAS BRITTEZ* Eliodoro César Sc.	Paraguay	Paraguay
12.02	JAYASEELAN ROBERT* Anthonipillai Sc.	France	France
12.02	VIRAJ* Don Asanga Sc.	Colombo	Colombo
17.02	ALAM* Ashaq Mukhtar Sc.	Colombo	Pakistan
19.02	YAMBENG Kiwawa Jean-Pierre R.P.	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	Namibia
19.02	EKO Okim Valére R.P.	Congo	Lesotho
19.02	NUÑO Antonio Jesús R.P.	Argentina-Chile	Spain
22.02	JIMÉNEZ GAVIRIA* José Narciso Sc.	Colombia	Colombia
22.02	COORAY Kingsley Fr.	Natal	Colombo
27.02	SEBREGHTS Louis R.P.	Congo	Belgium/Netherlands
05.03	GÓMEZ JIMÉNEZ* Francisco Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
05.03	SZKLARSKI Anthony Fr.	Gen. Admin.	U.S.A.
14.03	KNOTT* Andrew Mark Sc.	Natal	Natal
14.03	GAUDRÉ Joseph Fr.	Cameroon	France
16.03	PAPION Rogatien R.P.	OMI Lacombe	France
16.03	GILL* Asad Attique Sc.	Pakistan	Pakistan
18.03	GOMES* Sudhir Jacob Sc.	Bangladesh	Bangladesh
19.03	BOUZI* Quilin Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
19.03	NAZIR* Maqsood Sc.	Pakistan	Pakistan
19.03	BHATTI* Attaullah Sc.	Pakistan	Pakistan
19.03	PAUL* Emmanuel Cecil Sc.	Pakistan	Pakistan
20.03	KEBAMUKO* Cyrille R.P.	Zambia	Zambia
20.03	SCHOEBER Hans R.P.	N. Prov. S. Africa	Central European Prov.
03.04	FETSHI* Jean Pierre Sc.	Congo	Congo
03.04	AYALA* Juan, Jr. Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
03.04	BYTNER* Rafal Sc.	Poland	Poland
03.04	KUPCZAK* Rafal Sc.	Poland	Poland
03.04	WIECZOREK* Florian Sc.	Poland	Poland
03.04	TOMCZAK* Michal Sc.	Poland	Poland
03.04	FORAJTER* Szymon Sc.	Poland	Byelorussia
03.04	JEZAK* Andrzej Sc.	Poland	Assumption

