



Some advice from the Founder about Formation

Fr. Cornelius Ngoka, OMI, Assistant General

Throughout this year, we have prayed and reflected on formation as a conversion journey that lasts a lifetime. We have lived faith-sharing encounters and experiences, we have perhaps made concrete acts of conversion. Soon, we will begin the third year of the Oblate Triennium leading us to the celebration of the day, 200 years ago, when the first Oblate community met in Aix-en-Provence, January 25, 1816. In the letter of request addressed to the Vicars General of Aix, Saint Eugene and his first companions state that “if they have preferred to form a regular community of missionaries, it is in an effort to be useful to the diocese while at the same time working at their own sanctification, in conformity with their vocation.” (*Selected Texts Related to the O.M.I. Constitutions and Rules*, No. 5)

For the Founder, formation and renewal are integral parts of being a missionary. He was convinced that the future will always depend on the quality of the formation of Oblates at all levels. Here are some excerpts from his letters; let us allow Eugene de Mazenod to speak to us of formation in the language of his time but with a conviction and a vision which touches and challenges us today.

“I am sorry that you are overloading yourself with work. I do not approve of this at all: it has the double disadvantage of exhausting your men and of keeping them too long outside the house. . . In God’s name, let them return to their communities to renew themselves in the spirit of their vocation; otherwise, it is the end of our missionaries. They will soon be nothing more than sounding cymbals.” (To Father Guigues, Superior of Notre-Dame de l’Osier, 27 May 1935 in *Selected Texts*, No. 255)

“Never forget that it is for God that you work, that it is the glory of his holy Name that it is at stake, and that the Church requests this service of you. This means that you must supernaturalize your studies, sanctify them by a great purity of intention, leaving all self-love aside and not seeking yourself at all. In this way, even secular authors bring you as close to God as do the Fathers of the Church” (To Father Mille, Superior of Billens, Switzerland, 3 January 1831, in *Selected Texts*, No 463)

“Certainly you have to use proper moderation in your relationship with the Brothers entrusted to you. Much gentleness in manner and much strictness in regularity and observance of the Rules which should become like a sound habit to make of them, as it were, a sort of second nature which they will maintain throughout their lives.” (To Father Mouchette, new moderator of scholastics at Notre-Dame de Lumières, 9 July 1853 in *Selected Texts*, No. 459)

“I was going to ask you to instill in them self-denial, renouncement of their own will, obedience as it is understood by our Rules and observed in all good Congregations and Orders, zeal for their own perfection so as to deserve to work for the sanctification of others. . . I implore you to demand also that they be polite, honest and kind. Do not permit any rudeness.” (To Father Bellon, moderator of scholastics, 30 August 1844, in *Selected Texts*, No. 458)

“The satisfying news you send me about your community of Montolivet is a great consolation. My eyes, and still more my heart, are forever

turned towards those dear sons, who are the hope of our family. I am happy that they understand the sublimity of their vocation and are courageously endeavoring to become holy religious.” (To Father Mouchette, moderator of scholastics, 11 March 1860, in *Selected Texts*, No. 461)

“Have Father Viguiet make a good novitiate. Do not be satisfied with appearances; make him practice every kind of virtue; train him in the love of poverty, obedience and entire abnegation of himself, in the spirit of mortification, in humility. What I say regarding him, I equally recommend for all the others.” (To Father Tempier, 18 June 1821, in *Selected Texts*, No. 430)

“The master of novices must be totally about his business. Hence he should never be taken away from his normal duties with the novices whom he should attend to as, so to say, the hen attends to its chicks. In case the superior needed the novice master for some other work, he must come to an understanding as to time with the novice master so that the novitiate, which is strictly speaking his only task, does not suffer.” (To Father Courtès, 3 October 1834, in *Selected Texts*, No. 435)

The commitment to live formation as a constant conversion experience disposes us to renew our eyes to the Lord, following the example of Mary Immaculate, in an ever inventive fidelity.

Holy See

VATICAN

Oblate presence in the Synod

The XIV General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Family was held from October 4 to 24 at the Vatican, with the participation of the Holy Father Pope Francis and 279 bishops, prelates and priests announced as voting participants, coming from countries and regions all over the world.

