

U.S. Oblates celebrate bicentenary



Archbishop Garcia-Siller greets parishioner after the anniversary Mass at OST, in San Antonio, TX.

I give thanks for the vitality of our charism expressed in the way Oblates decry injustice, discrimination, violation of human rights, racism, tribalism, sexism and prejudice against the poor, tribal peoples, indigenous peoples, etc. Our Congregation is well known within the Church and outside it for our commitment to the priority of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. -Superior General Fr. Louie Lougen, OMI

Around the world, Oblates gathered in community to celebrate the 200 years since St. Eugene de Mazenod founded the congregation in Aix-en-Provence, France on January 25, 1816. News concerning the anniversary in the U.S. province came to OMIUSA from several sources.

In Texas, the celebration was spread over three days. On Jan. 24 Oblates, Oblate Associates, employees of OST, Oblate Missions, Madonna, and many friends of the Oblates gathered for a interactive prayer service at the Whitley Theological Center of Oblate School of Theology. **Frs. Frank Santucci** and **Fernando Velazquez**, together with

Will Shaw, and **Victoria Luna** all contributed in creating a prayerful service the 250 people in attendance. During the 90 minute presentation, **Will Shaw** shared key moments of St. Eugene's life, key moments that lead to the founding of the Missionaries of Provence in 1816. Singing, video presentations, and prayers were all

part of an experience that strengthened the bonds of the Mazenodian Family.

On Jan. 25, 75 Oblates and Honorary Oblates gathered at St. Joseph Chapel of the Oblate Renewal Center for prayer, followed by a festive supper.

And on Jan. 26, **Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSps**, celebrated Mass at Oblate School of Theology, honoring the Oblate 200th Anniversary. In attendance were Oblates, Honorary Oblates, priests and parishioners of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, along with Oblate School of Theology students, faculty, and staff. The Mayor of San Antonio, Ivy Taylor, greeted the over 400 in attendance in a pre-Mass address, thanking the Oblates for their service to the City of San Antonio. A lively, mariachi filled reception followed in the Whitley Center.

Fr. Ed Hauf, OMI used his monthly live television program on Catholic Television of San Antonio to interview **Fr. Bob Wright**, OMI. They

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Fr. Ed Hauf (right) interviews Fr. Bob Wright.

It would seem that we Oblates have meetings from time to time. There are CROCUS meetings, committee meetings, conference calls and teleconferences, provincial council meetings and Congresses and Convocations. One constant theme has to do with the "future." Hopefully, in the future, there will be at least a slight decrease in the

number of meetings and a greater ability to meet electronically!

Regional CROCUS meeting

The term "CROCUS" among Oblates is the acronym, following the words in French, for the "Regional Oblate Conference of Canada and the United States." The three Oblate provinces in Canada (Notre Dame du Cap, OMI Lacombe and Assumption) and the United States province together make up the Canada-US Region. The General Councilor for the Region is Fr. Warren Brown, OMI.

The provincials and vicars provincial of these four provinces meet twice a year taking turns hosting the meeting. Frs. Luc Tardif and Raymond Marquis serve as provincial and vicar provincial respectively for Notre Dame du Cap province; Frs. Ken Forster and Ken Thorson for OMI Lacombe province; Frs. Marian Gil and Jacek Nosowicz for Assumption province and Fr. Louis Studer and myself, for the U. S. province.



Hamilton, ON Bishop Doug Crosby, OMI, Fr. Luc Tardif, OMI, provincial of Notre-Dame-du-Cap province; Fr. Antone, and Ms. Bonnie Crombie, mayor of Mississauga, ON at Assumption Province Congress banquet.

The General Councilor, Warren Brown, is always present as well as the Executive Secretary, Ms. Danielle Brisson. One of the main reasons for meeting as a Region is to find ways to collaborate and share in the Oblate mission.

Assumption province congress

Recently, I attended as a guest, from January 18 – 22, the Assumption Province Congress, at the Oblate-owned Queen of the Apostles retreat and renewal center in Mississauga, Ontario. Frs. Luc Tardif and Ken Forster also attended. The Oblates of the Assumption province are almost all Polish or Polish-Canadian. I was blessed to experience their culture, hospitality, faith and joyful, fraternal spirit. They are most respected for their zealous concern for and ministry among the Polish immigrants in Canada. I learned a word or two in Polish!

