



## A journey of initiation into religious life

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

The novitiate is a time of initiation into religious life during which the Oblate novice, guided by the Holy Spirit and under the guidance of the master of novices, grows in friendship with Christ. During this time, the novice experiences the Oblate charism, deepened and lived in community and, in prayer, he develops his conscious and joyful response to God's call to become an Oblate, through the experience of the vows of chastity, poverty, obedience and perseverance.

We often find for ourselves some opportunities to renew ourselves in our oblation, to awaken in ourselves the joyful enthusiasm of the beginning and to remember or tell about the experience of the novitiate: it is when we participate in a first vows ceremony, when we are preparing for final vows or when we celebrate the anniversary of our own first vows. For many Oblates, the experience of novitiate remains a unique time in their journey towards Oblate religious life.

I would like to quote an Oblate who just celebrated 50 years of religious, as well as some novice masters and former novice masters to tell about what the experience of the novitiate means for them, and how it contributes to the formation of an Oblate to a solid religious identity.

Fr. Gilberto Piñón, who just celebrated 50 years of oblation, shares this with us: "The Oblate novitiate experience was a special moment in my life, a time of serious discernment of my own vocation. The decision to become an Oblate had been made before, but the novitiate was the living experience of the Oblate vocation. This was the moment when I could examine my life to see if it

really was God calling me; when I could evaluate my own ability to live the Oblate ideal; when I could see if I was really happy and at peace in this Oblate religious lifestyle. I remember that the novice master offered us a lot of questions to help us reflect and pray. The novitiate community also helped me a lot. Sharing my daily life with others helped me in my discernment. And sharing my interior life with the novice master and my spiritual director, I learned to know myself better and know what God expected of me. It was a difficult but very rewarding experience whose fruit is still with me today."

The testimonies of novice masters agree with the experience of Gilberto and in which many Oblates, I am certain, can recognize themselves. They underline the fundamental elements of this experience of the novitiate which it is worthwhile to recall.

The experience must "begin by encountering the cross. This experience is central to formation in the novitiate. The novices, guided by the Holy Spirit, begin to discern their deepest motivation... If we accept entering into the experience of the cross, we open the door to what is the heart of the conversion process. And its fruit is the offering, the gift of self. The novice begins to understand that the adventure of life is to be lived in faith, and in this adventure, formation and conversion are one and the same. In the same context of the encounter with the cross is the connection of the novice with the demands of asceticism in his life, to put the prayer life in first place and to give the Spirit of Christ the opportunity to form

his heart. Finally, contact with the poor -- even if it is limited during the time of novitiate -- gives the opportunity to live as missionaries: to serve others and never wish to be served."

Another element of the novitiate mentioned by a former novice master is silence. "Religious life began in the desert; thus, the desire for solitude and silence. Even though we are not monks or hermits, we need to know and to love the silence, and this is even more important in our noisy 'entertaining' civilization! Being able to leave aside, during the time of retreat, the laptop, the computer; having mastery over these modern means of communication."

During the novitiate, he must also know how to give value to things. "The value and the joy of prayer, the value and the joy of community life, the value and the joy of going to the poorest, the value and the joy of sharing. Hence the importance of personal accompaniment, which must also be valued. This requires openness and

confidence in self and in the formators."

Since it is an introduction to Oblate missionary and religious life, the last element of formation in the novitiate I want to emphasize here is the deepening of knowledge of the Founder and the Oblate charism, which the time of novitiate must provide. "The novices are introduced to the lifestyle of the Oblates not only through the teachings they receive, but also thanks to the experience of the Oblate charism within the novitiate community, the living testimony of the master of novices and his collaborators, and through contact, though limited, with Oblate communities and missions. This is why it is appropriate to appoint the right people at the novitiate."

The congress on the charism in context can be an opportunity to fan the flame of the Oblate charism, which was lit in us during the novitiate experience -- a flame which must continue to burn during every season of our Oblate religious life.

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## General Administration

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### GENERAL POSTULATION

#### Our Oblate Martyrs: the list grows

A month ago, on May 5, 2015, Pope Francis authorized the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate the decree for the beatification of Italian Fr. Mario BORZAGA, O.M.I., and his Laotian catechist, Paul Thoj Xyooj, both martyred in Laos 1960. Now on June 5, 2015, the Holy Father authorized the promulgation of the decree for the beatification of the 15 other Martyrs of Laos, among them five other Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Here is the full list of the 17 Martyrs of Laos:

- 1) Fr. Joseph Thao Tien (1918-1954), diocesan priest and first Laotian martyr.
- 2) Fr. Jean-Baptist Malo, M.E.P. [*Missions Etrangères de Paris = Paris Foreign Mission Society*] (1899-1954), missionary from France.
- 3) Fr. René Dubroux, M.E.P. (1914-1959), missionary from France.

- 4) Paul Thoj Xyooj (1941-1960), lay person, catechist, first Hmong missionary and martyr.
- 5) Fr. Mario BORZAGA, O.M.I. (1932-1960) missionary from Italy.
- 6) Fr. Louis LEROY, O.M.I. (1923-1961), missionary from France.
- 7) Fr. Michel COQUELET, O.M.I. (1931-1961), missionary from France.
- 8) Joseph Outhany (1933-1961), Laotian lay person, catechist.
- 9) Fr. Noel Tenaud, M.E.P. (1904-1961), missionary from France.
- 10) Fr. Vincent L'HÉNORET, O.M.I. (1921-1961), missionary from France.
- 11) Fr. Marcel Denis, M.E.P. (1919-1961), missionary from France.
- 12) Fr. Jean WAUTHIER, O.M.I. (1926-1967), missionary from France.

