

Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

Fr Christian's article

Ministry with young people and promotion of vocations seem like obvious ministries, but they are important to encourage and promote as we have achieved 200 years and are challenged to re-found the Congregation for another 200 years. The Year of Oblate Vocations is an important initiative that is a natural part of ministry with young people.

In the past 14 years, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate have made new efforts to encourage, support and develop ministry with young people at local, regional and international levels. From the congregation's foundation, one of the first ministries of St Eugene de Mazenod was to meet the needs of young people in the town of Aix-en-Provence and establish a young youth association. The 34th General Chapter (2004) acknowledged this by including "Ministry to Youth" as a traditional ministry in the Oblate Constitutions and Rules.

In response to the 34th Chapter, the first International Oblate Congress on Youth Ministry was held in Sydney in 2008, after World Youth Day. Among the discussions, it was recognised that, for it to truly be an Oblate Mission, it had to be a mission "with" youth, not "to" youth.

The second Oblate Congress on Youth Ministry, titled the Oblate Mission with Youth, was held in Aix, France, in 2016, during the 200th Anniversary of the congregation's foundation. At this Congress, building on the past, the participants recognised the need for a clear Vision and Framework to guide Oblate Mission with Youth, as well as more practical documents such as General Norms, Formation Material and other resources to assist Oblates in their ministry.

It was also clear that all ministry with young people was a form of vocational work. At our foundation, other Diocesan Priests joined De Mazenod's Mission, but those first young men to join the congregation as students were from the youth association De Mazenod had founded in Aix.

The Commission for Oblate Mission with Youth, formed by the 36th General Chapter (2016), has developed three Goals of Oblate Ministry with Young People. These goals seek to assist a young person on their journey of faith, which at its core seeks to answer the question – How is God calling me to use my gifts?

In becoming Human, we seek to foster the total personal (psychological, intellectual, emotional and physical) and spiritual growth of each young person; helping them to recognise their dignity and the dignity of others.

In becoming Christians, we seek to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.

In becoming saints, we seek to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the Oblate Charism, fully human and fully alive, in our world today.

In this mission, we want to return to the example of De Mazenod, who calls us to help each other become first human, then Christians and lastly Saints, realising that this is our common vision. Only this way will we be able to help our youth find their true vocation and the Call that God has specifically for each one of them.

In this Year of Oblate Vocations, please join the congregations in praying for Vocations.

Holy Father,
we come to you because Jesus asked us to pray
that you send workers into your harvest.
Therefore, send us generous young men,
passionate for Jesus,
willing to make of their whole life a total oblation to you,
to become close to the poorest and most abandoned,
and to proclaim the Gospel.

May they burn with the same fire that you
enkindled in Saint Eugene;
may they come to be part of his family
and, with all the Oblates, may they continue
the work of Redemption.
Mary Immaculate,
Who first gave Jesus to the world,
be with us as we pray



From the Director:

With Fr Andrew Chen OMI



The MAMI office is staffed by a small team made up of Sandra Dwyer, Luisa Amati, Fr Andrew Chen OMI, Leon Jongebloed, Jenny McPherson, and myself. Fr Andrew, Luisa, Jenny and Leon have other jobs in our Provincial Administration but assist MAMI. Leon, assistant to the Bursar, makes sure our finances are in order. Fr Andrew handles the transfer of money to missions and helps make sure we all get the best out of our computers. Jenny McPherson is the Executive Officer for the Provincial. When it comes to supporting our missions, it is "all hands on deck" when the job demands it. From time to time, I include members of the team in the photo of FROM THE DIRECTOR to ensure you understand this is not a one-person organisation.

In addition to the above, MAMI gets invaluable support from the local Camberwell community, led by Fr Vincent Ryan OMI. Fr Austin Cooper OMI ensures the Masses you request are celebrated. The Camberwell community, together

with all the Oblates of the Australian Province/Delegation of China, keep our benefactors in their prayers.

As a missionary family in the Church, the Oblates regularly reassess their missionary commitments. The shortage of Oblate Priests and Brothers forces us to make some difficult decisions. Over the years we have withdrawn from several parishes and ministries. Sometimes this has been a refocusing, as when the mission houses were closed and the colleges established. This Easter, Immaculate Heart of Mary parish, Sefton, in the Archdiocese of Sydney, will cease to be under the Pastoral Care of the Oblates.