I was edified by their desire to be true to their charism as Oblates and as a province, as well as the way they are challenging themselves to reach out beyond the current ministries in order to respond to

those who are on the margins, some of whom are not Polish immigrants. I am grateful for the gracious hospitality I experienced during their Congress.

Region-Rome meeting

Another Regional event, hosted by CROCUS, took place last year at Our Lady of the Cape Shrine in Trois-Rivières, Québec, from September 13 – 18, 2015. This event, occurring every 6 years, was a Joint Session of the full councils and treasurers of each of the four provinces in the Region with the Central Government of the Congregation. The Superior General, Fr. Louis Lougen and his Council as well as the General Secretary and Treasurer were all present.

The theme of the Joint Session was "The Call to Conversion: Discerning our Region's Future." Throughout the week together we discussed our visions for the future and ways in which the four provinces could collaborate. In the end there were four

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From the Provincial

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ideas or paths of collaboration that were agreed upon at this time:

- Meeting of young Oblates of the Region
- Regional Vocation and Youth ministry
- Formation and animation of Superiors
- Regular meetings of Provincials and their councils.

There is a significant presence of *young Oblates* in the Region and they and those entering behind them will be carrying more and more responsibility for our missionary presence through various ministries and institutions.

There is also an urgent need to continue our ministry among youth and young adults and work together to promote the specific invitation to hear and respond to *a possible call, a vocation*, to become an Oblate priest or Brother. The role of *local Superiors* will only become more important and so a better formation of Superiors is called for, and there is a commitment to have periodically a meeting of the provincials and their councils as a Canada-US Region.

Visioning Retreat

Recently in Houston, Texas, January 29 – 31, we met as a provincial council in order to reflect together on the future. This “*Visioning Retreat*” was a good opportunity to focus primarily on our future.

Our starting point was a question: “*What do you imagine the missionary presence of the Oblates in the United States Province will look like 8-10 years from now?*” I am grateful to Frs. Fernando Velazquez and Jim Fee for their facilitation of our “retreat.” The time was prayerful and

filled with good discussion. The results of this will be presented the province members both in writing and at the upcoming Province Convocation.

Baja CA gathering

Also, as I write this, the members of the Baja California Mission are meeting in Tecate, Mexico, near Tijuana. It is very chilly and we are wrapped in blankets, but thankfully there is a fireplace where we huddle from time to time. We are enjoying our discussion regarding the future of this particular missionary endeavor in Baja California, specifically in Tijuana.

Provincial Convocation

In the very near future, the *Province Convocation* will take place in Belleville from April 18 – 22. We

have gathered as a province every three years. The theme of the Convocation is “*Rooted in Christ Crucified; Growing in Witness to his Kingdom.*”

At the Convocation, we hope to present some possible concrete views of the future of the province and invite your own ideas and perspectives. *Where will we be and who will we be in 8 to 10 years? How will we help younger Oblates respond to the challenges in the coming decade? How do we envision the future?*

I look forward to the Convocation in Belleville. It is going to be a good moment for us to prayerfully bring our future to God and to renew our community and missionary life.

-Fr. Bill Antone, OMI



The Baja CA Mission team met with the administrative team in Tecate, Mexico, from Feb. 3 – 5, developing a vision of the future for the Mission. *Back, l-r:* Fr. Stan Zowada, Bro. Peter Vasquez, Frs. Bill Antone, Lou Studer, Francisco Gomez, Ray John Marek, Greg Gallagher; *front, l-r:* Frs. Jesse Esqueda, Antonio Ponce, Julio Narváez, Steve Conserva.

‘Homeless Jesus’ touches hearts

To honor the ministry to the homeless for which the Oblates are known, **Fr John J Gordon OMI**, pastor of St. Mary’s Church in the heart of downtown San Antonio, TX, commissioned a sculpture of *The Homeless Jesus* to shed light on the needs and concerns of the many homeless of the city in need of comfort.

Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, M.Sp.S., celebrated Mass at St. Marys, joined by Fr. Gordon and **Fr. Ed Hauf, OMI**, on Nov 23rd.

Pleased with the sculpture, the Archbishop reminded those attending the Mass that we are called to recognize and reach out to the homeless throughout the city.

Inspired by Matthew:25 the sculpture is a representation that suggests Christ is with the most marginalized in our society. “When I walk by the statue each morning it reminds me of the words of Mother Teresa; “You



Fr. Gordon (l) and Archbishop Garcia-Siller with two parishioners.

cannot say you love Christ and ignore His image in the poor.”

