



OMI INFORMATION OMI INFORMACION OMI INFORMAZIONE OMI NACHRICHTEN OMI WIADOMOŚCI OMI

Information No. 502 (English)

September 2010

Called to conversion: the Chapter begins!

From the five regions of the Oblate world, the capitulars and staff of the 35th General Chapter are arriving in the Eternal City to begin what our Oblate Constitutions and Rules call: “...*a privileged time of community reflection and conversion. Together, in union with the Church, as we discern God’s will in the urgent needs of our times, we also thank the Lord for the work of salvation which he accomplishes through us*” (C 125).

At the close of his 12 year tenure as Superior General, Fr. Wilhelm STECKLING, the 11th successor of St. Eugene de Mazenod, in his report to the General Chapter, reminds the whole Congregation of the focus of this important moment in the history of the Oblate family:

“Our Chapter theme is, surprisingly, not mission but conversion. It reads: “*Centered on the person of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves to a profound personal and communal conversion for the sake of our Oblate Mission.*” Our precapitular process was guided by the motto “Conversion: A new heart - a new spirit - a new mission”.

“It was the 2007 Interchapter meeting in South Africa that identified this theme. The participants realized that, in the Congregation, there appears to be an emerging consensus about our identity as missionary Oblates. It has taken years to reclaim this identity, but now most of us agree on a model with the following key elements:

- We are an expression of the Church’s mission to the poor.
- We live and minister in community.
- We embrace internationality and interculturality.
- We make our structures more collaborative and flexible.
- We share financial resources between provinces.

“It was felt that we had reached a basic agreement on these principles and even on ways to bring them to fruition, but that they had not yet become full reality. The one missing element was a change of heart. Intellectually and theoretically we may often be clear about concepts and ideals, models and action paths, but the heart is not fully engaged. We realized that our whole life style as missionaries had to change so that we could live together more harmoniously, be more consistent in prayer and reflection, and then cross the borders to witness to Jesus Christ to the poorest and most abandoned in more creative ways.”

The work of the capitulars is cut out for them. Again quoting our Constitutions and Rules: “*The General Chapter is the highest authority within the Congregation. It elects the Superior General and his Council, articulates our missionary vision, determines general policy for the Congregation and makes whatever decisions are required. If need be, the Chapter also makes changes in the Rules or proposes to the Holy See modifications in the Constitutions*” (C 125, 126).

There will be reports from the Superior General and the General Treasurer. Each region will present its report to the Chapter assembly, as will the Permanent Committee of Oblate Brothers and representatives of the Commission of Oblates and Lay Associates. The Government Committee mandated by the 2004 General Chapter has worked for five years in order to fulfill its mandate. It is proposing a number of changes to the Constitutions and Rules concerning the structures of the Congregation. There will also be other proposals to discuss and consider, related to our missionary vision for the future. Perhaps one of the biggest challenges for the capitulars

will be to do all that they are mandated to do, all the while keeping its focus on the Chapter's theme of conversion.

The Oblate Communications Service will make every effort to keep the entire Oblate family informed about what is happening at the 35th General Chapter. The most up-to-date news will be found on www.omiworld.org. Plans are

being made to have a printed version of *OMI Information* in the mail shortly after the election of the new Superior General; in it, there will be a Chapter Chronicle. There will also be an edition of *OMI Information* after the Chapter, in October, with a continuation of the Chapter Chronicle. The final Acts of the General Chapter will be published in *OMI Documentation*, once the final version is ready.

General Administration

GENERAL CHAPTER Meet the capitulars

We present to you the names of the 89 Oblates who will serve the entire Oblate Congregation by meeting in the 35th General Chapter, September 8 – October 8, 2010.

Key:

BOLD = ex officio members

Italics = elected members

** = invited by Father General

General Administration - 12		
ARCHIATI	Paolo	General Administration
DUMAIS	Marcel	General Administration
FIRTH	Oswald	General Administration
KING	Eugene	General Administration
LABAGLAY	Federico	General Administration
MAZILE	Loudeger	General Administration
MUSUMBI	Jean Bosco	General Administration
<i>PIÑÓN</i>	Gilberto	General House
ROIS ALONSO	Luis Ignacio	General Administration
SARTOR	Roberto	General Administration
STECKLING	Wilhelm	General Administration
WHITLEY	Rufus	General Administration
Africa-Madagascar - 17		
BARNARD	Terrence	Northern Prov. South Africa
BATE	Stuart	Natal
<i>BEWA</i>	Paulin	Cameroun
<i>CHINYEMBA</i>	Evans	Zambia
<i>DIAKANOU</i>	Jean-Marie (Bro)	Cameroun
GIORDANO **	Giuseppe	Senegal-Guinee Bissau
<i>MAKATJANE</i>	Anthony	Lesotho
MANIMBA	Macaire	Congo
<i>MAZIBUKU</i>	Vusumuzi	Natal
<i>MOSEMEDI</i>	Lukas	Namibia
MOSOEU	Emmanuel	Central Prov. South Africa

