

Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

From the Director



From August 15–18, 2019, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate will celebrate the 125th anniversary of our arrival in Fremantle, Western Australia. This anniversary provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the past and set our sights on the future of our Mission in Australia and beyond.

Oblates traditionally work in close partnership with people in their local community. Most of the parishes entrusted to our pastoral care had their beginnings in communities where families were building their first homes. The providing of a church and a school came from hard work and sacrifice.

All three of our colleges began with parents and students co-operating with the Oblates in working bees, laying the foundations of the wonderful campuses we now enjoy. From the undertaking of our first overseas mission in Indonesia, the prayers and financial support of members of our Missionary Association and other friends have been, and continue to be, a key ingredient of their success.

THE KEY TO ANY PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE MISSION IN THE AUSTRALIAN CHURCH MUST BE A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PEOPLE WE SERVE AS OBLATES.

Our parish ministry began from Fremantle. This was also where preaching of missions and retreats commenced. Until the early 1970s, the men of the Mission Band would have been in contact with parishes and religious communities throughout much of Australia. The missionaries worked out of communities in Fremantle, Lesmurdie, Sorrento, Camberwell, Arncliffe, Hurstville, Penshurst and Eagle Junction.

As the need for more schools became pressing, in the 1960s and beyond, other changes in society lessened demand for missions. The traditional form of parish mission disappeared. Certainly, many other forms of renewal emerged. In this edition of the MAMI newsletter, I invite you to remember the local missionary spirit of the past and possibly to share reflections about how we can, in this century, help to increase the Faith in a nation where 'no religion' is the declaration of a significant number. The Plenary Council of the Australian Church in 2020 calls us all to be participants in the renewal of the Australian Church.

The pictures below of former Mission Houses might remind you of the past MISSIONS you attended. The picture of Fr Lewy Keelty OMI and myself was taken at the front of the former Eagle Junction Mission House. It is now a part of a retirement complex.

Since the last MAMI newsletter, the Christmas card appeal has been successful, as was the first MAMI Appeal for 2019, held in the parish of Sorrento/Rye/Portsea. We are really in debt for the wonderful support we receive for our overseas missions and the formation of young Oblates for the Priesthood. Appeals are planned for 2019 in Fremantle (Western Australia), Burpengary, and Cannon Hill (Queensland), Eagle Vale (NSW) and Tea Tree Gully (South Australia). The three Oblate Colleges will have their Mission Action Day fund-raising days before Easter. It is certainly going to be a busy year and I look forward to meeting many of our Associates and other supporters.

You are always in our prayers.

Fr John Sherman OMI
Director of Missions



Lesmurdie, WA



Hurstville NSW



Camberwell Vic

ANNIVERSARY

Fr Brian Harris OMI



On December 17, 2018, Fr Brian Harris OMI celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood. Both his ordination and his anniversary celebration took place in Christ the King Church, Deception Bay, Queensland.

As it should be for all Christians, the foundation of Brian's life is his baptismal call to seek God's Will. In doing this, Brian draws on the example of Mary, who made herself available to the Will of God. In this search to do God's Will, Brian has heard two calls – married life and the Priesthood.

Fr Brian had an interesting journey to the priesthood. He was born in Ipswich, Queensland on April 11, 1934, into a Catholic but non-practising family. He encountered the Church in his late teens. He attended Brisbane State High

School, Ipswich Boys Grammar and Kelvin Grove Teachers Training College. He worked as a primary school teacher for a couple of years, before joining the public service as an industrial inspector. As a young man in the 1950s, Brian discussed the possibility of the priesthood with Oblate Fr Tom McDermott, whose advice was 'go away and get married', which Brian did.

He married Kathleen Mahoney in 1959, and they had six children. He worked for the Department of Industrial Development in various locations - Longreach, Mackay and, for 20 years, Rockhampton, where he became Regional Officer. Kathleen died in 1981, and Brian again felt the call to the priesthood. After waiting for his youngest child to turn 18, and with the support of his family, he joined the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Mulgrave, Victoria in 1989. On December 17, we celebrated his 25 years of priestly ministry as an Oblate while continuing his ministry as father of his family.

As an Oblate Priest, Brian served first as Assistant Priest at Mary Immaculate Eagle Vale for four and a half years. That was followed by six

months assisting at St Paul's, Massey, New Zealand. Then came short terms at St Patrick's Basilica, Fremantle, as Hospital Chaplain and 18 months at St David's, Tea Tree Gully, before he became Novice Master at St Mary's Seminary in Mulgrave, from October 2000-2003. The next four years were spent assisting at St Eugene de Mazenod, Burpengary, and then four years at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sefton, before returning in 2012 to assist at St Eugene de Mazenod, Burpengary, where he remains.

