



OMI INFORMATION OMI INFORMACION OMI INFORMAZIONE OMI NACHRICHTEN OMI WIADOMOŚCI OMI

OMI Information No. 571 (English)

November 2016

Message of the 36th General Chapter

Dear brother Missionary Oblates,

Dear brothers and sisters of the Mazenodian family,

1. In this jubilee year of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, we give thanks to the Lord. We look to the past with gratitude, beginning with St. Eugene de Mazenod and to all of our predecessors including our living elder brothers whom we greet most especially.

2. In these times of great global changes, we respond to the call of the Spirit, as did St. Eugene de Mazenod in his Preface to the Oblate Rule, by giving a new impetus to the mission that is our *raison d'être*: being close to the new faces of the poor, the most abandoned, and sharing the Good News to which we are witnesses.

3. In this world that God loves, with all its richness and beauty, and looking upon it as Saint Eugene did through the eyes of Christ crucified:

- We observe new forms of poverty, especially among young people: fundamentalism, individualism, materialism, consumerism, addiction to the digital world... But, we also see the suffering of families, youth, the lonely, and the elderly.
- We recognize urgent issues which strongly speak to us such as: the situation of refugees, the homeless, and migrants who are forced to leave their countries, as well as the devastation of the environment.
- We perceive victims of injustice and

violence, especially the indigenous peoples and minorities, the victims of human trafficking, of abuse and exploitation, who cry out loudly for support and a response from us.

4. Faced with these situations, the Church strongly calls us out of our comfort zone to go to the "peripheries" and work for the fulfillment of the Kingdom. We are invited to write a new page of the Gospel with Mazenodian creativity and audacity.

- We recognize that the poor evangelize and teach us, and we welcome their contribution to the authenticity of our charism.
- We are committed to live in missionary communities founded on a fraternal spirit and mutual sharing, as we strive to break down the barriers that separate and divide people. We will promote interculturality at all levels in which cultures, religions, and diverse communities can dialogue and enrich one another.
- We will give witness to the deep bonds that unite all human persons, both in our daily life and personal encounters of all kinds, as well as in the collective bodies where decisions are made. Drawing upon the charism of Saint Eugene, we will contribute to the defense of family values, of refugees and migrants, as well as of all people who are victims of injustice, violence and abuse.
- We will participate in efforts to care for the integrity of creation in the face of environmental devastation. We will continue to strengthen our commitment to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (J.P.I.C.).

- We are committed to the defense of minors and the most vulnerable as we have been sensitized by the recent scandals in the Church and in society.

5. Conscious of our infidelities, of our poverty, and of our own need for conversion:

- We commit ourselves to strengthen our family spirit and the quality of our community life, following the example of Jesus Christ with his disciples, as did St. Eugene de Mazenod and his first companions.
- We, Oblate brothers and priests, hear the call to holiness, and we value the missionary religious life and accept being interdependent and responsible to each other.
- We choose to strengthen the ways we live interculturality in international communities and in society, as we are present in close to 65 countries around the world.
- We have decided to increase the sharing of personnel and the other resources of the Congregation, in order to foster greater fairness and generosity among our Oblate units.
- We will take steps to prepare ourselves, throughout life, in the areas of anthropology and missiology, as well as in studies of economics and media, so as to better

respond to the demands of today's world.

- We renew our support for the preparation and empowerment of the laity to whom we are sent and with whom we share a common mission.

6. "Missionary disciples" of Christ, who gave himself for us, we choose to give witness wherever we live to the joy that flows from the Gospel.

Our vocation is to become missionaries of mercy and hope, ambassadors of the tenderness of the paternal and maternal face of God like the Virgin Mary, our Immaculate Mother, pondering all things in her heart. Thus, we will bear witness to God's family, a family without borders, in dialogue with the cultures and religions of our time.

Through the intercession of Saint Eugene de Mazenod and all the Oblate saints and martyrs, we are responding to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "He has sent us to evangelize the poor. The poor have the Gospel preached to them." "How vast the field that lies before us!"

Rome, October 10, 2016

The capitulars of the 36th General Chapter

General Administration

GENERAL POSTULATION

Liturgical texts for the Martyrs of Laos

On 17 October 2016, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved texts for liturgical use on the Memorial of the Martyrs of Laos. December 16 has been chosen as the date for the Memorial of Blessed Joseph Tien, priest, and his companions, martyrs. This date coincides with the anniversary of the martyrdom of Blessed Jean WAUTHIER. *(These liturgical texts may be found on the website of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, www.omiworld.org)*

Cardinal Orlando QUEVEDO will be the delegate of Pope Francis at the actual ceremony

of beatification, to take place in Vientiane, Laos, on 11 December 2016. Celebrations of thanksgiving will be held in 2017 in Paris (France), Trent (Italy) and Belleville (USA). Information on these events will follow later.