Among them were two Oblate Bishops, both from the Southern African Region - Msgr. Gerard LEROTHOLI, from the Archdiocese of Maseru, Lesotho and Msgr. Joseph SHIKONGO, from the Vicariate of Rundu, Namibia.

Archbishop Gerard was also one of those bishops who delivered a presentation during the Synod. Here is an extract of his speech: “*A Christian family is a domestic Church, a ‘church inserted in my house’.* Family that prays together stays

together. Family is the sanctuary of life. It is the fundamental cell of society. It is the foundation on which the social edifice is built. It has vital and organic links with society. It is from the family that citizens come to birth. It is the first school of the religious and social virtues. The Christian family is the first orbit in which the Church is expressed and visualized”.

The Oblate General House community extended him an invitation to share his own thoughts about the event before he left the ‘Eternal City’ and he accepted it willingly. Incidentally, this was Archbishop Gerard’s fourth occasion of being a Synod Father. He explained the real purpose behind this Synod, the methodology it followed, its strengths and drawbacks and also about the humility that the Holy Father showed throughout the event.

The Synod ended with the Holy Mass offered by Pope Francis on Sunday, October 24.

General Administration

PRECAPITULAR COMMISSION

Preparations continue

With less than a year to go before the 36th General Chapter during the 200th anniversary year of the Congregation, the Precapitular Commission met again in mid-October to review the preparations taken so far, and to plan the next steps.

The Commissioner, Fr. Claudio BERTUCCIO, commission members Frs. Martin WOLF and Emmanuel YOUNGTEN, secretary Fr. William O’DONNELL and General Council liaison Fr. Cornelius NGOKA spent 3 ½ days in Rome together, working through a busy agenda. Fr. Louis LOUGEN, Superior General, was on a visit to the Oblates in Poland and unable to be present.

The first item reviewed was the list of delegates to the Chapter. At present, all the delegates of the regions, and their alternates, have been elected. Those to be invited (5 Oblate Brothers and 4 others whom Fr. General can invite) and a few provincials who will finish their term (either first or second) prior to the chapter also are waiting to be determined. The total number of capitulars will be 86.

Staff for the chapter (translators, secretaries, a liturgical committee, hospitality, ambience, and other such roles) are in the process of being contacted and asked to serve. It is estimated there will be between 25 and 35 of these Oblates present in Rome for the Chapter.

In addition to reviewing the list of Oblates for the Chapter, the commission visited the Christian Brothers General House to see first-hand the various rooms and other space that will host the Chapter from next September 14 to October 12. A further visit will take place at the next commission meeting in February.

The commission reviewed the responses that were sent in to the questionnaire sent to all Oblates from the 5 Oblate regions. The number of commonalities in the responses was quite high. This information will be used by those preparing the 3rd year of the triennium and also be distributed to all Oblates for reflection and discussion prior to the chapter.

Finally, the commission reiterated that any proposals of subjects for discussion at the General Chapter must be in the hands of the commission by January 10, 2016 (omichapter2016@gmail.com), in order to be considered for inclusion in the Chapter discussions.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

International Congress on the Mission with the Youth

Serving the impoverished youth in Aix-en-Provence was one of the main missions of the Founder and the first Oblates when he initiated the Congregation in 1816. After exactly 200 years, the second International Oblate Congress on the Mission with the Youth (or simply the

‘OMI Youth Congress’) will be held in that very place, Aix-en-Provence, France, from the 7th to the 12th of March 2016.

The first such Congress was held in Sydney, Australia, on July 21-25, 2008, with about 50 Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, lay partners and youth representatives, along with members of the General Administration, in order to re-emphasize the importance of ministry with young people.

This time, the key objective will be to initiate a process to develop a missionary vision and a strategy for the coming years concerning the mission with youth in the Congregation. In addition, it will provide an opportunity for the regional representatives to share their experiences and highlight key needs of young people of our time. The Congress will also be a platform for evaluating our mission with youth as well as for discerning the means to meet the missionary challenges today, in light of the 2008 Congress and the 2004 Chapter Document ‘*Witnessing to Hope*’, where a separate section was dedicated to the Mission with Youth.

For this event, it has been decided that participation from the different regions and units must be limited due to the housing constraints in Aix. Along with Fr. Louis LOUGEN, Superior General, and the representatives from the General House, five representatives from each Oblate Region will participate (a combination of both Oblates and young lay men and women).

