

# Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate Provincial Reflection

**I am writing this on a 6 hour stopover at the Hong Kong International Airport after having the privilege of spending a week and a half in the Philippines and then almost two weeks in Hong Kong/China. I say a privilege because I have spent time with Oblates from the Asia/Oceania region and have visited some of the inspiring places of their missionary outreach.**

The Oblates, whether in Cotabato, Manila, Hong Kong, Beijing or Guangzhou face many challenges (and rewards) that we in the first world do not experience as they do. We certainly have our own challenges, and rewards, particularly in an increasingly secular world.

I was fortunate to spend time with the Oblates at an Oblate Gathering and subsequently at each of the places of mission, also listening to their inspiring stories. I spent some time (not enough)

with two remarkable Missionaries. One was a Spanish sister, Sister Rosario who, after almost 40 years in northern India, and other places beforehand, came to Guangzhou at the age of 74 years, and after 12 years there is going strong, with a passion for the people and the Lord which is infectious. The other missionary is Fr David Ullrich OMI who has spent almost 40 years in the Missions – Japan, the Hispanic Community in the USA and Mexico and now, 11 in China. They did not want me to mention their names or their story. It needs to be told and I will seek forgiveness when I next see them. (Mind you, I did say that I would give a bit of background, and they begrudgingly agreed.)

When I asked them the question that Fr John Sherman put to me, "The challenges of helping our missions – what are they?", such a question could not be answered in a few words. However I will offer to you the reflections of these two remarkable missionaries who have been touched by the Wisdom of the Lord.

Firstly, they said, ascertain the real needs of the people and not just assume that we know their needs. One example they both gave in different ways, was receiving bundles of blankets, warm clothing, etc. all made in China and arriving at a great cost, to help the



Chinese. They continued, that although they appreciated the generosity and the charity of so many, they were concerned that perhaps the gifts which came from wonderful people, did not meet the actual needs of the people. They made mention that the needs of the people were not always in response to crises, such as the Asian tsunamis with the incredibly generous response of the people and Government of Australia. The needs of the people were basically based on the need to live – food, education and health. They did not necessarily see that "things" needed to be sent, rather money sent to missionaries who could purchase what was needed and at good prices.

The Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate (MAMI) was one group mentioned that always met the needs of the people. Monies sent, were sent to people (Oblates and other missionaries) who spent the money, not on themselves or on administrative costs, but on the people it was meant to help.

*continued...*





# From the Director

May is a busy time as we process the requests for grants from our missions in China, Indonesia and throughout the rest of Asia and Africa. Fr Peter Daly, our Provincial has just returned from Mainland China and Hong Kong visiting our communities. I am sure you will find his reflection on the visits interesting. While for many years MAMI has assisted the work of our Beijing community, it is wonderful to be also assisting the Guangzhou community as they work with a community of Chinese Sisters to assist migrant children.

Thanks to your generosity both through your donations and the Christmas cards, we able to increase the grants to our Indonesian missions. I am very grateful for the welcome and generosity of the Sorrento/Rye/Portsea, Sefton and Fremantle parishes who have had MAMI APPEALS so far this year and I look forward to the APPEALS in Burpengary/Deception Bay 17/18 June, Eagle Vale 1/2 July and Tea Tree Gully 12/13 August.

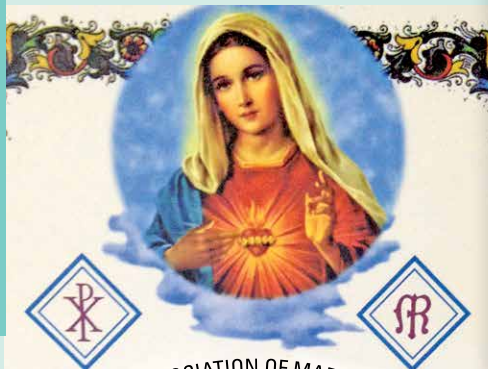
Your PRAYERS are essential for the work of our missionaries who work as St Eugene urged them 'to make people more human, then lead them to Christ and finally pray they become saints.' Please do remember that we also pray daily for all our associates and those who support our mission in the Church. Each day the Camberwell Oblate Community celebrates Mass for our benefactors both in this life and the next.