13) Thomas Khampheuane (1952-1968), lay person, first Laven martyr.

14) Fr. Lucien Galan, M.E.P. (1921-1968), missionary from France.

15) Fr. Joseph BOISSEL, O.M.I. (1909-1969), missionary from France.

16) Luc Sy (1938-1970), married man with three children, missionary and catechist, one of first Kmhmu' martyrs.

17) Maisam Pho Inpeng (1934-1970), head of a family, leader of Christian community, one of first Kmhmu' martyrs.

A decision about the time and the place of the beatification of "Joseph Tien and his companions" will be made by the Holy See, hopefully during the coming summer. (Thomas KLOSTERKAMP, Oblate General Postulator)

## GENERAL HOUSE

### Via Aurelia 290: a work in progress

Whoever comes to Rome and passes by the General House will immediately see that there is some work going on; Via Aurelia 290 is undergoing some remodeling.

After a long period of reflection, calculations, evaluations, technical expertise and financial reports, the General Council has given the go-ahead to part of some major renovations and maintenance which the building of the General House has needed for a long time. The project to sell the General House having been abandoned, the next step is some remodeling, considered necessary some 65 years after its construction.

As everyone knows, the compound at Via Aurelia 290 is made up of three large buildings: the General House, the International Roman Scholasticate and the "Foresteria" (or Guest House); plans are afoot for some important repairs on all three of these buildings.

One of the aims of the operation is to make these three buildings independent in terms of energy. Abandoning fuel oil and switching to gas, at

present, work is under way at the International Scholasticate for the installation of a new boiler; the General House will also be equipped with new gas boilers that will ensure greater efficiency.

In the General House building, work has begun to transfer the General Archives from the second floor of the house to the "crypt" under the large chapel; this crypt and the library under the scholasticate have been emptied. Most of the books were sold / donated to the Accademia di Latinità "Vivarium Novum" in Rome (<https://vivariumnovum.net/>).

In these locations, the first major and essential objective is to recondition the atmosphere so as to protect the Archives from moisture, so damaging to the paper documents that will be kept there; also, the adjacent "Oblate Library" demands a radical reconditioning and maintenance, if we do not want to lose a veritable family patrimony.

Since multiple repairs are needed on the General House, from the terraces to the foundation, we have opted for overall work on the outside of the house (roof, windows, plaster, shutters) that will proceed by sections. Starting from the front of the gatehouse, we will proceed part by part along the perimeter of the building. This outside restructuring will require a period of about three or four years. Since we are always confident of divine providence, it all depends on how much financial and economic strength the General Administration will have available. Discussion of the internal remodeling has not yet been taken into account.

As for the Guest House, a project is underway for a complete makeover of the building that later will be entirely inhabited for a good number of years by a community of religious women, on the basis of a loan contract for use of the building.

Consequently, everyone can guess that the Hospitality Service which the General House was able to offer with a certain generosity will have to be reduced and limited because it will be moved into the central building. All Oblates who come to visit us will always find here a house that welcomes its brothers, but which looks like a work in progress; they will obviously and fraternally

understand the inevitable inconveniences that such a project requires, especially for the Oblates that live there all the time.

Just as sometimes you see written along a street

or other public place where work is in progress, so too at the General House we can write: “Excuse the inconvenience: we are working for you too!”

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## Africa-Madagascar

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### CONGO

#### Oblate educators gather for 8<sup>th</sup> meeting

The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the executive group of the Association of Oblate Institutes of Higher Learning was held in Kinshasa, Congo, May 25-29, 2015. The theme of this year’s meeting was the Year of Consecrated Life and our Oblate Institutes of Higher Learning. Present for this year’s gathering were: Dr. Chantal Beauvais, Saint Paul University; Dr. Scott Woodward, Oblate School of Theology; Frs. Sylvester DAVID and Neil FRANK, St. Joseph’s Theological Institute; Fr. Charlie INZON, Notre Dame University; Fr. Fabio CIARDI, Director of Oblate Studies; Fr. Anaclet DUPAR, St. Eugene Institute; and, Fr. Warren BROWN, coordinator.

The meeting began with words of welcome by Fr. Habell NSOLO, provincial of Congo. He opened his talk with the African proverb: *‘on ne bat pas le tambour dans l’eau’* – (one does not beat the drum in water), and proceeded to express the joy and good wishes of the local Oblates for this meeting which was held for the first time in Congo.

In the following days, the participants gave presentations on their respective educational institute in relation to its capacity to witness to religious consecrated life in general, the Oblate Charism, and Oblate vocations, their relationship to the Diocesan Church and how they are engaged in planning for future transitions in leadership. The discussions were rich, lively and honest, based upon the growing mutual relationships that have developed over the years among the leadership of the various institutes. The members of the executive group also took time to have one-on-one meetings where each Institute’s leadership could coordinate joint projects with each of the other Oblate Institutes depending upon their interests or needs.

One of the major points of convergence centered around a paper entitled: “Elements of a Vision for an Oblate Catholic Institution of Higher Learning” which was presented by Dr. Chantal Beauvais, of Saint Paul University, and developed in collaboration with the Oblate SPU community in Ottawa. The paper proposes to set a certain standard for our Oblate Institutes and hopefully will soon be presented to the Oblate Congregation’s leadership and members as a contribution to the development of our Oblate charism during the Oblate Triennium. The paper led to an interesting discussion on how the executive group could next develop a set of standards of values to be expected of all graduates of our Oblate Institutes. This concept of “formation design” would fit well with the theme for this 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Oblate Triennium on Formation.