Fr. General and Fr. Luis Ignacio ROIS, the General Counselor in charge of mission with youth, invite the Oblate world to be involved in the event in the form of prayers and discussions in local Units. A separate section in the *omiworld.org* website dedicated to this special occasion is already open to public (<http://www.omiworld.org/en/omi-youth-conference-2016>).

GENERALSERVICE FOR OBLATE STUDIES Our Oblate artists

Most members of the greater Oblate Family know such names as Michelangelo Buonarrotti, Pablo Picasso, William Shakespeare, Salvador Dali and

Auguste Rodin. Many Oblates also know such names as Frans CLAERHOUT, Guy MARY-ROUSSELIÈRE and even Clyde RAUSCH.

While the latter don't (yet) have the renown of the famous artists whose works are considered masterpieces for the ages, nevertheless, they are just a few Oblates of Mary Immaculate who have used the arts as tools in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In a recent number of our Oblate review *Oblatio*, one will find interesting articles about some of our Oblate artists. In the preface to Volume 4 2015/2, the Director of the General Service for Oblate Studies, Fr. Fabio CIARDI, introduces the edition which is dedicated primarily to Oblate artists. In it, he states: *Evangelization cannot disregard art. Paul VI, in a message to the artists in St. Peter's Square on December 8, 1965 at the close of the Council, said: "The world in which we live needs beauty in order not to fall into despair. Beauty, like truth, is what brings joy to a person's heart; it is the precious fruit which resists the ravages of time, which unites generations and unites them in admiration."*

He continues: *Saint Eugene and our first missionaries understood this well. The art of oratory, singing, the theatrics of some ceremonies, like the tolling of the bells to call sinners to repentance, was indispensable during their parish missions; the superior of the mission going barefoot, a rope around his neck, the cross on his shoulders; processions, the erecting of a cross, etc. Already in 1826 St. Eugene had printed a *Recueil de cantiques et de prières à l'usage des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie, dits de Provence*. This was later followed by many other Oblates, who wrote hymns and published collections of songs in many different languages, to engage the new Christians in prayer.*

After naming many Oblates who have been engaged in the various arts over the past 200 years, he concludes his introductory remarks: *You will find other names in the specific articles in this issue of Oblatio, but I know, reading this list, that many Oblates will feel unjustly excluded. I hope that this will be the beginning of a greater exchange between all the "artists" and for a deeper reflection on the relationship between art and evangelization.*

INTERNATIONAL ROMAN SCHOLASTICATE

A new formation year

At the IRS, we are starting a new year of formation. After five days of programming, on Monday, October 5, we are starting the academic year. Now we present to you our complete community: It is composed of 26 Oblates of Mary Immaculate with 18 nationalities from 4 continents:

AFRICA 9: Chad (1), Lesotho (2), Madagascar (1), Namibia (1), South Africa (1), Zambia (2), Zimbabwe (1).

AMERICA 3: Guatemala (1), Haiti (1), Paraguay (1).

ASIA 9: Korea (2), India (1), Sri Lanka (4), Vietnam (2).

EUROPE 5: Germany (1), Poland (2), Czech Republic (1), Spain (1).

We are an international and intercultural community, very diversified but enriching. It is divided into three Groups of Life. Our ideal is that which was proposed to us by Saint Eugene de Mazenod: "United by the bonds of the most intimate charity, form one heart and one soul." (<http://irsomi.blogspot.it/>)

Asia-Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Iona College: missionary journeys

A highly significant characteristic of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Congregation is the inherent missionary spirit of the founder, St Eugene De Mazenod. In addition to the broad range of local and interstate mission experiences, Year 11 students are able to engage in overseas mission

immersions each year as part of the missionary spirit at Iona College in Brisbane.

This year some twenty-five boys and four staff (constituting two separate groups) enjoyed rich mission experiences in China and Fiji during the recent Term 3 holidays.

While both mission immersions were characterized by intercultural experiences, rich interpersonal encounters, prayer and reflection and a healthy approach to mission outreach: they were different in terms of one being a decidedly Asian experience having a significant focus on human interactions and sharing; and the other was a Pacific context with a focus on construction and practical assistance.

