



The Church's mission: Change the world

The Second Vatican Council was less about changing the Church than about changing the world, according to Cardinal Francis GEORGE.

“It was a missionary council,” said Chicago’s cardinal — an Oblate Missionary — to more than 100 directors and staff of the Pontifical Mission Societies gathered for their national meeting April 17-19 in Miami, Florida USA.

The meeting featured talks by the cardinal — who serves as the U.S. bishops’ liaison to the Societies — as well as Oblate Missionary Father Ron ROLHEISER, author and president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas; blogger Mark Shea of “Catholic and Enjoying It”; and Oblate Missionary Bishop Bejoy D’CRUZE of Sylhet, Bangladesh. Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami celebrated the opening Mass. Oblate Missionary Father Andrew SMALL, national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S., also spoke to members of the group during the meeting.

In a wide-ranging talk that touched upon missions, evangelization, the new evangelization and secularism, Cardinal George cited the definition of Church written in the first paragraph of the council document, *Lumen Gentium*: “The sacrament of the unity of the human race.”

He said that after experiencing the rise of nationalism, Fascism, Nazism and Communism, Pope John XXIII was under “no illusions as to this world being a place of freedoms.” In fact, he knew “the modern world was a terrible place,” and he saw the Church’s role as reminding humanity of its common brotherhood, its true freedom under God.

“All the ministries that come out of the council are based upon dialogue,” Cardinal George said — but no longer a dialogue between the Church and the nation-states, rather a dialogue between faith and culture, “introducing the world to its Savior in such a way that the world will change.”

If the divisions among the human race were the missionary challenge 50 years ago, the challenge today is secularism, Cardinal George said. “There’s a new call to address cultures that are closed in on themselves, cultures that are not open to transcendence.”

That is the reason Blessed Pope John Paul II called for a “new evangelization” in 1992, the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in the New World. Pope Benedict XVI has continued that call, and in fact designated a Year of Faith that will begin October 11 and include a synod of bishops on evangelization. The Year of Faith coincides with the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the new Catechism of the Catholic Church — events that remind Catholics of the importance of mission and catechesis.

“If the mission impulse dies, that’s a bad sign for the vitality of the faith,” Cardinal George said.

The new evangelization means “going back to societies that had once been Christian” and reminding them of the responsibilities that entails. This new evangelization is needed in Europe as well as the U.S., where the culture of individualism has led to a majority of people describing themselves as spiritual but not religious.

“We are stuck in our spiritual experiences,” Cardinal George said. He likened it to a parallel

emphasis on economic individualism where “selfishness is something to be pursued — and not so much for the common good.”

But in the Catholic tradition, “Christ never comes alone.” Catholics are “saved,” as the Protestants would say, but within a sacramental system that teaches that “intimacy with Christ is found through one another in a visible Church,” Cardinal George said. It is in creating those “ecclesial relationships,” in sharing Christ with one another, that “everybody learns that they are truly — not just metaphorically — brothers and sisters in Christ.”

That is why the Church is “not just a private club for believers,” and why it has a public voice, a moral voice. The missionary challenge is “how

to be a moral voice without being political,” Cardinal George said. “We have to do our best not to be captured by any political party.”

He added that while the Church has gotten away from thinking of missionary activity as a going out to far-off places — since missionary work must be done everywhere — it is still important to remember that in Asia, the continent where the vast majority of the human race resides, only two to three percent of the population is Christian.

As a fellow Oblate put it at a General Chapter meeting back in 1972, Cardinal George said, “The greatest poverty is not to know Jesus Christ.” (Ana Rodriguez Soto, *Florida Catholic*, Miami Edition or <http://www.miamiarch.org>)

General Administration

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

On the march toward Aparecida

On April 25, 1813, Eugene de Mazenod began the Christian Youth Association in Aix, to bring youth closer to Christ and to form them in the Christian faith. Our Founder accompanied and cared for this Association, and its members shared the house in Aix when, three years later, in 1816, the first community of the Missionaries of Provence began their great adventure. This Association was so important to the Founder that in the rules written by him, he asked that there be such an Association “in all the houses of the Institute.”

