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## **Formation after the novitiate: internalizing Oblate values and the spirit of oblation**

**P. Cornelius Ngoka, OMI, Assistant General**

Last July, I took part in the Congress on the Charism in Context as both a celebration of the heritage of our Oblate family and as a commitment to renew ourselves as a Congregation in the dynamics of the Oblate charism, such as the Spirit is inviting us to do today. The essential role of first and ongoing formation within this dynamic of renewal was strongly emphasized throughout the Congress.

Constitution 46 rightly reminds us the “*goal of the formation process is that each of us become an apostolic man, capable of living the Oblate charism.*” Therefore, formation promotes the growth of these Oblate values which those in charge of formation have discovered in the candidate through accompaniment and discernment in prayer. The first stages of the formation journey allow for the discovery of and the first steps in nourishing and watching over the growth of the Oblate missionary spirituality of the candidate.

Obviously, formation after the novitiate, the longest stage of initial formation in most cases, and that which accompanies the preparation for perpetual oblation, have a fundamental role in this process of growth and assimilation of Oblate values. During this stage, the life choice that the young man has made and deepened during his vocational journey, the pre-novitiate and novitiate, is strengthened, becomes more stable and more in tune with the charism of the Congregation today. The sense of belonging as a member of the Institute is reinforced. It is a period that prepares the young Oblate to say a definitive

yes to God’s call to become an apostolic man, animated by the Oblate charism. To become an Oblate, to become an apostolic man, animated by the Oblate spirit, is a process that is gradual and continues throughout life. This is why formation after the novitiate, lived in a formation community, remains a required course for each Oblate, whether a candidate for priesthood or the vocation of a Brother.

Constitution 46 describes this apostolic man as a person who “*inspired by the example of Mary*”, lives “*in creative and ongoing fidelity our personal commitment to Jesus Christ, while serving the Church and God’s Kingdom.*” This definition of the apostolic man animated by the Oblate charism constitutes an essential pillar of the formation program after the novitiate. It is a period during which the formandi will “*live out their consecration in such a way that it permeates all aspects and activities of their daily life.*” (C 65)

The Marian dimension Oblate formation is expressed through the invitation to follow the example of Mary in one’s oblation, one’s faith response and willingness to consecrate oneself to the work of Christ. Mary is the model of our oblation and formandi learn to look to her, to pray to her and to imitate her.

The commitment to follow Jesus Christ means putting him at the center of our lives and living a truly personal encounter with him. This is realized in a life of prayer and devotion to Christ. “*This ever creative fidelity* is fidelity that is renewed

every morning and which finds, in everyone and everywhere, new ways to get in touch with Christ and give him to others.” (Fernand JETTÉ, OMI *The Apostolic Man*, Commentary on the Oblate Constitutions and Rules 1982, p. 265).

In general, our Congregation can be proud of good formation after the novitiate, which is lived in community, around the person of Christ, with teams of formators who are dedicated and well committed to their mission. In addition to the five Oblate institutes of higher learning that offer good philosophical, theological and other formation, most of our formandi study at universities, theological institutes and major seminaries where they receive a solid intellectual and doctrinal formation. But because of an academic program that is often very busy, it is tempting to leave to these institutes all responsibility for forming our candidates after the novitiate. But the deepening of

the Oblate charism and our missionary spirituality must continue during formation after the novitiate. Oblate formation must always consider the spiritual, human, intellectual and missionary dimensions of the apostolic man. The development of a strong formation program in each house of formation after the novitiate helps to maintain this harmony. And to do that, the formators themselves must constantly renew themselves.

Putting oneself totally at the service of the Church and the Kingdom is the result of a generous and joyful response to God’s call. It is the orientation of a life *seized* by Christ who gives himself totally to the poor. Formation after the novitiate allows young Oblates to grow in a total and free oblation of their being for the proclamation of the Gospel to all peoples, especially the poorest. This proclamation is made as Church, as community and through community. In an ever creative fidelity.

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## Holy See

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### VATICAN

#### 3 Oblates at seminar for new bishops

In September, the Vatican Congregation for Bishops held a seminar for bishops nominated in the course of the previous year. There were 125 bishops, including three Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: Bishops Jan KOT (Bishop of Zé Doca, Brazil); Wilhelm STECKLING (Bishop of Ciudad del Este, Paraguay); and Mark EDWARDS (Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne, Australia).

This seminar, which some believe to have been modeled on the Oblate seminar for new provincials, included formal talks, opportunities for questions in the plenary forum and small group discussions in language groups. Topics included the understanding of what a bishop is, spiritual discernment, care for the family, healthy affectivity for priests, evangelization, finances and Eastern Rite Churches, among other things.