Both groups of students found their mission immersion experience very meaningful and felt that it strengthened their sense of social justice and mission, enhancing their life experience. At Iona College, we are privileged to have the strong missionary spirit of St Eugene as the basis of our response to Christ and the Gospels. (<http://www.iona.qld.edu.au/>)

PHILIPPINES

Parish blends Youth, Lay Leadership and Interreligious Dialogue

Located among the Muslim dominated populace of Datu Piang, Maguindanao, Santa Teresita of the Child Jesus Parish has sought to strengthen its pastoral activities with the guidance of Fr. Marciano “Mars” ANDRES, the parish priest.

The celebration of Lent and Easter was made more meaningful with a feeding program from February 18 to April 5 this year for socially disadvantaged kids aged 3 to 7 years old, the majority of whom were Muslims. The parish youth went to the children’s homes and brought them to the church hall for a late afternoon meal. They served arroz caldo (hot rice) which was fortified with vitamins and other nutrients like “malunggay” powder. Youth volunteers taught the youngsters good discipline by asking the children to line up, wait for their turn and share a pleasant meal with other children. The Muslim parents were

grateful for the outreach activity initiated by the parish.

Similarly, in a fraternal spirit, Sta. Teresita Parish acknowledged the Muslim religious celebration of Ramadan by offering some food every Friday in four mosques or masjids last June to July during the breaking of the fast on the Muslim Ramadan.

The parish has a year-round Interreligious Dialogue program that caters to fifteen youth (13 high school students and 2 college students) through a scholarship program which offers a partial (or 50%) tuition fee scholarship. The scholarship program is currently parish-based. The Parish Pastoral Team and Parish Finance Team are entrusted with the responsibility of the proper safekeeping and disbursement of the scholarship fund.

Fr. Mars and the community of Santa Teresita Parish are grateful to the generous donors whose assistance enabled the realization of Muslim-Christian dialogue through the aforementioned activities. (<http://www.omiphil.org/>)

PAKISTAN

Seeking security amidst danger

In some places in the Oblate World, extra means must be taken to give some sense of security to the residents of our houses in situations where violence is not uncommon.. (editor)

It is with sincere thanks to the General Administration, Oblate Units in the Asia-Oceania region and the Anglo-Irish Province that we feel quite relieved for we have addressed certain security concerns, raising parapet walls higher, attaching razor wires, cameras, and gates and employing watchmen. These necessary security measures in the formation houses, namely the Oblate Juniorate in Multan, the Oblate House in Lahore and the Oblate Scholasticate in Karachi were required by the law enforcement agencies and the government of Pakistan after a deadly terrorist attack on an Army Public School in Peshawar on December 16, 2014 and a twin suicide bomb attack on churches during Sunday service in the Lenten season in Youhanabad, Lahore on March 15, 2015. (*PAK Bulletin, May-September 2015*)

Africa-Madagascar

NATAL**St. Joseph Theological Institute: 25 years**

St. Joseph Theological Institute at Cedara, Republic of South Africa, is celebrating 25 years as a separate institution. Until the end of the 1989, it was the “academic part” of St. Joseph’s Oblate Scholasticate. The scholasticate was founded in 1943 and started with a philosophy programme; when the first students had completed their 2 year philosophy programme, a theology programme was developed.

At first the only students in the programme were Oblates of Mary Immaculate, but soon some diocesan seminarians also joined. These simply joined the Oblate Scholasticate community. This pattern continued for many years. In 1971, the Dominicans started sending their students to Cedara; this move was followed by the Archdiocese of Cape Town for their Coloured seminarians; then came other male religious institutes: the Franciscans, the Capuchins, the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales and others. From the mid-seventies, more communities joined us: Sacred Heart missionaries, Benedictines, Mariannahill Missionaries, Spiritans and others. The first Sister joined us in 1975. All of these were members of one formation community, St. Joseph’s Oblate Scholasticate.

By the 1980’s, the number at the scholasticate was reaching 50 members and it looked as if the number was still going to increase. The idea developed to invite those Congregations with larger numbers to start their own separate communities near Cedara. The first to adopt this idea were the Redemptorists who were forced to sell their monastery in Pretoria to the University. In 1984, they moved into their own quarters. This example inspired others to make the same move and so the Dominicans, the Mariannahill Missionaries, the Oblates of St. Francis, the Capuchins, the Spiritans and others all moved into their own communities.