MOTHEAPHALA	Emile	Lesotho
<i>MOTHIBEDI</i>	Thuso Gregory	Central Prov. South Africa
<i>NDJOLI</i>	Prosper	Congo
NGENOMESHO	Linus	Namibia
NGOKA	Cornelius	Cameroun
<i>OCHLAK</i>	Marek	Madagascar
Asia-Oceania - 14		
<i>ADUANA</i>	José (Bro.)	Philippines
ATMAKA	Andri	Indonesia
BERNABE	Ramon Ma.	Philippines
<i>BERTUCCIO</i>	Claudio	Thailand
<i>CROOS</i>	Francis L.N.	Jaffna
DYER	Harry	Australia
<i>LAYSON</i>	Roberto	Philippines
LE **	Vincent	France (Mission in Asia)
MARIAMPILLAI	Paul Nachethiram	Jaffna
<i>MORAES</i>	Emilianus	Bangladesh
NALLAPPAN	Francis	India
<i>SILVA</i>	Jude Rohan	Colombo
<i>ULLRICH</i>	David	China
WAIDYASEKARA	Clement	Colombo
Canada-United States - 15		
BLAZEJAK	Janusz	Assumption
<i>BOYER</i>	André	OMI Lacombe
<i>BROWN</i>	Warren	United States
<i>GALLAGHER</i>	Gregory	United States
<i>GILBERT</i>	Charles (Bro.)	United States
GILBERT	Jean-Claude	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
KALERT**	David	United States
<i>LALIBERTÉ</i>	Jacques	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
LOUGEN	Louis	United States
MALAZDREWICH	John	Lacombe
<i>MORELL</i>	William	United States
<i>O'DELL</i>	Anthony	Lacombe
<i>PULCHNY</i>	Christopher	Assumption
<i>ROLHEISER</i>	Ronald	Lacombe
<i>TARDIF</i>	Luc	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
Europe - 20		
<i>BOCHM</i>	Antoni	Poland
CHALVET-DE-RÉCY	Yves	France
DOSQUET**	Benoît (Bro.)	France
<i>D'OTTAVIO</i>	Aldo	Italy
<i>DUPONT</i>	François	Belgium/Holland
FITZPATRICK	William	Anglo-Irish Prov.
<i>GNEMMI</i>	Alberto	Italy
<i>JANCA</i>	Krzysztof (Bro.)	Poland
<i>KERADEC</i>	Bernard	France

KLOSTERKAMP	Thomas	Central European Prov.
<i>KOWALEWSKI</i>	Wojciech	France
LARGO	Otilio	Spain
PARRETTA	Nicola	Italy
<i>POPIELEWSKI</i>	Wojciech	Poland
<i>SEDLON</i>	Martin	Central European Prov.
SZMYDKI	Ryszard	Poland
VERVUST	Georges	Belgium/Holland
<i>WARREN</i>	Raymond	Anglo-Irish Prov.
<i>ZAJĄC</i>	Paweł	Poland
<i>ZMITROWICZ</i>	Radosław	Ukraine
Latin America - 11		
<i>BRITEZ</i>	Pedro	Paraguay
CABRAL	Rubens Pedro	Brazil
FRITZ	Miguel	Paraguay
JOINT	Gasner	Haiti
LOPEZ	Vicente	Mexico
<i>MARTYR</i>	Ellince	Haiti
<i>NEPTUNE</i>	Jean (Bro.)	Haiti
ROJAS	Wladimir	Argentina-Chile
<i>SANTOYO</i>	Victor	Peru
SILES	Guillermo	Bolivia
<i>VÁSQUEZ</i>	Erasmó	Guatemala

GENERAL CHAPTER

Regional reports on the internet

In September of 2009, the superiors of provinces, delegations and missions were asked to submit a report of their Unit to both the Chapter Commissioner and to the Regional President. The suggested focus of these Unit reports was the following:

- Areas or ministries of the Unit that have developed, flourished or grown since the last Chapter, with reasons for this apparent success.
- Areas or ministries of the Unit which are dying out, or are no longer relevant, with reasons for this decline and dying.
- The main issues which the Unit wants to bring to the attention of the General Chapter?

The Regional President was asked to make a synthesis of these reports. This synthesis is the basis for a report that the Regional President will make during the General Chapter. After

the presentation of the report, there will be time for the capitulars to make comments and ask for clarifications.

These syntheses are now found on the Congregation's web site (www.omiworld.org).

GENERAL CHAPTER

Treasurer General's report to Chapter is available

We have posted on this website the report that the Superior General will offer the 35th General Chapter as required by Rule 126a.