Highlights were Mass at the tomb of St Peter and an audience with Pope Francis. However, connections at meals, friendships and bonds with others from around the world may be the most important result. The seminar afforded growth

in understanding of the situation of the Church in countries as various as rural Brazil, Ukraine, the Philippines, urban Italy, the USA and Puerto Rico. (Bishop Mark Edwards)

### VATICAN

#### Radio interview on the Laotian Martyrs

The Oblate General Postulator, Fr. Thomas KLOSTERKAMP, was recently interviewed on Vatican Radio concerning the future beatification of “*Joseph Tien and his 16 companions*,” the Vatican’s name for the 17 priests and laity whose decree of martyrdom was approved by Pope Francis earlier this year. Fr. Tien was the first Laotian martyr. The list includes European missionaries from France, one from Italy and several local Laotian Catholics.

The six Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the group are Fathers Mario BORZAGA (†1960); Louis LEROY (†1961); Michel COQUELET (†1961); Vincent L’HENORET (†1961); Jean WAUTHIER (†1967); and Joseph BOISSEL (†1969). Fr. Borzaga came from Italy. The other Oblate martyrs were from France. The day for their beatification is yet to be announced.

The following links lead to the two-part interview with Fr. Klosterkamp, in English:

**August 27, 2015**

[http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/08/27/the\\_martyrs\\_of\\_laos\\_part\\_1/1167795](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/08/27/the_martyrs_of_laos_part_1/1167795)

**September 4, 2015**

[http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/04/the\\_martyrs\\_of\\_laos\\_part\\_2/1169065](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/04/the_martyrs_of_laos_part_2/1169065)

## VATICAN

### Oblate speaks at meeting of young religious

The World Meeting for Young Consecrated Persons began on September 15 with a Prayer Vigil held in St Peter's Square. Sponsored by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL), the gathering is just one event in the Year of Consecrated Life, which began in November 2014 and concludes in February 2016.

In his keynote address, the Prefect of the Congregation, Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, dealt with the novel vital relationship that consecrated persons need to incarnate as a response to God's call. He explained that “the Church is inviting us to embrace the spirituality of communion, the 'culture of the encounter', where the brothers and sisters with whom we follow Jesus do not remain solely 'our major penance'; indeed, they offer us the possibility of experiencing God in a concrete way, because it is our brothers and sisters who give us the opportunity to love”.

Of course the highlight of the meeting was an audience with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Addressing the young consecrated men and women gathered in the Paul VI hall, Pope Francis urged them to choose the true freedom which comes from the Spirit and not from worldliness,

to nurture great dreams for God and to have a heart enkindled with love. He then addressed in particular those coming from Iraq and Syria, recalling the many martyrs that have witnessed their faith with their blood. A special thanks was reserved for the women consecrated for their witnessing: they are true icons of the Church-Bride and Mother.

One of the invited speakers was Fr. Fabio CIARDI, the Director of the Office of Oblate Studies and Research at the General House in Rome. He spoke to the participants twice. In his first talk, Fr. Fabio affirmed that “to be young means to be open to novelties, free from prejudices, ready for an unconditional donation, docile to the Holy Spirit's divine adventure, looking ahead for God's future and his infinite horizons”. It's an invitation to have the courage to trust in God and allow him to guide us by his Spirit, like a pencil or a brush in the Artist's hands. How can this be done? Fr Ciardi explained: “By listening to and living the Word of God; by spending time to talk to him lovingly in prayer; by practicing practical love with all, especially the poor and the marginalized”.

On the final day of the meeting, Fr. Fabio exhorted the Young Consecrated to follow their Founders' example: indeed, they were men and women capable to “see values where others saw none; to recognize beauty where others failed to do so”. All Young Consecrated men and women need to feel urged to have the same creative capacity, the boldness and the enterprise of their Founders; also, the capacity to know and understand contemporary society, and to work together with others to provide adequate responses for today's humanity's needs. Concluding, Fr Ciardi quotes St John Paul II: “Besides having a great story to narrate, we have also a great one to build”. (*From press releases of the CICLSAL*)

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## General Administration

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### EUGENE DE MAZENOD INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

#### PilgrimAix – youth pilgrimage

On November 21st, 1815, St. Eugene de Mazenod

blessed the Choir of the Carmelites desecrated during the Revolution and made it a place of prayer for the Youth Association he founded. These recent days, the same choir served as a place of prayer for the Youth, organized here

in Aix by the Commission of the Youth and Vocation Pastoral in Europe (CPJVE).

There were 35 young people from Italy, Spain, Ireland, Ukraine, Germany, France and Poland joined in the "PilgrimAix" to discover places where St. Eugene de Mazenod had lived in. They are animated by Brother Benoit DOSQUET and Father Henricus ASODO of the Aix community. The Youth, accompanied by their own Oblate chaplains, Lisa RENNER, OMI and Ileana CHINNICI, COMI, visited Aix and Marseille. The prayers, liturgical celebrations or reflection on the spiritual experience of St. Eugene in the veneration of the Cross on Good Friday as well as the pilgrimage of the parish mission preached

in 1820 at Aix by the Oblates, have indeed enriched their visits.