Feel free to share your requests for prayers with us. As the Camberwell Community offers Mass for you each day, do feel free to name your needs either by phoning Sandra Dwyer (03 98058888) or emailing them to MAMI@oblates.com.au. Sandra will pass them on to the Oblate Community.

Remembrance of our deceased of the family and friends. Praying for our deceased is part of our Catholic tradition. The MAMI Remembrance Certificate is a meaningful way to offer your sympathy to the family of the deceased. Again Sandra can help arrange these for you.

In addition to my ministry with MAMI, I am also the Oblate Coordinator of Vocations. Working with my brother Oblates, I journey with those in the initial stage of discerning a vocation as an Oblate Priest or Brother. For many on this journey of discernment, the CALL came through a lay person suggesting 'Have you ever thought of being a Priest and/or a Religious?' Do you know someone you could say this to? Never hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance especially in encouraging vocations.

God bless.  
Fr John Sherman OMI



MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MARY IMMACULATE  
*Register Of The Dead*

*has been enrolled in the Oblate Register of the Dead and is hereby entitled to share in 10 (ten) daily Masses, and the prayers of all Missionary Oblates throughout the World, as long as our Congregation exists.*

WITH THE SYMPATHY OF:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
649 Burke Road  
Camberwell, Vic. 3124

M.A.M.I. Director



# Provincial Reflection

*...continued cover article*

Another mention was made of the China Education Fund of MAMI. This fund helps to educate children who so often have to be taken from their schools to work in the fields in order to support the families. In these cases, their formal education ends and their opportunities to further help their families disappear. One of many sad stories told was that one family sold a child (AUD\$ 4000) to make sure that the rest of the family could survive. As horrible as this is, sadly, it is not a once-off happening.

Probably, the most telling points made in the conversations with these missionaries, was that the donor gives us the right, in trust, to choose how the donation is used to further the opportunities for the people and especially the kids. They believe that this is the greatest challenge in supporting the Missions. As the young people at our Colleges tell me, "It is not about us!!"

So, donation is an act of faith and generosity. I encourage you to support our missionaries, **knowing that in faith, you are** helping to bring what St Eugene set out as the way of the Missionary Oblates and their fellow travellers – "First of all, help them to be fully human, then good Christians and finally saints."

I thank you for all that you are and for what you do to accompany us in the Mission. May the Lord continue to bless you and your families.

Fr Peter Daly OMI



# John O'Doherty's 50th



Fr. John O'Doherty was born in Brisbane on 27th April 1934 and attended St. Agatha's Clayfield primary school and St. Columban's C.B.C. in Albion Heights, Brisbane.

At the end of his Junior Certificate, John left C.B.C. and began his first job in the insurance industry, securing a position with the South British Insurance Company in Brisbane.

After five years he was transferred to Grafton as the district representative for his company. Four years later he was transferred to Casino N.S.W. for a year. It was here that he attended a parish Mission conducted by three Oblate Fathers, namely Frs. Tom Brady, Robert McGregor and Joseph McCann, the last named being the Director of Vocations for the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He spoke to Fr. McCann and decided to try out his vocation in the Oblates.

In 1960 he was accepted as an Oblate novice and he began his novitiate in March 1960 at Sorrento, Victoria. Having taken First Vows in March 1961, he was sent to join a number of other young Australian Oblates who were studying for the Priesthood at St. Joseph's Scholasticate, Cedara, Natal in South Africa.

After three years Philosophy, John was sent back to Australia to study Theology at the new Oblate Seminary of St. Mary's in Mulgrave, Victoria. From there he attended the Diocesan Seminary at Glen Waverley to complete his priestly studies. On 22 July 1967, Fr. John was ordained to the Priesthood with a number of diocesan priests at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. He was 33 years old.