Fr Brian is a gentle, prayerful, pastoral Priest with a love of serving the sick. He is quietly determined, respectful of people, and loves Our Lady and the Eucharist. His great ability to care attracts people, as does his experience as a married man, parent and grandparent. He is able to build bonds with people of all ages.



Fr Brian Harris OMI with grandsons.

CELEBRATE

Fr James Jeyachandran OMI



As we celebrate with Fr James Jeyachandran OMI his 25 years of priesthood, we need to remember he has ministered in Australia only since 2011, and in becoming a member of the Australian Province he brought with him a wealth of missionary experience from his time in the Mission of Korea.

Born on September 17, 1967, in Urumpirai, Sri Lanka, James was ordained on January 15, 1994, in Colombo. He received his obedience to the Mission of Korea, where he arrived in 1996. From 2008- 2011, he was a member of the council of the mission, and from 2010-2012 he was superior of the mission.

On arriving in Korea, his first challenge was to become proficient in speaking Korean. He then ministered as chaplain in several hospitals. After studying counselling in the USA from 2003-2005, James returned to Korea to assist with the formation of students discerning to be Oblates, while still engaged in hospital chaplaincy. At this time he also worked to establish the Korean MAMI. This enabled him to make a great effort to spread an appreciation of the Oblate Charism, even though there were only a few Oblates in the mission. The warmth of his personality and dedication to those he served created a bond between himself and the people.

Fortunately for the Australian Oblate Province, he took a sabbatical year in Australia after completing his time as superior of the mission. On June 5, 2012, he received his obedience to the Australian Province. James has contributed to the Oblate ministries at St David's Tea Tree Gully in South Australia, Burpengary in Queensland, Sunshine in Victoria, Sefton in NSW, and is currently at St Patrick's in Fremantle, Western Australia.

In all these missions James has gained the respect and appreciation of people, through commitment to his priestly ministry in the Oblate spirit of warmth and closeness to people. They say 'actions speak louder than words', and this is seen in Fr James' recent appointment by the Oblate Superior General Fr Louis Lougen, after consulting the Oblates of the Australian Province, as one of the four members of the Provincial Council assisting the Provincial Fr Christian Fini OMI.

CELEBRATE

Fr Pat Moroney reflects on Fr Patrick Dwyer OMI

Fr Pat Dwyer was one of four young Oblates missioned to the Australian Province in the mid-'60s. It was an exciting time to be young missionaries, and it was wonderful to be going to Australia just as new migrant families were flooding in from Europe. Some 1400 new citizens from Italy were on board the migrant ship that took us on that long journey.

Our arrival coincided with the Australian Oblate Province's decision to found three secondary colleges to help meet the educational needs of a rapidly growing young population. Pat spent much of his ministry working with young people



in these schools. He would, in time, become Rector/Principal of two of them, Iona College in Queensland and Mazenod College in Western Australia.

His success in the Colleges stemmed from the marvellous rapport he established with students. Always approachable and gentle, he was trusted implicitly, not only as a

popular teacher of senior English and Literature, but as a compassionate, friendly and wise guide in the face of life's challenges. Because of this trust, students could readily overlook his occasional forgetfulness and his sometimes frustrating lack of organisation.

The other outstanding gift that endeared Pat to students was his love and appreciation of sport. An excellent sportsman himself, he could turn his hand to any ball sport, and especially cricket. His knowledge of sport was encyclopaedic and was matched by his interest and enthusiasm. He coached football, soccer, rugby and even Gaelic Football. Seldom a weekend went by that he was not engaged with students in sport, either playing or taking boys to matches. To see him in action in the colleges, whether in the classroom, as College Principal, or on the sports field, was to understand the affection and respect in which he was held by thousands of students over the years.

About 20 years ago, Pat was asked to take on the job of director of Rosie's Youth Mission. 'Rosies' is an Oblate initiative for homeless young – and not so young – people on the streets of Melbourne and Brisbane and in many smaller towns. On various nights of the week, in all kinds of weather, he and his young volunteers would park their Rosie's Van in the city and become the friendly hands and faces serving food and drinks to people living on the streets. His friendliness, compassion and natural ability to reach out to everyone made him a marvellous director of this ministry.

'Rosies' was followed by years of excellent work in parish ministry. One of his Oblate brothers remembers Pat's "completely genuine interest in the person he was talking with ... the warm smile that came from deep within him ... He was the priest everyone want to talk to".

"He was the most lovable, loving and loved Oblate I have ever met."

God had showered many gifts on him, including a beautiful tenor voice and a willingness to use it for the enjoyment of others, qualities that made him a welcome guest at gatherings, whether of Oblates, school groups or parishioners.