Besides, in a solemn celebration, the Oblate Youth Chaplains: Antonio D'AMORE, David MEDINA, Jens WATTEROH, David OMIECINSKI, Andrzej ALBINIAK, Przemek KOSCIANEK and Jacques LANGLET, signed the copy of the request for the authorization to form a community of missionaries submitted in 1816 to the authorities of the diocese of Aix by St. Eugene and his first companions. This symbolic gesture is offered to all the Oblates who visit the Foundation's room since last year as a preparatory triennium to the bicentenary of the Congregation. (Krzysztof ZIELEND, <http://www.centremazenod.org/>)

## Africa-Madagascar

### CONGO

#### MAMI news

We just finished the first year of existence of our Association. Let us thank God for having accompanied us. We also thank the Provincial, Father Abel NSOLO, for his consideration and availability. Our special thanks to all the Missionary Oblates of Congo (Provincial Administration, Provincial Treasurer, parish priests, chaplains and community superiors).

We are now 107 associates (Kinshasa: 53; Kikwit: 23 and Idiofa: 31). It is not possible to present a comprehensive assessment, especially since the Association is still in its infancy; much remains to be done. It is true that our committee was mandated, among other things, to recruit new members. If our priority was to consolidate first of all the existing districts, during this year, we will be widening our circle toward other Oblate parishes, including, initially, Ifwanzondo, Panu and Lozo and later Ekama, Opala and Angola.

As for the plan for self-financing, we have completed the study phase of the projects. In early September, we will have talks with BUPRODOMI to finalize these projects. God willing, by the end of 2015, we should be able to launch our projects in Kinshasa and Kikwit. In order to improve our functioning, we will develop, discuss and adopt, between September and October, our procedural rules, before submitting

them to the Provincial Council in November. Thus, we will propose some adjustments to improve the road map that we received from the general assembly of 11-12 July 2014.

May Mary Immaculate, our Mother, accompany us in achieving our goals. By her example and intercession, may we live the charism of Eugene de Mazenod in our daily lives? (Désiré Baere Pene Yanganya, Provincial President of MAMI - Congo)

### CAMEROON

#### Some surprises at the prenovitiate

*There are many surprises when one enters Oblate formation. The prenovices at Mokolo discover them rapidly. Here are the comments of some current prenovices.*

#### Electric current

To meet needs at various levels (academic, spiritual, and food preparation), the pre-novitiate is a client of the company that distributes electricity in Cameroon. This year's power cuts reached a record level, thereby disrupting the house program. In fact, electric current is useful in more ways than one. As for food, it allows us to preserve food and pump water into the water tower. On the spiritual and academic level, the current provides lighting, mainly for studies, prayer and the different activities of the house.

But this year, it so happened that the pre-novitiate spent hours or even days without electricity. According to explanations given here and there, it was a question mostly of equipment malfunction. The house suffered from these cuts, sometimes together with a lack of fuel to power the generator. In addition, sometimes the light bulbs were burnt out because of the instability of the current. But these power cuts and lack of fuel, even if they sometimes disrupted the program, did not prevent the progress of formation which has now concluded. Furthermore, this allowed us concretely to live poverty and in solidarity with those who have experienced or are experiencing the same difficulties. (Joseph Dogo)

### **Water, a scarce commodity in Mokolo**

This year, Mokolo, a mountainous area, has seen huge water problems. The provision of water here depends on electric current. Untimely interruptions of current have resulted in a water shortage. It is true that at the pre-novitiate, we have two wells, but one needs electrical energy to supply the water tower; the other is manual. It is this second well which was a success and has continued to provide for the crowds.

People travel long distances to stand in line at the pre-novitiate to get the precious liquid: women and children, big and little, all in search of water. To meet the demand and given the real need, the pre-novitiate did not hesitate to open its doors and its well to help this people in need. But this aid has had its cost: we no longer had priority. The pre-novices sometimes saw themselves maltreated by those people who have become so needy and more disadvantaged than the property owners.

The solution was to close the gates for two to three hours, giving us time fill our reserve

supplies before opening up and welcoming others. That is the price of charity. Cans are lined up with the names of their owners who wait for long hours inside the pre-novitiate confines. (A pre-novice) (*Bulletin du Prénoviciat N° 3*)

### **NATAL**

#### **New president at St. Joseph's Theological Institute**

On September 8, the Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Fr. Neil FRANK became the new president of St. Joseph's Theological Institute in Cedara.