The Christ figure is shrouded in a blanket the only indication that it is Jesus are the visible wounds on the feet. The life-size version of the work has

enough room that someone is able to sit on the bench.

The statue has become a comfort and consolation to our guests who are experiencing homelessness. They see their plight and their suffering is honored in this way

Among the other places that “Homeless Jesus” can be found are Christ Church (Anglican) Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland; the headquarters of the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.; and in downtown Chicago in front of Catholic Charities.

The statue was given by Edward and Linda Speed whose family have worshipped at St. Marys parish for over 100 years.

**HE HAS SENT ME TO
PREACH THE GOSPEL
TO THE POOR**



Confirmation retreat held in Sitka, AK

by Fr. Andy Sensenig, OMI

From January 22 - 23, we held a Confirmation High School Retreat at St. Gregory the Nazianzen for eight students, led by **Deacon Kevin Woodvine and his wife Eli** from Our Lady of Angels in Kenai. The aim of the retreat was to help the students to get a deeper appreciation of the Year of Mercy by reflecting on what it means to live out the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

One of the most powerful moments of the retreat for me was during the Holy Hour with Exposition of the Eucharist with the students in our chapel in St. Gregory's. The Divine Mercy Chaplet was sung by Deacon Kevin, Eli, Anne Morris (our DRE). The students so loved it and time before the



At left: Deacon Woodvine in front of Fr. Sensenig. The parish Director of Religious Education, Anne Morris, is third from the right.

Blessed Sacrament that we added another Holy Hour for them during the retreat. They intend on forming a Divine Mercy Prayer Group soon.

Deacon Kevin and Eli work with **Fr. Tom Rush, OMI**, at Our Lady

of Angels in Kenai. They are planning to come to St. Gregory Nazianzen parish with their youth group this coming summer for a Youth Mission Experience.

4th Oblate from India to minister in U.S.

Father **Peter Rajan Alphonse, OMI**, arrived at provincial headquarters in Washington, DC from India on

Feb. 3, in preparation for beginning his ministry in the United States.

Born on July 3, 1980, Fr. Peter

entered the congregation in 2002, making his first vows on May 21, 2003. He was ordained to the priesthood on Sept. 26, 2009.

Besides his B.A. in English Literature, he has earned a B.Ph. Th and Licentiate *Summa cum Laude* in Sacramental Theology at St. Anselmo, Rome.

After a year on the Mission Preaching band in Chennai, India, he began work as a formator in India.

Fr. Peter has joined the pastoral staff in Laredo, TX. He is the fourth Oblate priest from India now ministering in the U.S. province. He joins **Frs. Lawrence Mariasoosai** (Sacred Heart, Eagle Pass, TX), **Paul Dass Selvaraj** (Our Lady of Refuge, Eagle Pass), and **Peter Antonisamy** (Immaculate Conception, Brownsville, TX).



L-r: Frs. Bevil Bramwell, Joe Phiri, Peter Rajan, Charles Hurkes



The third year commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (January 25, 1816) takes the theme “**Mission and Obedience.**”

This theme is dear to my heart as Personnel Director! At first glance, it might mean that under the vow of Obedience, Oblates go on mission to wherever they are sent! Unfortunately, it’s not quite as simple as that!

Oblates are generous in responding to help meet the needs of the U.S. Province, to the commitments we have made in other parts of the world; to the poor we have promised to serve.

A number of important factors do come in to play with the vow of obedience and our missionary commitments.

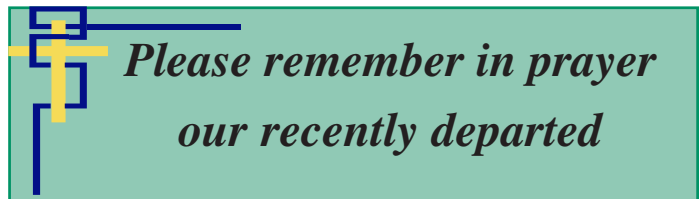
Some of our Oblates have received specialized training in a particular field of study so they are sent to use this skill and knowledge, such as teaching, justice, peace and integrity of creation ministry, preaching God’s word, administration, and countless other particular areas.

Some Oblates have the gift of being “generalists” so while they are not highly trained in a specific area, they do many ministries very well, with great competence. They can be readily assigned to retreat ministry, parish, Shrine, teaching, street ministry and a host of other valuable works.