From the decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments:

During the Indochina War, between the years 1954-1970, seventeen followers of Christ in Laos suffered martyrdom for the sake of His name. Among these martyrs were the young priest, Joseph Tien (1918 - 1954), the first martyr of Laos, and some catechists [Paul Thoj Xyooj (1941-1960), Joseph Outhany (1933-1961) Thomas Khampheuane Inthirath

(1952-1968), *Luc Sy* (1938-1970), *Maisam Pho Inpeng* (1934-1970)]. *Members of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris* [Fr. *Jean-Baptist Malo MEP* (1899-1954), Fr. *René Dubroux MEP* (1914-1959), Fr. *Noel Tenaud MEP* (1904-1961), Fr. *Marcel Denis MEP* (1919-1961), Fr. *Lucien Galan MEP* (1921-1968)] and of the *Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate* [Fr. *Mario Borzaga OMI* (1932-1960), Fr. *Louis Leroy OMI* (1923-1961), Fr. *Michel Coquelet OMI* (1931-1961), Fr. *Vincent L'Hénoret OMI* (1921-1961), Fr. *Jean Wauthier OMI* (1926-1967), Fr. *Joseph Boissel OMI* (1909-1969)] also offered their lives in sacrifice so that the Gospel could be heard. The Church in Laos recognizes these blessed as their founding fathers.

GENERAL HOUSE

Tempier: the youthful face of a faithful friend

At the side of every Founder, there is always a faithful friend, a sure companion. Saint Eugene de Mazenod found him in François de Paul Henri TEMPIER, his first companion, “my other self,” as Eugene himself called him. At the death of Tempier, Fr. FABRE wrote: “These two friends were made to understand one another, to join with one another, to complete one another and to act together, each according to his own vocation, to carry out the works of God.” They were always together, from the very beginning, when Eugene wrote that he could count on him “with eyes closed.”

Eugene had the keen mind, the charismatic and enthusiastic temperament; Tempier embodied concreteness, organization, regularity. The first was passionate, fiery, choleric; the second, calm, reserved, “(acting) quietly, without haste, without emotion, giving each thing its time, he was a match for one and all”, as noted by Joseph Timon-David. They complemented each other.

The photos we have of Tempier, taken in his old age and over 80, portray him as a good and wise man, full of days and happy to see that the work God had given him was completed.

We have only one portrait from the time he was superior of the seminary in Marseille (1827-54);

it's a painting of an uncertain date, made by one of his former students, F. Cartier.

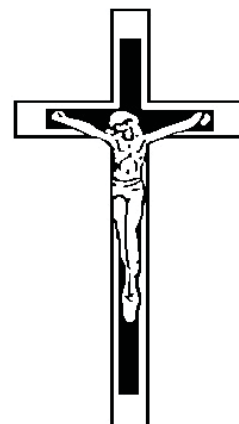
And now another portrait has reappeared, dated 1827, the year after the pontifical approbation of the Rule. Tempier was 39 years old, fully mature, happy to know that the religious family he and De Mazenod had brought into being was now recognized by the Church. He is the Vicar General and the General Treasurer, the one whom the Founder trusts.

It is older than the Cartier portrait and the artist is unknown at this time. The canvas which had been kept in Aix had been badly cut from its frame, rolled up (!) and brought to Rome 57 years ago. The heat (perhaps during its move) had dried the paint which was falling off in flakes.

It was kept in the General Archives, but now was the time for it to be brought into the light, on the occasion of the General Chapter of the Oblates who are celebrating the 200 years since the beginning of the Congregation.

A major restoration was called for and it was very professionally done in the “AtelierMaBi” by Marta Gelsumini.

At the beginning of the Chapter on 14 September, next to the portrait of Saint Eugene, there was also that of his faithful friend. (Fabio CIARDI in <http://fabiociardiblogspot.com/2016/09/tempier-il-volto-giovane-dellamico.html>)



Africa-Madagascar

ZAMBIA**Episcopal ordination of Bishop Valentine Kalumba, OMI**

The Diocese of Livingstone in Zambia joyfully welcomed Bishop Valentine KALUMBA at his episcopal ordination on 3 September 2016. Ordaining the 49 year-old Oblate to his new office was his predecessor, Bishop Emeritus Raymond Mpezele. The principal co-consecrators were Bishop George Cosmas Zumaire Lungu, Bishop of Chipata, and Bishop Clement Mulenga, S.D.B., Bishop of Kabwe.

Bishop Mpezele urged his young successor to lead the people of the diocese by being a good shepherd after the example of Jesus: “Jesus was a good shepherd who loved his sheep both in word and action; and as a bishop, Bishop Valentine has to love Jesus and only by so doing that he will be able to feed the sheep of Jesus Christ.”