News of Fr Pat's call to God came as a great sadness for his fellow Oblates in Australia and in Ireland, and for his many friends and admirers. But we are, above all, grateful to God that his sufferings are over and, most especially, for having had the privilege of being and working with him for more than 50 years.

AROUND THE PROVINCE

Blessing of the new senior classrooms and library of Mazenod College Victoria.

On Saturday, February 9th, two past students of Mazenod College officiated at the Blessing of the new senior classrooms and library. Bishop Mark Edwards OMI blessed the building, assisted by College Rector and now Provincial Fr Christian Fini OMI. Both these distinguished past students have also taught at the College. The picture also includes two other past students who were associated with construction of the building.



Goodwin and Coghlan

With the appointment in 2019 of Mr Trevor Goodwin as Principal of Iona College Queensland and Mr Tony Coghlan as Principal of Mazenod College Victoria, along with Mr Andrew Watson's, Principal of Mazenod College WA, appointment at the commencement of 2018, all three Oblate Colleges now have lay Principals.

In this new model of leadership, each college will have a Rector and separate Principal.

AROUND THE PROVINCE

On February 2, Fr. Christian Fini was installed as the Provincial of the Australian Province/Delegation of China. Fr. Christian is seen here with the new Provincial Council.



From left to right: Frs Slawek Plonka, James Jeya, Christian Fini, Andrew Chen and Michael Twigg

We are presently planning for the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the Oblates in Australia for the Fremantle foundation. The celebration will take place in Fremantle, WA, from August 15–18.



Fr John David Raj Chodagiri OMI has been appointed to Mazenod College Western Australia.

By the time you receive this MAMI newsletter, Fr Casmir Raj Arul OMI should have arrived in Australia. Fr Casmir undertook most of his studies in Australia. WELCOME FR CASMIR.



Blessing of the new SMS will occur on Saturday March 9th – look out for the official photos in our next newsletter



Moe Golf Day in January. For many years the Oblate Community of Moe/Newborough has invited the Sale diocesan clergy and Oblates in Victoria to the Moe Golf Day. It has always been a day of great fellowship for the Priests. The accompanying photo is of some of the more talented ... there is no comment on the quality of the talent.



Left to right: Fathers John McGinty OMI, Peter Bickley, Michael McMahon OMI, Harry Dyer OMI and Brendan Hogan.

The National Oblate Youth Encounter was held in Healesville, Victoria, from January 3–6. It was attended by 86 young adults from South Australia

and Victoria. The theme was taken from St Eugene's challenge to 'make people more human; lead them to Christ and then make them saints'.



'ON THE ROAD, HUMAN, CHRISTIANS, SAINTS'

Overseas missions

Christmas cards again set a new high:

Africa development projects	\$4,780
China education projects	\$2,395
Indonesia chicken project	\$9,040
Indonesia goat project	\$13,231
Indonesia tool box project	\$8,278
Total	\$37,724

Your support of the Christmas card projects will share the joy of the birth of Christ to many served by our missions overseas.

Many thanks, as always, for your prayers and continuing support of the mission of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Fr John Sherman OMI

The bombing of the Cathedral of Jolo in the Philippines.

The Oblates have responsibility for two dioceses in the Philippines, the Archdiocese of Cotabato and the Vicariate of Jolo. Thirteen Oblates work in the Jolo district, where the vast majority of people are of the Islamic Faith. In general there is a harmonious relationship between the religions. However, small extremist groups make it a dangerous mission at times. The Jolo district is made up of many islands with small communities.



The recent bomb attack on the cathedral left many dead and injured. Bishop Lito Lampon OMI, who recently transferred to the Archdiocese of Cotabato on the retirement of Cardinal Quevado OMI, has worked in Jolo for many years. His predecessor, Bishop Benjamin de Jesus, was shot through the head outside the cathedral on February 4, 1997, then on February 14, Bishop Antonino Nepomuceno OMI, was killed in a plane crash returning from Bishop Benjamin's funeral. On December 28, 2000, Fr Inocencio Benjamin OMI was also shot outside the same cathedral.



If you wish to make a donation to MAMI apart from the Annual August appeal, your gift is always happily received. To assist our administration and avoid confusion you might like to use this donation slip.

Please complete the donation form on the right and mail to us. Or donate online by following the below steps.