Fabio Ciardi shared with the participants some of his service’s activities on behalf of academic study of the Oblate charism through promotion of individual study, academic courses and the project of the Oblate Charism Congress. The Congress will be held in four of the Congregation’s higher learning institutes: Cedara, Kinshasa, Obra and San Antonio. Fabio also pointed out how employees of all the Oblate’s internal and external ministries could really benefit from an orientation program on the life of St. Eugene and the Oblate charism today. This would help the employees to understand the Oblates and our charism in a better way as a missionary religious congregation.

The final morning of the meeting brought the participants together with the school community of Institut Saint-Eugene to experience a dynamic and inspirational presentation given by Dr. Chantal Beauvais on Transformational Leadership in the Church in light of the teachings of Pope Francis.

At the business meeting, the participants discussed how they could be more inclusive of all those Oblates in the Congregation who are involved in the ministry of higher education. Some proposals were made, including drawing up an inventory of all Oblates in the Congregation who are or have been involved in the ministry of higher learning as a primary database. They also discussed how to better attend to Oblates who are sent for higher studies to Oblate Institutes. They studied the Oblate Congregation's policy as amended in 2011, entitled: "Guidelines on Higher Studies - the Academic and Professional Training of Oblates in our Units" and made a commitment on the behalf of the Oblate Institutes to study this policy so as to better serve the needs of the Oblate Congregation in the ongoing formation of Oblates in different fields of study undertaken in the name of the Oblate mission. Warren Brown was re-confirmed as the coordinator of the group and Dr. Chantal Beauvais was elected as the treasurer for the next three years. Next year's gathering will be held at the International De Mazenod Center in Aix-en-Provence. Special thanks to Fr. Anaclet Dupar and the local Oblates of Institut Saint-Eugene; it will be difficult to surpass this meeting for its animated discussions and engaging local programming.

### **GUINEA BISSAU** **Many new Christians**

*Fr. Celso CORBIOLI reports on the many baptisms in the mission and on the situation in the country.*

As many of you know, for a few years now, I am located in a parish in Bissau, the capital of this little country in Western Africa. The parish is called Antula and includes part of the city and a large area on the outskirts. The number of inhabitants continually increases because of the unending movement from the interior of the country toward the city. Consequently, the number of Christians increases each year. Last year, we had 360 baptisms, most of them adults. Again this year, the number will be more or less the same. For all this, we thank God, and at the same time, we pray for the gift of perseverance for all those who enter to become part of his

family, so that they might be authentic witnesses of the Gospel.

A couple of years ago, we had written that we were planning on building the church; it's still not completed. Construction has begun and we hope that within a year or a little more, it will be finished.

After a long period of instability, Guinea Bissau is finally experiencing a bit of peace and progress. A few weeks ago, the President of the Republic welcomed to the presidential palace all the religious men and women of Guinea Bissau, gathered in those days for the visit of Cardinal João Bras de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The president, in his speech, repeatedly thanked the religious men and women for their presence and the help they give the country; he said that the palace is not his, but the people's, and that we too can come and meet with him whenever we want. That was another sign of the desire to establish a climate of peace and collaboration.

### **ZAMBIA** **Radio Liseli marks 10 years**

On Oct. 13, 2004 the Oblate Zambian delegation's dream of establishing a radio link to bring the Word of God to the people of Zambia was realized when it was granted a license for full broadcasting.

On June 11, 2005, Superior General Fr. Wilhelm STECKLING, presided at the official opening of Oblate Radio Liseli in Mongu, Zambia. Among the dignitaries present was the Hon. Dr. Sipula Kabanje, MP, Provincial Minister.

In a letter of congratulations, United States Provincial, Fr. Bill ANTONE, wrote the station's first director, now delegation superior of Zambia, Fr. Freeborn KIBOMBWE, saying, "Given the lack of infrastructure and the distances in the Western Province, Radio Liseli has been able to be a wonderful bridge of communication for thousands of listeners beginning in Mongu and striving to reach the most distant villages.

“May God bless you Fr. Barnabas SIMATENDE and Fr. Joseph KANG’OMBE and all who are leading the development at this time of this invaluable and

powerful tool for evangelization, communication and the integral building up of a peaceful society in the beautiful land of the Zambezi.”

## Canada-United States

### NOTRE-DAME-DU-CAP

#### The Oblates leave Maniwaki

On May 31, with Bishop Paul Lortie presiding, the Diocese of Mont-Laurier wished to show its gratitude to the community of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate with a magnificent celebration. Well before the creation of the diocese in 1913, in the 1840’s, the Oblates were already navigating its rivers, the Gatineau and the Lièvre, bringing the Good News to the region north of Ottawa. Amerindians and woodsmen, and later on, colonizers and their families received the spiritual and religious support of Christianity, thanks to the diligence and the generosity of these Brothers and Fathers who confronted the swamp mosquitoes in order to be near the people of Upper Gatineau, as well as the men and women who settled on the Lièvre river.

The solemn entrance procession included a large delegation of priests from the diocese of Mont-Laurier and several Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, with their provincial, Father Luc TARDIF, who took their places in the church’s sanctuary.

At the beginning of the celebration, Fr. Christian DIONNE, a native of Maniwaki, presented to the assembly a beautiful historical summary of the 164 years of evangelization by the Oblate community in the Upper Gatineau and at Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts in the 1930’s.