Date	Name	Origin	Destination
03.04	SZAFRANSKI* Tomasz Sc.	Poland	Mexico
16.04	JOLLY* Louis R.P.	Cameroon	France
16.05	CALUZ Jean Pierre R.P.	Gen. Admin.	France
16.05	CHATELLIER Marc R.P.	Cameroon	France
16.05	KHOZA* Elphas R.P.	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
16.05	FIGUEREDO NETO* Joao Silvino Sc.	Brazil	Guyane-France
16.05	GUNAPALA Jagath Premanath R.P.	Jaffna	Poland
16.05	MOREL Patrice R.P.	U.S.A.	France
16.05	RYU* Anselm Hi Gu Sc.	Japan	Korea
16.05	SRIKHON* Mark Waraanyu Sc.	Thailand	Thailand
16.05	TOMICZEK Jacek R.P.	Cameroon	Poland
16.05	VELASQUEZ* Osvaldo Fernando Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
19.05	MUÑOZ MEDINA David Sc.	Spain	Spain
13.06	INGELE* Frédéric Sc.	Congo	Congo
13.06	EYER* Berthier Sc.	Congo	Congo
13.06	CASTRO Raúl R.P.	Argentina-Chile	Gen. Admin.
14.06	ACOSTA OVELAR* Guido Sc.	Paraguay	Paraguay
14.06	PIÑÓN Gilberto R.P.	Mexico	Gen. Admin.
25.06	JAHAE Raymond R.P.	Central European Prov	ND-du-Cap
25.06	OLÉA TINOCO* Hipólito Sc.	Mexico	Guatemala
25.06	WILK Mariusz R.P.	Kenya	Poland
10.08	GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ* Félix Sc.	Mexico	Mexico
10.08	TERAI* Sello Michael Sc.	Lesotho	Lesotho
10.08	SAVERIMUTHU* Martin Fr.	India	India
10.08	SANDHAPPAN Chinnappan R.P.	Gen. Admin.	India
10.08	MUTALE* Nebby Sc.	Zambia	Zambia
10.08	LEGARÉ Louis R.P.	China	OMI Lacombe
10.08	DOWLING* Joseph John Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
10.08	SAINTILMA* Louitional Sc.	Haiti	Haiti
10.08	BOISSEAU Joseph R.P.	Cameroon	France
10.08	COLSON Jean R.P.	Cameroon	France
10.08	EKPO* John Francis Sc.	Cameroon	Cameroon
10.08	CHIAMBON* Joseph Sc.	Cameroon	Cameroon
10.08	AWUZIEKE* Jovita Chibueze Sc.	Cameroon	Cameroon
19.08	NSOLO Habell R.P.	Congo	Gen. Admin.
31.08	KOZIOL Wladyslaw R.P.	Cameroon	Poland
31.08	JAYARAJ* Matthew Raj Sc.	India	India
31.08	BOZEK Daniel Fr.	Poland	U.S.A.
30.10	BARATTO Virgilio R.P.	OMI Lacombe	Assumption
30.10	MADONDO* Jeffrey Francis Sc.	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
30.10	AROKIASAMY* Gregory Sc.	India	India
30.10	RAVELOMAMPISANDRAIBE* Alfred Sc.	Madagascar	Madagascar
30.10	RAKOTOMALALA* Alfred Sc.	Madagascar	Madagascar
30.10	NABWENJE* Charles Calisto Sc.	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
30.10	MNCWABE* Mthokozisi Claudius Sc.	Natal	Natal
30.10	BABOU* Georges King Blaise Sc.	Cameroon	Cameroon
12.11	BENNAKHONE* Inthirath Benedict Sc.	Thailand	Thailand
12.11	DE ASSIS SANTOS Eduardo R.P.	Brazil	Korea

Date	Name	Origin	Destination
17.11	YANG* Antoine Tchy Sc.	France	France
17.11	THEVATHASAN* Edwin R.P.	Jaffna	Jaffna
10.12	LOPEZ* Rodel Sc.	Philippines	Philippines
10.12	TSHITHIGONA* Matthias Sc.	Namibia	Namibia
14.12	GARCÍA RODRIGUEZ* Porfirio Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
14.12	ORTIZ* Marco Antonio Sc.	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
16.12	BROSSARD Joseph Gilles R.P.	Lesotho	ND-du-Cap

Deaths and Departures

Deaths in 2007: 113 (95 Priests, 18 Brothers)

2006: **92** 2005: **94** 2004: **113** 2003: **102** 2002: **121** 2001: **101** 2000: **121** 1999: **116**

Departures reported in

2007: 85**	(19 priests, 64 scholastics, 2 brothers)
2006: 67	(8 priests, 56 scholastics, 3 brothers)
2005: 60	(8 priests, 48 scholastics, 4 brothers)
2004 : 52	(3 priests, 48 scholastics, 1 brother)
2003 : 89	(15 priests, 69 scholastics, 5 brothers)

** Of these totals, some departures took place in previous years but were either not reported until 2007 or did not become canonically permanent until 2007.

2007:

- 61 scholastics and 2 Brothers did not renew their temporary vows.
- 3 scholastics were granted a dispensation from temporary vows by the Superior General.
- 9 priests were dismissed from the Congregation.
- 6 priests were laicized.
- 2 priests were definitively incardinated into a diocese.
- 2 priests were incardinated into a diocese (ad experimentum).

The Holy See granted the following dispensations:

- 6 laicizations with dispensation from celibacy
- 2 transfers to the diocesan clergy

Ordo for February 17, 2008

Second Sunday of Lent. 182nd Anniversary of the approval of our Congregation and Constitutions. The Mass of the Second Sunday of Lent takes precedence over the Mass proper of Thanksgiving for our vocation. All priests should offer the Mass for the Congregation's intentions. Renewal of Vows. Act of Consecration to Mary Immaculate.