The ordination was attended by bishops from within Zambia and abroad, Bishop Valentine’s Oblate confreres, many priests and religious brothers and sisters, traditional chiefs, civic leaders and lay faithful.

Livingstone Diocese covers the southern part of Zambia, approximately 58,200 sq kms.

KENYA**Showing mercy through prison ministry**

Fr Fidele MUNKIELE is the Formation Director of the Kenya Mission and also a prison chaplain, a ministry which was dear to the heart of the young Father Eugene de Mazenod.

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate are involved in prison ministry in many locations in the world. It is in-line with our charism: *to evangelize the poor, the most abandoned.* In Kenya, the Oblates are ministering in the Nairobi Langatta Women’s Prison.

Our ministry consists of attending to the prisoners’

spiritual needs (Masses, the Sacraments), pastoral needs, social welfare and psychological care. It’s a challenging ministry because it involves time, material means and presence. We assist them with their basic needs: soap, toiletries, shoes, medicines.

Many women are convicted because of crimes (minor or major) committed on the basis of the poverty and joblessness in their lives. Desperation leads them to do anything they can, in order to survive. Many are single mothers, and some are young ladies. Other women are there because of poor legal representation due to poverty.

Our ministry gives them the opportunity to reform their lives and to counsel them, so that, once they are free, they can live a normal, healthy life. Those who leave, after serving their sentence for many years, receive no help from the government or society – they are often rejected by their own families. The Oblates try to assist them with small amounts of money so they can start a small, simple, business in order to survive. Some have children who, unfortunately, cannot access education.

We all know that water means life. In June this year, we were able to provide a 8,000 litre tank at the Women’s Prison which has a problem providing adequate water to the women, some of whom have small children or babies to care for. The gift brought tears of joy to the prisoners and staff alike.

CAMEROON**An Obedience on three fronts**

In this third year of the Oblate Triennium focused on the Mission, here is the testimony of Brother Mirabeau DIATANG (Cameroonian) about his ministry at Ngovayang.

I officially began my mission at the hospital in Ngovayang in July 2013. As I was still studying in Yaoundé, I made the trip twice a month to Ngovayang.

In my letter of obedience, it is specified: *“I am communicating to you your official assignment to the mission of Ngovayang in the Diocese of Kribi, where you will offer your services not only through your participation in community life but also through your missionary zeal in service to the sick at the hospital of this mission and to the faithful at the parish of St. Francis Xavier.”*

From that, it was clear that my first mission must be carried out within the community, and then at the hospital, and finally, in the parish.

Within the community, I am with two confreres who have much experience in religious life. I thank God for this community where dialogue, sharing and brotherly love are right at home. As bursar of the community, it is my mission to manage our small earnings which allow us to take care of our minimal needs. On weekends and holidays, I exercise my cooking talents.

At the hospital: In August 2014, I moved to Ngovayang as Director of the hospital. I was astonished at the huge size of this hospital deep in the forest in the South.

The sick person is at the heart of our concerns. It is for this reason that in the procedural plan, we have put the accent on the doctor-patient relationship, the quality of care and the retraining of personnel. We have strengthened collaboration with community health workers in the field of education and prevention.

I would like to emphasize the importance of open collaboration between the three religious congregations present in Ngovayang, each committed to the welfare of persons, especially the littlest ones.

We have our challenges: finding partners for the funding of hospital activities; making Ngovayang hospital a place for evangelization: our treatment, our way of looking at them and our words for the sick must be imbued with love, joy and peace. The hospital’s 50 years coincide with the year of Divine Mercy. We do our best to help the patient experience a personal and familial reconciliation.

In addition to administrative and financial management, I participate in preventive and healing activities.

In the parish: Before the arrival of the pastor, I took care of organizing catechesis, the formation of catechists and ministry with youth. This year, I am in charge of the altar servers. I also animate a retreat for the students during Lent.

CAMEROON

Planning the scholasticate year

From 20 – 22 September 2016, the Oblate Scholasticate, Maison Yves Plumey in Yaoundé, held some days of reflection in order to plan the 2016-2017 academic year. These days began with the questions: “Why hold these scholasticate days?” Father Gabriel KINZE, who organized the sessions, explained that in life, at times the questions are more important than the answers. A person who does not ask questions about his own life is doomed to endure it. Beginning with this “why” question, he proposed three answers:

1. The first answer, he pointed out, is from the Gospel (Luke 14: 28-33). Indeed, it is the Lord Jesus himself who recommends it. He told his disciples to “sit down” before beginning a job. That means to “know how to plan:” “to program or plan what you want” if you really want to succeed; otherwise, you risk becoming an object of the mockery of passers-by if the work begun remains unfinished.
2. The second answer he proposed is “constitutional” (taken from our CCR). Indeed, our CCR recommend that each Oblate community meet at the beginning of the year to adopt the rhythm of life and prayer that suits it. That means “together it will adopt the community plan...” (C38)
3. The third and final answer he gave has to do with wisdom. (It points to the wisdom drawn from life experience.) Wisdom tells us that before undertaking a journey, you should know very well from the start where you are going (destination); what road to take; by what means and method; and the reason

or reasons for going. Along the way, you must ensure that you are on the right track (quarterly or semi-annual evaluations). And after the journey, it is wise to check if you have arrived at the destination. This exercise is called the “final evaluation”. “Goal, programming or planning, implementation and evaluation” are words that guide and make the world live today.

In a word, the principal goal of these days of reflection at the beginning of the scholastic year is the programming or planning of the communities formation project. The principal theme that the Maison Yves Plumey chose for this 2016-2017 year is the following: “Religious, Missionary Oblate, Faithful, Free and Responsible.” (P. Gaby CRUGNOLA)

Asia-Oceania

THAILAND

50 years of Oblate presence

This 2016 is a very special year for the Oblates of the Thai-Lao Delegation. Fifty years ago the first three pioneering Oblates arrived in Thailand with the purpose of establishing ministries that would respond to the needs of the local church. The first three who arrived in 1966 were Frs. Gerard FORTIN, Christian GILLES and Jean HABERSTROH. The three knew each other very well because they had once been missionaries in Sri Lanka.

The actual mission work started in 1967 when the three of them began to work separately: Fr. Fortin worked in a squatter area in Klongtoei; Fr. Haberstroh worked at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Samsen; and Fr. Gilles worked at the Assumption Cathedral in Bangkok. Three years later, the Archdiocese of Bangkok entrusted to the Oblates the Fatima Church in Din Daeng, Bangkok. From that time, the Oblates used the Fatima Church as the center of the Oblates in Thailand especially for receiving new members as they arrived. Fr. Pierre CHEVROULET, who was then the Superior of the Vice-Province of Vientiane, Laos, announced that Thailand had become part of their mission.

Several other Oblates joined the mission, but in 1976 political turmoil in Laos caused the Superior General to suppress the Vice-Province of Vientiane and Luang Prabang; both Thailand-Laos became a General Delegation.

With the increase in members due to the arrival of more Oblates, the General Delegation accepted

invitations to work in other dioceses as well: the Diocese of Udon Thani in 1979 and the Diocese of Nakhorn Sawan in 2004.

The Delegation Congress in 2007 set new priorities for the entire Delegation. New ministries were taken on: ministry with the Hmong people and justice issues related to migrants, refugees and human trafficking.

In 2010, the Thai-Lao General Delegation became a Delegation of the Philippine Province. Besides ten Thai Oblates, there are also Oblates from the Philippines and Italy working there. At present, the Delegation has 5 scholastics studying theology.

On 19 November 2016, the Thai-Lao Delegation will celebrate its 50 years of presence in Thailand with Mass at the Fatima Church in Din Daeng, Bangkok. The main celebrant will be Bishop Chamnian Santisukniran of the Archdiocese of Tharae-Nongsaeng

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Youth share in preaching ministry

Mazenod Youth, a ministry of the Province of Colombo, has found another new way to share the gospel with young persons. For some time now, we have been conducting different types of programmes, sessions, workshops and seminars with youth, children and adults by using videos, music and other experiences.

As our latest venture, our team invited youth to join us in preaching novenas in parishes. It was really inspirational and touching. The youth are

not at all shy about sharing their experiences and talents in preaching novenas. Using Power Point presentations, songs and hymns, together with Bible quotations, short dramas and real life experiences, they bring the faithful closer to God.

We call this preaching experience with youth a "Mini-Mazenod-Mission." The latest "Mini-Mazenod-Mission" was conducted in the Wanathawilluwa parish where the newly assigned parish priest is Fr. Prabhath SANJAYA. There were seven Mazenod Youth members who came from various places to share the Word of God with the people. (Fr. S. Randil FERNANDO)

PAKISTAN

Oblates in a dangerous area

In 8 August 2016, a terrorist bomb killed at least 70 people and injured 130 more in a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan. On 25 October 2016, at least 59 cadets and guards were killed in an attack by militants on a police college in that same city. The Vicar Apostolic of Quetta is an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Bishop Victor GNANAPRAGASAM.