The liturgy continued with the beautiful singing of the choir (under the direction of Mrs. Lucille Morin-Martel) around the biblical texts of the feast of the Holy Trinity. As this Sunday coincided with the feast of the Visitation of Mary, an important Marian feast in the liturgical calendar, the selected Gospel text was that of Mary’s visit to Elizabeth and her song of praise, the Magnificat. Bishop Lortie gave the homily. During the offertory procession, some symbolic objects were presented: the cross from

the religious profession of Father Jean Déléage; a historic suitcase that the missionaries brought with them to celebrate Mass; a Bible recalling the Word of God announced by the Oblates; and finally the bread and wine needed for the Eucharistic celebration.

After communion, Bishop Lortie blessed the beautiful stained glass window to the left of the transept, the work of Mr. Roger Filiatrault. He has succeeded in engraving in the art glass the emblems of religious communities that followed one another in Maniwaki and the coat of arms of the diocese of Mont-Laurier. At the top of the window, under the cross, there is the silhouette of Bishop St. Eugene de Mazenod, founder of the community of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Marseilles, France.

Finally, as a sign of gratitude, an original sculpture by artist Donald Doirion, a Maniwaki resident, was given to the Provincial of the Oblates, Fr. Luc Tardif. The sculpture depicts a priest holding the Word of God, standing in a bark canoe in which we see the suitcase of the missionary. This sculpture of iron and brass sits on a white stone pedestal, and then on a base on which is inscribed: *Gratitude of the diocese of Mont-Laurier to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (1851-2015)*. (By Michel Lafontaine, <http://www.dioceseml.com/>)

### UNITED STATES

#### Shrine celebrates “El Santo Niño”

The Filipino community is one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States. In 1989, when the Oblates celebrated 50 years of presence in the Philippines, the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, Illinois, welcomed several thousand Filipino Catholics to commemorate the North American Oblates (Canada and USA) who first established an Oblate mission in that island nation. At that time, the late Cardinal Jaime Sin, then

Archbishop of Manila was the guest of honor at the celebration. Also present were several Oblate bishops, all now deceased: Archbishop Gerard MONGEAU, Bishops Philip SMITH, George DION and Antonino NEPOMUCENO. The then President of the Philippines, Mrs. Corazon Aquino, sent a special video greeting on the occasion. She and her late husband had visited the OMI Shrine when they were in exile in the early 1980's.

Ever since that 1989 celebration, hundreds of Filipino Catholics have come each year to pray at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, especially for the annual Flores de Mayo (Flowers of May) celebration in honor of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, a devotion which originated in Spain and which

spread to the Philippines in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

On May 23-24, 2015, the annual pilgrimage took on special meaning with the presence of Cardinal Orlando QUEVEDO, the current Archbishop of Cotabato. He came to help celebrate 75 years of Oblate presence in the Philippines and to dedicate a special chapel at the Shrine to honor the Santo Niño of Cebu (the Little Child of Cebu), another devotion which is very popular in the Philippines. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after the city of Cebu was destroyed by a devastating fire, a statue of the Christ Child was found virtually untouched under mounds of ash. News of the statue spread and devotion to the Santo Niño de Cebu was initiated. Today, the image of the Santo Niño appears in many homes and businesses in the Philippines.

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## Europe

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### UKRAINE

#### A Canadian Oblate in Kyiv

*On June 8, 2015, Fr. Paul PATRICK was ordained a priest for Assumption Province in Canada. After completing his studies at the International Scholasticate in Rome, he had gone to Ukraine for a year of pastoral experience.*

Although time flew by very quickly, my pastoral experience in Kyiv, Ukraine is one which will always remain with me; although not always an easy ministry, especially at the beginning, due my need to perfect the language, I loved ministry in Ukraine and feel as though I left a small part of my heart there.

My first introduction to Kyiv ministry came in the form of ministering to street people with Brother Sebastian JANKOWSKI. A few days after my arrival in the city, he invited me to help him show a film at a hospital for those without money. Arriving at the hospital, I was astounded that people could live, let alone be cured, in such a place. It was basically a concrete bunker, with some old wire cots for people to lie on, quite cold, and draughty. Medicine was to be bought by others – no money for medicine meant no medicine – there were no social programs available. We raised some money through donations and charitable events such as plays

and programs, and used the money to buy basic medicines and painkillers, as well as essentials such as soap and shampoo. To show films, we brought a laptop and a projector, and projected the movie on the concrete wall of the hospital. The homeless people propped themselves up in their beds and cheered as the film went on.

After becoming an Oblate, I never had imagined that my knowledge of mechanical engineering would come into play. At the Media Center, I was able to utilize many skills to help with the maintenance of equipment, creating websites and databases, as well as troubleshooting and setting up equipment. I also did a lot of translating – from Italian or English to Ukrainian and vice versa.

As deacon in the parish, I had the responsibility to officiate at any funerals which came, as well as any baptisms or marriages celebrated outside of the Mass. I remember the second time in my life I was to officiate at a funeral service for an elderly woman who had passed away in the outskirts of Kyiv. When I arrived at the morgue, it was explicable closed, and no one seemed to know why. With the family of the deceased, I tried to gain access, but it seemed that no one had the key to the small building which housed the morgue itself. The response – come tomorrow. The next day, in the morning the family came for me again, and we travelled across the city to the

morgue. This time, we found the morgue open, but the body was nowhere to be found – it seems that they had transported her to another location. Upon arriving at this new location, we found it also to be locked, with the familiar response – come tomorrow. The next day, the family picked me up from the Oblate residence and again we travelled to this latest location, where apart from some issues with paperwork, we were able to finally gain access, pray and conduct the service. I thought the family might have been upset; on the contrary, it seemed to them the normal way when dealing with governmental organizations such as a district morgue.