General Administration

POSTULATION**St. Eugène de Mazenod and the Universal Calendar: a petition**

Father General and his Council, together with the major superiors and other participants at the Intercapitular Meeting, have signed a document asking the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Rites to present to the Pope a “petition” asking him to inscribe our Founder in the Roman calendar of the Catholic Church.

Nevertheless, we must demonstrate that St. Eugene is known and venerated beyond the Congregation founded by him, in different countries on the five continents. Therefore, it is necessary that this universal devotion be made known by sending letters to this effect from some bishops’ conferences, individual bishops, institutes of consecrated life, and other Christian groups and from the faithful. The more letters that arrive, the better.

To this effect, and thanks to the wonderful work of the Provincial of France, Fr. Bernard DULLIER, such letters have already reached Rome from 16 French bishops, among others, from the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris as President of the Bishops’ Conference of France, and from the Archbishops of Aix and Marseille. Seven bishops have written from Spain, among them the President of the Bishops’ Conference and the Cardinal Primate, the Archbishop of Toledo. From the Philippines, the

Provincial, Fr. Ramón M^a BERNABÉ, taking advantage of a joint meeting of Oblates and laity, has forwarded a document with 79 signatures.

The Superiors General of religious institutes of women with links to our Congregation have also written. Others have promised to do so. Likewise, the Confraternity of Fr. ALBINI from Vico, Corsica, has done its part.

As far as our Oblate bishops are concerned, Bishop Angelito LAMPON was among the Oblates that signed the document from the Philippines. Others who have written letters are Bishop Alessandro STACCIOLI and Bishop Michael D. PFEIFER.

The General Postulator is asking the Provincials and Delegation Superiors to follow suit as quickly as possible by approaching bishops who are friends of the Oblates, especially in dioceses where the Oblates work. Nor is it out of the question that the Oblates themselves, either personally or as communities, send letters and invite all the friends of St. Eugene to be part of this campaign, sending their letters to the Cardinal Prefect (Piazza Pio XII, No. 10, 00120 Città del Vaticano).

We are also asking that a copy of these letters be sent to the Postulator General OMI, C.P. 9061, 00100 Roma-Aurelia, Italy. (Joaquín MARTÍNEZ, General Postulator)

Europe

POLAND**A monument to honor an exceptional Oblate**

On November 25, 2007, feast of Christ, King of the Universe, there was a beautiful and touching celebration in Gorzów Wielkopolski in a former Oblate parish. The parishioners decided to honor their very first parish pastor, Fr. Kazimierz ŁABIŃSKI, who died on June 27, 1999. He did so much good, and his memory is so alive among the residents of the area, that they decided to collect

the money needed to build a monument in honor of this exceptional Oblate.

The church was full that day. The Mass was celebrated in memory of Fr. Kazimierz. Bishop Pawel Socha of the diocese of Zielona Góra–Gorzów presided and gave the homily during which he emphasized the numerous merits of our priest. Also present were the city’s clergy and the Oblates, led by the provincial, Fr. Teodor JOCHEM. The present pastor of the parish, Fr. Tadeusz Lityński,

asked former students of Fr. Kazimierz to stand up. That meant the majority of the assembly; at that moment, the applause was long and loud.

One of the former students of Fr. Kazimierz delivered a testimony of gratitude in the name of the former and present members of the parish. She recalled the reasons why the parishioners and the residents of the area continue to be grateful to their former parish priest after so many years. A display in the church told of the 14 years he had served in the city. Those in attendance received a magazine, "Tygodnik Katolicki" (Catholic Weekly), whose founder and

first editor-in-chief was Fr. Kazimierz Łabiński. The special edition was entirely dedicated to him.

After Mass, all of the participants gathered around the monument built in honor of Fr. Kazimierz as it was blessed by the bishop. Father Provincial said a few words to thank the members of the former Oblate parish for their touching tribute to an Oblate. The President of the City Council of Gorzów also spoke of the great contributions of Fr. Kazimierz to the city. He informed the assembly that the plaza and round-about that is being built next to the church will bear the name of Father Kazimierz Łabiński, OMI.