On 28 October, the Vatican news bureau, Fides, made the following report:

Christian and Islamic religious leaders who intervened to resolve a case of alleged blasphemy in Quetta, the Pakistani province of Baluchistan played a decisive role regarding two Christians. As Fr. Renald REMINDRAN, Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate in Quetta, reports to Fides, a nine-year-old Christian boy named Izhan and his mother Shakeela Kauser, a nurse at the Civil Hospital in Quetta and mother of three children, were stopped and questioned on charges of blasphemy: they were accused of having burned pages of the Koran on 20 October.

After the complaint, the police stopped them. In this instance some local Christian leaders got the leaders of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam organization involved, who played a key role to exonerate the two of all charges. The matter was resolved on October 21, and accusations of blasphemy were declared void, "We are delighted with this outcome. It is significant. In the province of Baluchistan no one so far has been charged and convicted for blasphemy", said Fr. Remindran to Fides. In a note sent to Fides, Anjum James Paul, President of the Pakistan Minorities Teachers' Association, appreciated the role of political and religious leaders, Muslims and Christians, to ascertain the truth and prevent any conflict between the two communities.

Canada-United States

UNITED STATES

Fr. George McLean, OMI, 1929-2016

On 6 September 2016, Fr. George MCLEAN, an Oblate of international renown in the fields of philosophy and intercultural dialogue died at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Residence in Tewksbury, Massachusetts.

Fr. McLean professed his first vows as a Missionary Oblate in 1949, and did his theological studies in Rome. He was ordained to the priesthood in Roviano, Italy, in 1955.

From 1956 until 1993, Fr. McLean was a professor at the Oblate College and the Catholic University of America, both in Washington, D.C. In 1983, he founded and was Director of the

Council for Research in Values and Philosophy in Washington, D.C. As a multilingual speaker, his four languages were advantageous, as the council is comprised of prominent philosophers and social scientists from many countries. He coordinated seminars and workshops that sought to capture the gifts and values that Fr. McLean saw as inherent in the different cultures, traditions and faiths across the world and to encourage a multidisciplinary, collaborative and analytical approach to the discovery of how their unique threads of wisdom could be woven into a tapestry that would help us to relearn how to be human in global times.

He was an unofficial collaborator of Karol Wojtyla, the future Pope St. John Paul II, having met him before he was elected pope,

and shared his passion for the evangelization of culture. In the missionary spirit that was rekindled and directed by the Second Vatican Council, Fr. McLean taught that the Spirit of God was alive in every culture, and he spent his life helping people identify and engage that Spirit and announce it in a way that they could understand and share.

NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP

Partners and Missionaries with the Oblate Charism

From 28 – 30 October 2016, during the First Congress of Lay Associates, about fifty persons met at the Hotel La Madone in Trois-Rivières: Oblates, Lay Associates and partners. The theme of the Congress: Diving into the Oblate spirituality of a lay person today.

Friday evening, the 28th, was an opportunity for the “Mazenodian family” to watch a movie together. Popcorn was provided for the participants as they sat in front of the screen to watch an interesting documentary about the origins and the life of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. It was a lovely discovery for one and all to the point that they showed an interest in getting a copy of this Oblate documentary: *Audacieux pour l'Évangile (Daring for the Gospel)*.

Saturday, October 29, after breakfast, all were invited to gather for prayer times, reflection and talks, from speakers who got things moving: Melanie Charron and Pierre-Olivier TREMBLAY. Melanie set the scene by “immersing” the audience into the realities of today's world: “We're all riveted to our computer screens or telephone to the point that they ‘screen’ us from our relationships with others. How do we reconnect with the person before us, be it a stranger, a friend or a family member? How do we create dialogue so as to encounter others who are locked in their solitude or barriers? How do we create joy in a gloomy world...?”

As for Pierre-Olivier, he spoke of his experiences at the Shrine. This summer, Pokémon invaded the gardens of the Shrine of Notre-Dame-du-

Cap; pétanque players held their congress on the grounds of the Shrine, and finally the Door of Mercy attracted many pilgrims from all over. These three elements helped to give a new look at the world of today and to welcome all the new facets in the lives of people of all ages.

The Oblate Missionary Centre, the Centre St-Pierre, the Hotel La Madone, the Shrine of Notre-Dame-du-Cap, and the administration of the Notre-Dame-du-Cap Province were all represented there; these men and women took the microphone to tell about their mission, their vocation and their work.

Lay Associates and Oblates led moments of prayer, of meditation and of reflection and they spoke of their contribution to the Oblate community and to society. Small group discussions brought people together and created bonds. The Mazenodian family came together day by day during this congress which will remain in the annals of missionary gatherings as something to be repeated.