From July 18-22, 2013, we will celebrate in Aparecida (Brazil) the Oblate program in preparation for World Youth Day, 200 years after the Founder created the Youth Association! We believe this to be a blessed coincidence. The Province of Brazil invites us to participate; they are preparing this program with great enthusiasm and energy. For several months, an image of Our Lady of Aparecida graces the meeting room of the General Council. It is the same image that the Provincial of Brazil, Fr. Rubens Pedro CABRAL, sent to all the Oblate Provinces of Latin America and some other regions to accompany our journey to Brazil. Our Mother helps us to follow in the footsteps of Eugene, in his passionate vision for the mission with youth. We too, the members of the Central Government community, would like there to be an enthusiastic mission with youth in

every Oblate community. Many Oblate Units have stated that the mission with youth is one of their missionary priorities. So we would like to confirm this as a priority for our whole Congregation.

Since the year 2000, and in an ever more intense manner, the Oblate preparation for World Youth Day has become a big family celebration and also a strong impetus for our mission with youth. In recent years, many Units have seen the start of new missionary initiatives; some found the inspiration to begin something new; others felt the challenge to renew their mission. Little by little, the young people themselves were asking to be part of our mission and family, by showing their enthusiasm for St. Eugene de Mazenod. We have personally witnessed this enthusiasm. It seemed as if Eugene was in their midst, renewing their joy and hope as he did 200 years ago with the youth of Aix.

We want to invite each and every Oblate to direct his steps, in one way or another, to Aparecida 2013. Not everyone can be physically present but we can be there in spirit. We also invite all those who consider themselves to be part of this great family, born of the heart of Eugene de Mazenod. We all have something to contribute. Many youth are making great efforts and great sacrifices to travel to Brazil. Experience itself so far tells us that it is worth it. This same experience tells us that if there is good preparation, participation in the program is very fruitful. And also, when

things are prepared in advance, this can solve almost all problems. It is important to get in touch with the Provincial of Brazil, Fr. Rubens Pedro Cabral (rubens.omi@ig.com.br), to begin to prepare and provide for all the details.

In addition, we would like that there to be present in Aparecida at least one Oblate from each of our Units, even if they do not come accompanied by a group of young persons. Father General and other members of his Council who will be present wish to have a meeting for a few hours with all the Oblates present at Aparecida, to seek together new ways for our mission with youth. After the Congregation's Congress on the Mission with Youth held in Australia in 2008, we believe that the time has arrived to relaunch this mission with renewed vigor. It seems to us that Eugene de Mazenod himself is moving us forward in this initiative and that this could be the best way to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Youth Association. WE'LL SEE YOU IN APARECIDA!

In the name of the Central Government Community,

Luis Ignacio ROIS ALONSO, omi.

OBLATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH Oblatio, a new periodical?

Not exactly, because it intends to be in continuity with the prestigious periodical "*Etudes Oblates*," which began in Canada in 1942, and continued from 1974 under the title "*Vie Oblate Life*." Its 70 volumes are a rich mine for studies, a secure reference point to get to know the history, charism and spirituality of St. Eugene de Mazenod and the religious family he founded. **Oblatio** will also include the bulletin "*Documentation OMI*," edited by the Information Service at the General House since 1968. The periodical puts itself in continuity with the past, especially by seeking to deepen the charismatic roots of the Oblates, an indispensable condition for an ever clearer identity, and a daring missionary outlook

At the same time, **Oblatio** sees itself as a new periodical. New in its *source*: it depends no longer on only one Province, but on the Center, and intends to be the expression of the whole Congregation. New in its *content*: it will continue to deepen our history

and spirituality. But at the same time, it will look at how we are actually living out our charism: to read and discern the signs of the times; to critically evaluate our mission; to be sensitive to the call of the Spirit; to be open to the future as prophets. New in its *collaborators*: in the last 70 years, the studies and contributions were made mainly by people in the West (Canada, Europe, the United States). Since the Congregation is now developing ever more in other "worlds" (Asia, Africa, South America), we expect to see new writers come forth. With new issues and questions, they will be able to bring out new readings of the charism, and to show everyone the richness of our missionary history in different countries, from the past until today. New in its *readership*: Though the main readers will be Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, it is addressed to all the members of the great Family which is united by the de Mazenod charism -- the Institutes and groups inspired by that charism, or started directly by Oblates, our lay associates, and all the various collaborators in the different areas of mission. We wish to see them all as authors of articles published by **Oblatio**.