The Grand Chancellor of SJTI, Archbishop Buti TLHAGALE, Archbishop of Johannesburg, was in attendance as were the members of the Board, the provincials of the Inter-Provincial Conference, students, formation staff, academic staff and members of the participating religious congregations who have students attending the Institute.

Fr Vusi MAZIBUKO, Chairman of the Board and Provincial of Natal Province gave the homily at the Mass.

Fr. Neil takes over from Fr. Sylvester DAVID, whose predecessor was Fr. Daniel CORIJN, former Oblate Vicar General and currently the Provincial of the Province of Belgium-Holland.

In his address, Fr. Neil spelled out his hopes and vision for the Institute. He is confident that there is great potential and a solid need for the development that the Institute can provide. He thanked his predecessors and the staff of the Institute for the firm foundation that has been developed through the 25 years of the Institute's history.

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## **Latin America**

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### **URUGUAY**

#### **A missionary journey**

From August 8 – 27, there was a missionary journey to Uruguay, organized by the Procure of the Mediterranean Province, with the participation of Fr. Adriano TITONE and three

lay women from Italy (Milena Bianco, Elvira Petrone and Nietta Albanese), together with Fr. Tino MIGLIACCIO and three lay women from Spain (Mercedes Ossorio, Cristina Centenera, and Teresa Macicior). Here, two of the participants tell of their experience.

### Fr. Tino Migliaccio: a threefold joy

For me, this missionary journey was a threefold joy. The first was the joy of having had the opportunity to return to a place where, as a scholastic, I had been for regency in 2003-2004, before perpetual vows and priesthood. For me, it was an immense joy to go back to Uruguay after almost 12 years and to meet persons with whom I had shared a year of my life. I could not stop smiling and being amazed at the same acceptance, affection and friendship they showed me, just as it had been in the past. The second joy was having the opportunity to share this journey with Mercedes, Kity (Cristina) and Teresa from Pozuelo, the place where I have been living as an Oblate for about a year, and with whom we form the group Talitakum Pozuelo, which began, thanks to the Talitakum Education Center in Uruguay which we had the good fortune of getting to know firsthand. The third joy was having the opportunity to share this journey with Fr. Adriano, Milena, Elvira and Nietta, as an important sign of the real communion between Italy and Spain, as a result of the unification (of provinces). I thank God for having given me this opportunity to live this threefold joy which only his great Love and Goodness could have given me.

### Mercedes Ossorio: Journey!

Journey! That's the word that came to mind

when I was told to summarize the experience in one word. A journey that began long ago, so long ago that I cannot even remember. It materialized in Rome when I met those who would be my traveling companions for a while. I found that we were all on the same path. We were all driftwood carried on the same current and led by God. Later, thousands of kilometers from our "homes," we discovered many other pieces of driftwood in this river of life. Some flow together like the Oblates and the Oblate Sisters; others did not even know that they were letting themselves be carried by the current but they knew, trusted and loved the water where they were; and you saw many others who were trapped, lost, with neither dignity nor strength or desire to move on through the murky and churning waters. How can we move forward without stopping? How can we not lend a hand? Or were we perhaps the ones who needed that hand, that help, that love? Today I think I can say that love, given and received, will make us always need each other, will unite us more closely so as to continue towards the sea and, in this unity without borders nor kilometers, we will find strength for the storm.

To summarize the experience in one word is impossible: peace, family, trust, love... Journey: journey is the word that stays with me and with which Saint Eugene began it all. (<http://nosotrosomi.blogspot.com/>)

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## Europe

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### POLAND

#### Remembering four Polish victims of war

Four scholastics, including a deacon, were the first Polish Oblates to die during the Second World War. The recent commemoration of the Holy Name of Mary was a reminder of their death on September 12, 1939.

In the early days of the Nazi invasion of Poland, the Oblates at Markowice tried to reach the Oblate community at Koden. The novice master at Markowice was none other than Blessed Joseph CEBULA. Some of those who fled found themselves on the front line of the battle along

the Bzura River, the first major battle of the Nazi offensive in Poland.

Four scholastics were arrested by a Nazi patrol: Deacon Joseph ROGOSZ, Brothers Joseph GEMBIAK, Francis GLADOS, and Francis MUNKO. According to eyewitnesses, they were led to the Marian Forest where they were put to death. As they were led away, the eyewitnesses said they had their rosaries in their hands and asked passersby: "Pray for us, as we are being led to death." They were shot in the head not far from the village of Michalow. In the forest, there were fresh trenches prepared for defense. Their bodies were thrown into the trenches and

buried. Dying with them was a priest from a nearby parish, Father Ignatius Czemplik.