The formal capitular text of the financial situation of the Congregation is available directly from the Treasurer General to any Oblate who would wish a copy. Please contact the Treasurer General directly if you wish a copy (whitley@omigen.org). Please clearly indicate the following:

1. The **language** in which you wish to receive the report (English, French, Spanish).

2. The manner of transmission:

- a. via a PDF file attached to an **e-mail** (include the email of the Oblate).
- b. via **post** (please include the full address to be used)

c. via **courier** (please include the full address – not post office box – and phone number)

Asia-Oceania

PAKISTAN

Oblate bishop ordained

On April 29, the Vatican announced the great news that Msgr. Victor GNANAPRAGASAM, OMI would be the first bishop of the newly erected Apostolic Vicariate of Quetta. This news was received by all the Oblates and the people of the vicariate with great happiness and thankfulness to God. Msgr. Victor had already been the Apostolic Prefect of Quetta since April 2002. In the last 8 years, the Prefecture grew and progressed in every way. The Holy See followed closely this expansion and development in the Prefecture. The decision from the Vatican was, therefore, one of encouragement and inspiration for the local church of Baluchistan.

The Episcopal Ordination was glorious and solemn at the Cathedral of St. Patrick at Karachi on July 16, 2010. Presiding at the ritual of ordination was the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Adolfo Yllana. Karachi is about 650 kms south of Quetta. There was some concern about having the ordination in Quetta due to the tensions and conflict in Quetta and in the Province of Baluchistan.

St. Patrick's Cathedral was filled with faithful from Quetta and Karachi and from many parts of Pakistan. Numerous clergy and religious came from all parts of Pakistan to witness this historic event. The Bishops' Conference of Pakistan was also present to welcome the new bishop. There were also many Oblates and friends and relatives of Bishop Victor to celebrate with him.

Msgr. Victor was born in Jaffna on November 21, 1940 and was ordained a priest on December 21, 1966. After serving in Sri Lanka, he left for Pakistan as a missionary in 1973. His episcopal ordination coincided with the 98th birthday of

his mother; two of his sisters are nuns in the Apostolic Carmelite Order.

He had worked in many parishes and had held a leadership role for many years, helping the Oblate Delegation to grow and expand in many dioceses and many ministries. He worked in the formation of future Oblates in the juniorate and the scholasticate. Now many of the Oblates in the Vicariate are his former students and they love to work with him.

The Oblates arrived in Pakistan in 1971. The mission of Quetta was given to the Oblates in 1983. From one parish (Holy Rosary) in Quetta in 1983, there are now 7 parishes. Three Oblates began ministry in 1983 and now there are 11 Oblates working in parishes and in varied ministries.

On July 25, Bishop Victor was installed as the first Vicar Apostolic of Quetta Vicariate. Quetta was for many years a parish of the Hyderabad Diocese, about 450 kms from the diocesan center. An outdoor Eucharist was organized on St. Joseph's Convent School grounds. More than 4000 people joined in the thanksgiving celebration where the local Church welcomed with great love and admiration the new Shepherd. It was very moving to see the newly installed Bishop going among the people, giving them his first blessing.

This beautiful and historic event was marred by a sad event. Four Oblates travelling from Quetta for the celebration met with a very serious motor accident. Two of them were in critical condition and were admitted to the Aga Khan Hospital. Most seriously injured was Fr. James Khan GASPER who was in a coma for several days, with a serious head injury and fractured ribs. Another Oblate sustained a broken hand and leg. The other two escaped with minor injury. (Fr. Jeevendra PAUL)

PAKISTAN**Oblates to the aid of a suffering people**

Since early August, torrential rains have caused extensive flooding in parts of Pakistan, especially in the Indus river basin. Some reports say that as many as 1,600 people have lost their lives in the flooding and another two million have had to flee their homes as the waters rose around them. There has been extensive damage to the agricultural crops; the lives of at least 14 million people have been disrupted.

Father Aloysius ROY, the superior of the Oblate Delegation in Pakistan, reports that the Oblates are trying to care for those fleeing for their lives: "The neighboring numerous villages are affected and the people from those villages are coming into our parish (school buildings, halls) and will stay till the flood recedes. Our priests have to look after them and feed them....; many of them have abandoned their cattle and many belongings and ran for life!

"One of our priests Fr. Mukhtar ALAM, of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine at Derekabad, phoned me few hours ago giving me the above details. There are more than 1500 people are already arrived into our parish for shelter." (August 12)

On a happier note, Father Roy wrote to Father General on August 11 about the two Oblates who sustained serious injuries while traveling to the ordination of Bishop Victor GNANAPRAGASAM on July 16:

"I want to give you some good news! Fr. (James Kahn) GASPER is shifted to the General Ward from ICU since yesterday. He has improved a lot and hopefully in a week or so he could be returning to our house.

"He still has tube through his throat for better breathing and for oxygen. So, he is still unable to talk, but he understands everything and communicates with signs. He is fed through a tube.

"Fr. Abid (SALEEM) is at the Oblate Scholasticate resting and recuperating. He still has to go to the hospital for 'check ups'.

"We are looking after all their needs and we hope they will be able to exercise ministry in the near future. We thank you for your prayers and constant support, especially in this difficult time."