But should a new periodical have its title in Latin, an old, "dead" language? Another new aspect of Oblatio is the fact that besides French and English, there will also be articles in Spanish, the third official language of the Congregation. How can we put the three languages into the one title? They all have a common root -- precisely Latin. So we chose a word - Oblate - which immediately brings out the deepest reality of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and is commonly used to identify both the religious and the laity connected to them! Oblation signifies both life and mission, without any separation of the two. Under the inspiration of the Spirit, and in answer to the call of Jesus to follow Him, Oblates give themselves completely to God, loved above all things, without conditions and without looking back, forever. The Founder reminded his Oblates "to work seriously to become saints." But oblation also expresses itself in the same radical giving of oneself to the Church, to people, to the mission, with a love ready "to sacrifice ... even to death" In this way, we really become co-redeemers with Christ the Saviour: missionaries because we are Oblates.

After an Editorial, the periodical will normally have four sections, about the life and mission of the Oblates :

- History: studies on the origins and development of the Institute, and the various aspects of its spirituality.
- Life and Mission: a look at the Oblate charism today, how it is being lived, and to the challenges to which it is called to respond.
- The Oblate Family: Contributions about various events and experiences from institutes and lay people who are in some way connected to the Oblates
- Documents: from the riches found in archives from around the world, some unedited texts of special interest, from the past or present; and also relevant bibliographies.

Begun at the closing of the 150th anniversary of the death of St. Eugene, **Oblatio** wishes to be an instrument to provide a deeper understanding and vitality of his charism, and to be of service to the Church and to the poor “with their many faces.” (*Fabio CIARDI, Director of the General Service of Oblate Studies and Research, Oblatio No. 1, 2012, oblatio@omioblatio.org*)

OBLATE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE Mass of Saint Eugene de Mazenod

The Deschâtelets Archive in Ottawa has asked us to inform the Oblate world that there are available numerous printed copies of the official Mass of Saint Eugene de Mazenod. This Mass, for use on the Founder’s feast day, May 21, and other occasions, can be had in English, French and Spanish. For further information, one can write to:

ardescha@yahoo.ca
or
Archives Deschâtelets
175 rue Main Street
Ottawa ON
Canada K1S 1C3

OBLATE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE Another step forward in electronic communications

The vocation of the Oblate Communications

Service is to help the Congregation, in faithfulness to the spirit of Saint Eugene de Mazenod, to share past and present experiences and to promote unity while respecting and valuing differences. In other words, the Service wants to make an important contribution to the communion between the General Administration and the whole Congregation and, at the same time, among the different Units, helping to create that family spirit so dear to the heart of the Founder.

In recent years, we have tried to give more importance to electronic communications which are of a more immediate nature and considerably less costly. We are aware that in some outposts of the Congregation, it is not yet possible to make use of the Internet, but we again want to encourage the Major Superiors and the local superiors that they themselves send printed copies of the various communications to those communities.

For this reason, starting from the month of April, there will be a further reduction in the mailing of the printed bulletins “*Information*” and “*Communiqué*.” As we have done for several years, we will send to each Oblate for whom we have an e-mail address the notice of publication on the Congregation’s web site (www.omiworld.org) of new bulletins, in two formats, *html* and *pdf* (printable), in three languages (English, French and Spanish). Two printed copies will be mailed exclusively to each Major Superior and mission superior. They will take care to ensure that each member of the Unit entrusted to them will receive these communications, either electronically or in print. They will also assure that a printed copy is delivered to their secretariats and preserved in the local archives.

We will also continue to send printed copies, as an exchange, to the editors of some newspapers and magazines, as well as to those benefactors who have explicitly requested them.

Of paramount importance, therefore, is the updating of e-mail addresses. The Communications Service uses the database of the General Secretariat. We believe that of the 2,000 current e-mail addresses, at least 500 of them are no longer in use. We ask every Oblate to help us on a regular basis to keep our data up-to-date, checking to see if his information in the

Personnel on the *Omiworld* site corresponds to his present situation. That information may be sent to genstat@omigen.org or gensec@omigen.org or webmaster@omiworld.org.

The most important thing, however, is send us news

about the Oblates and their experiences so that we might share them with all the Oblates: we are present in more than 60 countries! **Please send electronic copies of all Unit newsletters and publications to information@omigen.org.** Water that does not circulate grows stagnant! Thank you.

Africa-Madagascar

GUINEAU BISSAU

Crisis in the kingdom of the cashew nut

“Today normal operations at the schools and some private institutions have resumed in Guinea Bissau, but the bulk of activity is paralyzed from the closure of the ministries and the strike that was called immediately after the coup by the central trade union”, said sources from Radio ‘Sol Mansi’, stressing that the crisis makes living conditions more difficult and complicates the delivery of basic services, such as in hospitals where the service is reduced to a minimum.