By 1989, the Oblate Scholasticate had only Oblates. The Superior of the Oblate Scholasticate,

Fr. (now Bishop) Barry WOOD was still the Rector of the academic program. However, the idea was being discussed that the academic programme be run by a body separate from the Oblate Scholasticate administration. During that year, a whole day was devoted to discussions with students, lecturers and superiors of Religious Institutes to reflect on these matters. By the end of that day, it was clear that the way forward was the establishment of a separate body to run the new entity which was eventually called St. Joseph’s Theological Institute. The Oblate major superiors of the Region were asked to work out the details and appoint a new administration with a President under a Board of Directors (which later was called the Board of Members). It was decided at that point that the Board should be made up of the 5 OMI major superiors and 3 major superiors of other participating communities.

Fr. Paul DECOCK was named the first President. Fr. Jock Earle, SJ, became the Dean of Studies and, with his experience in running Jesuit schools in England and as a former Jesuit provincial there, he was a great help. With about a hundred students, St. Joseph’s Theological Institute began in 1990 as a new academic venture, but it had nearly 50 years of experience to rely on. (Paul B. Decock in *OMI Natal Newsletter*, January – September 2015)

TANZANIA**Missionary journey with some French youth**

During the month of August, Father Alfonso BARTOLOTTA accompanied some young French men and women on a missionary visit to Tanzania.

Here we are, back after a month in Tanzania.

Preparation for the experience took place during four weekends between February and June.

From August 3 – 30, there were 8 of us who took off on a flight of Air Ethiopia, landing us the next day at the airport in Kilimanjaro. Tanzanian Spiritan missionaries met us and

lodged us at their home at Tengeru, near Arusha in Northern Tanzania.

Our plan was to learn about the country, its inhabitants, its education system, the situation of persons with disabilities, and the development of Christian communities of the Maasai culture.

To accomplish this, we visited 6 primary, secondary and vocational schools and three centers where people with disabilities are cared for and educated. We conducted an awareness program for primary, secondary and vocational school pupils through games and discussions in the classrooms.

Our 10-day stay in a village of the Maasai

culture gave us an immersion into the culture of this people. With them, by visiting their villages and schools and by meeting with community leaders, we experienced the beautiful hospitality of a people living in difficult conditions: drought, scattering, and a poor level of education and health care. We were able to sensitize the Christian community regarding the needs of persons with disabilities: a committee was set up after our departure to organize the management of health and education for persons with disabilities. We left behind a little money so we could be part of it. And we also wanted to support the construction of two chapels by paying for the roof. (The "Tanzania 2015" Team: Alfonso, Celia, Florian, Ines, Anne, Sullivan, Hugues and Jean-Pascal)

Europe

ITALY

A most generous gift

In the year 2000, Fr. Raffaele GRASSO received the transplant of a kidney; however, the transplant did not totally succeed and for 10 years, he had to undergo dialysis that weakens the body and greatly affects every day of the patient's life. On October 7, one of Fr. Raffaele's Oblate confreres, Fr. Mario CAMARDA, was able to give him a generous and life-promoting gift, one of his own kidneys. Fr. Mario describes the gift as "a gift of self to a brother, so that he might live."

The two Oblates have known each other since 1975 when they were together in first formation. Fr. Mario remembers that during the scholasticate, someone asked them: "Are you ready to give your lives for one another?" He continued: "I decided to do it: if I can give a different type of life and alleviate the suffering of Fr. Raffaele, why not help him?" Since the two are not blood relatives, they had to await the judgment of a Tribunal in Pisa before proceeding to the medical tests and the transplant itself. It took nine months of waiting until Fr. Mario was judged to be the most compatible donor.

The operation itself was a success and now, Fr. Raffaele is slowly recuperating. He states: "Now

I must take care of a gift that is the fruit of an act of love by a confrere."

UKRAINE

Pilgrimage of the statue of the Virgin of Fatima

On September 26, 2015, we came to the end of the pilgrimage of the statue of the Virgin of Fatima in the diocese of Kamyanyets-Podilskiyi. (The Auxiliary there is Oblate Bishop Radosław ZMITROWICZ). For the Oblates, it was a very important event. The preparation took six months: conversations with the bishop; agreements with the "Lights of the East" Association; preparing the plans for the pilgrimage; preparation of prayer books, posters and various materials in the Ukrainian language. The program began on May 1 at the Shrine of the Mother of God at Leychiv.