Some of our Oblates are very adept in ministering to their fellow Oblates. They are valued members in our community life together because they bring a sensitivity, compassion, and genuine concern for their brothers. These Oblates are often our Superiors in community who are able to support, build up, listen to, pray with the Oblates with whom they live.

Some of our Oblates, most especially the elderly and infirm, spend the majority of their days ministering to others like themselves, also frail, and praying for their fellow Oblates, special intentions and the needs of the world. While they might do little “outside ministry,” their life of prayer, reflection, listening, reading, constitutes an essential dimension of our calling by St. Eugene to be both active and contemplative in faithfully living out Oblate religious life.

Some of our Oblates, while remaining faithful and committed to mission and obedience, feel the burden themselves of early illness, family constraints, or lack of energy, to continue to carry out the missionary work they once did. These are the Oblate missionaries to whom my heart goes out with the greatest sensitivity. Their ardent desire for ministry is still very much part of who they are but, because of some



Francisco Alarcón, brother of Fr. Carlos Alarcón, OMI, died on Jan. 15 in Davis, CA.

Jon Bourg, former Oblate, died on Jan. 16 in San Antonio, TX.

Fr. Frank Wagner, OMI, 83, died on Jan. 17 in Arleta, CA.

Thomas Lougen, brother of Fr. Louie Lougen, OMI, died on Jan. 22 in Getzville, NY.

Fr. John Sokolski, OMI, 86, died on Jan. 24 in San Antonio, TX.

Lynne Antone, 68, sister-in-law of Fr. Bill Antone, OMI, died on Jan. 25 in Olympia, WA.

Ida Monett Louwagie, 100, stepmother of Fr. Vincent Louagie, OMI, died on Jan. 25 in Minnesota MN.

Jerry Demers, 89, brother of Fr. Frank Demers, OMI, died on Jan. 26 in Manchester, NH.

Craig Snipes, 68, brother of Fr. Roy Snipes, OMI, died on Jan. 26 in New Braunfels, TX.

Former Oblate **Bill Minwegen** died in FL. on Jan 29.

Dr. David Sensenig, 94, father of Fr. Andy Sensenig, OMI, died on Jan. 31 in Philadelphia, PA

Former Oblate **Fr. Bill Elliott** died on Feb. 3 in St. Johns, NB.

illness, past behavior, or other external factors beyond their control, they cannot minister in the same way as before.

Each of our Oblates – 265 of us in the U.S. Province – brings a wealth of talents, gifts, care, and compassion that we are called to share.

This third year of celebration of our founding 200 years ago should serve to remind us of how blessed we have been in our history. Currently, we serve in 67 countries of the world. If part of being “missionary as Oblates” means that we are thinly scattered in many remote areas where there are few resources – that’s us! If part of being “missionary as Oblates” means that we often answer the call of bishops to send missionaries to places where the needs are great, where he can find no one else – that’s us! If part of being “missionary as Oblates” means that

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Pact of the Catacombs 50th Anniversary: Vatican II on a New Level

by Harry Winter, Coordinator of the Ministry of Mission-Unity-Dialogue, USA Oblate Province

When the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II was celebrated on Oct. 11, 2012, Bill Antone and his administration encouraged me to contact the many Oblates who had been in Rome either as scholastics or periti, to share their experiences. So a group of us including Frs. Jim Allen, Don Dietz, David Kalert, Dick McAlear, and George McLean sent material to Will Shaw. These are available on the www.omiusa.org website.

One important event, though, of Vatican II which we missed was the Nov. 16, 1965 Pact of the Catacombs, when about 40 bishops, mostly from Latin America, went to the Catacombs of Domitilla, outside Rome, and signed a pact

renouncing expensive cars, episcopal palaces, etc, and pledged themselves to a greater concern for the poor. The Pact was then signed by others at Vatican II, including at least one cardinal from Europe, and presented to Pope Paul VI.

Probably due to the extensive changes in liturgy, and seminary formation, and all the other turmoil following the end of the Council, the Pact was forgotten, until a few years ago. Pope Francis' concern for a simpler life style, and the growing number of the poor, revived interest in the Pact.

On Nov. 14, 2015, the Pontifical University Urbaniana, Rome, held a symposium on the Pact, with Jon Sobrino, SJ, as the featured speaker. His conference is a masterpiece, docu-



menting the almost forgotten concern of Vatican II for the poor, from its initial days.