Pameran panggilan, 1999

After ordination he was posted to Hillcrest Parish, South Australia from 1968 to 1970. Then he was appointed Director of Novices at Mulgrave. In 1979 he was appointed as the new Parish Priest of Rosebud on the Mornington Peninsula.

Fr. John had been anxious to join the new Australian Oblate Mission in Indonesia and, after volunteering, he arrived in Indonesia on 6th August, 1982.

Fr. John admired the tremendous evangelical work of lay people in various parishes and their deep involvement in programmes such as the R.C.I.A.

After twenty eight years in Indonesia Fr. John decided to return to Australia, owing to various ailments associated with ageing. He was appointed to St. Pius X Parish, Dernancourt, South Australia at the beginning of 2011 as assistant Priest and his dedication to various pastoral roles has been admirable. Fr. John is a wise, totally dedicated, prayerful priest and his deep faith is appreciated by the parishioners. He has been deeply involved in various sacramental programmes especially in St. Pius X Primary School in Windsor Gardens, South Australia visiting the homes of all children preparing for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation, encouraging their parents to attend Sunday Mass with their children. He began a programme to train altar servers and succeeded in training some thirty boys and girls. He has also been involved in both Kildare Secondary Girls' College and St. Paul's College for boys, celebrating Masses on different feast days.

We congratulate Fr. John on his many fruitful years as a priest and ask the Lord to continue to bless his priestly work in the years ahead.

Ad multos annos.

Fr Ian Mackintosh OMI

'Big John's' vocation from the beginning focused on Indonesia. His studies at Monash University included the Indonesian language and culture. Before being officially posted to the mission, he had visited Cilacap where he eventually joined Fr Charlie Burrows. Settling into a new culture was not easy but John's love for the mission never waned from his arrival in October 1982.

For such a tall man, there were many issues – low doorways, little legroom etc. John sometimes on local transport was charged a double fare.

Fortunately, he liked rice but some other foods tested him, especially taufu. Apparently this dislike came from having once seen it being made in not-the-most-hygienic conditions. His brother Oblates teased John about his reaction to taufu.

In 1984 he became parish priest of our only parish in Jakarta. This was a big challenge, with living in crowded conditions with 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 Marynoll priest, Fr. Jim Kalchthaler MM. (RIP). As parish priest he bought a white Suzuki Jimny. He enjoyed his Jimny because it had great leg room and height-wise was just right for him, and of course had air-conditioning which is so important in Jakarta.

After a short time in the parish he was called to Yogyakarta to open and begin the novitiate as Novice Master. John was charged with the construction of the new novitiate building. In true John-style all was carefully planned with attention to detail and completed on time.

In time he became the first provincial bursar when the Province was established in 1993. He accompanied Fr Mario Beftolli OMI (RIP), the first Provincial of Indonesia as they set up the provincial house in Yogyakarta. Once again John was asked to be the one who would design and set up the Provincialate in Semarang. And as always with his expertise and his connections, the Indonesian Provincialate was set up on the hills above the big city of Semarang.

Ever ready to serve where needed, 'Big John' returned to Trinity Parish in Jakarta as parish priest for five years. With his usual foresight, land was purchased for a second parish to be cut off the original parish and also be entrusted to the Oblates. He also assisted with the establishment of a third parish which was eventually returned to the diocese.

John was always ready to serve but his health became an issue and he finally returned to Australia in 2009.