The crisis that began last April 12 – when the military took control of the country and arrested the prime minister and acting president – is hitting some crucial sectors of the national economy, particularly that of the cashew, which alone accounts for 80% of the country’s exports. “The harvest period began about ten days ago”, said Father Carlo ANDOLFI, Missionary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who has lived many years in Farim in the north, “and will come to full

speed in a couple of weeks. However farmers are getting very low prices such that many farmers are holding back from selling their crops in expectation of better times, while those who can try to travel to Senegal.” The cashew nut is the main crop in Guinea Bissau and the only export product: “Its harvest”, continues the missionary, “regulates the lives and welfare of thousands of families. Generally traders are foreigners, particularly from Mauritania, who buy the raw product from individual farmers, and then upload in containers at the port of Bissau. For now everything seems to be suspended, pending developments, rising prices and the reopening of the banks.”

The crisis is among the priorities of the Economic Community of West African countries (ECOWAS / ECOWAS) but it canceled a summit dedicated to it and previously scheduled for Monday in Conakry. ECOWAS has not endorsed the ‘transition’ that was inaugurated by the military in agreement with the opposition. [GB] (www.misna.org - Missionary International Service News Agency, 24 April 2012)

Europe

POLAND

Obra: Mission Circles

Are seminarians still interested in the missions? That question was the focus of a gathering at the Oblates’ scholasticate in Obra on April 21, 2012. It was a meeting of seminary Mission Circles under the auspices of the Theology Faculty of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Although it was an informal event, it attracted a large number of seminarians as well as members of the Student Mission Circle from AMU. The program included lectures on missionary spirituality, a missiology workshop and the sharing of experiences by seminarians and students from the various Mission Circles.

Special guests included some Oblate mission procurators and missionaries, among them, Oblate Frs. Marian LIS (missionary in Madagascar) and Mariusz BOSEK (missionary in Uruguay), as well as Fr. Szymon Stułkowski, PhD (theology professor at Adam Mickiewicz University and chaplain of the Student Mission Circle). In addition to the planned activities, there were many interesting conversations, reminiscing about old missionary experiences and a tasting of the “yerba mate” tea, a common drink in Uruguay. Present also was Bishop Jerzy Mazur, President of the Polish Bishops’ Commission for the Missions. In his address to those gathered he expressed his joy and appreciation for such initiatives. (Jacek ZIOMEK -- www.oblaci.pl)

NORWAY

Guitars in the land of the Vikings

The scholastics in Obra, Poland, have a band they call "Guitars of the Immaculate." It began in 1970. Over the past 42 years, the members have changed many times. Their main purpose is to evangelize through song. They have produced several tapes and two CDs and have given concerts in Poland and abroad.

After a year's break, with new members in tow, they recently resumed their activities. Their first show saw them setting out literally into deep water as they crossed to the other side of the Baltic Sea -- to Norway. The young Oblates were introduced to a country famous for its fjords, its forests and its salmon. Today's descendants of the Vikings in Catholic parishes constitute but one part of a multicultural mosaic, largely Asian in composition.

As usual, the scholastics toured Polish communities. This time, however, they met new challenges, among others, conducting meetings in English for other ethnic groups. In the Church in Scandinavia, the Oblate parishes are made up of faithful from Norway and Sweden, but also from various Asian countries, Croatia, Spain, South America and some European countries, especially Poland. The activities of the team are more evangelical and catechetical than artistic, but they were able to offer new arrangements of some well-known songs. The group was accompanied by Fr. Sebastian ŁUSZCZKI, one of the formators from Obra, who preached on vocations.

Why Norway? The invitation came from Fathers Roman KUNKEL and Piotr PISARK, Oblates working in the Swedish-Norwegian district of the Polish Province of the Oblates. Fr. Roman had previously hosted "Guitars of the Immaculate" twice, in Landskron, Sweden, in 2009. This time, the young Oblates visited such places as Askim, Moss, Fredrikstad and Halden, from April 28 till May 1. (Jacek ZIOMEK in www.oblaci.pl)

FRANCE

Fr. Pierre Babin: 1925-2012

Fr. Pierre BABIN, world-renowned author, professor and promoter of the media as a means of evangelization, died in Lyon on May 9, 2012, at the age of 87.

He had taught at universities in Lyon, Paris (France), Strasbourg (France), as well as St. Paul's University, Ottawa (Canada) and the University of Dayton (Ohio) and St. Thomas University (Florida) in the United States. Internationally, he was known for his innovative vision for defining a new approach to catechesis in a media age. He founded an international research and training center in religious communications - CREC AVEX, Ecully (Lyon).

