

## Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

# Pope Francis's address to the Oblates meeting in the recent General Chapter.

Dear Brothers,

**It is with particular joy that I welcome you, who represent a missionary religious Family dedicated to evangelization in the Church. I greet you all with affection, beginning with the newly-elected Superior General and his Council. You are here for the General Chapter, in the year in which you celebrate the bicentennial of your foundation through the work of St Eugene de Mazenod, a young priest eager to respond to the call of the Spirit. At the beginning of its history, your Congregation laboured to reignite the faith, which the French Revolution was extinguishing in the hearts of the poor in rural Provence, overwhelming also many ministers of the Church. In the space of a few decades, it expanded throughout the five continents, continuing on the path begun by the Founder, a man who loved Jesus with passion and the Church without conditions.**

Today you are called to renew this twofold love, remembering the two hundred year lifespan of your religious Institute. Your jubilee, for a fortuitous and providential coincidence, occurs in the Jubilee of Mercy. Indeed, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate were born from an experience of mercy, lived by the young Eugene one Good Friday in the presence of Jesus crucified. May mercy be ever at the heart of your mission, of your efforts of evangelization in the world today.



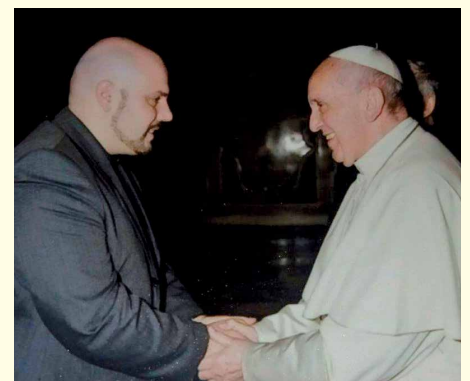
Fr Louis Lougen and Pope Francis

On the day of his canonization, St. John Paul II defined Father de Mazenod a 'man of Advent', docile to the Holy Spirit in reading the signs of the times and aiding the work of God in the story of the Church. May these characteristics be present in you, his children. May you also be 'men of Advent', capable of discerning the signs of the new times and guiding your brothers on the paths which God opens in the Church and in the world.

The Church is living, together with the entire world, an epoch of great transformation in the most diverse areas. She needs men who carry in their hearts the love of Jesus Christ, which permeated the heart of the young Eugene de Mazenod, and the same unconditional love for the Church, which seeks to be a house ever more open. It is important to toil for a Church for all, ready to welcome and accompany! The work necessary to realize all this is vast; and you also have your specific contribution to make.

Your missionary history is the history of many consecrated persons, who offered and sacrificed their lives for the mission, for the

poor, to reach distant lands whose people were still 'without a pastor'. Today, every land is a 'missionary land', every human dimension is a missionary land, which awaits the proclamation of the Gospel. Pope Pius XI defined you 'specialists in difficult missions'. The scope of the mission today seems to expand every day, embracing ever new poor people – men and women with the face of Christ who plead for help, consolation, and hope in the most desperate situations of life. Therefore, you are needed: your missionary daring and your availability to bring to all the Good News, which frees and consoles.



Fr Christian Fini with Pope Francis

May the joy of the Gospel shine above all on your faces and make you joyful witnesses. Following the example of the Founder, may 'among yourselves practice charity' be your first rule of life and the premise of every apostolic action; and may 'zeal for the salvation of souls' be the natural consequence of your fraternal charity.

# From the Director

Each year somehow passes faster. As we get to the end of 2016, it is time for reflection on what has been achieved. Attending the retreat with the Oblates of our China Delegation was a time of prayer for me but also an experience through which I deepened my appreciation of the ministry of my brother Oblates both in Mainland China and Hong Kong. The visit to Australia by Fr Giovanni Zevola OMI has helped to promote the PIMs – Partners in Mission program which is an important part of the mission both in Beijing and Hong Kong.



The financial assistance that we have been able to give to the Oblate Indonesian Province has enabled them to continue their work among some of the poorest of the poorest.

In recent years our partnership with Oblates missions in India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Zimbabwe has enabled us to assist our brother Oblates working in some very difficult situations.

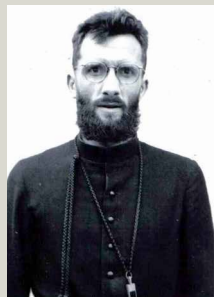
You would be aware of the devastation caused by the hurricane in Haiti. The Oblates have a significant presence there. Our missionaries and their people have suffered terribly. If you would like to assist these people, MAMI is able to ensure that the aid gets to where it is needed most.