Through an unpleasant odor, the unmarked graves were found. A local village leader identified the bodies and took their personal belongings which he later gave to the victims' families; a wooden cross was erected at the site. In 1940, they moved the five bodies into a common grave at the parish cemetery in Marian Forest; the local parish priest celebrated a funeral Mass.

Both scholastics Gembiak and Glados had brothers who became Oblates: Frs. Francis GEMBIAK (†1987) and Boleslaw GLADOS (†2002). Fr. Boleslaw went to find the grave, together with his mother, in 1947. There, they erected a metal cross.

The Glados family also commissioned a tombstone from a local stonemason. The Oblate provincial had a marble plaque affixed to the tomb with the names of the victims.

The weather-worn gravestone was replaced in June 2015 with a new one. The names of these first Oblate victims of World War II are now engraved in gold on black marble, next to the Oblate Cross. (Adapted from the Polish text of Fr. Józef NIESŁONY.)

## MEDITERRANEAN PROVINCE

### Responding to the Pope's appeal for immigrants

*At the recitation of the Angelus on September 6, 2015, Pope Francis asked every Catholic parish or religious community in Europe to take in refugee families fleeing from disastrous situations in the Middle East and Africa. The arrival of thousands of migrants has caused a humanitarian crisis in various parts of Europe. Fr. Alberto GNEMMI, Provincial of the Mediterranean Province, has addressed the Oblates and Lay Associates to find ways to respond to the Pope's appeal.*

I appeal to all of you, especially to community superiors, Oblate parish priests and their collaborators, Oblates and lay people, to consider

seriously, with courage and, at the same time, with evangelical prudence, the Pope's appeal that "... every parish, every religious community, every monastery, every shrine of Europe host a family (of refugees, [ed.])". The Pope reminds us and urges us: "Faced with the tragedy of tens of thousands of refugees fleeing death from war and from hunger, and who are seeking hope in their lives, the Gospel asks us to be 'neighbors' to the least and most abandoned, to give them real hope."

I believe that each of our communities, as well as every parish where we are present, must listen closely to this appeal and make serious discernment. Therefore, I invite parish priests to consult their community confreres (especially the superior, if he is not the pastor), the parish council, the diocesan offices responsible for migrants, the parishes of the same vicariates or sectors, in order to reach a concrete and shared decision. So, I ask each of our communities to consider how to respond to the invitation of Pope Francis, in conjunction with our parishes (if the religious community has a parish as part of its apostolate), especially in collaboration with other religious institutes in the area [...].

Superiors should bear in mind that prior to any concrete activity which involves the community and its living space, the Provincial should be consulted. Where it is not possible to make concrete choices for offering hospitality to refugees, other forms of help should be considered, even sharing financially in projects of other Church groups.

The province will also consider requests for financial assistance that might come from the communities to cover the costs of carrying out the proposal of Pope Francis.

This Year of the Triennium, centered on poverty, offers us the opportunity (not an easy one, I know quite well) to be challenged on how to give shape, through works of charity, to the many evangelical words directed to our interior conversion.

Fraternal greetings to all, in the certainty of mutual prayer and the help that Providence will give us.

**ITALY****Oblates and youth at EXPO 2015**

Ten young people from the parish of Maria Regina degli Apostoli in Messina (Sicily), cared for over the last six years by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, in late August visited EXPO Milano 2015. The group was accompanied by Fr. Pasquale CASTRILLI together with Fr. Damian CIMPOESU from Romania, Oblate scholastic Petr DOMBEK and a young Romanian woman. The group responded to the offer that the Archdiocese of Milan had made in late 2015 to all church youth groups of Italy, providing diocesan hospitality services for those who wished to visit the EXPO. The Messina group was hosted by the youth center of Stoà di Busto Arsizio (Varese), a structure that provides young people of the city's 13 parishes with formative cultural and religious events and periods of coming together for experiencing life in common.

During their visit to EXPO, whose theme is "Feeding the planet. Energy for Life", the youth had the opportunity to visit various pavilions, starting with 'Pavilion Zero', with the story of food in the history of the world. They were also given a tour of the city of Milan and its famous cathedral. A dinner with representatives of the youth of Stoà and Don Giovanni, their assistant, fostered a mutual understanding and an exchange of ideas about the commitment of faith

**POLAND****Bicycle evangelization with joy!**

Bicycles with full travel bags, tents, six weeks on the road, no support car, no fixed accommodations, heat, wind, mist, rain and chill! That is a short summary of this year's (and the ninth in total) bicycle trip of the NINIWA Team from Poland! The pilgrimage's destination was the British Isles and the many Polish who for

various reasons were forced to emigrate there. Many of these emigrants miss their families, friends and language.