Fr Peter Stoll OMI

## MISSIONS

### RIISING FROM THE ASHES OF WAR IN SRI LANKA

# A Peace Building Initiative of the Oblates of the Colombo Province and of MAMI Australia

**All wars are evil and utterly destructive. No one really wins in a war. The very first unfortunate casualty of any conflict is the breakdown in human relationships. This is what Sri Lanka experienced for thirty long years in a civil war that left a trail of hundreds of people dead and thousands being displaced and deprived of their homes and livelihoods.**

The war in Sri Lanka ended in 2009, but the aftermath has left a series of unfulfilled needs which include constitutional changes that will guarantee equal rights and opportunities to all communities,

## Guangzhou Project



According to the China Labour Bulletin, there are an estimated 277,000,000 rural migrant workers in China. These are people who have had to leave their homes in the countryside and go to the more prosperous large cities in search of work. Guangzhou in mainland China, located about two hours by train from Hong Kong, is one such city. It has attracted millions of poor workers from surrounding areas who come in search of work. Currently there are estimated to be approximately 5,000,000 such migrant workers in this city of 14,000,000. Some of these are single, others come with their families and live in poor areas of the city. Those who come with their children often have a problem. Because they are from the countryside they are not registered as legal residents in the city. Though education in China is tuition-free for local residents, others must pay for tuition.



judicial mechanisms for crimes against humanity, compensation for damages caused to persons and property, accountability for involuntary disappearances, claims on occupied land and the plight of political prisoners. To put it more simply, the need to restore justice and equality to all parties concerned.

Much work needs to be done to transform a post-conflict situation of 'no-war no-peace' into one of sustainable peace and reconciliation.

Oblates of Sri Lanka are concerned for the well-being of the nation. They have made the brave decision to face the current challenge of building sustainable peace and promoting reconciliation in a nation where racial, religious and cultural prejudices have been exploited as weapons to incite communities to violence and war for sheer political gain.

The Oblates have designed a diploma education programme in *National Reconciliation and Peace Building*

The Oblates serving in Guangzhou have over the years become familiar with a small weekday programme sponsored by a group of religious Sisters to care for pre-school migrant children while their parents are at work. The Oblates have provided spiritual and moral support for this initiative over the years. We have now been requested to begin a programme for elementary and middle-school aged students, on weekends to provide them a place to study and complete their homework. Young people from our Oblate Youth China group have already been coming for several months to volunteer their services.

To this end, the mission in Guangzhou has recently rented a small storefront to serve as a study and activity centre for the children of the migrant families. The centre called 'Angel's Love' was officially opened on Christmas Day with a party for the migrants and local children. Twenty-seven participated and enjoyed the Christmas drama, games and refreshment that the 25 young adults provided for the occasion.

(Note from Fr John: AUD\$10,000 was sent recently from MAMI in support of this project.)

to train interested persons in taking on this mission. Medical personnel, teachers, religious men and women, professionals, NGO workers, university students have signed up for the course. The entire programme is being graciously sponsored by MAMI Australia and the Australian Oblate Province in collaboration with the OMI province in Colombo for which the Oblate Institute of Higher Learning is grateful.

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 may like to use this donation slip. Thank you for kind and generous support.

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

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Please send an email to: [mami@oblates.com.au](mailto:mami@oblates.com.au) which includes your name, postal address, EFT transfer detail and intention.