At Christmas we celebrate the sharing of God's presence in Christ 'the Word made Flesh...dwelling among us'. Jesus said 'What you do to the least of your sisters and brothers, you do to me'. MAMI is for all of us one way of living out this mystery of God's presence among us. On behalf of the Oblate Mazenod Family I thank you for your prayers and financial assistance. You are remembered in our Masses and prayers. May this year's celebration of the Birth of Christ be a time of experiencing the peace of Christ's presence in your lives and those of your family and friends. As St Francis of Assisi urges us to pray 'Lord make me an instrument of your PEACE.....'

**Fr John Sherman OMI**

## More Oblate Martyrs

On 10th December Cardinal Quevedo OMI in Laos will declare on behalf of Pope Francis 17 martyrs of Laos. Six of them are Oblate Priests. All were martyred in the 1960s when the country was taken over by the Communists. One of the Martyrs is the first Laotian Priest Fr Joseph Thao Tie, a catechist Paolo Thoj Xyooj who was martyred with Fr Marion Borzaga OMI, five were lay church leaders and five were Priests of the Missionary Society of Paris.



Fr Michael Coquelet OMI



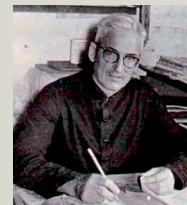
Fr Louis Leroy OMI



Fr Jean Wauthier OMI



Fr Vincent L'Henoret OMI



Fr Joseph Boissel OMI



Fr Mario Borzaga OMI

### Oblate Martyrs of Laos

## WYD2016



Combined China youth group at WYD

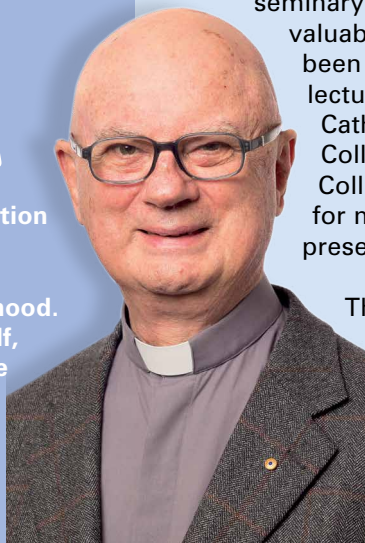
Oblate Youth both from the Mainland and Hong Kong were present with the Oblate Youth from Australia at the recent World Youth Day in Poland.



Australian and some of the Chinese Oblate Young at WYD

# Fr Austin Cooper OMI AM

A proud and joyful celebration in the Australian Province as Fr Austin reaches his 60th anniversary of Priesthood. A very modest man himself, we all hail him as someone who has made a unique contribution, not only to our Province, but to the Church in Victoria and wider Australia.



As well as being the first Rector of St Mary's and overseeing the opening of St Mary's in Mulgrave, he led the Province as Provincial from 1977–83. His teaching continued at Monash University and the diocesan seminary but surely his most valuable apostolate has been his leadership and lecturing at Melbourne's Catholic Theological College (and Melbourne College of Divinity) for many years to the present day.

There, students for the Priesthood, adult students Catholic and non-Catholic, have enjoyed and admired his knowledge, clarity of exposition, his kindness and

As we know, he is the first – and only – vocation from Sorrento parish, our first Oblate foundation in the Eastern States. His grandparents and the Cooper family were wonderfully supportive of the parish in its early years and Austin was educated at first by the Sisters of Mercy in the little parish school before he went to the Marist College at Kilmore and Melbourne University.

Austin was in the first group of novices when the Novitiate was established at Sorrento. As was the case for the next number of years, he had to go to an overseas seminary, the Irish Scholasticate, where he was very welcome and excelled in studies for six years.

After ordination and six years in Ireland, he received an Obedience for Australia and Queensland. While resuming studies at the University of Queensland, he joined Fr Tim Long and the first Oblates starting Iona College – in very pioneering conditions. His task there was to teach the youngest students in Year 5. The Professor today showed at once his teaching skills and organisational and study capacity.

Very soon, however, he was off to the U.S.A. As Provincial Fr. Ned Ryan, decided the time was right to fulfil the dream of an Australian scholasticate, he asked Austin to do further studies in America and prepare to lead our own seminary when it was ready. Later he would do further studies in Oxford – and really he has never stopped studying or researching.

his humour in teaching History and Spirituality. The skills and enthusiasm he showed all those years ago teaching Year 5 children have never left him but been honed and fine tuned by his tireless preparation, incredible reading and his own deep spiritual life and faith.

He is sincerely ecumenical and has written a number of books and many articles and his sermons whether on Sundays or in Retreats, are valued for their depth and clarity.

Austin is a great Oblate and, in spite of his usual quiet modesty and courtesy has enriched us and so many others. We thank the Lord for him and ask God's continued blessing on him.

## Fr Kevin Davine OMI



Fr Austin Cooper OMI 60th anniversary of priestly ordination.