To better understand the Oblate charism and its beginnings, the participants learned of some writings of the founder, St. Eugene de Mazenod: three prefaces of the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. These writings were used to start discussions: the signs of the times, in what world do we live? What values surround me? What are the cares of the poor? How do I see them? Where do I see the wheat and tares in the world today? What are my beliefs? In this world with multiple needs, what are my gifts, talents and resources that I can offer? Who is this Jesus in whom I believe? What is the Gospel scene which currently moves me to action? In what way does Jesus of Nazareth shed light on what the Spirit is doing in the world? In light of what we live and perceive as the world's needs, in the light of our talents and our resources, of our capabilities and of the action of the Spirit in this world, what are our goals, our missionary vision? Our commitments? ([Http://www.omi-qc-on.com/](http://www.omi-qc-on.com/))

Europe

POLAND**Fr. Jozef Pielorz, OMI, 1921-2016**

In his personal blog, Fr. Fabio CIARDI, the Director of the General Service of Oblate Studies, wrote an affectionate farewell to Fr. Jozef PIELORZ, whom he called "a passionate student of Saint Eugene." Here are excerpts from that tribute.

The death of Father Jozef Pierlorz, on 1 September 2016, marked the passing of one of the last great historians of St. Eugene and of the Oblates. We mention as examples Beaudoin, Cianciulli, Gilbert, Lamirande, Courvoisier. It is the end of a generation of great Oblates who studied passionately and with scientific competence the history of the origins and the spirituality of the Oblates.

On 30 January 2014, he wrote to me: "I studied the life of the Founder for ten years, and then for seven years more as vice-postulator for the cause of beatification. I had the occasion to read all of the Founder's writings and the letters addressed to him... On 13 June 1953, I discovered in Aix 80 letters of the Founder, dated 1799 to 1808. In spite of my urging, they have not been published in their entirety." The long letter continued with an account of the years of the conversion because, according to him, I had not understood anything about St. Eugene. He didn't let me get by with anything! And with reason. Fortunately, he died before the imminent publication of my book on the young years of St. Eugene: who knows how he would have made me suffer! But the last letter that he sent me, a year ago, was all sweetness and full of thanks, also for the "excellent review *Oblatio* of which you are the knowledgeable director."

Father Pielorz was 95 years old, 70 years a religious and 66 years a priest. He was born on 22 January 1921, the third of eight children. He was an athlete and wanted to participate in the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1940. Instead, after getting his degree, he entered the novitiate of

the Oblates at Markowice where he met, among others, the future blessed Oblate martyr, Jozef CEBULA, whose biography he would write. Because of the Nazi invasion, he fled with other novices toward Warsaw. They ended up right in the line of fire between the Polish and German armies; they had to return to Markowice. On 4 May 1940, the Gestapo deported the novices to Germany and on 2 August, Fr. Pielorz ended up a prisoner in the Mauthausen-Gusen camp. The work in the mines was difficult, at times overwhelming. By miracle, he survived. He was then transferred to Dachau. After the liberation, he was sent to the General House in Rome where he completed his novitiate and made his perpetual vows in 1949. The following year, he was ordained a priest and continued to study history at the Gregorian University in Rome. He was director of the library at the Pontifical Urbaniana University and he ministered among the communities of Polish immigrants in Canada, in Rome and in Belgium.

We will continue to remember him, especially for his passion for scientific research and his publications which he continued up to the last few years, some of which are real milestones for our knowledge of St. Eugene and the beginnings of the Congregation.

UKRAINE**Cardinal Parolin visits the poor**

During his visit to Ukraine at the end of June, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican's Secretary of State, visited the eastern parts of Ukraine and brought aid from Pope Francis to the victims of war. He also desired to meet the poor of Kiev who are cared for by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Before the arrival of the Secretary of the State, the religious musical group, "Cana," performed. The arrival of the cardinal was greeted with applause and flowers. One of the parishioners recited her own poem, dedicated to the arrival of the special guest.

Cardinal Parolin addressed the poor, greeting them on behalf of the Pope and ensuring his solidarity with those who personally experience poverty, homelessness and the essentials of life, something all too common for the majority of people there. He thanked the Missionary Oblates who serve the poor.

After the blessing, Oblate Brother Sebastian JANKOWSKI, who, together with volunteers, works directly with the poor and homeless, invited them to the church yard where food and clothing were made available.

Latin America

HAITI

Devastation from Hurricane Matthew

On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew made landfall near Les Anglais in southwestern Haiti as a Category 4 storm. As a result, Matthew left billions of US dollars in damage over 600 dead. The winds and floods destroyed thousands of homes as well as the crops of the people.

The Oblate Provincial of Haiti, Fr. Loudeger MAZILE, was in Rome for the General Chapter at the time of this disaster. He and other Haitian Oblates in Rome made sometimes futile attempts to be in contact with their homeland, their brother Oblates and their families.

News has finally confirmed that all of the Oblates are unharmed personally, but they, like the people they serve, are victims of the terrible storm.