Although not officially in charge of the youth in the parish, I often helped out the associate pastor with many functions and events which involved the youth in the parish. Although the parish was small, the youth were very devout and active, and left a lasting impression on me. They were very curious about religious life, and asked me many questions – questions which I remember asking other Oblates in Canada when I was discerning a religious vocation. We went on retreats together, skiing trips to the nearby Carpathian Mountains, decorated and cleaned the church, fed the homeless, and performed liturgical events such as adoration and penitential services together. When I had my last Sunday in the parish, the youth presented me with flowers in the colours of the Ukrainian flag, and a beautiful Ukrainian gift to remember them by.

## **HOLLAND**

### **Knighthood for a missionary in Peru**

On June 17, 2015, His Majesty, Willem-Alexander, the King of Holland, honored a long-time missionary in Peru, Father Jan BRINKHOF, with the Order of Knighthood of Orange-Nassau. The award was granted in recognition of the many years of social work and the pastoral ministry exercised by the Missionary Oblate in Comas, Peru. On that same day, Father Jan also celebrated his 77<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The honor was conferred by the mayor of Deventer in Father Jan's hometown, in the presence of all of his brothers and sisters, as

well as many people from the local parish and some benefactors.

The Oblates of Holland were represented by Father Gerard VAN DEN BEUKEN, the regional superior, and Father Léo VAN DEN BERG, the regional treasurer.

## **UKRAINE**

### **A double celebration**

In 1998, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate founded a Roman Catholic parish, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in Kryvyi Rig. Fr. Jacek PYL oversaw the building of the parish church, and in 2012, in order to make available some Oblates to begin a mission in Russia, the Oblates turned the parish over to the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette. Kryvyi Rig is known for being the longest city in Europe (124 km from north to south).

On June 13, 2015, the parish's former pastor, now Bishop Jacek PYL, Auxiliary of Odessa-Simferopol, came back to preside at another historic event, the ordination of the first native son of the parish to become an Oblate priest, Fr. Bogdan SAVITSKYI, as well as the bishop's first conferral of priestly ordination.

At the beginning of the Mass, Fr. Pavlo VYSHKOVSKYI, the delegation superior, welcomed the guests and spoke some words of courage: "Despite the fact that the war continues not so far away and despite the difficult times the Fatherland is enduring these days, God is telling us: Do not be afraid! Fear not, because today I am giving you and your land a new priest who will liberate from the yoke of the bondage of sin many souls. God does not abandon us; our land and our parish are greatly blessed in this priestly ordination."

In his homily, Bishop Pyl recalled the importance of the sacrament of priesthood. "You, dear son, receive ordination in the name of Christ the teacher; carry out the mission entrusted to you. Preach the word of God to all ... Let your studies be food for the people of God; may the holiness of your life be a source of joy for the followers of Jesus Christ." The bishop concluded that on



the previous day, the Church had celebrated the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that on the ordination day, it was celebrating the Immaculate Heart of Mary. "Behold, dear Bogdan ... be a priest after the model of the heart of Jesus."

## ITALY

### Forty years after the expulsion from Laos

*August 31, 2015, will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the expulsion of Italian Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Laos. Other foreign-born Oblates left the country between 1976 and 1978. Bishop Jean KHAMSE VITHAVONG was the only Oblate there for many years. He is now the Vicar Apostolic of Vientiane. Fr. Paolo MICELI, formerly a missionary in Laos (1972-75) and for nearly 40 years a member of the Delegation of Thailand, when he learned of the upcoming beatification, he visited Luang Prabang and wrote to Fr. Angelo PELIS on June 3, 2015. Below are some excerpts from his letter.*

What emotion and what joy I felt at your message about the upcoming beatification of Fr. Mario BORZAGA and the catechist, Paul Xyooj, not to forget the cause of the other 15 martyrs of Laos, promoted by the local bishops and also ready for the next step.

The news persuaded me to make a *pilgrimage* to Luang Prabang, after forty years, and to spend a couple of days with Monsignor Tito Banchong, Apostolic Administrator, and his closest collaborators: deacons, sisters, some catechists. Fr. Mario Borzaga, the first Oblate martyr in Laos and Paul Xyooj, the first Hmong to be beatified, are already protectors of the Vicariate of Luang Prabang.

In those two days, I saw in person how the Holy Spirit is working to strengthen and give growth to the Church in *our* North Laos. Tito is a man who has total confidence in the action of the Holy Spirit and who lets himself be guided by God in his decisions. And one can see the results. Fr. Pierre Bounthà has been a priest for three years, the first of the new group, and he is an ever joyful priest, full of zeal, enthusiasm and a missionary

spirit. Three deacons, God willing and in hope of receiving government approval, are preparing for priestly ordination, possibly at the end of the year.

The house which Tito has built, at this time, brings them all together: a veritable cenacle, where they pray and work together under his truly fatherly guidance. As is his style, he leads a very simple life: his free time is spent on the work necessary to maintain the house, from gardening to the various household needs, such as repairing the fishing nets. The priest and deacons follow his example by cutting the grass and taking care of the rice paddy.