The work of Fr. Babin continues in France: a team of volunteers organizes sessions for the formation of seminarians, especially in Africa. For the past two years, sessions have taken place in Burkina Faso, in Togo, in South Africa and in Zambia. These sessions are supported and funded by the Society of St. Peter the Apostle. Another session, funded by CREC, was organized for the bishops of the Democratic Republic of Congo. These sessions utilize the symbolic method invented by Pierre Babin.

The website of the Talbott School of Theology in Los Angeles, California, has a brief biography of Fr. Babin in which it says: "As a man of faith, he was driven by a concern to communicate the message - the whole message of the Good News - to adolescents who are far more impressed by sights and sounds than by words. He embraced an adaptive stance to the changing media times with prophetic vision. He knew we have to break out of circles that confine our vision. It is impossible to enter into the digital world without breaking out of the print-oriented universe. One of Babin's mantras has been 'It is impossible to have a real intercultural communication in the electronic age without leaving your country and your kindred and your father's house' (Gen 12:1). Becoming a full person in the electronic age is not playing with the emerging new digital tools but being born to new depths of humanity for which our previous education has not prepared us. By 1975, he was one of the most acknowledged authorities in the Church on audiovisual catechetics. Still, early in the 21st century and in his early 80's, he continued to query, explore and imagine the influence of social networking for communicating faith in a digital age." (*Pierre Babin* by Angela Zukowski, http://www2.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/view.cfm?n=pierre_babin)

Asia-Oceania

PHILIPPINES***Mindanao Cross* brings home 4th editorial award**

The Mindanao Cross, one of the oldest running weekly community newspapers in Mindanao and in the country, received another award recently, the 2011 Best in Editorial Page (weekly division), from the Philippine Press Institute during the 2011 Civic Journalism Community Press Awards night on the second day of the PPI 16th National Press Forum held April 23-24 in Manila.

It was this paper's fourth award in that category since 2006.

Published by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate since 1948 for its religious and communicative mission, *The Mindanao Cross* was first awarded the Best in Editorial Page in 1998 by the PPI, which has now more than 60 publication-members throughout the country, both in the weekly and daily division. Its second was the 1999 Gerry Gil Foundation's Best Editorial Page and its third in the 2006 Community Press Awards also in the Best Editorial Page category.

It was also awarded the 1998 Best Edited Paper Weekly and sustained its mettle in the succeeding years' finals.

When the PPI started its awarding system, *The Mindanao Cross* was cited as Best in Newspaper Design, having received a citation in the Mindanao region and a finalist in the national level. It was also recipient of a certificate and a finalist in the Best in Cultural and Historical News.

In its citation for Best in Editorial Page (Mindanao weekly), the PPI said *The Mindanao Cross* "has shown its relevance in its strength. It covers issues close to the hearts of its readers and to a large extent close to home. It goes beyond being an information provider as it gives context to these issues. *The Mindanao Cross* deals with national issues, from the perspective of the local community i.e., how it is important to their readers. It covers big national issues and relates it to the lives of its readers." (R.M. Tendero, Jr., www.mindanaocross.net)

Latin America

HAITI**Our Lady of the Cape in Haiti**

Fr. Yoland OUELLET, *director of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Cape in Canada, saw the devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the context of a different culture.*

Father Joseph CHARLES has managed to promote devotion to Our Lady of the Cape, bringing the Pilgrim Virgin destined for the American diaspora and for Haiti, from north to south in his country. This visit of Mary reached its peak at the charismatic congress in Port-au-Prince, last April 13-15. The congress was televised throughout the whole country and also to the Canadian-American diaspora. Thousands of people heard the story of Our Lady of Cape, before seeing her in a procession of as many as 200,000 persons. Mary has gone to help the Haitian people keep their lamp burning (theme of the Congress, Psalm 18:115); to maintain

courage in hardship and trust in the Lord who is going to rebuild her! (Psalm 102:17). I was very impressed with the organization, with the many committees of young volunteers offering various services. The program with various youth choirs and various artists who came to the event helped me build relationships with certain groups of singers that we hope to hear one day in the plazas of the basilica of the Cape.