A record group of 37 cyclists, with Fr. Tomasz MANIURA in the lead, traveled 5,136 km in 42 days. They traveled through Poland, Germany, Belgium, Holland, France, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland and Wales. This year's expedition was called "The Joy of Life"! Every day the cyclists brought with them and shared an evangelical call to the people they met through a smile and kind words. They were also strengthened by St. Thomas More's "Prayer for good humor," which they prayed every day.

NINIWA Team cyclists have already traveled over 41,000 km (two times the Earth's circumference!) and have been in 47 countries of the world. Their enormous distances have taken them to Jerusalem, through Siberia, and also south to Gibraltar, west (Cabo da Rocha, Portugal) and to Nordkapp, Finland, the northernmost point in Europe. Every year's trip starts in Poland.

Who are the participants? Most of them are amateur travelers from Poland and even abroad. They don't need the strength of a marathon runner! The power of the group is prayer every day, the Eucharist, faith in their message and the common support of their fellow travelers. Without those features, their travel regime would not work. As the cyclists themselves say, "The expedition teaches life!"

NINIWA Team is a part of the Polish Oblate Youth Ministry NINIWA. Another expedition will start next year just after the World Youth Days in Poland. Fr. Tomasz secretly dreams about going to the real Nineveh (the biblical city, now situated north of Mosul, Iraq). Unfortunately the political situation might prevent this from happening.

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**Canada-United States**


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**NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP****Central Government meets with Canada-US Region**

The leadership of the Canada-US Region met

with the Superior General Fr. Louis LOUGEN and the Oblate Central Government on September 13-18, 2015, at the Sanctuaire Cap-de-la-Madeleine in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Canada. The local Oblates of the Sanctuaire and the



Reine des Apôtres communities welcomed the participants of the joint session with warm Oblate hospitality and fraternity. The joint-session meeting included an afternoon visit to Quebec City where the local Oblates hosted a special liturgy and reception at the Saint-Sauveur parish church and also where the joint session participants were able to visit some of the historical sites important to the religious history of Quebec and the Canada-US Region.

The theme of the gathering was: “Call to Conversion: Discerning Our Region’s Future”. The general objectives of the session were to build stronger bonds among the Oblates and to experience shared leadership; among the stated specific objectives was a desire to develop a global perspective about the future of the Canada-US Region. Overall, throughout the week there existed a positive fraternal spirit of unity and a desire to journey together as Oblates and collaborators in the Canada-US Region now and into the future.

Attending the joint session from the Region were the four Oblate provincial superiors of Assumption, Notre-Dame-du-Cap, OMI Lacombe and US provinces, and members of their councils with the provincial treasurers; altogether around 40 Oblates and 2 Oblate associates attended.

The president of CROCUS, Fr. William ANTONE, US provincial, helped to oversee the planning and execution of the meeting, which was coordinated by an *ad hoc* planning committee with representatives from the four provinces and chaired by Fr. Remi LEPAGE, of Notre-Dame-du-Cap province. The executive secretary of CROCUS, Ms. Danielle Brisson, helped to coordinate the logistics of the meeting and the transportation. The weeklong meeting was ably facilitated by Fr. Pierre-Olivier TREMBLAY and Ms. Lorene Ste-Marie who kept the discussions on track and lively. Providing reflection and feedback on the presentations and discussions were Fr. Marcin SERWIN and Ms. Carol Kuzmochka who served as reflectors. Well prepared and inspiring liturgical prayer at the beautiful historic sanctuary chapel provided

moments of reflection and worship and helped to serve as the unifying center of the meetings.

The focus of the reports prepared by the provinces was given from a future perspective of the next 5 to 10 years. After hearing the reports of the 4 provinces, a reflection was given by Fr. General and 3 members of the Central Government covering the topics of finance, formation and mission as related to the Canada-US Region. Fr. General noted that as the Oblates in the Region looked to the future, they could see that several lived Oblate values helped to hold them together: community life, generosity and availability in the renewal of mission, a commitment to vocation and youth ministry and ongoing formation through the Oblate Triennium. Fr. General challenged the Canada-US leadership to do something together and to find at least 2 projects in which they could collaborate for the good of the Region and its future. The group entered into several sessions of discussion and discernment in which the participants honestly shared their dreams and their fears about future collaboration.

Following several sessions of discussion and reflection in both small and large group gatherings, the participants proposed four projects they would work on in common for the Region: a meeting of the young Oblates of the Region, a regional Vocation and Youth Ministry, animation and formation of superiors, and regular meetings of the provincials and their councils.