There are also three Sisters of Charity of Saint Jeanne Antide Thouret, who take care of a school for the disabled. At six in the morning, they all gather for the Eucharistic celebration.

The logistics are slowly taking shape. In Luang Prabang, the house where Tito lives, in addition to its authorized function as a hostel (*guest house*), at this time also serves as the seat of the Vicariate, Cathedral Church and Center for young people. A couple of kilometers further on, the Sisters have built and run a school for the disabled.

In the same area where the Sisters live, a property of about 30 by 50 meters has been purchased: it is now necessary to separate the center of the Mission from the parish church (cathedral) which will be dedicated, of course, to the first Blessed of the Vicariate.

In Vientiane, there is a building which houses the seminarians of the Vicariate of Luang Prabang: Fr. Bounthà is in charge. He and the three deacons all come from Sayabouri.

In the village of Pomg Vang, there is a very lively Christian community that has some freedom to live its Christianity.

In Huay Say, there are so many villages of different ethnicities, with rather large Christian communities. In particular, the community of the Lahù shows great vitality and fervor; they live in the area of Ton Pheung, the former village of Frs. Amadio VITALI and Natalino BELINGHERI.

For the moment, Fr. Bounthà, with a government permit given annually, can go there three or four times a year for major festivities. In the near future, even with a permit to be renewed annually, it is believed that one of the new priests will be able to assure a stable presence.

I send you this news to tell you that the future Blessed Mario Borazaga and Paul Xyooj are

already working hard in this North-Laos, which also witnessed our own sweat in planting the Church of Jesus. Besides Father Mario, I think of other dear companions who died there: Fr. Natalino SARTOR (1966), Bishop Leonello BERTI (1968), Fr. Antonio ZANONI (1972) and still others who have left us in the past 40 years since the expulsion from Laos. We are only a few now who are going strong!

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### Latin America

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#### PERU

##### Oblate musician wins a music prize

Father Elio Dennis LÓPEZ PAREDES is the winner of contest for religious music conducted by the National Conference of Religious of Peru. Elio communicates with music about his own vocation: Compendium of a vocation – the gift of love.

“They are two songs,” he says, “that today are a reality and in which I tell the story of my priestly vocation. I am sharing a video with you of two of my creations, songs which appear in the CD, *Vida Consagrada en la Iglesia hoy: Evangelio-*

*Profecía-Esperanza (Consecrated Life in the Church today: Gospel-Prophecy-Hope)*. I hope you like them. Special thanks to the group *Siembra* who mad this production posible.” (YouTube: <http://y2u.be/CB3vcFN3Uwk>)

Elio was born in 1976, professed his first vows in 2006 and was ordained a priest in 2011. He was a member of the Oblate community at the International Roman Scholasticate, 2008-2010. With his great creativity, he was the force behind the organization of parties and family celebrations in the community. Now he puts to the service of the mission his joy, his creativity and his talent as an animator.

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## Anniversaries -- August 2015

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#### 75 Years of religious life

1940.08.15 07143

Fr. Edmond Turenne

Lacombe

#### 70 Years of religious life

1945.08.02 08004

Fr. Marc Bilodeau

Notre-Dame-du-Cap

#### 65 Years of religious life

1950.08.02 08868

Fr. Lucien Bouchard

United States

1950.08.02 08871

Fr. Roger Couture

United States

1950.08.02 08827

Fr. Normand Harvey

Notre-Dame-du-Cap

1950.08.12 09624

Deac. Marcel Lamonde

Notre-Dame-du-Cap

1950.08.15 08844

Fr. Antonio Ciccone

Mediterranean

1950.08.15 08837

Fr. Donald Dietz

United States

1950.08.15 08833

Fr. Waclaw Gorniak

Poland

1950.08.15 09470

Bro. Paul Haag

France

1950.08.15 08845

Fr. Fortunato Muffolini

Mediterranean

1950.08.15 08838

Fr. Thomas O'Brien

Brazil

1950.08.15 08840

Fr. Alain Piché

Lacombe

1950.08.15 08836

Fr. Paul Wightman

United States

1950.08.15 08841

Fr. William Woestman

United States

**60 Years of religious life**

1955.08.02	09982	Fr. Roberto Durette	Bolivia
1955.08.02	09983	Fr. Leroy Landry	United States
1955.08.02	09977	Fr. Robert Levesque	United States
1955.08.02	09980	Fr. Donald Lozier	United States
1955.08.15	09987	Fr. Hervé Aubin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.08.15	09992	Fr. René Bélanger	Lacombe
1955.08.15	10462	Bro. Henri Bisson	Lacombe
1955.08.15	09986	Fr. Gérard Cousineau	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.08.15	09930	Fr. Fraccid A. Fernando	Colombo
1955.08.15	09995	Fr. Edward George Figueroa	Brazil
1955.08.15	09996	Fr. Michael Hussey	United States
1955.08.15	09993	Fr. Luciano Lachance	Bolivia
1955.08.15	09994	Fr. Marc Lortie	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.08.15	09932	Fr. Pedru P. Philip Fernando	Jaffna
1955.08.15	09988	Fr. Louis Ponniah	Jaffna
1955.08.15	09989	Fr. Jean-Guy Roberge	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.08.15	10002	Bishop Reynald Rouleau	Lacombe
1955.08.15	10080	Fr. Albert Michael Schneider	Central European
1955.08.15	09990	Fr. Rodrigue Vézina	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1955.08.22	10005	Fr. Joseph Daudier	Haiti
1955.08.22	09934	Fr. Price Dorismond	Haiti