Below is a list of damage sustained by places where the Oblates serve the poor in Haiti:

Fr. Real CORRIVEAU reports that his former parish of St. Antoine in Fond-Oies lost its church for the second time in six years and the rectory was damaged.

Fr. Fred CHARPENTIER reports that the Procure lost its metal roof and all trees on the property are down. People sought protection from the storm in cement bathrooms.

Other examples of damage to Oblate sites:

- Camp Perrin: St. Anne Parish church was severely damaged; the pews were

damaged after the roof collapsed. The parish hall is in a critical state.

- Camp Perrin: Holy Angels Parish lost the entire church and rectory roofs.
- Les Cayes: Our Lady of Grace Novitiate lost its radio antenna and many trees are down.
- Charpentier: St. Michael Church had two sides of its roof damaged by fallen trees and the infirmary is severely damaged.
- Mazenod: The Oblate Minor Seminary chapel, gymnasium, dormitories, and conference rooms all suffered major damage. All trees are down and barred entrance to the property
- Port-Salut: The parish church was completely destroyed (only the bell tower remains)

Please continue to pray for the people of Haiti in this time of suffering and loss.

ARGENTINA

The Community Refrigerator

Father Antonio MARIANGELI, Provincial of Argentina-Chile, shares with us a letter from Pamela Luján Zilli (Caritas Volunteer), from the Parish of Our Lady of Luján in Santa Fe, Argentina.

The “Community Refrigerator” began when Father Pablo FUENTES suggested to the Caritas Volunteers a project known as “Mary’s Refrigerator.”

There are eleven of us who get together seven days a week to offer a meal to persons living on the streets. We follow the parish schedule. It is a daily task that requires patience and trust in the Lord.

We soon realized that it took a daily effort for those of us who could offer this service. Some volunteers stopped coming because they were unable to do it or they did not feel able to be with those who came to our door.

Personally, I am where I want to be... According to Pope Francis, hearing the cry and the needs of the poor and responding concretely is not a task reserved for the few. The Church, guided by the Gospel of mercy and love of humanity, hears the cry for justice and wants to respond to it with all her strength. In this context, we understand the demand of Jesus to his disciples: "You give them something to eat!" (Mk 6:37.) It's a simple, everyday gesture of solidarity with the very concrete sufferings we encounter.

In particular I believe and am left with this: "Love my neighbor as myself." So we learn to see ourselves in them. We overcome every obstacle: fatigue, anger, disagreements. All that passed when we started receiving what we are giving: **love**.

We give of ourselves as we are, always going out of ourselves, to be the bridge, the instrument, every moment learning and growing, not asking but only listening.

Often, we find ourselves without the main thing, food; many divide a plate into three so that no one goes away without anything. Some of us come crying, sad, looking for the right words to tell them that there is no food and seeing uncertainty in their faces. Many others come joyfully, knowing that if our refrigerator is empty, it will fill up again, because we are beginning to get food from the parish community. We look at Padre Pablo and together we say: "These things belong to Mary!"

It is also an opportunity to tell, especially to the young street persons, who she is and what she is called: Our Mother, the Virgin of Luján, who protects them and who opens her doors to those who have so many doors closed in their faces. "And who is it in that painting that looks down on them, with such a strange look?" And then we find ourselves leading them to prayer, telling

them that it is the pain of Saint Eugene and that he is not bothered by them; like Jesus, he looks upon them and also listens to them.

Mary's Refrigerator is their place and their opportunity to be heard in their many needs. They learn that a "Good morning" and the joy of being welcomed help them to forget and to be healed, even a little, of the cold they experienced the previous night.

VENEZUELA

A very difficult situation

These are comments of Father Javier ÁLVAREZ LODEIRO, superior of the OMI Mission, made a few weeks prior to the October 24, 2016, announcement that the Holy See will try to act as mediator in the process of searching for a lasting peace in that conflicted country. Because the situation is so volatile, things could change day by day. This is the testimony of an Oblate on the scene and it tells of the tensions and the difficulties our Oblates there face each day.

Waiting and discouragement. These two words could define the situation in Venezuela, given the rapid worsening of the situation. In less than a year, we are living an enormous crisis, already foreseen, but now present in every home. Food is scarce; it is difficult to find any and on top of that, the prices are exorbitant. If in 2012, a kilo of Cachama (a river fish) cost 20 bolivar, in 2014, it reached 200. At the end of 2015, it was going for 800 and today, this typical product of my area costs 2000 bolivar per kilo. If we consider that the minimum wage is 15,000 bolivar, one can well imagine the situation. Furthermore, medications for the most common illnesses are lacking, not to mention the more serious cases. Illnesses become worse because of a lack of medicine. Everything is becoming difficult. And the worst is yet to come.

