



14 September – 12 October 2016

Dear Brother Oblates, (*to Major Superiors, Mission Superiors and Thomas Klosterkamp*)

Blessings! The 200th anniversary of our foundation on 25 January 2016 is drawing near. The celebration of this date has not been a custom everywhere in the Congregation. For this reason I am writing to ask that you encourage your council and the superiors of your Unit to make this a special day for all Oblates to gather in prayer and celebration. As you know, we were not recognized as a pontifical congregation until 17 February 1826. January 25 1816 is the beginning of our congregation, characterized by the missionary spirit of Eugene and his companions to respond to the situation of the Church by preaching the Gospel to the poor and most abandoned. They responded to this missionary call by coming together in poverty and joy to live in apostolic community.

In each Unit at all levels the 25th of January should be commemorated in a solemn manner. This does not mean in a pompous or lavish way. Surely on this day Oblates and Associates will come together for the Eucharist. I invite you also to spend “a holy hour with the Lord and a holy hour with the poor.” Please celebrate according to your reality in a simple, but meaningful way. We should spend time in oraison thanking and praising God for the gift of our vocation and the charism. We should also connect with the poor in a way that is significant and coherent with our lives. I invite our communities to make time for faith-sharing about our love for our Oblate vocation and charism.

On 24 and 25 January 2016 I will be commemorating our anniversary in Aix with members of the Central Government; with Fr. Vincent Gruber, Provincial of our esteemed Mother Province; and with Oblates of the Province of France. In planning these days, the Oblate community of the International De Mazenod Center has included the Oblate Family, young people and the poor who are associated with us.

A scholastic from each Region of the Congregation will participate, representing our immense hope for the future. On Sunday, 24 January, we will celebrate the Eucharist in the Cathedral of Aix presided by Archbishop Christophe Dufour. He is convinced that De Mazenod’s missionary spirit is vital for evangelizing the Aix archdiocese today. Then, on Monday, 25 January, there will be a celebration in the Chapel of the Mission at which I will preside. After the Eucharist we will

all share in a simple meal. During the day we will have time for oraison and faith sharing together.

I ask that this date, January 25, 2016, reflect our journey of grace into conversion. I remind everyone that the Oblate Triennium and our Bicentenary Jubilee will officially close on 25 January 2017. Throughout this jubilee time of grace, our commitment to faith sharing and hearing the call to conversion will continue to enrich our missionary lives. Special events will mark 2016: the Congress on **Mission** with Youth; the Vocations Congress; the Oblate Youth Encounter before WYD; and all will culminate in the 36th General Chapter of the Congregation.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication in making the Oblate Triennium and our Bicentennial Celebration a meaningful and wonderful renewal of Oblate life and mission!

Your brother Oblate in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate,

Louis Lougen, O.M.I.

Father Louis Lougen, OMI
Superior General
Rome, 8 September 2015

MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

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