INDIA**Thanks from the new provincial**

Dear and Rev Father General,

18 August 2010: Peace and Joy of Jesus from Fr. Francis NALLAPPAN OMI and all the Oblates of St. Eugene Province of India!

This is to thank you for your support and prayers for the New Province Day celebrations on 15 August 2010 at St John Baptist Church, Poonamallee, Chennai! We thank God for the manifold gifts and graces from the time of inception to the present moment of Oblate life and mission! On the eve of 15 August, our Independence and the Feast of Assumption of Mary, the threatening rain and thunder slowly cleared the heavens for the songs praise and glory to God!

I, as newly elected Provincial, had the unique privilege of welcoming and thanking the ecclesiastical and Oblate dignitaries along with the extended Oblate Family! Most of the ecclesiastical dignitaries about twenty five of them – the Bishops, the Provincials and Major Superiors of local Church and Religious Congregations -- as expected, had come and were honoured for their contribution to our growth in our life and mission! We also had the full attendance of the Oblate provincials (Fr. Clement WAIDYASEKARA of Colombo, Fr. Paul NADCHITHIRAM of Jaffna), and Major Superiors (Fr. David ULLRICH from China-Australia), and their Oblate representatives of the region (Fr. IRUDAYARAJ of Japan-Korea, and Fr Rex KULAS of Bangladesh), and the missionaries (Frs Hilarion VEDANAYAGAM, Joseph SAMARAKONE, ATPUTHARAJA, Bob RODRIGO)! In these Oblates, we remembered all the missionaries and the General and provincial administration who nurtured the seeds of Oblate Charism to grow to this stature of being

and becoming a Province under the patronage of St. Eugene, our Founder and Father!

It was a unique experience also to have the Major superiors of the Oblate related Congregations – Sr. Latha, HFB (Holy Family of Bordeaux); Rev. Fr. K P Xavier, CR, Vicar General (Congregation of Rosarians); Fr. ARULRAJ, the Founder of DMI (Daughters of Mary Immaculate) and MMI (Missionaries of Mary Immaculate); Sr. Sasikala, DMI, the Assistant General; Fr. Roland, MMI, the provincial of MMI; Fr. GERARD, the Founder of SDM (Sons of de Mazenod) and DDM (Daughters of de Mazenod); Sr. Flora, OMMI, a councilor (Secular Institute of Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate of the late Fr. Louis Marie PARENT). The presence and active work in preparation and serving of dinner by the

members of MAMI (Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate) is another clear sign of their being and belonging to our family and their participation in our life and mission!

The colourful cultural events were duly represented from our missions – Andhra Pradesh, North India, Tamilnadu and Karnataka! The cultural and linguistic variety manifested to the august gathering the spread and spirit of our Oblate Charism and missionary outreach across the vast expanse of India! With the Poonamallee Scholasticate community providing a very homey atmosphere for the dinner, the day was beautifully ended! We certainly thank God and Mary along with everyone related to this day's event with their body, mind, heart and soul!

Europe

ITALY

Fr. Carmelo Conti Guglia: 1910-2010

“This morning, August 21, 2010, the dean of our province, Fr. Carmelo CONTI GUGLIA, arrived at the last chapter of his mission: Paradise.”

With those words, the provincial of Italy, Fr. Nicola PARRETTA, announced the passing of a great Oblate missionary who had also served the entire Congregation as Assistant General (1966-72), during the final years of the mandate of Fr. Léo DESCHÂTELETS.

The provincial added: “Besides finding himself with so many other Oblates whom he knew in person, he will be with Jesus to whom he gave witness and whom he preached in an extraordinary way during the course of his long life (on December 2, he would have celebrated 100 years). In communion with the Trinity, he will be able to enjoy the smile of the Immaculate whom he loved and venerated with tender affection. Grateful to the Lord for such a great example of Oblate missionary, let us pray that he might contemplate the fullness of the Father's glory.”

Fr. Carmelo, born in Sicily, left his home when still a boy in order to join the Oblates. He made

his first vows in 1927. Present at the very beginnings of the Italian province, he spent his whole life helping in its development. He was provincial from 1954 until 1957.

Graduating with a degree in literature from the University of Naples, he was a professor of sociology, one of first priests in that field. He was a tireless preacher of parish missions, always seeking new ways to preach God's love.

Fr. Gilberto PIÑON, currently superior of the General House, remembers how, when he was a scholastic in Rome, he would accompany Fr. Carmelo to Piazza di Spagna where they would sit on the Spanish steps, wearing cassock and Oblate cross, and chat with the hippies who had made that one of their preferred hangouts in Rome. Fr. Carmelo even published a book in 1976 about this experience: *Un prete con gli hippies a Trinità dei Monti (A priest among the hippies at Trinità dei Monti)*.

He also published other books. In *Colei che indica la via* [2005] (*She who shows the way*), he summed up the purpose of the book: “These pages are not a theological treatise: they are the fruit of long meditations by a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate who now, after more than a

half-century of preaching Marian novenas, weeks and months, has been inspired by the richness of Mariology and the teachings of life and history.”