One SVD missionary, Father Sonny de Rivera, has called it "a guiding force for Mission." The full text is available on the home page of the Mission-Unity-Dialogue: (www.harrywinter.org).

MN Oblate Associates pack meals for starving children

On a Thursday evening in February our Oblate Associate group went to join others from six local churches to pack food for "Feed My Starving Children" at the

Rainbow Food Store. This opportunity was suggested by Oblate Associates Carol & Craig Schoenecker.

The Rainbow Food place was huge, and accommodated the large

group of volunteers from all over the Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN area.

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is a Christian non-profit organization committed to feeding God's children hungry in body and spirit. The approach is simple: volunteers hand-pack meals specially formulated for malnourished children, to be sent to mission partners running orphanages, schools, clinics and feeding programs around the world. FMSC food has reached more than 70 countries.

The Bloomington, MN Associates originated from the Christ the King Retreat Center, Buffalo, MN. The coordinator of the group is Bonnie Strand and this group is presently supported by Oblate Fathers Lon Konold and Harry Winter. -by Bonnie Strand with Photo by Carol Schoenecker



(L-r) Jim Sharpsteen, Carol Schoenecker and Sara Niemiec, Bonnie Strand (front)

Fr. Rolheiser to receive NFPC award

Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI, author, columnist, retreat leader, and president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, TX, will receive the 2016 National Federation of Priests' Councils Touchstone award, at a banquet on April 19 in Indianapolis, IN.

The award is presented annually to "the priest who, in the view of the National Federation of Priests' Councils, is one whose service in the Gospel of Jesus Christ exemplifies the purpose and goals of the Federation.

"In particular, his leadership enhances the ministry of others and his words and deeds support the life and ministry of priests; thus he is, as it were, a Touchstone for genuine, quality priesthood."

Fr. Rolheiser's column, *In Exile*, is now carried by almost 100 newspapers worldwide. In addition, he

is a prolific writer, authoring twenty-one books on spirituality since 1979. His 2014 book titled *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity* (Image Book, Random House) won the highest award for a hard cover book on spirituality from the Catholic Press Association. His 1999 book, *The Holy Longing* (Doubleday, New York) is considered a "tour de force" in foundational Christian spirituality. It is now translated into multiple languages.

Father Rolheiser is in demand as a speaker and retreat facilitator. He has given numerous retreats for priests over the years.

Peace Laureate Award

Fr. Ron was also named as the 9th San Antonio Peace Laureate at the 10th annual Blessing of the Peacemakers in San Antonio, TX, January 31, 2016.



In its mission statement, the San Antonio peaceCenter states: "Since 1995, the all-volunteer and interfaith peaceCENTER continues to be a significant community catalyst for peace in San Antonio, Texas. Compassion and Justice are our strong guiding lights. Contemplative Practices, Experiential Education, and Nonviolent Actions are our working expressions throughout the community at large."

Province convocation in Belleville

In this year when the congregation celebrates the 200th anniversary of its foundation, the fourth triennial U.S. province convocation will be held at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL from April 18-22, 2016. The theme chosen for the occasion is "**Rooted in Christ Crucified; Growing in Witness to His Kingdom.**"

In his letter inviting province members to attend the convocation, the provincial, **Fr. Bill Antone, OMI**, wrote:

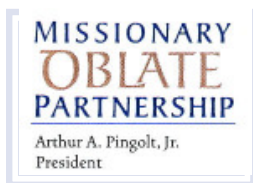
Our province convocations have taken place every three years. They have given us an opportunity to renew our energies as missionaries and to strengthen the bonds which

unite us as members of one province. Even though our province stretches from coast to coast and beyond, we still form one missionary body. Even though we are involved in a great variety of ministries in various locations and even though as individuals we are all different one from the other, we are still deeply united and rooted in the same Oblate charism.

Convocation 2016 will include moments of celebration, fraternity, input, and discussion as we look together to the future. As provincial and council we plan to present some possible concrete views of the future of the province and invite your own ideas and perspectives. Where will we be and who will we be in 8 to 10 years? How will we help younger Oblates respond to the challenges in the coming decade? How do we envision the future?

The provincial has thanked the Oblates who have served on the 2016 Convocation Task Force: **Frs. David Uribe, Sal DeGeorge, Tom Coughlin, Mark Dean, David Muñoz and Frank Santucci.**





The sixth Annual De Mazenod Conference, sponsored by the Missionary Oblate Partnership, was held at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, January 22-

24, 2016.