**Austin commenced his association with Catholic Theological College in 1967 when he chaired the committee formed by Archbishop James Knox (later Cardinal) to consider the future of theological education for seminarians and the laity in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. One of the outcomes of these deliberations and negotiations was the establishment in 1972 of CTC as a member of the Melbourne College of Divinity. Austin was the first Master of CTC and he was reappointed to the position two times for a total of thirteen years, making him the longest serving Master. Austin became the first Catholic President of the MCD and in 1993 was made a Fellow of the College. When the MCD became the University of Divinity in 2001, Austin was appointed one of the ten inaugural Professors of the University.**

To all who have been colleagues or students of Austin over these forty-four years, he has worn these appointments lightly. The overwhelming experience of Austin is that of priest and scholar, teacher *extraordinaire*, wise guide, faithful friend, spiritual director and a man of great humanity and wit who led the College through significant change and development with a steady hand. Much loved and respected by all, Austin's scholarship and teaching in the area of Australian Church History has challenged generations of priests, religious and laity to the proclamation of the gospel ever aware of the place and culture of their time. He is renowned for his leadership of Study Tours to Europe, and his interest in ecumenism and his research on Blessed John Henry Newman have gained him international recognition around the world.

"God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.... I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons." (John Henry Newman, *Letters and Diaries*, Volume XII Jan 1847— Dec 1848. 7 March 1948.)

## Dr Frances Baker rsm

Senior Lecturer  
Deputy Master  
Dept Head Moral Theology & Canon Law  
Coordinator GradCertTeachRE

# Fr Charlie needs to swap CHOOKS for DUCKS!

Fr Charlie reports on a visit to a very poor remote village called Karangsalam where there is a small chapel.

The village is near a mangrove swamp of about 5,000 hectares. The people depend on rice production for their living, but the land around the swamp is, believe it or not, too wet for successful rice growing. However, while there are plenty of snails, it is ducks that would do well and they have none.

There are 30 Catholic families and 70 Moslem families in the village – Fr Charlie helps all. He is hoping to provide each family with 20 ducks. That comes to 2,000 ducks. Maybe the Christmas cards will help these people on their first step out of poverty.



Christmas in Indonesia



Christmas in China



Christmas in Pakistan

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.



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
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 I have enclosed a Cheque/Money Order made payable to MAMI for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 or direct my:  Mastercard  Visa the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Once off  Monthly  
 Card number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
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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: \_\_\_\_\_

**DONATE TO THE 2016 CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

- Purchase  Chooks at \$10 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Purchase  Education at \$15 (Asia/Africa) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Purchase  Toolboxes at \$20 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Purchase  China at \$25 ('Better Chance') \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Purchase  Goats at \$30 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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



## VOCATIONS

Some 50 years ago the Oblates built St Mary's Seminary in Mulgrave. Fr John O'Doherty has given us his reflections on St Mary's Mulgrave in this newsletter. The Mulgrave site was chosen because of its proximity to the diocesan seminary then in Glen Waverley, known as Corpus Christi Seminary. The site is now the Police Academy. The Oblate site at Mulgrave was still well situated when Victorian Bishops moved Corpus Christi Seminary to a site in Clayton. When Cardinal Pell was Archbishop the seminary and Catholic Theological College both moved to the inner city of Melbourne. This left the Oblate students with considerable distance to travel for lectures.

Distance plus ageing buildings in need of considerable refurbishment led to the decision to re-establish St Mary's on a property purchased next to the Camberwell Oblate Community. With the sale of the Mulgrave property the move will be cost-neutral and the students will have access to excellent public transport and more importantly, association with a larger community of Oblates.

While St Mary's will keep its identity as 'St Mary's Seminary,' it will be clustered with the Camberwell Oblate Community and the Province's administration. Together they will form the De Mazenod Centre. Throughout 2017 you will be kept informed about the development of St Mary's Seminary.

# St Mary's Seminary Mulgrave

**It was a happy experience to participate in two events in the final days of the Mulgrave era of St Mary's Seminary. The celebration of the 50th anniversary of St Mary's was attended by a good number of people, many of them former students, both those who didn't continue, and those who are still Oblates. Possibly one of the best features of that occasion was the informal chatting: sitting around the table late into the night, listening to, and telling stories of the past especially from the early days. What I felt listening to those present was their loyalty to the Oblates and their appreciation for what they had received during their formation.**

The ministry of Formation can be a daunting one. If it is only looked at from the perspective of "success", how many Priests are ordained, then it would be easy to be frustrated and disappointed. For those who didn't continue with us we always said that what they learned in the Seminary would stand them in good stead in their life as laymen.