At a meeting of the CROCUS regional conference on Saturday following the joint session the provincials and vicars provincial of the Region decided on a process to begin to bring to life these projects in the months to come. In his homily at the closing liturgy of the joint session, the Superior General expressed gratitude to those who had prepared the meeting and shared his hopefulness for the future of the Oblate presence in the Canada-US Region. He closed his homily quoting the words of the Blessed Archbishop Oscar Romero prayer: “... We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.” (Fr. Warren BROWN, General Councillor for the Canada-US Region)

**OMI LACOMBE****Archbishop Peter Sutton, OMI: 1934-2015**

On September 5, 2015, the Archbishop-emeritus of Keewatin-Le Pas, Peter SUTTON, died at the Oblate infirmary in Richelieu, Canada.

Born in 1934, he pronounced his first vows as an Oblate in 1954 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1957. In 1974, he was ordained as bishop of the Diocese of Labrador-Schefferville (Quebec), where he served until the Holy See decided that he should “go west.” He was appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Keewatin-Le Pas (Manitoba) in January 1986; he succeeded Archbishop Paul DUMOUCHEL in November of that same year and he retired in 2006.

The first bishop of the Vicariate of Keewatin was Servant of God Bishop Ovide CHARLEBOIS, appointed in 1910 and installed in 1911.

Bishop Sutton’s remains were brought to Ottawa to the Church of the Canadian Martyrs on September 20 where there was a prayer service presided by Fr. Kenneth FORSTER, Provincial of the OMI Lacombe Province. On the next day, Bishop Douglas CROSBY of Hamilton, ON, presided at the Mass of Christian Burial.

**ASSUMPTION PROVINCE****An unusual jubilee**

A priest complained to Mother Teresa that because of the amount of work he has, he has absolutely no time for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In her reply, she stated that the best medicine for that is to double the amount of time spent before the Blessed Sacrament.

There is a certain logic to this seemingly absurd advice. For the time spent on adoration is not just a time given to God, but it is also a time we give to ourselves. The quiet contemplation is not only conducive to prayer, but also helps us organize the countless day-to-day affairs we must deal with. The experience of God gradually dies with us when we do not have time for prayer, for adoration. The lack of adoration, the lack of prayer make us waste a lot of time and energy on

alleviating our anxieties and fears. Time devoted to adoration will make our lives – including our emotional, professional, family, and community life – more orderly.

Without a doubt, our immigrant life is not without stress. For many, the cure is to entrust them in prayer to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Residents of Mississauga and the surrounding area are fortunate in that for the past 20 years they have been able to pray at the Perpetual Adoration Chapel at St. Maximilian Kolbe church in Mississauga.

The very idea of creating such a chapel was born in 1995, and a great advocate of this project was the parish pastor, Fr. Tadeusz NOWAK. For the past 20 years, Barbara and Andrzej Chmura have been dutifully looking after scheduling regular attendants. But the chapel serves not just those who regularly come here to pray; it is visited by hundreds of passersby who entrust their daily affairs to Divine Mercy. In 2012, a statue of the Merciful Jesus was placed at the entrance of the Divine Mercy Chapel. It was donated by a parishioner, Mr. Tadeusz Dobosz, and blessed by Bishop Antoni Dlugosz from Czestochowa. A jubilee Mass commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Perpetual Adoration Chapel was celebrated by Archbishop Wojciech Polak, Archbishop of Gniezno, Poland. In his homily, the Primate of Poland stressed the importance of maintaining a close relationship with God before the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist was concelebrated by numerous Oblates and guest priests. (by Wojciech Porowski in Assumption News and Views, July-August 2015)

**OMI LACOMBE****Oblate elected President of CCCB**

On September 15, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops elected Bishop Douglas CROSBY of Hamilton, ON, as its next President.

Born in Marathon, ON, in 1949, Bishop Crosby professed his first vows as a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate in 1969 and was ordained a priest in 1975. Before being called to the episcopacy, he served in various parishes in the former St. Peter’s

Province in Canada. He also served as vocation director and coordinator of provincial services before being named Provincial of his province, during which time he also served as President of the Oblate Conference of Canada. Subsequently, he became the Director of the CCCB Missions Office and English-language General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Ordained as Bishop of the Diocese of Labrador

City – Schefferville in 1998, in 2003, he also became Bishop of St. George's, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador in 2007. Three years later, the Diocese of Labrador City - Schefferville was formally suppressed and became part of the new Diocese. The new Diocese is called the Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador. Bishop Crosby became Ordinary of the Diocese of Hamilton in 2010. He has been CCCB Vice-President since 2013.