Asia-Oceania

PHILIPPINES

Fr. Reynaldo Roda, OMI: murdered in a kidnapping attempt

Father Reynaldo RODA, an Oblate who had been doing missionary work for the last ten years in Tawi-Tawi, was killed Tuesday night (January 15) in the province's South Ubian town during a kidnapping attempt. Tabawan, an island town off Tawi-Tawi, is a Muslim dominated area in Mindanao, Southern Philippines.

Archbishop Orlando QUEVEDO of Cotabato told AsiaNews that Fr. Roda was assigned as parish priest of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Tabawan, in the Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo.

"It's very sad news for us, the Oblates and the Catholic Church," Archbishop Quevedo said.

Fr. Roda was praying in a chapel in the village of Likud Tabawan at about 8:30 p.m. when a group of gunmen (about ten) tried to kidnap him. He resisted and was grabbed and then shot several times, according to Fr. Loreto DAQUIPEL, the victim's associate in Tawi-Tawi.

Fr. Roda struggled against his kidnapers until they reached a basketball court in front of the chapel. Then one of the kidnapers pulled a handgun and shot him in the head, Daquipel said. Daquipel said a teacher who was with Roda was taken by the gunmen and put onto a waiting motorboat.

Roda was also the director of the Notre Dame in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The mission in Tabawan was opened in 1957.

Fr. Roda was born on February 5, 1954, in Cotabato City. He made his first vows on May 21, 1975, and perpetual vows on June 17, 1979. He was ordained a priest on May 10, 1980.

In 1997, another Oblate, Bishop Benjamin DE JESUS, was shot dead by gunmen in front of the Jolo cathedral.

Several Oblates have been subjected to physical harassment by hostile groups in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. In 2000, gunmen also tried to kidnap a priest. He resisted and was shot, but survived. The last missionary to be kidnapped was Fr. Giancarlo Bossi, of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions.

The island of Mindanao is a region known for the presence of Islamic fundamentalists, who in the last few years have carried out numerous attacks, kidnappings, and killings. The largest group is the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Also very active is the movement of Abu Sayyaf [editor's note: "Sword Bearers" in the local language], made up of guerrillas affiliated with al-Qaeda, whose aim is to create an independent Muslim state in the country's south. Since the beginning of the violence in 1970, more than 150,000 victims have been recorded. (Sources: Ramon BERNABE, Provincial, and Asia News at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en>)

INDONESIA

A growing community

For many missionaries outside of their own countries, Christmas is a good time to tell their family and friends at home about their ministry. Father Giuseppe REBUSSI, an Italian-born Oblate, but now an Indonesian citizen like all the Oblates in that country, continues that tradition each year with a brief message to his loved ones.

Thus, we learn that he is in charge of five Christian communities of about 30 families each, located along the national highway between km 5 and km 30. Advent focused on the invitation from the *Letter to Titus* (2:12): "to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age." The communities take their names, not from their respective km marking along the highway, but from "more religious names" such as Saint Eugene and Blessed Gérard.

Fr. Giuseppe lives at the mission station dedicated to Blessed Joseph Gérard at km 15. The chapel is called *Kebangkitan Kristus*, meaning "Church of the Resurrection." The local town of about 5,000

inhabitants is Karang Joang, in an area known as "Battle Hill," a name that goes back to the days of the resistance against the Dutch or the Japanese, depending on who is telling the story. In the same area, there is a cemetery for Australian soldiers killed during the Second World War.

The "Mary Immaculate" group also has a chapel made of salvaged wood; they share it with the "Assumption" group. It's a multi-use chapel containing a sewing school, a playroom, a room for catechism and prayer, and on some occasions, it's used for Mass. For Sunday activities, both of these groups go to the Church of the Resurrection.

The two groups closest to the city are those of Saint Eugene and Saint Luke. "At St. Eugene's," concludes Father Rebusi, "we have plans for a new chapel dedicated to the Founder. The area, on the outskirts of the city of Balikpapan, has many new buildings going up. For a year now, we have been working with the authorities for permission. There is opposition on the part of some of our *Muslim brothers*. We are at the fifth of the *seven tasks of Hercules*, trying to get this permission."

