

# Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate



On behalf of all the Oblates of the Province of Australia/ Delegation of China and those Oblates ministering in overseas missions together with the staff of our Missions Office, we wish you a grace filled celebration of the Birth of the Lord for you and your family and friends.

You will be remembered in the Christmas Novena of Masses celebrated in our Camberwell Oblate Community.

## From the Director

The photo accompanying this article is of Brother Andhy OMI. During my visit to the projects we assist in Indonesia from June 27–July 7, I met Brother Andhy at our Juniorate in Cilacap. This meeting reminded me of the wonderful Brothers who worked in the Australian Province and have now gone to their eternal reward. They were the Brothers who came in the foundation years of the mission to Fremantle to help staff the Industrial School at Glendalough; Brother Frank Thornton, the first Australian-born Oblate, he ministered throughout Australia, and then Bro Ignatius Hannick who founded St Patrick’s Community Care Centre, where he worked for many years. The Indonesian Province has four Oblate permanent Brothers and one novice. Two of the Brothers have university qualifications.



In our ministries today there is need for many who might not feel called to the Priesthood but who could contribute in our Oblate communities to missionary work here in Australia or overseas.

The annual August Appeal has been a great success, raising more than \$100,000 so far. A big thanks to all who support us with their prayers and financial support. Thanks to your generosity, in total this year we have been able to send to our Indonesian mission \$193,098.

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# FROM THE DIRECTOR

...continued cover article

Projects submitted by Fr Charlie Burrows were:

- Development of rice fields in Kampung Laut and Bantarsare: \$56,000
- Reforestation: \$20,000
- Schools: \$16,000
- Tools, goats and chicken/ducks programs: \$32,098

Other projects submitted by Oblates totalled \$69,000:

- Educational projects: \$32,000
- Social assistance: \$27,000
- Clinic support: \$8,000

Thanks to the generosity of one person, we have been able to assist with the building of an Oblate Junior seminary with \$60,000.

Each of the above programs is submitted by the Oblate concerned, evaluated by the Indonesian Provincial Council, and then submitted to the Australian Provincial administration for final assessment before the question is put to MAMI, 'Can we help?'

My recent visit was to evaluate on-site how the assistance from MAMI is being used.

Fr Charlie does not seem to grow old. At 75, he is still looking at ways of lifting people out of poverty to help them build better lives for themselves and their families. Discussing the rice field development at Kampung Laut, he informed me that once the land has been raised and well drained,



it will have the potential to produce enough rice to feed 400,000 people.

The Goats and Chicken/Ducks project is particularly interesting. In the village I visited, there are about 30 widows who – according to Fr Charlie – are expected to live on 10 cents a day. By providing each of them with two or three goats and/or chickens, they are able to develop an income for their own survival and to contribute to their families.

The visit to a vocational school was encouraging. While the workshop was basic, the students are taught to maintain motorbikes, trucks and cars. Maintaining motorbikes is especially important – everyone seems to have one!

One of the accompanying photographs will give some idea of the number of projects Fr Charlie is or has worked on. Each red line indicates a project.

One photo is of a new senior secondary school under construction.

A book could be written on the work of Fr Charlie. It is also worthwhile Googling 'Fr Charlie Burrows – the Nazarene'.



## Other Indonesian projects:

Near the village of Kaliori, the people working with the Oblates have built a shrine to Our Lady. Next to it, the Oblates have built a retreat/conference centre. The labourers who worked on many of the buildings are from the local village and the project is being used to help them develop building skills.

Challenges for the future will include projects in Kalimantan (Borneo), where the Oblates have several missions serving people in desperate need of assistance. Let us see what we can do to help.



I visited several clinics founded by the Oblates. One that I share with you is in our parish in Jakarta, run by parishioners, specifically a group of doctors and nurses. It serves the poorest of the poor, among whom are refugees from a local detention centre.



This man is 25 and from Afghanistan. He has spent five years in an Indonesian camp waiting for the UN to find a country willing to accept him.

MAMI gives a small grant to help with the cost of medicines. The rest is provided by the parishioners.

Christmas for 2018 is coming up all too quickly. In this newsletter you are invited to share with us your intentions for the annual novena of Masses celebrated by the Oblate Camberwell community.

The Christmas cards are a wonderful way of celebrating the depth of the meaning of Christ's birth. As He said 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full'. Through these Christmas cards we celebrate with our friends a giving of life to the poorest of the poor.