The people of Sefton will miss the Oblates, as we will indeed miss them. The parishioners of Sefton have been generous supporters of our Oblate missions. For this I thank them. However, I know the parish has an Oblate missionary heart and that they will continue to support our missionary endeavours and as we pray each day for our benefactors, they will be in our prayers.

Christmas cards again set a new high:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Africa development projects | \$5,024 |
| China education projects | \$4,156 |
| Indonesia chicken project | \$9,712 |
| Indonesia goat project | \$14,651 |
| Indonesia tool box project | \$7,735 |
| TOTAL | \$41,278 |

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



This young lady's photo is used with the permission of her mother.

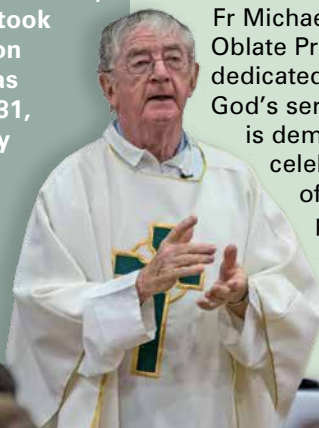
Many thanks, as always, for your prayers and continuing support of the mission of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Fr John Sherman OMI

ANNIVERSARY

Michael McMahon

Fr Michael McMahon was born on November 29, 1940, in Drumshanbo, County Leitrim, Ireland. He took his first vows as an Oblate on September 29, 1961, and was ordained a Priest on March 31, 1968. His training as a family therapist and counsellor has helped to enrich his ministry of service.



Most of his ministry has been in Oblate Colleges: Iona College (1969–1975 and 1980–1989); Mazenod College Victoria (1998–2004); and his beloved Mazenod College and St Brigid's College, Western Australia (1975–1979, Rector Mazenod 1979–1980, 1990–1997 and 2005 to today).

The following testimony has been written by Lorraine Lima.

Fr Michael McMahon is an Oblate Priest who is specifically dedicated to God and to God's service. Clearly this is demonstrated with the celebration of his 50 years of dedication to the priesthood. Fr Michael is seen very much as the person of Jesus as he performs his duties of Priest and Pastor to all.

The qualities of Jesus and St Eugene are easily recognised from the moment you meet Fr Michael. He has an uncanny ability to know you by name, and your family history. He has the gift of making people feel special and at ease. His work with young people at Mazenod College and St Brigid's College has been outstanding because of his gift as an excellent teacher. He has the ability to teach final-year students the ATAR Religion and Life course, as well as English Literature. He makes the students question and engage in learning by presenting well-thought-out lessons. In this way he is an asset to the staff at St Brigid's and Mazenod College.

His pastoral work in the Hills shows his empathy and understanding; with the many funerals he has conducted, families feel a great deal of solace through his support through Funeral Masses and prayer services.

Fr David Shelton

David was born in Stourport-on-Severn, which is just outside Birmingham, England, on June 25, 1941, the son of Agnes and Eddie Shelton. Fr David's mother now lives in Adelaide. As a secondary school student, he attended St Mary's College, Colwyn Bay, which was conducted by the Oblates. David entered the Novitiate at Cahermoyle in 1958; his priestly studies were at Belmont and then Piltown, near Dublin. He took Final Vows in 1962, and was ordained a Priest at Birmingham on February 11, 1968.

David's first Obedience brought him to Australia. His first appointment was to the Parish of Hillcrest (Dernancourt) in South Australia. In 1970, the call went out for volunteers to join the foundation Oblate Community to go to Indonesia. David was one of those first four selected. It was a courageous decision involving long preparation studying the language and culture. David can still hold a good conversation in Indonesian. He was there from 1971 until he returned to Australia in 1983.

He ministered in various parishes – Rosebud, Sefton, Dernancourt, Sorrento (where he was Parish Priest from 1989–1996), and Springvale



North until 1997, when he was appointed to his present position as senior Catholic Chaplain to the prisons of Western Australia.

Wherever David has worked, he has expended considerable energy and vitality to the people he has ministered to. He is an enthusiast and enjoys mixing with people. David is a forthright and determined character, honest and straight forward – what you see is what you get. He is never backward in coming forward. David pays careful attention to detail, particularly the little things that can make a big difference to the lives of those suffering and in need. He is a compassionate man, with a great capacity to give.