The second event was on the 29 August 2016, when a number of us gathered to celebrate Mass in the St Mary's chapel. This was the final Mass to be celebrated in the Chapel in which some Oblates were ordained and others celebrated their first Mass. Bishop Mark led the Mass in which we thanked God for the many blessings that we had received over the fifty years plus in Mulgrave. Now our Seminary has been re-located to 647 Burke Road where a new era begins.

St Mary's Mulgrave was opened on 4th August 1963 with four scholastics in Philosophy, and two in Theology who had completed their Philosophy in South Africa. The numbers grew steadily in the early years, so much so that we were thinking of what to do to accommodate new candidates. But that was never to happen. There was always enough rooms for all those who came along. During the first fifty years 43 priests were ordained and the Province looked to be quite healthy; then, as was happening everywhere, there were a number of departures. In the early 1990s the Province opened its doors to students and scholastics from the Oblate region who came for first formation as well as for post-graduate studies. This was a generous gesture from the Province and it also kept St Mary's alive.

The decision to build a Seminary in the 60's was a courageous step by the Province. Formation must always be a top priority for an Oblate Province, and it is good that for fifty years we were able to provide the first formation to our Australian students in their own country. As to the future, we must always be hopeful. Where our new generation is to come from to take up the baton from us "oldies" is a question for us all. We must be courageous and keep on looking and inviting others to come. When we invite young people to 'come-and-see', we should use the words of St Eugene to Father Tempier when he first established our Congregation, "we need you".

It is fitting to recall that *Rosies Oblate Youth Mission* was commenced by the St Mary's Oblate Community as also was the tradition of *Good Friday Stations of the Cross*.

**Fr John O'Doherty OMI**



St Mary's Seminary from Jacksons Rd, Mulgrave

# “Come and See”

A ‘Come and See’ weekend will be held at the  
**De Mazenod Centre**  
 649 Burke Rd., Camberwell Vic  
 from **6.00pm Friday 18th** to  
**Sunday 20th November 2016.**

It is for those who may feel a CALL to the Priesthood and/or the Religious Life.

For more information contact your local Oblates or **Fr John Sherman OMI** at [jsherman@oblates.com.au](mailto:jsherman@oblates.com.au) or mobile **0418 825 701**



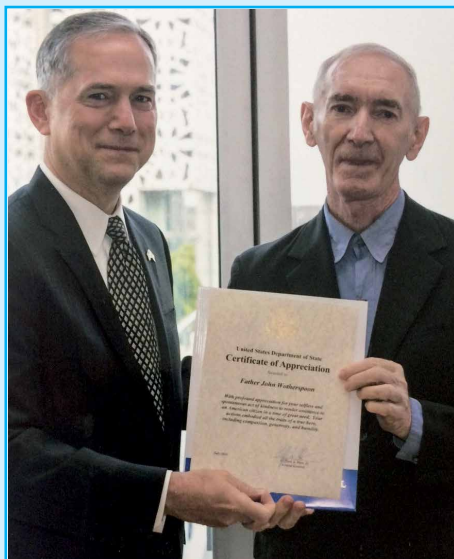
## Fr Peter STOLL OMI

— elected at the General Chapter as a General Councillor for Asia/Oceania.

Fr Peter was born in 1953 in Brunswick, an inner suburb of Melbourne, and after leaving school he attended St Mary’s Seminary, where he took first vows in 1973. Ordained in November 1978 in North Melbourne, Peter also has a Dip Ed from Monash University, and a Master in Theology from Sanata Dharma University in Yogyakarta.

His first obedience was to Sefton, NSW, but missions were in his heart, so in 1983 he first went to Indonesia to assist at the newly-built Oblate seminary in Yogyakarta. He was the last Oblate to go to Indonesia from Australia, and has remained there ever since.

Subsequent obediences include parish priest of Cengkareng in Jakarta, Lubang Buaya in Jakarta, and more recently at Cilacap. He has also served as Superior of the seminary in Yogyakarta.



## CHINA – Hong Kong

Fr John Wotherspoon OMI receiving a ‘Certification of Appreciation’ from the USA Consul in Hong Kong for his care of gaoled American citizens.

## New Oblate Cardinal

Lesotho’s Cardinal-designate **Sebastian Koto Khoarai** is a much-loved pastoral man known for working very hard, say those who know the 87-year-old retired bishop of Mohale’s Hoek.

He is the first cardinal from Lesotho. He looks after children with disabilities, visits and helps people who are sick, and travels wherever he is needed to celebrate Mass. He is known as a humble person of prayer.

The cardinal-designate is a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the first bishop of Mohale’s Hoek after it was created in 1977.

## Important Information

The MAMI office will close on **THURSDAY 22nd DECEMBER** for our Christmas break and reopen on **MONDAY 16th JANUARY 2017.**



## Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

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