The congress prayer was, of course, addressed to Mary: "Virgin of Beautiful Love, help us to keep our lamps burning so that Our Father might transform our country into a little corner of heaven!" Haiti is still reeling from the effects of the earthquake. Father Charles showed me the destroyed city and the faces of terrible misfortune. But hearing these people pray and sing their faith and their hope convinced me that, with the beautiful Love which the Virgin continues to give us, this people is beginning to

rebuild themselves and can become a little corner of heaven! (INFO OMI, 1 May 2012)

GUATEMALA

Lorenzo Rosebaugh: three years since his murder

On May 18, 2009, a group of assailants killed the Oblate priest, Lorenzo ROSEBAUGH, originally from the United States. The attack also wounded Fr. Jean-Claude NGOMA NDEWES, originally from Congo. Three years after the death of Fr. Lorenzo, absolutely nothing is known about the motive and the identity of the killers. On October 28, 2009, the police captured Pedro Choc, Miguel Xo Botzoc and Alfredo Xo. However, after almost six months of trial, the court of Coban found them innocent and they were set free for lack of hard evidence, despite the fact that the bullet found on the dead body of Fr. Lorenzo, according to ballistics experts, matched one of the guns, a 22 caliber automatic Magnum, owned by Don Pedro Choc.

Lorenzo dedicated his life for the poorest of the poor in Latin America, in Brazil, El Salvador and especially Guatemala. His struggle for peace and disarmament, his resistance to the U.S. presence in Vietnam, his struggle against nuclear weapons, and his opposition to the training in the U.S. of young Latin Americans for war...repeatedly sent him to jail. There are few who like him have lived and shared the "fate" (or better, the misfortune) of the most disadvantaged. With unkempt hair and a long beard, he dressed poorly and was confused with the street people. Sometimes, he slept under bridges with the homeless and, with them, he looked for discarded vegetables in the markets to feed them to the poor. In Brazil, he was falsely accused of stealing a cart he was using to bring food to the homeless. Imprisoned in a miserable jail, he was abused and even beaten by other inmates.

When the Oblates learned of his whereabouts, they told the bishop of Recife, Dom Helder Camara, who went to court on his behalf until they released him. He also worked among Salvadoran peasants who were terrorized by the civil war in El Salvador in the 80's.

He continued his work for the poor in Guatemala, a ministry he interrupted to return to the United

States to be near his dying mother. Upon her death, he stayed in the U.S. a couple more years to write his autobiography entitled: *To Wisdom Through Failure: A journey of Compassion, Resistance and Hope*. In it, he wrote: "After being back in the United States over two years, I feel sort of like a fish out of water, having been exposed to the poor and their living conditions. I anxiously await the day I can return to Guatemala."

And to Guatemala he did return, to serve the people he loved. There he was shot on May 18, 2009, at the age of 74. (*Ser misionero hoy*, N° 7)

PARAGUAY

Floods affect the poor

Father Miguel FRITZ, General Councilor for Latin America, tells of the background to the terrible floods that the Oblate missions in the Chaco of Paraguay have endured in recent months.

When the Missionary Oblates arrived in Paraguay in 1925, many indigenous communities, particularly the Nivaclés, based their livelihood upon the Pilcomayo River which was their means of survival and, therefore, considered their "paradise." The Oblates established there the first two missions where they eventually built two parishes, a hospital and schools from which they defended the Nivaclés, in a joint effort with two other religious congregations, against the Bolivian military.

Forty years ago, the capricious river completely flooded one of the parishes. Then, about 20 years ago, an Argentine president, with the support of the European Union, faked a development project and constructed a canal which diverted water to the Argentine side. The Paraguayan government, on its part, reacted by building a canal toward the Paraguayan side, which, during the rainy season, watered this side and was used by different ranches through the construction of dams, for which the government reopened the old channels, in contrast to the Argentine government which was less interested, because of widespread flooding; this led to the neglect of the canal they had built.

Presently, the Pilcomayo River on the Paraguayan side has been hit by various disasters as the result

of three factors:

- More abundant rain than normal.
- The widening of the river, from its origins in Bolivia.
- The ranches that disobeyed the government's orders to open the dams that prevented drainage through the available channels.

On May 7, Fr. Anuncio LÓPEZ sent Fr. Fritz an e-mail with information regarding the present situation.

I am working amidst the floods which were caused by the heavy rains which last January struck the areas of Mariscal, Santa Teresita and Mariscal Estigarribia. The latter remained flooded for a month; fortunately, there were no human victims to mourn because the people took precautions and kept safe. Later, other weather conditions caused rains of 800 to 2200 millimeters in some areas. Because of this, the areas of Fischat, Esteros and General Diaz were flooded; at the latter, the flood wall broke.