Africa-Madagascar

CAMEROON

Oblate scholastics work with street children in Yaoundé

Yaoundé, the capital of Cameroon, like all the large cities in Africa, attracts the youth from the countryside. They come hoping to be able to find work or an education or simply for a bit of adventure. Unfortunately for them, they do not encounter the same hospitality they would find in a village. And they end up on the street.

The street is extraordinarily fascinating for the children who live there and where they find a sense of belonging, friends, freedom, cigarettes and girls. It's a life without limits, but also without any purpose. It's difficult to fight against this.

In order not to leave them by themselves, abandoned to all the dangers on the street, the community of the

Yves-Plumey House each year sends among them a team of four scholastics. Our work with them consists, among other things, in offering them first-aid medical attention for their wounds, skin infections, malaria, dysentery, and especially, to rush them to the central hospital in the case of serious and urgent situations.

We also try to talk with them because they really need that; others see them as bandits, vagabonds, trouble-makers and especially as skilled and dangerous criminals. With us, at least, they feel free and open. Some even manage to open up to us and tell us of their crimes and other misdeeds.

To help them even more, we encourage them to return to their families. If they accept that, we facilitate their journey and their homecoming. There are some who refuse to go home and prefer to find a welcoming family

nearby. Sometimes we manage to find that for them.

Furthermore, for the youngest ones (7-10 years old), we bring them to a home designated especially for them, where they are better protected, better situated and where they can once again find some physical and psychological stability.

Of course, the street children also need some fun times. That is why each year we organize football games with and for them.

In a word, our presence among these youth is primarily aimed at affording a listening ear, respecting them, paying attention to them, and when possible, working toward their social, human and moral renewal. And for us, this apostolate helps us interiorize better our own missionary and religious vocation. (Samuel ABBA-GANA, Oblate scholastic)

CONGO

A true Christmas story

Antonietta Mongiò, a member of the Italian secular institute, Oblate Cooperators of Mary Immaculate (COMI), writes from Congo of a true episode that has all the touch of a Christmas story.

They brought him to our dispensary early in the morning of Sunday, December 9. A woman who sells bread had seen him on the ground, naked and wet from the rain; she picked him up thinking he was dead. But not so! She ran to the police who took the baby and brought him to us. The nurses warmed him, bathed him and weighed him.

Immediately, we bought what was needed. Then we checked him over and saw that he was in good condition. He was only one day old and already he was the winner of a major battle that could have ended in tragedy. At the dispensary, they called him Moses because he had been abandoned in the water and brought to safety.

After four days during which we cared for him and gave him his first vaccinations, we brought him home for a few hours: we wanted so much to keep him! But we could not do that! You have to respect and follow the laws. So we brought him to the sisters

of Mother Teresa. We had to change his name because there were already two named Moses; since the babies do not have a surname, there would have been a lot of confusion.

Now his name is Joseph Gaetano. We plan to go see him and we hope he will grow up healthy. He was born on the feast of the Immaculate. Therefore, we have asked her to help him fight for his life...and to win!

KENYA

A dangerous situation

Fr. Douglas JEFFREY, Vicar Provincial of OMI Lacombe, sent this news of the province's mission in Kenya on January 2, 2008.

As we begin this New Year we are hearing from various media sources countless stories about the violence in Kenya. Alfred GROLEAU, the Mission Superior has assured us that as of January 1, they were all safe. He has indicated that the faith communities connected to Kionyo, the pre-novitiate community in Meru and the section of Nairobi in which our house is located remain relatively peaceful. The demonstrations and violence are happening elsewhere in the city of Nairobi and the country. While much is being done on the political level to negotiate peace between President Mwai Kibaki and his opponent Raila Odinga, their supporters continue to engage in protests and violence. This violence is impacting the families and friends of our Kenyan born Oblates, and the families and friends of the Kenyans we serve. As the Executive Team of OMI Lacombe, we are asking each of you to join with us in praying for a peaceful resolution to the conflicts that are erupting in Kenya. We are also asking you to pray for the safety of our Oblates in Kenya and for their ministry of service at this particular time. May we continue to know well the Peace of Christ and may it be the source of all our thoughts and actions!