For five uninterrupted months, the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima visited 82 parishes that have a permanent priest (with 3 days of retreat in each parish) and 71 mission station parishes, that is 153 parishes in all, comprising 6,655 km. Our old minibus (that's all we have) broke down 8 times. However, there were always kind people ready to help us and therefore, we were able to arrive everywhere on time. Thanks to the help of the "Lights of the East" Association and their

benefactors, during the pilgrimage, 14,000 rosaries were distributed, as well as 12,000 books in Ukrainian and Russian on St. Eugene de Mazenod, 11,000 images of Mary and 9,000 Miraculous Medals.

But these numbers are not the most important thing. Most important are the testimonies of conversions of many persons and the prayer in common for peace in Ukraine for which we Oblates have made a considerable contribution. So it does not seem strange to us that upon finishing this long retreat with the Madonna, the war in Ukraine ended as well. From that moment till now, thanks be to God and to Mary, we have peace. (*Fr. Pavlo VYSHKOVSKYI, Delegation superior*)

Here are excerpts from the testimonies of a couple Oblates who took part in the pilgrimage:

Fr. Sergiej PANCZENKO: This time was an occasion for reassuring us of the actuality of the Fatima revelations. Especially for our land where until now there is still a post-Soviet spirit and where in many cities and towns, there is still a Lenin Street. Every day when I shared the message of Mary with other people, then I began to be more conscious of it and to live it more. Then one can better notice how people receive it in the depth of their hearts, how they begin to live the First Saturday of the month, how they grasp their rosaries. During this pilgrimage, I saw in the people great devotion to the Mother of God. Our people love Mary. The pilgrimage was also a time when many people went to confession; perhaps this struck me more than anything else.

Fr. Andrzej MACÓW: In July, several times two women came to pray, one older and the other younger, always with a bouquet of roses. They were a mother and daughter of the Orthodox communion. In May, they had visited one of the parishes and prayed for the health of the daughter. Not only was the daughter healed but they received many other favors from the Mother of God, for themselves and for their family members. Thankful for the graces received, that mother and daughter came to follow the Mother of God wherever they could. In some parishes, Orthodox priests participated, whether from

the Patriarchate of Kiev or of Moscow, I do not know. They came with their faithful. In one of the parishes, an Orthodox priest came, accompanied by his wife and children; they participated in the vigil for families and the whole family came for a blessing.

ITALY

Meeting of religious Brothers in Rome

“Siamo tutti Fratelli” (“We are all Brothers”) was the motto for a gathering of religious Brothers at the General House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools on October 24. Over 130 religious Brothers from 20 men’s Congregations were celebrating their vocation during the Year of Consecrated Life. Four Oblate Brothers took part in the event: Brothers Zygmunt WOLNIAK (General House); Silvio BERTOLINI (Senegal); Donato CIANCIULLO and Salvatore VITIELLO (Italy).

The guiding theme for the encounter was based on the three objectives indicated by Pope Francis for the Year of Consecrated Life: “look at the past with gratitude;” “live the present with passion;” “embrace the future with hope.” During the day, each Congregation shared something specific about its own vocation, after the showing of a video of activities of Brothers in the many countries where they work. In the introduction to the video, the former Superior General of the Dominicans, Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, stated: “Often, religious are men and women who take us beyond the Church, beyond our little, well-known world. Pope Francis says that we must get out of the sacristy. Often, it is the religious who do that, to go into places where the name of Christ is unknown and to uncover it there.”

The meeting made clear that the vocation of the Brother is genuine. It is no coincidence that recently the Princess of the Asturias Award for Concord, one of the main awards given in Spain to those who are outstanding in the field of humanitarian values, went to the Order of the Hospitaller Brothers of St. John of God for their work during the Ebola epidemic in Africa which killed 18 Brothers and co-workers, as well as their work with refugees.

The group of Brothers that organized the meeting stated: "Although the vocation of the Brother is diminished in the total number of members, nevertheless, it is ever more widespread in the

world and continues to be necessary as an icon of equality and service in a world that is divided, unequal and filled with so many poor persons."

Canada-United States

UNITED STATES

Oblates and associates welcome Pope Francis

The provincial house and offices of the United States Province are located directly across the street from the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, one of the places visited by Pope Francis during his September 22-27 visit to the United States. It was during a Mass at the Shrine that the Holy Father presided at the first canonization on U.S. soil: St. Junípero Serra, an 18th century Franciscan missionary to California.