Fr. Conti Guglia’s funeral took place at the Shrine of the Assumption in Santa Maria a Vico on August 23. (<http://www.omi.it>)

POLAND

Life Festival for youth

Youthful joy again! The 10th jubilee Life Festival was held on July 19-25. Some 350 young people from Poland, Ukraine and Byelorussia met at a camp site by the Shrine of the Mother of God in Kodeń, Eastern Poland. For seven days, enthusiastic teens participated in conferences, concerts, meetings and workshops. Each day culminated in the Holy Eucharist and common prayer.

No day was like the other. The first day was filled with the joy coming together. On the second day Sister Anna Bałchan, whose vocation it is to take care of the “wayward girls”, told us about her experiences. The third day brought a discussion on matrimony. On the fourth day, we celebrated our 10th jubilee get-together and we listened to a music concert given by the same players that had held concerts during previous festivals. The following day was devoted to the “gift of love.” On Saturday, we summed up all the activities of the previous days. In the evening, there was a concert given by the *New Life M Band* and at midnight, the Provincial, Father Ryszard SZMYDKI celebrated Holy Mass.

The Missionary Oblates (Fathers Ryszard SIERAŃSKI, Tomasz MANIURA and Bartek MADEJSKI) and the Community of the Good Shepherd, whose mission is reaching out to the needs of drug addicts, have been holding Life Festivals for ten years now. Such meetings present an opportunity to rediscover God and to learn about the activities of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. (Fr. Blazej MIELCAREK)

ITALY

The colors of peace

On June 13, 2010, the burning sun and the high

temperatures did not discourage at least one thousand participants in a pilgrimage organized by the Regional Office of Migration of the Episcopal Conference of Sicily.

The “colors of peace” were painted by those who are engaged each day in being “workers of peace” through their normal work activities. The “colors of peace” were painted by men and women coming from the five continents and who live on our island.

To see Sinhalese and Tamils, who have lived for 35 years through a terrible civil war in Sri Lanka, is a most eloquent “color of peace.”

To see Filipinos and Ecuadorians, Mauritians and Ivoirians, Ghanaians and Poles, Italians and Indians, Senegalese and Romanians together is a sign of hope for a new multiethnic and multicultural humanity living in the same region.

The great novelty of this regional assembly was in the variety of traditional clothing, the music and the dancing, the ways of expressing a common faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Unity and diversity were woven into a beam of light emanating from the lives of ordinary people who live and work seriously and with commitment on our island. It is the sign of a society that is passing from multiculturalism to interculturalism.

The greeting and welcome of Bishop Zambito of Patti, and the homily preached by Archbishop La Piana of Messina, who presided at the intercultural Eucharistic celebration, placed the event within the sphere of the Churches of Sicily.

Peace is a precious commodity, a commodity which should be pursued and should be placed above private interests. Everyone, in different ways and manners, can help build a society that lives in peace.

The hundreds of colorful balloons, carried in the procession which wound from the “House of Life” to the Shrine of Tindari, were the symbol, the visible sign of this desire and of the prayer to the “Beautiful Mother of Tindari”, so that the

peace brought by Jesus might reign in the hearts of each person and in the lives of the people. The colors of the balloons symbolized the five continents: green for Africa, with its green forests; red for the American continent which was founded by the red-skinned people, the Indians; white for the continent of Europe, because its spiritual father lives there, the white pastor of the Church, the Pope; blue for the Australian continent, Oceania, and the other islands in the azure waters of the Pacific, where Christ is still little known; yellow for the vast Asian continent, the land of the rising sun, the cradle of civilizations of the past. In front of the shrine, all the balloons were released as a sign of prayer for all people of the earth, rising up to heaven to ask, along with Mary, the gift of peace for all peoples.

In the Eucharistic celebration, in addition to the four main languages (English, Italian, French and Spanish) other native languages were used, such as Twi, Tagalog, Sinhalese and Tamil. It was a "new Pentecost", where the one language of love was expressed in the different languages of the men and women present there. Songs and ritual dances were different cultural expressions of the one faith in Jesus, just as was the act of consecration to the Black Virgin of Tindari, composed specially for this occasion by Oblate Father Sergio NATOLI. (Sergio Natoli in *MISSIONI OMI*, July 2010)

FRANCE

21 prepare for perpetual vows in Aix

During this year's session in Aix-en-Provence for the preparation for perpetual vows, we were 21

young oblates representing 17 nationalities. From the Italian scholasticate, there were five; there was one from the Central European Province; one from the French Province; five from Poland; seven from the International Scholasticate in Rome; and two from the United States.

We spent almost three weeks deepening our knowledge of our Founder, our charism, and the history of our Congregation. A beautiful part of this experience was letting the places of Aix speak to us: our Oblate house, the Founder's room, the foundation room, our internal chapel and the Church of the Mission.