In the areas of Campo Aceval, Linea 32 and Santa Maria, all the roads were impassable and it

was impossible to deliver aid by land due to the continuing rain; it was possible to move help only by helicopter. As a vicariate, we decided not to receive contributions and distribute them because we do not have the means to deliver them, plus it could create problems in the communities. So we are channeling all aid to the National Emergency Group who are doing their work satisfactorily.

Unfortunately, the community of Fischat-San Leandro is still cut off by land, either through Argentina or Paraguay. The missionaries who are there are well and are trying to get ahead of the situation which they are sharing with the people; they have received some donations by helicopter, but it is not nearly enough since there are situations of great need, such as the case of patients who want to be evacuated as the need arises.

We are seeking help for rebuilding the communities and lessening of the damages caused by the floods. We hope that after the communities recover, we can begin the pastoral care of support and strengthening the communities under our care; that's how we, as Oblates and as Church, want to respond. We commend ourselves to your prayers.

Anniversaries for July 2012

75 Years of Religious Life

1937.07.21	06520	Fr. Lucien Lajeunesse	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1937.07.21	06541	Fr. Roma Payant	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

65 Years of Religious Life

1947.07.16	08306	Fr. Yvon Beaudoin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.07.16	08326	Fr. Gilles LeBlanc	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

65 Years of Priesthood

1947.07.06	07781	Fr. Jean Troncy	France
1947.07.06	07398	Fr. Pierre Veyrat	Lacombe

60 Years of Religious Life

1952.07.01	09919	Bro. Anthony Szklarski	United States
1952.07.16	09291	Fr. Marcel Chénier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.07.16	09293	Fr. Bernard Ménard	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.07.16	09289	Fr. Gaston Rioux	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.07.25	09251	Fr. Amador Lopez	United States
1952.07.25	09252	Fr. José María Riega	Argentina-Chile

60 Years of Priesthood

1952.07.01	08425	Fr. Bernard Crouvezier	France
1952.07.01	08423	Fr. François Demeaux	France
1952.07.01	08446	Fr. Jean Lerayer	France
1952.07.01	08371	Fr. François Sailler	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

1952.07.06	08202	Fr. Stanislaus T. Balasuriya	Colombo
1952.07.06	08397	Fr. Heinrich Döing	Central European
1952.07.06	08240	Fr. Michel Frémaux	France
1952.07.06	08359	Fr. Jean Lefèbvre	Belgium/Holland
1952.07.13	08372	Fr. Eugeen Van Helden	Belgium/Holland

50 Years of Religious Life

1962.07.25	11628	Fr. Baudilio Fernández	Mediterranean Prov.
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50 Years of Priesthood

1962.07.01	10081	Fr. Augustine Makhokolo	Northern S. A.
1962.07.12	10084	Fr. Vincent McGillicuddy	Australia

25 Years of Religious Life

1987.07.21	13228	Fr. Yakobus Priyana	Indonesia
1987.07.21	13074	Fr. Ignatius Yulianto	Indonesia

25 Years of Priesthood

1987.07.05	13447	Fr. Simon Tlali Thoo	Lesotho
1987.07.11	12746	Fr. Albert Cator	Haiti
1987.07.11	12745	Fr. Loudeger Mazile	Haiti

Anniversaries for August 2012

75 Years of Religious Life

1937.08.15	06613	Fr. Gaetano Nanni	Australia
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70 Years of Religious Life

1942.08.02	07490	Fr. Léo Cantin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1942.08.02	07499	Fr. Gérard Montpetit	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1942.08.15	07461	Fr. Kevin Cawte	Northern S. A.
1942.08.15	07464	Fr. Renato Ciccone	Mediterranean Prov.
1942.08.15	07505	Fr. Ephrem Pelletier	Lacombe

65 Years of Religious Life

1947.08.02	08327	Fr. Adhemar Deveau	United States
1947.08.02	08331	Fr. Gustave Pelletier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.08.02	08334	Fr. Germain Ranger	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.08.02	08337	Fr. Jean-Louis Richard	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.08.15	08341	Fr. Laurent Alarie	Lacombe
1947.08.15	08829	Bro. Oscar Audet	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.08.15	08340	Fr. Jean-Paul Demers	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1947.08.15	08349	Fr. Dominique Kerbrat	Lacombe
1947.08.15	08344	Fr. Jean-Marie Lacasse	Lacombe
1947.08.15	08348	Fr. Albert Lafrenière	Lacombe
1947.08.15	08317	Fr. Pasquale Lanese	United States
1947.08.15	08338	Fr. Maurice Robitaille	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