The Oblate novices from Immaculate Heart of Mary Novitiate in Godfrey, Illinois, traveled 824 miles (1327 km) in response to an invitation to young religious and seminarians to greet the Pope. Together with members of the novitiate team, the very international novitiate community spent many hours on the road to join the crowds that were waiting to see Pope Francis. The Novice Master, Fr. Thomas HORAN, and his associate, Fr. Jack LAU, accompanied Jean Emmanuel MELONCOURT and Steven MONTEZ (U.S. Province); Amila PERERA and Nishan ANGODAGE (Colombo Province of Sri Lanka); Joshua NASH (Australian Province); and Paul ARUANANTHAM (Indian Province). They were in the basilica when Pope Francis came in to greet the religious and seminarians; they were able to watch the Mass of Canonization on large computer screens inside the church since the rite took place outside.

Other travelers to Washington were Victoria Barrientes-Luna, Office Manager for the Southwest Area Office and Vocation Office in San Antonio, Texas; Claudia Garcia, Gift Advisor at Oblate Missions in San Antonio, and her sister, Yvette Ibarra; and Oblate Associate, Geri Moore, from Belleville, IL. They originally thought they would only get a brief glimpse of Pope Francis in his "pope-mobile," but Oblate Bishop Michael

PFEIFER saw to it that had some tickets for the canonization Mass.

Security was tight, according to Victoria, "somewhat heavier" than airport security checks, purses were thoroughly searched and everyone passed through metal detectors and other screening procedures. "We anticipated a long time going through security so we arrived about noon for the 4:15 outdoor Mass." Getting through security took about an hour but Victoria described the security personnel and the crowd of some 25,000 ticket holders as, "...kind and respectful... When you have him (Pope Francis) as an example you tend to act that way."

NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP

Transferral of the body of Father Victor Lelièvre

For twenty-five years, every first Friday of the month, this apostle of the Sacred Heart managed the remarkable feat of bringing together for an hour of adoration almost two thousand workers in overalls or dungarees. In 1923, he founded the *Jésus-Ouvrier* (*Jesus the Worker*) house for closed retreats where until his death, he would meet thousands of adults and youth. He had the gift of captivating them to the point of winning them over for Jesus Christ and very often, turning them into true apostles. An incomplete list gives the names of 80 priests for whom he inspired their vocation, among them thirty religious men and more than a hundred religious women. This man, this priest, this extraordinary Oblate, you may have guessed, is Father Victor LELIÈVRE. (André DORVAL dans <http://postulationomifr.weebly.com/>)

On October 8, 2015, the body of Servant of God, Father Victor Lelièvre, for the third time since its exhumation in 2004, was transferred to the new and superb Mausoleum-Columbarium at

the Saint Charles cemetery in Quebec. The coffin of Father Lelièvre was moved in the presence of Oblate authorities and those of the diocese of Quebec, according to the prescribed regulations, into its new abode.

More than 40 persons, Oblates, CVL workers and Oblate associates, assisted at the transferal. After authentication and repair of the seals by the Chancellor Jean Tailleur and his team, a very hope-filled Liturgy of the Word was held in front of the tomb of Father Lelièvre. Then we were treated to the showing of an audio-visual presentation, with the help of an Ipad, so as to better inform us about the life of Father Lelièvre (1876-1956): photos, interviews, slide shows, etc. This important religious figure in the history of Quebec, he who was and is Father Victor Lelièvre, has not finished making people talk about him. (André CYR)

UNITED STATES

Honoring an Oblate “caveman”

At the age of 86, Fr. Paul WIGHTMAN is still the pastor of five parishes in the mountainous

region of Southern Missouri. A professed Oblate for 65 years and a priest for 60 years, he has also been an avid spelunker for many years. Recently, he was recognized for his work as the surveyor and explorer of the Fogelpole Cave System of Monroe County, Illinois. The land above and around the cave has been purchased for preservation and, in honor of his work, it has been named the Paul Wightman Subterranean Nature Preserve.

Fogelpole Cave is the largest and most ecologically diverse cave in Illinois. The group that purchased the site (Clifftop NFP) hopes to protect the cave’s rare ecosystem which provides a habitat for several endangered species, some of which are found nowhere else in the world.