Fr David likes things to go well and be on time. He is a talented Liturgist, but the liturgy must be well-organised and relevant, never be drawn out but precise, carefully planned and suitably prayerful and uplifting.

At times, David can be a little stubborn, but to good effect. Recently he suffered a severe heart attack and everyone gave him up for dead, except David, of course. He courageously hung in and survived, and is now back at it with gusto. Overall, David tackles life, and its issues, with considerable flair and imagination, with no fear of the future, even on the roads, hence his great love and passion for Formula 1 racing.

Fr David is a generous man with a big heart. He is never afraid of work and helping others out. This is very much evidenced in his work with prisoners and their families. David is known for his defence of prisoners and their families. This interest extends beyond the prison walls, as he works for the resettlement and material well-being of released prisoners and shows them his continuing friendship. As Fr Nanni once brilliantly described him – "He seems at times a little rough, but he has a soft heart of pure gold".

Fr David Shelton is indeed a great priest, a humble Oblate and a most loyal friend. May God bless him on celebrating 50 years of priesthood, and grant him many more years in the Lord's vineyard, faithfully doing His work in serving and loving all people that God puts before him. God bless, and many thanks Fr David.



Prayer is very much a living, loving act of communication with God and Fr Michael has been able to share and demonstrate this during his Masses, prayer services and Kairos retreats for the young students of Mazenod. Fr Michael makes everyone feel welcome and loved by God, regardless of his or her faith or beliefs. This is a testament to the kind and caring man that he is.

Marriage and baptism are two important sacraments that Fr Michael is asked to perform frequently by past students at both the colleges he has taught at. These young people value the influence of God in their life through him and want to continue in sharing their faith journey with their own families.

Fr Michael is an intelligent man with a sharp wit and an interest in all forms

of art. He has been instrumental in bringing the Hills community and staff together through staff plays, which have been a highlight for many and encouraged collegiality between all. Often you will hear boarders and past students talk about the influence Fr Michael has had on them and how he has been a source of inspiration. To quote one young man, "Fr Michael showed friendship and support and made us feel like a family at home while being away from home. It was the experience of community and friendship that helped and encouraged me to join the Oblates".

Fr Michael is a good golfer and played this year at the OMI Golf Day in Victoria on January 10. When Fr Harry Dyer OMI announced the 2017 winners, it was with great joy that he was able to say that the

Oblates had regained the Plate after an absence of two years, with Fr Michael McMahon OMI being the Plate winner.

Fr Michael embodies a passion and zest for life that is infectious and we have all shared in these moments – they have been magical and many and we have been blessed to share these times with him.

Once in a while, there comes someone very special like Fr Michael McMahon, who not only serves the church and its people faithfully, but who makes of their own life a living testimony of Christ's love. Thank you for your many years of devoted and caring ministry.

Happy 50th Anniversary, Fr Michael McMahon, dearly loved by all in the West.

Mission Appeals for 2018

A successful appeal was held in Sorrento, Rye and Portsea on January 6 and 7. Thanks to local parishioners and the many visitors for your generous support.

Coming appeals for 2018 are:

- St John Vianney's parish, Springvale North, April 28-29
- Moe/Newborough and Yallourn North, September 8-9
- St Pius X, Dernancourt, South Australia, July 21-22

Sri Lanka

Late in 2017, John Payne and Michael Frank from Mazenod Western Australia, along with six students, had an immersion experience in Sri Lanka, reporting "the Oblates there are very enthusiastic about building on this relationship with future immersion experiences. I will encourage Mazenod WA to incorporate the Sri Lankan missions into our MMD celebration. I think we can be of great assistance with water purifiers to prevent kidney disease and to provide help with educational needs."



This workshop at St Joseph's orphanage desperately needs refurbishing.

China

Fr John Wotherspoon OMI serves in the prisons of Hong Kong and encounters many drug mules from Africa and Central and South America. Having previously visited the inmates' families in Africa, Fr John visited families in Central and South America in January. His diary of the trip reveals how poverty at home can drive people to take risks to survive. His report is too long to print; Fr John has given permission to share his web page, which contains his diary of the trip. <http://hkdrugblog.org/SA/daily-blog.htm>



Fr John meets Bishop Wilhelm Steckling OMI, our former Superior General who is now Bishop of Ciudad del Este in Paraguay.