# Hong Kong Sojourn No. 3

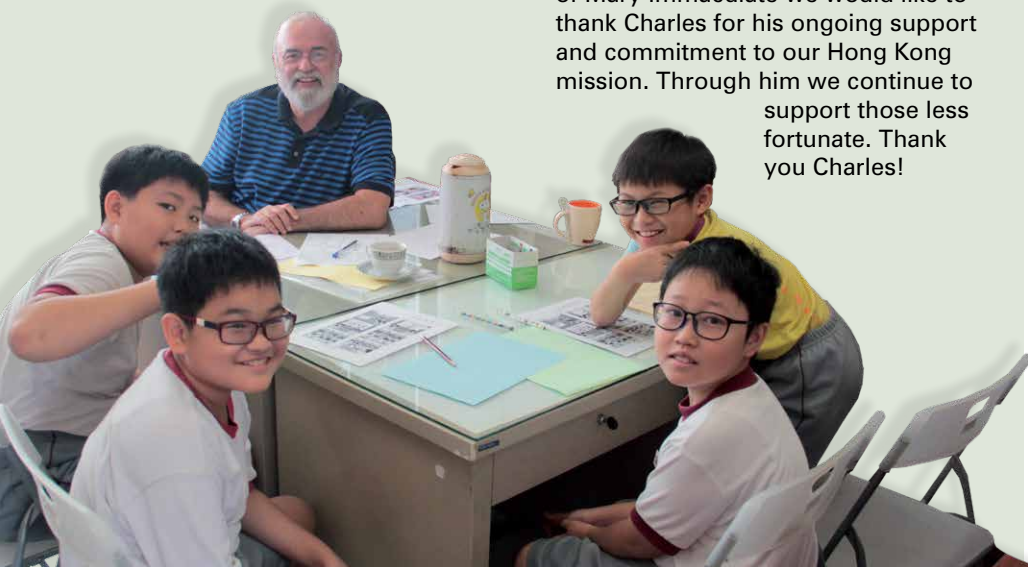


Since 2008, there has been an almost continuous stream of Australians who have spent time in Hong Kong and Beijing. They have come from all ages and walks of life

to work for the Oblates. We are not lay missionaries in the sense that Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses are but we are Partners in Mission.

If you are expecting an inspirational, scripture-filled call to the missions, you will be disappointed and if you think you will read a long list of my successes and achievements that's not here either. As a lay person I will attempt to explain things in lay terms.

**WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER** — I was once told that Catholics were divided into the Prayers, the Payers and the Stayers. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to all three overlapping groups in my parish and my family who enabled me to work for the Oblates in Hong Kong. Students would ask two main questions, "Why are you doing this?" or "What about your family?" It was easier to answer the second question first as I explained that I was a distant member of the Australian Oblate family who had come to spend time with my Chinese relatives and that I brought gifts. The first was me, with all my strengths and weaknesses, my sense of humour, my energy and enthusiasm and just as important, my language and culture. In that sense I was fulfilling my baptismal duty as a Christian to spread the faith.



**FROM LITTLE THINGS, BIG THINGS GROW**—In most of our parishes we are lucky to see a handful if that of new Catholics being received into the Church at Easter, whereas in the Notre Dame Parish there are often 20. Most say that it was the influence of Catholic schools which helped form their decision. That is why the 3 primary schools and 1 secondary school play a role in bringing this about.

Confucius the Chinese sage once said, "EVERYONE CAN BE A TEACHER." This was proven to me on more than one occasion when very young students could translate what I was saying for the rest of his group. Or the 3rd year high school student who although of Thai background spoke Cantonese, Mandarin and English as well as her own language. Or the upper primary students who taught me to say and write my name in Mandarin in fits of laughter as they corrected my mistakes. Each school has its own flavour and will find you a role which suits YOUR strengths and abilities.

Oblate Parishes are renowned for their generosity and I ask you to be most generous towards MAMI. Australians like "bang for their buck" and think "Charity begins at home." Rather than give to a Charity in general, why not specify that you want it to go to helping an Oblate Parishioner go to Hong Kong on your behalf, as circumstances prevent you from doing so. It may encourage many more Australians to volunteer to carry out this most rewarding and important work and be immersed in the culture for a month. I found it very rewarding working with the students and being able to share some of our Australian experiences and culture with them. We experienced wonderful hospitality and have made some wonderful friends. Great memories!

**Charles McPhee, Hong Kong PIM**

On behalf of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate we would like to thank Charles for his ongoing support and commitment to our Hong Kong mission. Through him we continue to support those less fortunate. Thank you Charles!



## Would you like to volunteer in Hong Kong?

The Partners in Mission in conjunction with the Oblate Beijing community provides Australians with an opportunity to volunteer some of their time to serve those less fortunate in our overseas Oblate schools, kindergartens and centres. The volunteer experience is focused on the people we go to serve and may be the most rewarding experience of your life.