The topic for weekend conference was **“ARE WE READY? The implications of Pope Francis and**



The Joseph Gerard Award presentation: L-r: Artie Pingolt, Fr. Clyde Rausch, OMI, Gee Gee and John Whitehurst, Fr. Bill Antone, OMI and Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller M.Sp.S.

Laudato Si.” Attended each year by members of the Partnership, Oblates from the US and around the world, OST faculty and staff, and foundations and other Catholic institutions, the De Mazenod Conference is designed to offer dedicated reflection and discussion around issues affecting individual Catholics and the Church.

The speakers this year included former Colorado Governor **Bill Ritter**, who served as an advisor to the Vatican on *Laudato Si*, **Sr. Maxine Pohlman, SSND**, director of the US Oblate Ecological Initiative, and **Seamus Finn, OMI**, who serves as chairman of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility.

Together they guided the group of nearly 60 conferees in sessions that included review of Francis’ remarks on key topics of the Encyclical: humanity’s integral identity, our stewardship of the earth and its resources, and the nexus of money/investments and Catholic social teaching.

The Conference’s Saturday liturgy included two special moments: a homily by San Antonio **Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller** and presentation of the Partnership’s Joseph Gerard Award to **John and Gee Gee Whitehurst**, Partners who live in San Antonio. The Gerard Award presentation included remarks on Gerard himself by US Oblate Provincial **Bill Antone, OMI** and also by **Clyde Rausch, OMI**, who created the Joseph Gerard icon that accompanies the Award.

The costs of the De Mazenod Conference are underwritten each

year by select Partners. 2016 underwriters were **Cliff & Mary Jo Bolner, Bonnie & Frank Gittinger, Mary & Kevin Henseler, MD, Keith & Joanna Perkins** and the **Whitehursts**.

The 2017 De Mazenod Conference will be held again at the Oblate Renewal Center in late January 2017.

“Mission and Obedience”

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we are close to the people we serve, that their concerns, hurts, joys, consolations are also ours – that’s us! If part of being “missionary as Oblates” means that we are quick to show God’s mercy and compassion rather than judgment and condemnation, quick to open our hearts to all, careful to listen to those with whom we minister rather than imposing our own solution – that’s us!

Besides celebrating the final year of our Oblate triennium, we continue to celebrate the Holy Year of Mercy. The themes of Mission and Obedience and Mercy fit well together in terms of how our Holy Father and St. Eugene de Mazenod, see our responsibilities as Christians and Oblates sent on mission: to be merciful in our approach as we seek “not to be understood but to understand, not to be loved but to love,” in our service to the poor and abandoned.

Our Founder’s dying words to his Oblates were: “zeal for the salvation of souls and toward one another: charity, charity, charity.” **Those simple words of this dying Oblate provide a worthy reflection for all of us on those key themes of mission, obedience and mercy as we continue to celebrate the 200th anniversary of our founding as a missionary congregation as well as the Holy Year of Mercy.**

-Fr. Lou Studer, OMI

Vocation retreat held in San Antonio

The four Vocation Directors for the United States Province held a “Come and See” retreat during Martin Luther King Weekend in San Antonio, TX for 13 men who are seriously considering a vocation with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Five of these men travelled from different parts of the Midwest.

The weekend began with Mass and encouraging words from **Fr. Richard Hall, OMI**, followed by dinner. The men returned to the retreat center for introductions and the first presentation given **Fr. Art Flores, OMI**. On Saturday, **Fr. Frank Santucci, OMI**, spoke on the life and charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod. Following his talk, the scholastics shared their vocation stories, stimulating good discussions between the discerners and the Oblates.



In the afternoon, the prospects visited St. Mary's, Immaculate Conception and San Juan de Los Lagos followed by a visit to the River Walk. After dinner, there was an opportunity for the group to meet with their vocation directors.

The weekend concluded with Mass at the Grotto and lunch before departing for their homes. Of those attending, eight are seriously discerning a religious vocation with the Oblates and three have begun the application process for next fall.

Oblates celebrate

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shared the story of the Oblates with the TV audience and those listening to the simulcast on the Guadalupe Radio Network in Texas.

That interview traced the origins and growth of the Congregation from its founding in 1816, through the lifetime of St. Eugene deMazenod, and the subsequent spread of our missionaries throughout the world up until the present day.