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.

Send to: **MAMI Office**
PO Box 384
Camberwell Vic 3124

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|---------|-------|----------|--|
| Name | | | |
| Address | | | |
| City | State | Postcode | |
| Phone | | | |
| Email | | | |

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

or debit my credit card: Mastercard Visa the amount of \$ _____
 Once off payment Monthly payment

Card number

Credit card expiry date / CCV number (final 3 digits printed on card back)

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: _____

or 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**

or 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.



Indonesia



At the time of publication, we are waiting on submissions from the Indonesian Oblates for the many projects they have among the very poorest. We all know there is

nothing that will stop Fr Charlie Burrows in his search for ways to help people to better their way of life. The below photo of him travelling in a canoe is so typical of this man, always on the move. However, I just have to share with you this photo with his Christmas gift – a kitten. It seems he did stop to enjoy some personal time on Christmas Day!



Vietnam



Your generous support will cover the education support of these young orphans for the next year.

Zimbabwe

It now looks as though the drilling for water project will be able to get underway.



OBLATE YOUTH



Iona College, Queensland

Year of Youth

The Bishops of Australia have declared 2018 the Year of Youth. As each parish and college community takes up the challenge of recognising that the youth are as much the Church of today as people of any age, it is valuable to reflect on the involvement of the Oblates with youth in the Australian Church.



Mazenod, Victoria

In our four colleges – Iona College Queensland, Mazenod College WA, Mazenod College Victoria, and St Eugene’s College Queensland, we are committed to the Faith development of some 5000 students every day. St Eugene’s is not a college administered by the Oblates but being in an Oblate parish with St Eugene as their patron, it values the Oblate charism.

The photos are of the Year 12 students with their Year 12 Cross which is signed as a pledge to take up the challenges of the year and follow Christ. In all our colleges, Mass is celebrated daily. Students are passionate about their support of the missions and many participate in overseas and local immersions programs, which can be life-changing experiences.

Oblate Youth communities exist in several of our parishes. Each year, representatives of youth from our parishes and colleges gather for their National Oblate Youth Encounter. This year the theme was, *You are the Light of the World*. One dream we all could have for 2018, the Year of Youth, is to have a community of Oblate Youth in all our parishes. To qualify for the World Youth Day experience, you must be under 35. If you are 35 and under, the good news is that you are youth.



Mazenod, WA



2018 National Oblate Youth Encounter

AROUND THE PROVINCE



ROSIES

ROSIES started as an outreach of Oblate Youth. The Victorian Community's members are still youth. The Queensland branch is open to volunteers of all ages but still has a significant youth involvement.

Rosies is known as "Friends on the Street" and is valued by the homeless and needy for the amazing way the volunteers extend the hand of friendship.



VOCATIONS

On February 19, Christopher Villanueva began his pre-novitiate. Chris comes from Adelaide but made contact with the Oblates during 2017 when he was a member of the NET (National Evangelisation Team) ministering at Iona College in Brisbane.

The photo is of Chris in front of the partly built new St Mary's Seminary. It is due for completion in September 2018.



19th March **Fr Peter King OMI** of our China Delegation will celebrate his Diamond Jubilee of Priesthood. The next edition of the MAMI will feature a reflection on Fr Peter's life.



Every year, the Moe/Newborough Oblate Community hosts a Golf Day. It is a great gathering of clergy and concludes with a delightful meal provided by parishioners. Once again, Fr Michael McMahon OMI was the champion. Fr Michael is seen here receiving the winner's trophy from Bishop Patrick O'Regan of Sale.

Fr Pat Moroney OMI is now resident in the Camberwell Community.



Fr Andrew Chen OMI has been appointed Assistant Formator of St Mary's Seminary and until the completion of the new St Mary's will be a member of the Camberwell Community.



Fr Nadeem OMI to the Moe Community.



Fr James Jayachandran OMI has been appointed Assistant Priest at St Patrick's Fremantle.



NEW ARRIVALS in the Province.

Fr Meno Basti OMI joining us from the Jaffna Province, Sri Lanka. Appointed to St. David's in Tea Tree Gully.



Fr Reginald Jayamaha OMI joining us from the Colombo Province, Sri Lanka. Waiting appointment.



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