Canada-United States

**NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP
A 100th Birthday at Richelieu**

On December 8, 2007, the Immaculate Virgin, patroness of the Oblates, stepped a bit into the background to present one of the works that she has helped shape since 1907: Fr. Jacques GILBERT.

The provincial, Fr. Jean-Claude GILBERT, presided at the Eucharist, assisted by the local superior, Fr. Marcel CHENIER, and the newly-ordained deacon, Rémi LEPAGE. The celebration began with a text by Brother Alphonse NADEAU, who described with great sensitivity the “One hundred years of the

life of Fr. Jacques Gilbert.” After communion, it was the jubilarian himself who expressed his thanks by reading a text he had prepared. About 40 guests from his family and friends joined the Oblates from the local community and from nearby for the celebration. During dinner, Fr. Gilbert received a blessing from Benedict XVI, and letters of congratulations and esteem from the Prime Ministers of Canada and of Quebec. There was also a substantial monetary gift from his family, his relatives and his friends. Two days later, the exact date of Fr. Gilbert’s birthday, there was another, more intimate celebration during a community meal. (Roger GAUTHIER, *Info-OMI*, 15 December 2007)

Anniversaries – March 2008

70 Years of Religious Life

1938.03.19	07238	Bro. René Wilscam	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1938.03.25	07756	Fr. Hermann Lübbering	Central European

60 Years of Religious Life

1948.03.19	08983	Bro. Georges Moquet	France
1948.03.25	08426	Fr. Bienvenido Leandicho	Philippines

50 Years of Religious Life

1958.03.25	11387	Bro. Adam Kruk	Poland
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50 Years of Priesthood

1958.03.01	11944	Fr. Louis Jolly	France
1958.03.19	11362	Fr. Peter King	Australia
1958.03.22	09653	Fr. Philippe Alin	Cameroon
1958.03.22	09803	Fr. Robert Loison	France
1958.03.22	09251	Fr. Amador Lopez	United States
1958.03.22	09252	Fr. José María Riega	Argentine-Chile
1958.03.30	09432	Fr. Heinrich Niemann	Namibia
1958.03.30	09433	Fr. Josef Ostendorf	Central European
1958.03.30	09435	Fr. Gerhard Scheuermann	Central European
1958.03.30	09437	Fr. Horst Ueberall	Central European

Suffrages for our Deceased

2007: No. 110-113

2008: No. 1-8

NAME	PROV./Del.	BORN	DIED AT	DATE
Fr. Guillaume Mathieu	France	27/10/1913	Strasbourg	22/12/2007
Fr. August Trapp	Central European	30/10/1918	Bocholt	26/12/2007
Fr. Bruno Dicaire	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	29/04/1915	Richelieu	31/12/2007
Fr. Simon Rampeo	Lesotho	28/12/1928	Mazenod	31/12/2007
Fr. Jean Gamache	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	14/08/1931	Richelieu	08/01/2008
Fr Moiloa Lazarus Ngaka	Central S. Africa	23/06/1962	Johannesburg	09/01/2008
Fr. Arthur Smith	Argentina-Chile	14/05/1918	Antofagasta	10/01/2008
Fr. Juan Dormal	Paraguay	21/08/1924	Asunción	14/01/2008
Fr. Jesus Reynaldo Roda	Philippines	05/02/1954	Tabawan	15/01/2008
Fr. Robert Kilroy	United States	25/02/1914	Tewksbury	21/01/2008
Fr. Angel Villalba	United States	24/09/1913	San Antonio	22/01/2008
Fr. Felicísimo Abella	Spain	10/09/1932	Madrid	23/01/2008

“They are before God, bearing the sign, the kind of character proper to our Institute, the vows common to all its members, the firm habit of the same virtues. We are linked to them by the bonds of a special charity. They are still our brothers and we are theirs. They now live in our mother-house, our main residence. The prayers and the love they retain for us will one day draw us to them and we shall live in our place of rest together with them.” (Letter of Founder to Fr. Courtès, 22 July 1828)

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