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## Asia-Oceania

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### **SOUTH KOREA**

#### **Beyond the peripheries into “no man’s land”**

“No man’s land:” that’s what they call the minefield on the border [ed. between North and South Korea]. Since Pope Francis arrived at the Vatican, it is fashionable to speak of the “peripheries.” For us at Anna’s House, where we have been living in the peripheries or suburbs for 23 years, it’s time to go beyond, into “no man’s land.” It’s a minefield where life does not count because at any moment, a mine could explode. In these long years living in the suburbs, we have met the street children, runaway teenagers, abandoned by their families and by the State, who have run away from everyone and everything. For them, we have created a network of solidarity which welcomes them and supports them and once again inserts them into the family and society. We have the RED HOUSE which is their first reception center (the Pope would call it a “field hospital”). Here, the youth have interviews, meetings, therapy and counseling with a specialized staff. The goal is to place them again with their own families. When this is not possible because the family situation has degenerated beyond all possibility of reconciliation and dialogue, the older ones are welcomed into the YELLOW HOUSE and the younger ones into the BRICK HOUSE. In these houses, the youngsters are guided toward completing their studies and receiving a diploma. The others who do not want to study are inserted into the world of work; they live in the GREEN HOUSE. Each year, about 200 youth pass through our programs.

Good job, you may think. That’s true. But according to official statistics of the city where we live, every year there are about 2,000 boys and girls who drop out of school and families: runaway children. We should ask where the other 1,800 children are who do not attend schools, who don’t live with a family and who are not in the welcoming center. They are in “no man’s land.” At any time they can blow up and they can destroy their lives by mines called alcohol, prostitution, theft, violence, prison, oppression.

Discovering this dramatic reality, we thought: “Since they don’t come to us, we will go to them.” So we decided to leave the suburbs, which are too comfortable and easy for us and we will go to the minefields of life, where 1,800 young boys and girls are wandering about dangerously. In this way, AGIT was born. It’s a movement with few things: a multicolored minibus, a tent, two tables and four chairs. From 7 p.m. until 2 a.m., we go through the streets of death desperately looking for these teenagers. There are not many of us, but we are all filled with such passion and love for these young people. Yes, we are a bit crazy, but we really love these guys.

I can personally say that since we began this AGIT experience, my sleep has been terribly shortened but my life has been infinitely lengthened onto new horizons, dramatic and beautiful at the same time. In this gloomy and brutal “no man’s land,” where it seems that there is no room even for God, because it is filled with violent fights, the sexual abuse of minors, drunkenness and suicide, like Moses at the burning bush in the desert, I have found a new face of God. This God

tells me: "Take off your shoes because this is a HOLY place. Yes, absurdly enough, this place is holy because His beloved young children are here. And He is with them. He never abandons them. So I have decided to leave the suburbs to go beyond, into no man's land, to stand beside these boys and girls.

On a dark and cold night, I met a 15 year-old girl who tied around my wrist a little cotton bracelet, telling me: "Whenever you look at this

gift, remember to pray for us." I hate bracelets and rings and necklaces. I don't even wear the beautiful golden chain that my dear parents gave me on the day of my priestly ordination. But I now always wear this bracelet of string because it binds me lovingly to the so many and the too many children left to themselves. AGIT is in the style of Jesus who, having left the 99 sheep in the sheepfold, went to look for the sheep lost on the dangerous clefts of the mountain. This is our mission. (Fr. Vincenzo BORDO)

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### Anniversaries for November 2015

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#### 70 years of religious life

1945.11.15	08087	Fr. Louis Doazan	France
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#### 65 years of priesthood

1950.11.19	07900	Fr. Patrick Guidon	United States
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#### 60 years of religious life

1955.11.01	10587	Bro. Carol Audet	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.11.01	10588	Fr. Noel Ormonde	Anglo-Irish
1955.11.04	10062	Fr. Andrew Takach	Lacombe

#### 50 years of religious life

1965.11.01	11699	Fr. Hermann Klein-Hitpass	Namibia
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#### 25 years of priesthood

1990.11.10	12714	Fr. Le-N'Djekila Thomas Mbaye	Cameroun
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## Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 61-71

Name	Prov./Del.	Born	Died at	Date
Fr. Maxime Chaigne	France	24/05/1931	Lyon	09/08/2015
Archbishop Peter Sutton	OMI Lacombe	18/10/1934	Richelieu	05/09/2015
Bro. Georges Nadeau	OMI Lacombe	31/03/1936	Winnipeg	07/09/2015
Fr. Claude Mayer	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	21/05/1935	Richelieu	11/09/2015
Fr. John Hannah	Australia	06/03/1930	Camberwell	18/09/2015
Fr. Archibald Daley	OMI Lacombe	21/07/1923	Edmonton	23/09/2015
Fr. Waław Górnjak	France-Benelux	10/07/1925	Blegny	29/09/2015
Bro. Charles Thirion	France	04/08/1922	Strasbourg	03/10/2015
Fr. Savio Crevacore	Mediterranean	04/01/1922	Borgomanero	05/10/2015
Fr. Leon Brzezina	France-Benelux	16/02/1935	Stella Plage	05/10/2015
Fr. Bernhard Wolf	Central European	01/03/1932	Mainz	06/10/2015

*“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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