**60 Years of priesthood**

1955.08.15	08871	Fr. Roger Couture	United States
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**50 Years of religious life**

1965.08.02	11659	Fr. Alfred Charpentier	Haiti
1965.08.02	11853	Fr. Raymond Marquis	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1965.08.15	11655	Fr. James Deegan	United States
1965.08.15	11860	Fr. Kenneth Forster	Lacombe
1965.08.15	11677	Fr. Francis Salmon	Lacombe
1965.08.15	11904	Fr. Glenn Zimmer	Lacombe

**25 Years of religious life**

1990.08.01	13274	Fr. John Staak	United States
1990.08.15	13431	Bro. Daniel Dionne	Lacombe
1990.08.15	13269	Fr. James Holland	Lacombe
1990.08.26	13380	Bro. Eric Audo	France
1990.08.26	13379	Bro. Dominique Dessolin	France
1990.08.26	13331	Fr. Antoine Monsavane	France
1990.08.26	13418	Fr. Jean Amadou Sy	France

**25 Years of priesthood**

1990.08.01	12791	Fr. Olotsh Zenon Berikani	Paraguay
1990.08.01	12945	Fr. Nokin Norbert Kingani	Congo
1990.08.01	12940	Fr. M'Onzil Rogatien Munzubu	Congo
1990.08.01	12867	Fr. Fulgence Lepi-Nene Tasar	Congo
1990.08.01	12823	Fr. Kolobay Polydor Twanga	Congo
1990.08.04	12981	Fr. Philip Anselm Jaga Anony	Colombo

1990.08.04	12979	Fr. Andrias Fernando	Colombo
1990.08.04	12980	Fr. Romesh Lowe	Colombo
1990.08.04	12978	Fr. Alexander Rodrigopulle	Colombo
1990.08.18	13008	Fr. Louis-Marie Verrette	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1990.08.25	12830	Fr. Simon Sechaba 'Malei	Namibia

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## Anniversaries for September 2015

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### 70 Years of religious life

1945.09.08	08022	Fr. Jacques Keyzer	Belgium & Holland
1945.09.08	08033	Fr. William McHugh	United States
1945.09.29	08049	Fr. John Murphy	Anglo-Irish
1945.09.29	08048	Fr. Brendan O'Sullivan	Anglo-Irish

### 65 Years of religious life

1950.09.08	08901	Fr. Charles Beausoleil	United States
1950.09.08	08890	Fr. Thomas Bilodeau	Lacombe
1950.09.08	08888	Fr. Thomas Brown	Brazil
1950.09.08	08895	Fr. Arthur Craig	United States
1950.09.08	08919	Fr. Marek Czyzycki	Assumption
1950.09.08	08913	Fr. Yves Desmet	Belgium & Holland
1950.09.08	08908	Fr. Pierre Fourman	Belgium & Holland
1950.09.08	08924	Fr. Leonard Glowacki	Poland
1950.09.08	08918	Fr. Alfred Hubenig	Lacombe
1950.09.08	08877	Fr. Guy Jalbert	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1950.09.08	08916	Fr. Christie Joachimpillai	Lacombe
1950.09.08	08922	Fr. Alfons Kupka	Poland
1950.09.08	08896	Fr. Daniel Lafrance	Lacombe
1950.09.08	08900	Fr. Joachim Lizon	Poland
1950.09.08	08911	Fr. John Mazur	Assumption
1950.09.08	08933	Fr. Jean Remy	France
1950.09.08	08904	Fr. Frans Samyn	Central S. Africa
1950.09.08	08898	Fr. Willy Staes	Belgium & Holland
1950.09.15	09154	Fr. Arsène Perbost	France
1950.09.15	09212	Fr. Marcel Rouyer	France
1950.09.29	08940	Fr. Mario Andreotti	Mediterranean
1950.09.29	08938	Fr. Edward Carolan	Anglo-Irish
1950.09.29	08939	Fr. Richard O'Donovan	Anglo-Irish

### 65 Years of priesthood

1950.09.29	08022	Fr. Jacques Keyzer	Belgium & Holland
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### 60 Years of religious life

1955.09.08	10297	Fr. Marian Biernat	Poland
1955.09.08	10445	Fr. Roland Christ	Cameroon
1955.09.08	10041	Fr. Jean-Marie Collière	France
1955.09.08	10008	Fr. André Durand	Cameroon
1955.09.08	10446	Fr. Jean-Baptiste Epp	France
1955.09.08	10660	Fr. Andrzej Grzesiak	Poland

1955.09.08	10011	Fr. Louis Hoffart	Lacombe
1955.09.08	10037	Fr. Iginò Ingriselli	Mediterranean
1955.09.08	10033	Fr. Jerzy Kalinowski	Poland
1955.09.08	10009	Bishop Louis Mbwôl-Mpasi	Congo
1955.09.08	10296	Fr. Jean Nieruchalski	Poland
1955.09.08	10025	Fr. Rudolph Nowakowski	Assumption
1955.09.08	10092	Fr. Angelo Pelis	Mediterranean
1955.09.08	10028	Fr. Guilherme Reinhard	Brazil
1955.09.08	10029	Fr. Wendelin Rolheiser	Lacombe
1955.09.08	10139	Fr. Wilfried Rossel	Belgium & Holland
1955.09.08	10035	Fr. Mauricio Schroeder	Peru
1955.09.08	10480	Fr. Marian Wieckowski	Poland
1955.09.08	10030	Fr. Ronald Zimmer	Lacombe
1955.09.26	10661	Bro. Jerome Blackburn	Lacombe
1955.09.29	10064	Fr. Francis McGreal	Northern S. Africa