A strong experience for us all was the feast of the Assumption during which we animated the Masses at our chapel, sharing coffee and refreshments after each Eucharist with the people of Aix. This gave to both us and the people of Aix a chance to see the beauty of the universal Church we represent. An emotional moment was also a community Mass at the Founder's grave.

In the last days, we spent much time looking at the present needs of the Congregation, our communities, Oblate identity and our priorities. In this, of great help was the report of Father General to the General Chapter, which we analyzed and discussed with the Fr. Chicho ROIS, the General Councillor of Europe. We thank the Congregation, the General Administration, our provinces and the European Formation Bureau for the possibility of this meeting in preparation for our perpetual oblation. (Marcin SERWIN)

Africa-Madagascar

MADAGASCAR

A school of carpentry

The Delegation of Madagascar has long planned to start a school of carpentry for the boys of the Marolambo mission.

Before the year 2000, the missionaries who were working there decided to build a little school that was quite primitive, but could take care of about ten students. We saw good results with the boys

who, after just a year of apprenticeship, were then able to earn their own keep.

Unfortunately, in 2007, we were obliged to close the school because the building was in very bad condition and it was putting the students in danger. After the closing, the people of the mission kept asking when we would reopen the school.

Thanks to Father Waldemar PIATKOWSKI and the Swiss organization, *LebensWert*, we

have been able to put in motion the process for building a new school.

However, because of the bad condition of the roads, we had to re-do the project's budget. With the huge increase in the cost of materials, we had to look for another financial backer who could co-finance the construction along with the *LebensWert* group.

It was then that Sister Claire François came along. With her *Revivre* association, she was ready to help us. In June of 2009, she came to Marolambo with the superior and bursar of the delegation to see the terrain and to speak with the contractor.

Finally, construction began. In spite of different difficulties that the contractor encountered, we were able to dedicate the new school on June 29, feast of Sts. Peter and Paul.

We are enormously grateful to the Oblate community of Marolambo for all the preparations for the event. We express our deep gratitude to the *LebensWert* and *Revivre* associations for having helped us to realize this project and also for having honored us with their presence during this event which was so important for our mission.

The opening of the school is planned for the month of October this year. May Brother Anthony KOWALCZYK, the patron of this school, intercede for us before God so that we might accomplish our mission! (Écho OMI Madagascar, July 2010)

CAMEROUN

Preparation for perpetual vows

Beginning on July 12, at Yaoundé in Cameroun, 12 young Oblates spent a month preparing themselves for perpetual vows: 2 from Congo; 2 from Senegal; 2 from Zambia; and 6 from Cameroun, of whom 3 are Brothers.

On August 15, they made their perpetual vows at Yaoundé, in the Oblate parish of Oliga. (Cornelius NGOKA)

ZAMBIA

You visited me in prison

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate take this challenging Gospel passage to heart. They seek out the poor and abandoned, offering them comfort and giving them hope. Father Jim CHAMBERS. is certainly no exception. When the United States native was assigned to move from Lukulu, Zambia to Mongu, in the poverty-stricken Western Province, he wasn't certain what his new role would entail. But he did know that he would leave himself open to whatever might come his way.

Father Jim began his new assignment at the Diocese of Mongu Development Centre where the Oblates worked with rice farmers to find markets for their rice. But before long this initiative was turned over to the diocese.

During the transition, Fr. Jim's superiors encouraged him to find a place in the area to preach the Gospel. It didn't take him long to find a local prison in great need of spiritual direction. The prison in Mongu is comprised of seven buildings which hold a total of 500 prisoners, including 20 women and eight youths. It is located within the boundaries of Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral Parish in Mongu.

Father Andrew, the pastor of Lourdes Cathedral, gave Fr. Jim permission to create a prison ministry group in the parish. The chair of the group, Paul Kaishe, has helped coordinate many of the activities of the ministry group. For example, he has worked with prisoners from countries other than Zambia, by contacting the consulates in their home countries to let them know about their status.

Father Jim has created an atmosphere for collaborative ministry at the prison. The Handmaid Sisters have been working with the women and juveniles. Brother John, a member of the Christian Brothers, is teaching classes for people to obtain their 12th grade certificate. The Holy Cross Sisters have been donating powdered milk for those in the infirmary. They also received a gift of \$5,000 to help put in a water system at

the prison. The Holy Spirit Sisters have paid to have two boreholes drilled for the water system. Even the youth from the parishes in the Mongu area have helped out, by playing sports with the prisoners.

Some of his fellow Oblates have also answered Fr. Jim's call to service. Brother George MADONA has been particularly helpful, improving the diet and quality of life for the prisoners by initiating a pig farm at the prison. Brother George and Paul Kaishe have also worked with the prison staff, helping them to understand that their

work is a ministry and not just a job. "The staff appreciates our presence," said Fr. Jim. "It's a good relationship for everyone."