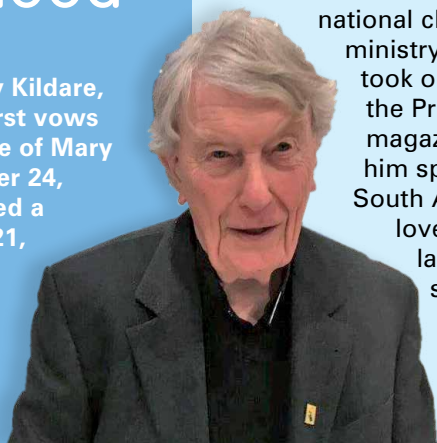
Again a big THANKS for all your continuing support.

**Fr John Sherman OMI**

## ANNIVERSARY

# Fr John Archbold OMI Diamond Anniversary of Priesthood

Fr John was born in Monasterevin, County Kildare, Ireland. He took his first vows as a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate on October 24, 1952, and was ordained a Priest on September 21, 1958. Before coming to Australia, he had served in the Anglo-Irish Province for 36 years.



Fr John arrived in Australia in 1994. He was the last of several Anglo-Irish Oblates who came to assist the Australian Province, following the General Administration in Rome requesting us to take responsibility for the China Mission.

John's great love for reading was the foundation that made him an exceptional teacher at the Oblate Belcamp College, Dublin, where, to quote one of his contemporaries, Fr Paul Byrne OMI, 'He even put life into Latin'. As teacher and headmaster, he was noted for his sense of fairness. In a college known for its sporting achievements, he introduced table tennis, where new heroes were created and some became national champions. After his ministry in education, John took on responsibility for the Province's mission magazine. This led to him spending time in South America, where his love for the Spanish language grew stronger, following earlier visits when he took students to Spain for excursions.

Since 1994 John has spent time in Lesmurdie in Western Australia and Sunshine in Victoria. But St Patrick's Fremantle has benefited from his ministry for most of these 24 years. He has a love of working with youth, devotion to the Mass and preaching, celebrating many baptisms and funerals and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, being the first Oblate chaplain at Notre Dame University, assisting Fr Colbert with the chaplaincy of Fremantle hospital – and still active. What a wonderful life of priestly service!

In all this, Fr John's love for his Irish homeland and his Paddy jokes convey a wonderful warmth for people. Then, of course, his roots in Ireland were in race-horse breeding, which explains that occasional little bet on the horses.

Fr John, we know that during September you celebrated these 60 years of ministry with your beloved family and the Anglo-Irish Oblates. Now back in Fremantle, it's time for your many friends and parishioners to celebrate with you. Thank you for who you are and your wonderful Oblate priestly service to so many.

## CELEBRATIONS

# Fr John O'Doherty OMI

In August we faced the passing of one of our senior Oblates, who was still ministering at St Pius X Church, Dernancourt, Adelaide. Fr John O'Doherty last year celebrated 50 years of Priesthood and in May this year he visited his former parish in Jakarta, where he served twice as parish priest. Trinity Parish was celebrating 40 years and invited former parish priests to be part of the celebration with the people. John was a missionary in Indonesia for 28 years between 1982 and 2010.

Following his ordination in 1967, he was sent to Dernancourt Parish, Adelaide. After a few years, he became Novice Master at St Mary's seminary, where he was later

appointed Rector. His next posting was a joy for him because he was near the sea at Rosebud Parish, Victoria. John always loved the sea; sailing, surfing and walking there.

John or Big John (as he was affectionately called) was really interested in the mission in Indonesia and he chose to learn the language and culture when he studied at Monash University. Because of his knowledge of Indonesia, he helped out in Cilacap once or twice before being missioned there in October 1982. He joined Fr Charlie Burrows in Cilacap for a while and battled with settling into such a different situation from Australia, different language, climate and culture. But his love for the mission kept him going.

For such a tall man there were many issues he had to face... low doorways, little leg room, even sometimes being forced to pay twice the amount for a ticket on local transport because he took up so much

room! Food also was a challenge but I think, because of the love for the mission, he was ready to face it all.

In 1984 he became parish priest of our only parish in Jakarta. This was a big challenge, with crowded conditions and traffic jams the order of the day and, of course, the humidity and heat. He was the only Oblate in Jakarta and shared his ministry and life in the parish with a Maryknoll priest, the late Fr Jim Kalchthaler MM.