**60 Years of priesthood**

1955.09.08	08639	Fr. James Foelker	United States
1955.09.08	08633	Fr. John Sokolski	United States
1955.09.11	09091	Fr. Arthur Massé	Lacombe
1955.09.18	08840	Fr. Alain Piché	Lacombe
1955.09.18	08765	Fr. Thomas Scully	Anglo-Irish
1955.09.24	08911	Fr. John Mazur	Assumption

**50 Years of religious life**

1965.09.08	11679	Fr. Pedro Curran	Brazil
1965.09.08	11957	Bro. Roger Durant	Belgium & Holland
1965.09.08	11770	Fr. James Fee	United States
1965.09.08	11861	Fr. Robert Haggarty	Lacombe
1965.09.08	11684	Fr. Stanislaw Jankowicz	Poland
1965.09.08	11683	Fr. James Jordan	Lacombe
1965.09.08	11678	Fr. Hendrik Koen	Belgium & Holland
1965.09.08	12089	Fr. Adolfo Lemmens	Bolivia
1965.09.08	11765	Bro. Gilberto Pauwels	Bolivia
1965.09.08	11641	Fr. Toon te Dorsthorst	Belgium & Holland
1965.09.08	11682	Bro. Marcos Van Ryckeghem	Belgium & Holland
1965.09.08	11680	Fr. Stephen Vasek	United States
1965.09.15	11688	Fr. Paolo Miceli	Philippines
1965.09.15	11692	Fr. Pasquale Saurio	Mediterranean
1965.09.21	11710	Fr. François Jacquemin	France
1965.09.21	11892	Fr. Bernard Keradec	France
1965.09.21	11891	Fr. Gilbert Le Goff	France
1965.09.29	11694	Fr. Michael Brady	Anglo-Irish
1965.09.29	11793	Fr. Francis Murray	Anglo-Irish

**25 Years of religious life**

1990.09.08	13359	Fr. Lemoine Alcuis	Haiti
1990.09.08	13368	Fr. Ozi-A-Nkom Willy Bunduki	Congo
1990.09.08	13317	Fr. Jerzy Bzdyl	Poland
1990.09.08	13283	Fr. Jean-Edy Desravines	Haiti

1990.09.08	13394	Fr. Enwan Roland Dikelele	Congo
1990.09.08	13314	Fr. Slawomir Dworek	Poland
1990.09.08	13384	Fr. Chrisantha J. Fernando	Colombo
1990.09.08	13312	Fr. Dariusz Galant	Poland
1990.09.08	13320	Fr. Slawomir Kalisz	Australia
1990.09.08	13699	Fr. Frank Kuczera	Lacombe
1990.09.08	13309	Fr. Joachim Kusz	Poland
1990.09.08	13323	Fr. Renald Remindran L. Sellathurai	Jaffna
1990.09.08	13432	Bro. Kitambala Claude Mafuta	Congo
1990.09.08	13371	Bro. Kamal Mendis	Colombo
1990.09.08	13434	Fr. Langongo Jean-Baptiste Mpuni	Natal
1990.09.08	13370	Fr. Mpas Guy Ndombe	Congo
1990.09.08	13316	Fr. Wieslaw Nowotnik	Poland
1990.09.08	13433	Fr. Maboyi Joseph Ntumba	Congo
1990.09.08	13308	Fr. Bogdan Osiecki	Lacombe
1990.09.08	13315	Fr. Wieslaw Przyjemski	Poland
1990.09.08	13318	Fr. Andrzej Rak	Poland
1990.09.08	13369	Bro. Wieslaw Ratajczak	Poland
1990.09.08	13321	Fr. Marek Rojek	Poland
1990.09.08	13450	Fr. Antoine Saint-Hilaire	Haiti
1990.09.08	13322	Fr. Stanislaus Swampillai	Jaffna
1990.09.08	13313	Fr. Krzysztof Szablowski	Poland
1990.09.09	13256	Fr. André Haman	Cameroon
1990.09.09	13297	Fr. Augustin Nwankwo	Cameroon
1990.09.09	13473	Bro. Poulakou Pierre Penta	Cameroon
1990.09.09	13405	Fr. Jean Didier Zanadrafara	Poland
1990.09.15	13257	Fr. Alberto Costa	Mediterranean
1990.09.29	13470	Fr. Francesco Anastasi	Mediterranean
1990.09.29	13291	Fr. Alberto Gnemmi	Mediterranean
1990.09.29	13469	Fr. Domenico Rodighiero	Philippines
1990.09.29	13353	Fr. Maurizio Vella	Mediterranean

### 25 Years of priesthood

1990.09.08	12986	Fr. James Brobst	United States
1990.09.08	12992	Fr. Giovanni Zevola	Australia

## Suffrages for our Deceased

**No. 46-50**

Name	Prov./Del.	Born	Died at	Date
Bro. Jan Szczech	Poland	15/12/1930	Koden	03/06/2015
Fr. John Deely	Japan/Korea	17/04/1941	Gotemba	17/06/2015
Fr. Roland Tessier	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	01/04/1924	Richelieu	20/06/2015
Fr. Enoch Shomang	Northern Province, South Africa	08/03/1939	Johannesburg	25/06/2015
Fr. William DuBuisson	United States	25/12/1929	San Antonio	25/06/2015

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

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