Father Jim would like the other Christian churches in the Mongu area to become involved at the prison. "I've found that a lot of people want to help in this ministry," he said. "People truly see the needs that are there. I believe people have truly heard the Gospel, especially the 25th chapter of Matthew." (*Oblate World*, June 2010)

Latin America

BOLIVIA

A tradition continues

On March 24, 1980 Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating Mass at a hospital chapel in El Salvador. A "voice for the poor" in Latin America had been silenced – but only temporarily.

In 1975 another "voice for the poor" was beginning a new ministry high in the Andes Mountains of Bolivia. As Director of Radio Pio XII, Fr. Roberto DURETTE has been known as the "Romero of Bolivia" for his unwavering support of human rights for the poor. Thirty-five years later he is still director of the radio station, following in the footsteps of Archbishop Romero by being a voice for the poorest of the poor.

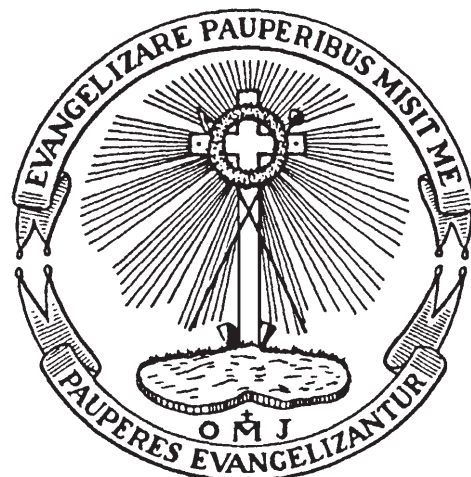
There are several bullet holes in Fr. Roberto's front door. For Fr. Roberto the bullet holes are a reminder that he has cheated death on several occasions, all in an effort to give voice to the poorest people in the poorest country in South America.

"It is in this battle for the rights of the poor that I find meaning in life, as a Christian and as a priest," said Fr. Roberto. Since arriving in 1962 in the Catavi mining region of Bolivia's Andes Mountains, Fr. Roberto has survived several assassination attempts, dynamite explosions at his work and an incident in which his truck plummeted down a ravine as he was being pursued by some of the many powerful people who wanted his Oblate voice silenced.

Their reason – because Fr. Roberto is the director of a small but influential radio station, Radio Pio XII. The radio station, created 50 years ago by the Missionary Oblates, broadcasts in support of the miners who are working in slave-like conditions due to corruption in the government, mining companies and labor unions.

Father Roberto has led the radio station for the past 35 years. "If this radio station would stop broadcasting, we would all be dead," is how one elderly resident of the area describes Radio Pio XII.

Archbishop Romero used the power of radio to change a country. His Sunday sermons were broadcast throughout El Salvador and inspired the farm workers to demand basic human rights. Today Fr. Roberto is using the power of radio to better the lives of the poor in his country. (*Oblate World*, June 2010)



Canada-United States

UNITED STATES

One parish: two cultures

Father George Roy, O.M.I. has one of the most interesting – and challenging – ministries of any priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago. He is pastor of one parish, with two churches, and two very different congregations.

Historic St. Malachy Parish is located on the west side of the city. In 1940, St. Malachy became the first African American Catholic parish in the city; an African American community still worships there.

Just a few minutes down the road is the “other” parish church – Precious Blood. Mass has been celebrated at Precious Blood for more than 100 years. For decades, it was a major Catholic community in Chicago for African Americans. Now its congregation is entirely Hispanic.

“We are definitely not your typical parish,” said Fr. George. “I start Sunday morning saying Mass in English for the African American parishioners and then go down the street to say Mass in Spanish for the Hispanic parishioners.”

Only around sixty people attend the Sunday Mass at St. Malachy Church, but its impact on the community is much deeper. Saint Malachy has an elementary school with about 250 students. All of the students are African American and most are not Catholic. About 90 percent of the students come from single-parent homes and close to 97 percent receive either free or reduced price school lunches. Most families receive tuition assistance through scholarships, grants and fundraising. Father George and the staff at St. Malachy School strive for academic excellence in a community facing the challenges of poverty, unemployment and gangs. Neighborhood violence has claimed the lives of several St. Malachy students in recent years.

Another important ministry at St. Malachy is a soup kitchen run by the Missionaries

of Charity. Blessed Mother Teresa herself established that ministry 25 years ago. The soup kitchen feeds about 200 people a day at a mid-morning meal, and 1,000 people a month from its food pantry. There is also a shelter for homeless women and children.

Although it is just a few blocks away, Precious Blood is a much different environment. The parish has about 500 members, so the church is usually filled for Sunday Mass. Mass is always celebrated in Spanish since most of the parishioners are immigrants from Mexico.

The school at Precious Blood has been closed for several years, but the building is still used for a variety of ministries for immigrants and youth.