60 Years of Religious Life

1952.08.02	09302	Fr. Denis Dancause	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.02	09253	Fr. Benoît Garceau	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.02	09254	Fr. Hubert Lagacé	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

1952.08.02	09295	Fr. Réal Mathieu	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.15	09265	Fr. Bernhard Albers	Central S. A.
1952.08.15	09925	Bro. Gunther Arndt	Central S. A.
1952.08.15	09266	Fr. Bruno Carpene	Mediterranean Prov.
1952.08.15	09393	Fr. Antonio Di Benedetto	Mediterranean Prov.
1952.08.15	09274	Fr. Urban Figge	United States
1952.08.15	09305	Fr. Guy Fortin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.15	09311	Fr. Gilles Gauthier	Lacombe
1952.08.15	09262	Fr. James Lantsberger	United States
1952.08.15	09499	Fr. Noël LeBrun	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.15	09394	Fr. Romualdo Lopardo	Mediterranean Prov.
1952.08.15	09272	Fr. Thomas Maher	Colombo
1952.08.15	09268	Fr. Gerald McGovern	United States
1952.08.15	09269	Fr. Anthony Padidilian	Colombo
1952.08.15	09313	Fr. Léonce Paquet	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1952.08.15	09276	Fr. Thomas Singer	United States
1952.08.15	09263	Fr. Bertram Thirimanne	Colombo
1952.08.15	09275	Fr. Frank Wagner	United States

60 Years of Priesthood

1952.08.24	08243	Fr. Michael Clarke	Australia
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50 Years of Religious Life

1962.08.02	11291	Fr. Gerard Bolduc	United States
1962.08.02	11290	Fr. Raymond Lebrun	United States
1962.08.02	11293	Fr. Paul Ouellette	United States
1962.08.15	11298	Fr. Terence Conway	Lacombe
1962.08.15	11275	Fr. Denis Grenier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1962.08.15	11266	Fr. George LaGrange	Lacombe
1962.08.15	11259	Fr. Vicente Louwagie	Mexico
1962.08.15	11256	Fr. Ruben Martinez	United States
1962.08.15	11254	Fr. Clyde Rausch	General Admin.
1962.08.15	11651	Bro. Peter Vasquez	United States
1962.08.15	11265	Fr. Norman Volk	United States
1962.08.15	11212	Fr. Paul Waldie	United States
1962.08.15	11260	Fr. Paul Wilhelm	United States

25 Years of Religious Life

1987.08.15	13172	Fr. Kambambi Roger Bulamba	Paraguay
1987.08.15	13024	Fr. Adélard Ongwans Mapinda	Congo
1987.08.15	13173	Fr. Nsulung Julien Mumpwena	Congo
1987.08.15	13241	Fr. Nsiengi Irénée Ndulu	Congo

25 Years of Priesthood

1987.08.02	12604	Fr. Kalunzu Jean-Baptiste Malenge	Congo
1987.08.02	12556	Fr. Ndongo Paul Manessa	Congo
1987.08.02	12570	Fr. Eric Etom Mukarantin	Congo
1987.08.05	12785	Fr. John Zunti	Lacombe
1987.08.06	12744	Fr. H. Anthony Chrysantha Fernando	Colombo
1987.08.06	12747	Fr. R. Jude Rohan Silva	Colombo
1987.08.29	12652	Fr. Hugo Chóquez	Peru

Prayers for our deceased

No. 31-40

NAME	PROV./Del.	BORN	DIED AT	DATE
Fr. Guerrino Perruzzi	Italy	02/11/1928	Aosta	01/05/2012
Fr. Dennis Deis	United States	22/08/1937	Sioux Falls	04/05/2012
Fr. Leander Fernando	Colombo	26/02/1933	Colombo	07/05/2012
Bro. Lucien Morin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	18/02/1917	Richelieu	07/05/2012
Fr. Pierre Babin	France	25/02/1925	Lyon	09/05/2012
Fr. André Brault	OMI Lacombe	1/12/1928	St. Albert	10/05/2012
Bro. Jozef Cole	Belgium/Holland	18/02/1929	Waregem	10/05/2012
Fr. Edmundo Leising	Brazil	15/09/1919	Rio de Janeiro	18/05/2012
Fr. Marcel Bolduc	United States	31/12/1913	Lowell	19/05/2012
Fr. Gérard Montpetit	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	1/12/1922	Richelieu	23/05/2012

“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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