Looting is a forerunner of societal collapse that, thanks be to God, for now has not shown its face. In some places there has been looting and clashes with the military: from Cumanà, recently we have had reports of repression after the looting that devastated the city. The media do not report

it, but fellow priests speak of many deaths. They arrested more than 400 people, crowded for days in a shed, without water or a bathroom...

In the midst of discouragement in the face of an untenable situation, the only hope is a change of government through a referendum, to be accomplished before the end of 2016, because if they do it in 2017, the government would pass into the hands of the vice-president and nothing would change. If we miss this occasion, the pressure cooker which is Venezuelan society would explode, with a trail of pain and violence, in a country where the murder rate is higher than in any other country, including Afghanistan.

Our communities are found in different areas. In Santa Barbara, we live in a rural village and that resolves in part the food problem, thanks to the

being in the country. San Cristobal is near places where there are vegetable farms, and from those, in general, you can get something. The situation of the community in Catia is more serious: they lack food and water and they do not have access to the sources of produce. Furthermore, the crime level is greater in the areas near Caracas, considered the most violent city in the world.

The Oblates are committed to being with these people, helping them to overcome the general discouragement and offering them hope and faith in the Lord who walks with his people. We are not in a grave situation, although we suffer with the neediest, victims of a great lack of food. But the shadow of a societal explosion that would have unforeseeable consequences is already on the horizon. What happens next will be determining in this long agony of the country.

Anniversaries - December 2016

65 years of religious life

08.12.1951	09845	Bro. Josef Overkämping	Central European
------------	-------	------------------------	------------------

65 years of priesthood

22.12.1951	08331	Fr. Gustave Pelletier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
------------	-------	-----------------------	-------------------

60 years of priesthood

09.12.1956	09266	Fr. Bruno Carpenne	Mediterranean
09.12.1956	08845	Fr. Fortunato Muffolini	Mediterranean
21.12.1956	08974	Cardinal Sebastian Khoarai	Lesotho
22.12.1956	08938	Fr. Edward Carolan	Anglo-Irish
22.12.1956	08668	Fr. Nicola Ferrara	Mediterranean
22.12.1956	09546	Fr. André Grimont	France
22.12.1956	08916	Fr. Christie Joachimpillai	Lacombe

50 years of priesthood

04.12.1966	11271	Fr. Philippe Thierry	France
17.12.1966	10905	Fr. Charles Banks	United States
17.12.1966	11122	Fr. Michael Bradley	Poland
17.12.1966	11107	Bishop Vincent Cadieux	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
17.12.1966	11035	Fr. Hernán Correa	Argentina-Chile
17.12.1966	10937	Fr. Charles Donovan	Lacombe
17.12.1966	10705	Fr. André Dumont	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
17.12.1966	10699	Fr. Jean-Guy Morin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
17.12.1966	10751	Fr. Martin Moser	Lacombe
17.12.1966	11127	Fr. Richard Pommier	Philippines
17.12.1966	11178	Fr. Hans Schöber	Central European
17.12.1966	11423	Fr. Philip Smith	Lacombe
18.12.1966	11168	Fr. Anthony Boyhan	Anglo-Irish
21.12.1966	10863b	Bishop Victor Gnanapragasam	Colombo
21.12.1966	10654	Fr. Lawrence Jayatilleke	Colombo
21.12.1966	10857	Fr. Stanislaus Philips	Jaffna
21.12.1966	10822	Fr. Joseph Samarakone	India
21.12.1966	10858	Fr. Saminather M. Selvaratnam	Jaffna

25 years of priesthood

03.12.1991	12933	Fr. Alexander Mariasavari	India
03.12.1991	12934	Fr. Francis Nallappan	India
03.12.1991	13091	Fr. Simeon Sebastian	India
07.12.1991	13009	Fr. Michael Coughlan	Anglo-Irish
16.12.1991	12859	Fr. Reginald Anthony	Northern S. Africa
21.12.1991	13104	Fr. Marc Verberckt	Bolivia
22.12.1991	12894	Fr. Adrien Difficile	Haiti
22.12.1991	13096	Fr. Arlin Jean-Louis	Haiti
22.12.1991	13095	Fr. Gardy Valère	Haiti
28.12.1991	13133	Fr. Alberto Montiel	Mexico

Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 76

Name	Prov./Del.	Born	Died at	Date
Fr. Hugo Van den Bussche	United States	16/07/1926	San Antonio	13/10/2016

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

OMI INFORMATION is an unofficial publication
of the General Administration of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
via Aurelia 290, I 00165 Roma, Italy
Fax: (39) 06 39 37 53 22 E-mail: information@omigen.org
<http://www.omiworld.org>
Editor: James Allen; Webmaster: Shanil Jayawardena
Printing & circulation: Shanil Jayawardena