Father George said he enjoys the diversity of his ministry. Since he became a priest in 1973, he has worked in a variety of settings including a parish, school, seminary and shrine. His first assignment was to the impoverished nation of Haiti, where he served for 20 years. After a brief stint as Parochial Vicar in Lincoln, Maine he was named Director of St. Joseph's Shrine in Lowell, Massachusetts. In 1998 he was assigned to the Archdiocese of Boston, where he served as chaplain to the Haitian community until 2006. After a brief sabbatical to learn Spanish, Fr. George was asked to become pastor at St. Malachy in 2007. “To persevere in this challenging vocation three things are necessary: first, a deep relationship with Christ; second, a profound love for the people ministered to; and third, the support of family, friends and fellow priests,” said Fr. George. “It has been very gratifying to help people grow in their faith here in Chicago, and I feel privileged to be an instrument of God’s peace and love in peoples’ lives.” (*Oblate World*, June 2010)

UNITED STATES

Vocation Directors attend workshop

The recently named Vocation Directors for the U.S. Province, Frs. Carlos ALARCON, Harold FISHER, and Dan NASSANEY, traveled to

Ferdinand, Indiana, on April 13 for a week-long vocational workshop entitled *Awakening: a rebirth of enthusiasm in Vocations*. They were accompanied by the provincial, Fr. Louis LOUGEN and by the Area Councilor, Fr. Allen MAES.

During the last 25 years, the Benedictine Sisters of Ferdinand have moved through a conversion to their original charism and have transformed their approach to Vocation Ministry. Concretely speaking, the majority of their vocation ministry efforts concentrate on the regional states of Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky, even though they receive applicants from other states. They have accepted an average of 2 candidates into their monastery every year for the last 20 years. According to today's standards, that is a rather high number for only 3 states.

Since many religious communities asked them about the secret of their success, they have organized annual sessions in order to share their story and enthusiasm for Vocation Ministry. This was session # 18.

In summary, they posed a rather simple question: Are you willing to strive for a meaningful missionary presence? If so, you must face the challenge of true conversion and transformation...

Given the task to draft a plan for Vocation

Ministry, the Oblates chose to strive for life and committed themselves to move through conversion towards a transformation of the ministry by concluding that "togetherness" and "connectedness" must be key components for Oblate Vocation Ministry in the US.

The next General Chapter will undoubtedly be inspirational on the issue of conversion. **Togetherness** means that, as the Oblate Vocation Ministry Team in the United States, the Vocation Directors will strive for open communication with each other in order to share resources, working together and supporting each other through their ministry as well as through their presence as a team at Oblate events. **Connectedness** means that they will establish a support network with Oblates at all levels: local, district, area and provincial administration, in order to strengthen the culture of vocations among all Oblates and foster Oblate vocations. Such a network will include Oblate institutions and Oblate Media in order to take advantage of their talents for advertising our Oblate community.

There were 28 participants at the workshop from all over the U.S. as well as Ireland. While some of them shared their challenge to convince their own provincial about vocation ministry, they also expressed their admiration for Louie Lougen for his visible support of vocation ministry as provincial. (Fr. Carlos ALARCON in *OMI USA*, June 2010)

Anniversaries for October 2010

70 Years of religious life

1940.10.10	07189	Fr. Charles Choque	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
1940.10.10	07187	Fr. Louis Van den Eynde	Belgium/Holland
1940.10.11	07198	Fr. Jan Heemrood	United States
1940.10.15	07384	Fr. Elie Bève	France
1940.10.15	07388	Fr. Adolphe Careil	France
1940.10.15	07383	Fr. André Morin	France

65 Years of religious life

1945.10.03	08060	Fr. Elie Cambron	Belgium/Holland
1945.10.15	08255	Fr. Georges Laudin	France
1945.10.18	08081	Fr. Jean-Marie Ribaucourt	Belgium/Holland

50 Years of priesthood

1960.10.16	09830	Fr. Giuseppe Carnevale	Italy
1960.10.22	09791	Msgr. Peter Sutton	Lacombe

25 Years of priesthood

1985.10.10	12660	Fr. Peter Doherty	Lacombe
1985.10.13	12643	Fr. Michael Seeiso Sekoati	Lesotho
1985.10.19	12576	Fr. Rino Prevedoni	Italy
1985.10.19	12638	Fr. Saverio Zampa	Italy

Suffrages for our Deceased

No. 59-65

NAME	PROV./Del.	BORN	DIED AT	DATE
Bro. Ernest Beaudoin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	20/12/1913	Richelieu	03/08/2010
Fr. Gijs Okhuijsen	Belgium/Holland	17/02/1939	Santpoort	03/08/2010
Fr. Mieczyslaw Niepieklo	Poland	06/08/1913	Lubawa	07/08/2010
Fr. Henri Pélicier	France	14/08/1916	Lyon	08/08/2010
Fr. Jacques Gilbert	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	10/12/1907	Richelieu	18/08/2010
Fr. Carmelo Conti Guglia	Italy	02/12/1910	Santa Maria a Vico	21/08/2010
Fr. Ubald Duchesneau	OMI Lacombe	13/04/1923	St. Albert	28/08/2010

“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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