## Summer Program – Hong Kong

The summer program will run from mid-July, finishing mid-August 2017. The requirements consist of four weeks teaching with two classes per day during the week (8.15am–10.00am and 10.30am–12.15pm) with the afternoon free. Some Saturday teaching may be required. Experienced English teachers required.

## Partner in Mission – Hong Kong

PIM required to commence either Feb – May 2017 or Sep – Dec 2017. The program includes some financial support and subsidies (accommodation, food and stipend), as well as the opportunity to explore the many wondrous sights of Hong Kong.

If you are interested in this opportunity or know of someone who is, please contact us on (03) 9805 8888 or pims@oblates.com.au for further information.



## VOCATIONS

From 5–10th March Oblates involved in the formation of our students gathered in Melbourne at the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre. The focus of their discussions was the vision of the recent Oblate General Chapter regarding the formation of our students as Oblate missionaries.

**The NEW ST MARY'S SEMINARY.**  
By the next MAMI NEWSLETTER we hope to report that construction is underway.

Brothers Casimir and Josh together with pre-novice Stephen organised and ran a very successful 'Come and See' day on the 8th April. All the participants were from Melbourne. However, we are hoping for representatives from all States to be with us 22–24 September for the next 'Come and See'. We invite all our Associates to invite those they feel might have a vocation to the Priesthood or Brotherhood to participate. Our novice Thuan, currently in the last few months of his novitiate in the USA, sent word that he is anxious to be with us for this next 'Come and See'.



**Hello Everybody,**

Greetings from Fr. Dominic Rozario!

My full name is Rupak Dominic Rozario. Bengali word 'Rupak' means 'parable'.

I was born in 1982 in Bangladesh. I am the youngest of ten children in the family. I joined the Oblates after my O-level and stayed seven years in the seminary and, simultaneously finished my A-level and University studies. Then I went to Sri Lanka for my Novitiate in 2006. After my First Profession, I came back to Bangladesh and completed my B.Ph. I was sent to Rome, Italy to study theology. There in Rome I stayed in the International Roman Scholasticate. After my Final Profession there, I was ordained deacon and went back to Bangladesh for my priestly ordination. I was ordained a priest on 18 January, 2013.

Since my ordination to the priesthood, I had been working mostly with different ethnic groups in Bangladesh.

It was a very enriching and profound experience to work with them, seeing their struggles and suffering of life, being part of their difficulties, sorrows and happiness. The people who I worked with are so neglected, marginalized, poor and uneducated that sometimes I had to take the role of a lamb among the wolves; sometimes a shepherd of unruly sheep and sometimes tiger among the cunning foxes. All these multifaceted experiences made me feel that as an Oblate, I was being specialized in difficult missions and they gave a meaning to my priesthood. Now I am happy that I was able to be a part of Oblate Mission.

Now I am here in Australia to help the Province and do my Master of Philosophy. I know it will not be easy to do two things together, but I remember that we Oblates are specialized in difficult missions. I am very happy to be here among the Oblates of the Australian Province. Definitely I am going to have some more enriching experiences here. I hope my presence will be beneficial to Oblate missions here. I very much count on your prayers.

God bless  
**Fr. Rupak Dominic Rozario OMI**

## Coming Events



**21st May**  
the Feast of St Eugene



**21–24th May**  
The Oblate Province Congress  
Please pray during these days for the success of this Oblate Congress.



**29th May**  
the Feast of Blessed Joseph Gerard



**30th May**  
Mazenod College, Victoria's 50th anniversary sporting carnival.



**12th June**  
the Feast of Blessed Joseph Cebula



**17/18th June**  
MAMI APPEAL in Burpengary/Deception Bay



**1/2nd July**  
MAMI APPEAL in Eagle Vale



**12/13th August**  
MAMI APPEAL in Tea Tree Gully



**15th August**  
Mazenod College Vic. 50th Ann. Mass especially for Grandparents, Parishioners and Friends of the College



**1st September**  
Mazenod Jubilee Dinner for past and present staff



## Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

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