Please note that if you tick to receive a tax deductible receipt, your gift can only be used for community development projects and not religious work of the missions.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER FOR **TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS** CAN BE MADE TO:
Oblate Missions Developing Countries Fund (OMDC)
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK
 BSB NO.: **083 347**
 ACCOUNT NO.: **45500 7380**

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER FOR **THE RELIGIOUS WORK OF THE MISSION** CAN BE MADE TO:
Oblates of Mary Immaculate (MAMI)
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK
 BSB NO.: **083 347**
 ACCOUNT NO.: **45489 0669**

Please send an email to: **mami@oblates.com.au** which includes your name, postal address, EFT transfer details and Intention.

Send to: **MAMI Office**
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Camberwell Vic 3124

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City	State	Postcode	
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I have enclosed a Cheque/Money Order made payable to MAMI for \$ _____

or debit my credit card: Mastercard Visa the amount of \$ _____
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Card holder's name (as appears on the card) _____

Card holder's signature _____ Date _____

I require a tax deductible receipt.

I would like further information on making a bequest in my will.

Comments/intention: _____

Delegations of China (Australian Province)

The Oblate Community in Beijing and Oblate Notre Dame College in Hong Kong are desperate for lay volunteers who are prepared to assist with their programs. In Beijing, there is an opportunity to work with poor migrant children assisting them with their education. For this missionary experience adults of any age are welcome who preferably are prepared to commit for a minimum of three months.

The Hong Kong Summer Program runs for four weeks during the HK summer. This program is open to trained teachers to assist in the language program in Oblate Notre Dame secondary college.

For more information please contact Luisa Amati pims@oblates.com.au



'FRESH WATER IS A HUMAN RIGHT'

Pope Francis.

Whether we are receiving appeals from Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, India, Indonesia...

The frequent appeal is CAN YOU HELP US GET RELIABLE ACCESS TO FRESH WATER.



Kenya Update

Fr Gerry has recently be home visiting family and giving talks in our Oblate colleges.

Fr Gerry reports, 'After the recent terrorist attack when 27 people were killed there has been a significant improvement in security. The Oblates, too, continue to strengthen their presence in Kenya coming from five countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Australia and Kenya, not to mention our Canadian members supporting us from a distance! There are 14 Oblates in Final Vows, one ready for priestly ordination this year. In January, five young men took first vows and another four are expected to do so in May and September this year. We're now blessed to have two Scholastics in Rome, five Scholastics in South Africa and four Novices. Behind

the scenes we have seven men in Pre-Novitiate training (Nairobi) and another two men joining the formation process as Postulants.'

'Many Kenyan youth struggle to reach University and once they arrive, they struggle to survive. Unexpected financial costs for medicine, or because of burglaries, often cause them to resort to desperate measures with lifelong consequences. The Oblates have gathered youth from the three country areas into a city based diaspora youth group in order to prevent this type of desperate behaviour. The Oblates accompany them as they support each other and chip in small amounts when "challenges" come. This is only possible because of our MAMI supporters all over the world: Australia, Canada, South Korea, etc. The missionaries are grateful for your support which allows them to touch many individual lives in small but meaningful ways.'

Indonesia

Fr. Charlie never stops. Among his many current projects the creation of new rice paddies is most important because they will help feed so many and help people to lift themselves out of poverty. This will be a major development project for 2019.



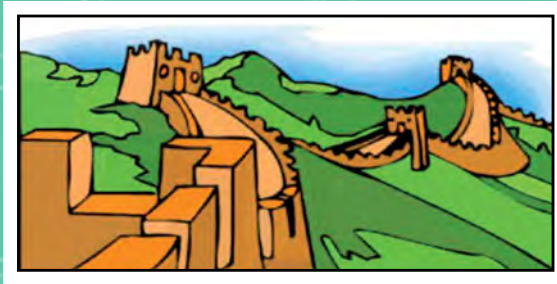
The Oblate Juniorists of Bangladesh Thank MAMI, Australia

The Oblate junior seminarians in Bangladesh thank and appreciate the MAMI Australia for their generosity and support to strengthen their English learning facilities in their class room. The MAMI Australia have donated them AUD 2500 in 2018 for educational equipment. The seminarians were in need of technological materials to boost their English. They bought a computer, a projector and a sound system. They were very happy to be introduced to new facilities and technique of learning English.



Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

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Volunteer in Beijing?

**From March
to July 2019**

TEACHING ENGLISH TO CHINESE
PRIMARY STUDENTS (6-12 YEARS OLD)

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF
SHARING
SOME OF YOUR TALENTS AND TIME
WITH MIGRANT CHILDREN
AND THEIR FAMILIES IN CHINA?

YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW
AT A HUMAN AND SPIRITUAL LEVEL,
WHILE LIVING WITH OBLATES IN A
COUNTRY SO RICH IN HISTORY AND
CULTURE.



FOR MORE DETAILS,
PLEASE CONTACT

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