John's time as parish priest was short because he was called to Yogyakarta to open the Novitiate on the same property as the Scholasticate. The first Novitiate was a combination of new candidates and some who had finished philosophy. At the same time, he was asked to design and build the new Novitiate, which was to be about 4 kilometres away.





## CELEBRATIONS

This all was done in John's style, carefully planned and with attention to detail and completed on time but a bit over budget!

Another big ministry undertaken by John was finances. He became the first provincial bursar when the Province was established in 1993. He accompanied Fr Mario Beřtulli OMI RIP as they set up the provincial house in Yogyakarta. Later John was asked to be the one who would design and set up the new Provincialate in Semarang, a city on the north coast of Java. With his expertise and connections, this was achieved.

After his ministries as Master of Novices and provincial bursar, he was ready to serve wherever needed. He returned to Trinity Parish as parish priest for five years. Again he was involved in the renovations of the presbytery and also instrumental in acquiring land that was to become the new parish of Mary Immaculate Kalideres, adjoining Trinity parish.

For some years, John spent three months a year in the foundation house in Aix-en-Provence, France, as part of the team assisting brother Oblates to deepen their living of the charism of St Eugene.

John served in the parish of Kalvari for several years before the Oblates returned the parish to the diocese of Jakarta in 2007, to focus on the large Trinity parish. John was always ready to serve wherever he was sent but his health became an issue, and so he finally returned to Australia in 2010.

He asked to go back to his first posting at Dernancourt, and he was

assistant priest there under Frs Ian Mackintosh and then Mathew Raj. He was happy in his posting and, despite several bouts of illness, would always bounce back and recover. To keep up his Indonesian connection, he became the chaplain to the small Catholic Indonesian Community and had regular Eucharists with them.

John attended a friend's funeral in Brisbane and then suffered a massive stroke from which he never regained consciousness. His Requiem Mass was held in the Iona Chapel on August 3. It was a privilege for me to be there and say a few words after his niece Judith Crozier gave the eulogy. It was good to meet friends of John who lived in Brisbane and others who had even come from Sydney and the Oblate Parish in Adelaide.

The Superior General Fr Louis Lougen OMI, in his short message at John's passing away, wrote "Big John was a man who loved the Oblate Congregation and charism ... His dedication to formation was also a sign of his love for the Congregation. I will really miss such a gentle giant! God bless him and we thank God for all the gifts John brought to the Congregation."

**Peter Stoll OMI  
(General Councillor)**



to give Fr John a giant send-off at a memorial mass in the parish church on the night of Thursday, August 9.

This was concelebrated by 19 priests, with parish priest Fr Mathew Raj OMI as the main celebrant. Concelebrants included Adelaide Archdiocese's Assistant Apostolic Administrator Fr Philip Marshall, Fr Slawek Plonka OMI from Sydney (who proclaimed the Gospel) and Fr John McGinty, from Melbourne (who preached the homily). The Choir from St Pius X School sang "As Long as I have Music", while the congregation saw a photo presentation, and eulogies were presented by Fr Philip from the Adelaide Archdiocese, Margaret from the St Pius X parish and Jimmy from the Indonesian community.

After mass, supper was shared in the parish hall, where all who gathered exchanged tall stories about their associations with their beloved priest, Fr John.

*Glory be to Him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Ephesians 3:20 (Fr John's priestly ordination card 22 July 1967)*

*As an Oblate seminarian, I was at John's ordination and at his jubilee celebrations 50 years later. Fr John was also the celebrant at my daughter's wedding and he baptised both of our grandchildren.*

## Fr John Francis O'Doherty OMI RIP

Missionary priest Fr John, who was on reduced active liturgical and pastoral duties at St Pius X Dernancourt for the last eight years, died suddenly on 31 July 2018 in Brisbane. Some 400 parishioners and people from the wider Adelaide community gathered



Jos Hensing and Fr John 2013

## MISSIONS



St Vincent's Orphanage

## IMMERSION experiences

**Having shared in regards to the Indonesian Mission in 'From the Director'**

I would like to concentrate on the three IMMERSION experiences that students from Mazenod College Western Australia and Iona College Queensland took part in late September and early October.