For many years, Fr. Paul was the bursar at St. Henry’s Preparatory Seminary in Belleville, Illinois. Many of the juniorate students assisted him in his explorations of Fogelpole Cave. As one former student stated: “I spent many hours in that cave and still enjoy spelunking today with my own kids.” .

Anniversaries for December 2015

70 Years of religious life

1945.12.08	08098	Fr. Henri Reignat	France
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65 Years of priesthood

1950.12.24	08431	Fr. Ottorino Casarotto	Mediterranean
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60 Years of religious life

1955.12.08	10597	Bro. Anton Raab	Central European
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60 Years of priesthood

1955.12.08	09378	Fr. Bernard Rivoal	France
1955.12.10	08980	Fr. Albert Danker	Natal
1955.12.17	09305	Fr. Guy Fortin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.12.17	08621	Fr. Max Risse	Central European

50 Years of religious life

1965.12.08	11971	Bro. Denis D'Auteuil	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.08	12063	Bro. Trudon Ikalamba Pebangu	Congo

50 Years of priesthood

1965.12.08	10608	Fr. Ian Mackintosh	Australia
1965.12.12	10869	Fr. Juan-Manuel Alvarez	Mediterranean
1965.12.12	10870	Fr. Pablo José Fuentes	Argentina-Chile
1965.12.17	10992	Bishop Philipp Pöllitzer	Namibia
1965.12.18	10719	Fr. James Allen	United States
1965.12.18	10756	Fr. Roy Boucher	Lacombe
1965.12.18	10923	Fr. Denis Bourbonnais	Lacombe
1965.12.18	10878	Fr. Raynald Couture	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.18	10687	Fr. Salvatore De George	United States
1965.12.18	10916	Fr. André Doyon	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.18	10884	Fr. Maurice Gauthier	Haiti
1965.12.18	10940	Fr. Joseph Hitpas	United States
1965.12.18	10987	Fr. Josef Katzer	Central European
1965.12.18	10799	Fr. Eugène King	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.18	10750	Fr. William MacDonald	Lacombe
1965.12.18	10936	Fr. Paul Marx	Poland
1965.12.18	10607	Fr. Peter John McLaughlin	Indonesia
1965.12.18	10989	Fr. Ernst Schönhammer	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.18	11212	Fr. Paul Waldie	United States
1965.12.18	11090	Fr. Richard Weixelman	Philippines
1965.12.18	10681	Fr. Johannes Ziffels	Central European
1965.12.19	10801	Fr. Dennis Connor	Anglo-Irish
1965.12.19	10793	Fr. Thomas O'Shea	Brazil
1965.12.19	10977	Fr. Edward Quinn	Anglo-Irish
1965.12.19	10803	Fr. Leo Roche	Central S. Africa
1965.12.21	10684	Fr. Gerardo Kapustka	Mexico
1965.12.21	10468	Fr. Gabriel Nanayakkara	Colombo
1965.12.21	10469	Fr. Lucien Perera	Colombo
1965.12.21	10683	Fr. Luis Villarreal	United States
1965.12.22	10761	Fr. Paul Fachel	Lacombe
1965.12.23	10502	Fr. André Laroche	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.26	10500	Fr. Gilbert Patry	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.26	10670	Fr. Gilles Patry	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.12.28	10694	Fr. Paul Arsenault	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

25 Years of priesthood

1990.12.08	12966	Fr. Jeevanadas Fernando	Jaffna
1990.12.22	12936	Fr. Oscar Carricaburu	Argentina-Chile
1990.12.22	13011	Fr. Gustavo Ovelar	Paraguay

Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 72-76

Name	Prov./Del.	Born	Died at	Date
Fr. Leon Peter Anderson	Australia	21/07/1946	Fremantle	17/10/2015
Fr. James Datko	United States	29/12/1926	Duluth	17/10/2015
Fr. Bernard Rivoal	France	28/06/1929	Landivisiau	18/10/2015
Bro. Dionysius Mothetsi	Lesotho	01/01/1920	Mazenod	20/10/2015
Fr. Rayappu Mariyanayagam	Colombo	13/05/1948	Colombo	23/10/2015

“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)

OMI INFORMATION is an unofficial publication
 of the General Administration of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
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 Printing & circulation: Shanil Jayawardena