**Fr. Long Immersion Experience from Iona College.** In late September, eighteen Iona College Year 11 students accompanied by three teachers and Fr Michael Twigg OMI, left for a new missionary experience that was to ignite the relationship of Iona and Sri Lanka through the respected work of Fr Tim Long OMI, the Founder of Iona College in Queensland. The events that followed were truly humbling and incomparable to any event experienced in Iona College's young history as the group immersed themselves in the Sri Lankan culture.

# MISSIONS

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In Jaffna the group was greeted by the warmest of welcomes from St Patrick's College. This experience was a highlight for the boys of both colleges, experiencing the difference in cultures, yet having the same values.

This is where the significant impact of Fr Long was evident. He was known as a man of sturdy faith and leadership whilst ultimately being referred to as 'The Man of Jaffna.'

On Saturday in Anuradhapura, a very poor diocese with an Oblate Bishop, the students met some from Iona's brother school, Mazenod College Western Australia also on

an Immersion experience, where they experienced the joyfulness and happiness of the Sri Lankans despite their great poverty.

A life changing experience for the Mazenod students was a visit to an alcohol rehabilitation centre run by the Oblates. This also continued the work of a previous Immersion group through the contact with Fr Dileepa's village where they are helping to provide water purification kits for as many families as they can raise money to assist. They also strengthened Mazenod's involvement in the work of St Vincent's orphanage, spending time with the Oblates working there.



Back in Australia a group from Iona joined with the Rosies community in Cairns, North Queensland where they had the privilege of deepening their appreciation of the culture of the local indigenous people. The students of Mazenod College (Victoria) and Iona College in Queensland are deeply involved in the work of Rosies which is an Oblate Mission especially to the homeless and those in desperate need. Mazenod College (WA) supports St Patrick's Community Care Centre in Fremantle.



The new Australian Province webpage was launched recently by current Provincial Fr Peter Daly OMI.

Please explore it. It is hoped it will provide you with news of what is happening in the ministries of the Province on a regular basis, together with giving links to other Oblate websites. For our Associates and those wishing to contact the MAMI office, we hope that it will be helpful. <https://www.oblates.com.au/>



## Partners in mission

**What a wonderful teaching and cultural immersion I have just experienced in Hong Kong!**

I was one of three fortunate teachers from Adelaide to participate in the Oblates' PIM scheme. Lorraine Armstrong, Georgy Ewing and I were volunteer teachers of conversational English in the Summer School Program at Notre Dame College, To Kwa Wan, Kowloon, Hong Kong. The program is co-ordinated by Fr Slawek Kalisz OMI and is open to students in the four Oblate schools.

The warmth and hospitality of the Oblate community – priests, principals and staff – was truly amazing. We were invited to the most delicious lunch the weekend we arrived, by Frs Slawek, Ronnie and Jun OMI. It coincided with a regional meeting, so we were also able to meet Fr David, who was from mainland China and returning to San Antonio in US, Fr Mark from Indonesia, Fr Irek (based in China) and Fr Peter, originally from Melbourne. The dining room was abuzz with chatting and laughter as Georgy and Lorraine renewed friendships from prior years of volunteering.

The following Tuesday we were treated to a luscious dim sum luncheon at Happiness Cuisine Restaurant by Frs Slawek and Ronnie and principals of the Oblate schools; Monica, Philip, Raymond and Lawrence. It was a chance to learn about the schools, student population and to ask any questions ... as well as savouring a huge array of local cuisine. Unanimous verdict: delicious! We continued to be spoilt on a daily basis, sharing our gourmet midday meal, prepared by chefs extraordinaire, Elma and Elisa, with Fr Ronnie, Fr Jun and Fr Slawek, depending on their busy schedules. This meal time proved to be a good chance to debrief after lessons. Fr Ronnie continued to be a fount of information, answering questions and supporting us teachers. He even recommended places to visit and buses to catch.

Having been educated in the Catholic school system but teaching only in SA government schools, it was a 'going home' experience, albeit short. The program catered for students ranging in age from seven to 16. Some students completed the full four weeks while others enrolled for two weeks. In true Oblate tradition, the government funding was returned to the families to cancel the cost.

I thoroughly enjoyed working with my year level 3 to 5 students. They were generally respectful and co-operative. It was pleasing to see the students relaxing and their personalities and interests emerging. It was also rewarding to see the students developing their oral language skills

as vocabulary, grammar and confidence all improved to some degree. Warm thanks also go to Cindy, English Language coordinator, and Fan, teacher assistant, for their helpfulness and quick follow-ups to our needs. Thank you also to administration staff Vivienne, Adele and Brian (IT), janitors at NDC and OPM ... and, of course, Sunny, who greeted us each day and patiently helped me to practise saying "good morning" in Cantonese ('jousahn') with the correct tones! Special thanks to principal of OPM, Miss Monica, for allowing us to stay in the residential section of her school. The accommodation was comfortable and overlooked a beautiful park. I miss waking to gentle Chinese music being played over the speakers as elderly Chinese practise their tai chi and being lulled to sleep at night to more classical strains! I was so impressed with the calm, helpful To Kwa Wan community.



I thoroughly recommend the Summer School PIM program and encourage anyone who is considering becoming involved to do so. I can confidently say that we volunteers all greatly appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity to be part of the generous Oblate School Community for the four weeks.

Sincere thanks and appreciation!

**Mary Graham**



## Australian Province



With the consent of his Council meeting in plenary session, the Superior General has appointed Fr Christian Fini OMI as Provincial of the Australian province for a first term. Fr Christian was born on January 30, 1975, in the Diocese of Melbourne. He completed Senior High School at Mazenod College Melbourne then, after a short time of studying engineering at Monash University, he entered the Oblate Novitiate in 1995 and professed his first vows on February 17, 1996. He continued with his study of philosophy and theology at the St Mary's Oblate Scholasticate in Mulgrave, Melbourne, completing his Bachelor and Masters in Theology at Catholic Theological College, as well as a graduate Diploma of Education at Australian Catholic University. After a pastoral year in Italy, he professed perpetual vows on August, 20, 2000 in the parish of St. John Vianney's Springvale North. Then, on June 29, 2001, he was ordained a priest by Melbourne Auxillary Mgr. Joseph O'Connell.

He received his first obedience to parish ministry in Campbelltown, Sydney. In a short time, Fr Christian found his strength in mission with youth and in 2005 was appointed national co-ordinator of Youth Ministry and Vocations for the Australian Oblate Province, as well as preparing for the International Oblate Youth Encounter and World Youth Day 2008.

In 2009, Fr Christian was appointed Director of the Oblate Office of Mission, established to bring together a number of ministries in the Australian Province: Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate, (MAMI), Partners in Mission, (PIM), Oblate Youth Australia (OYA), and Rosies Victoria and Queensland.

While Director of Oblate Office of Mission, he was appointed to the council at St Mary's Seminary in 2011, a formator in 2012 and interim Superior of the Scholasticate in 2013.



Fr Christian has extensive experience working in administration of the Province, serving four terms as a member of Provincial Council, and being appointed Vicar Provincial in 2016.

At present, he is Rector of Mazenod College (VIC) and also coordinator of the General Committee for Mission with Youth.



Fr David Ullrich OMI from the United States of America Province generously volunteered to work in the Delegation of China from 2008 to 2016. Fr David was the superior of the China Delegation. He returned this year to the United States Province. We are grateful to Fr David and the Superiors of his home Province for his being available to work and lead in the China Delegation for so long.



Fr John David Raj Chodagiri OMI who until recently has been the Chaplain to Rosies Qld has joined Fr Mathew Raj OMI in the Parish of St Pius X, Dernancourt South Australia.

Mazenod College (WA) has just opened the new Province Design and Technology Centre and Mazenod College (VIC) is just completing extensions to the chapel and new senior classroom block and library.



Mazenod College (WA)

▲The last week of September the Oblates of the Australian Province gathered for their annual retreat at the St John of God retreat house in Western Australia. The retreat was given by Archbishop Emeritus Sylvain Lavoie OMI from Canada.



Bishop Mark Edwards OMI Auxiliary Bishop in Melbourne was one of the bishops from Australia chosen to attend the recent Synod on Youth in Rome. Bishop Mark was very active giving regular reports of the action at the Synod.



Progress on the new St Mary's Seminary is going well and by the time you receive this newsletter the staff and students should have moved into the building, making it their home. It is now up to all of us Oblates and MAMI associates to do our best to invite men to consider life as an Oblate Priest or Brother.

Have you ever said to someone 'I think you would make a good Oblate?' How about challenging someone?

### Important Information

The MAMI OFFICE will close on THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2018, and reopen MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2019.



## Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

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