Special emphasis was given to the fascinating history of the Oblates in Texas, from their arrival in 1849, their evangelization of the Rio Grande valley on horseback as the Cavalry of Christ, their spread throughout Texas and their support foundations in San Antonio, beginning with St. Mary's Parish down-

town and expanding to their care for many other parishes in the Archdiocese and the founding of seminaries there,

including what now has become the Oblate School of Theology.

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Among those at the Jan. 25 bicentennial in San Antonio were: Frs. Richard Hall, John Collet, Porfirio Garcia, Ron LaFramboise, Ed Hauf, Charlie Banks, Ramiro Cortez, Jim Loiacono, Raymond Mwangala, and Paul Dass Selvaraj

Oblates celebrate

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The program also spoke about the Oblates' work among the Hispanics, especially along the Texas-Mexico border and in cities like San Antonio and Houston, their special care for the poorest of the poor and the homeless in downtown San Antonio at St. Mary's parish, and for the beautiful shrines in San Juan and San Antonio including those at San Juan de Los Lagos parish and the Lourdes and Guadalupe shrines on the grounds of the Oblate School of Theology.

The program ended with a special focus on the life of St. Eugene, and promotion of the Oblate websites here in the U.S. and the world.

In Buffalo, NY, The major 200th Anniversary Mass was organized by Oblate Associates from all three parishes on Jan. 24. **Bishop Richard Malone** celebrated it along with all the Oblates in the Buffalo District and some diocesan clergy, as well as Religious Women. **Frs. David Muñoz, Quilin Bouzi, (pastor) Humphrey Milimo** are spearheading the ministry at the West Side of Buffalo's three parishes.



After Mass in Buffalo, NY, l-r: Thomas Machniki, Teko Teko-Agbo, Brian Bernhard, John Staak, OMI, David Muñoz, OMI, Humphrey Milimo, OMI, Jerry Gutierrez, Paul Nourie, OMI, Quilin Bouzi, OMI, Steve Vasek, OMI, Alex Roque, OMI, Dan Nassaney, OMI, Alejandro Alvarado, Joseph Olickan

On Jan. 25, the Oblates held a Prayer Service in the form of a dialogue in which the professed Oblates took on the role of Eugene DeMazenod and younger men were learning from them.

In Belleville, IL, about 50 Oblates and Associates were in atten-

dance for a French dinner at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, with a few more joining for a beautiful sung Vespers service immediately afterwards.

RVP meets in Tewksbury

Fifteen scholars from Rome, Portugal, China, India, Holland, England, Canada, and U.S.A. spent the end of the year in Tewksbury, MA for Fr. **George McLean's** Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) seminar, "Re-learning to be Human for Global Times."

The conference was associated with Boston College. The participants praised the religious house atmosphere and skillful management of the conference's many details; meeting international flights, car services shuttling participants, off property and on property housing arrangements, preparing meeting rooms, supplies, dining arrangements, video tape and video disc editing and YouTube connections.



Some of the large numbers attending the Buffalo, NY anniversary Mass

✓ In celebration of its 60th anniversary (May 10, 2016), St. Joseph the Worker Shrine's Oblate Historical Museum in Lowell, MA will display a series of photos depicting significant events from the Shrine's past sixty years. The display was prepared by **Bro. Richard Cote, OMI**, Curator of the Museum, with help from the Tewksbury Oblate Associate Community. The display will run during calendar year 2016. All are welcome to visit the museum on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

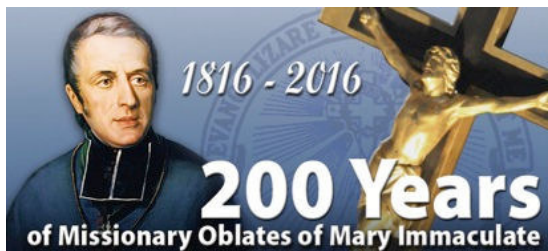
✓ A generous cash gift of \$265,000 from **Deacon Robert and Ruth Kusenberger, HOMI**, has enabled Oblate School of Theology to reach the goal of its \$30 million Building on Faith Capital and Endowment Campaign, launched in April 2008. Among other things, the gift will endow a teaching chair in Oblate studies at OST. "It will be the only academic entity in the country dedicated to spreading the history and the charism of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate as St. Eugene de Mazenod envisioned it," Deacon Kusenberger said.



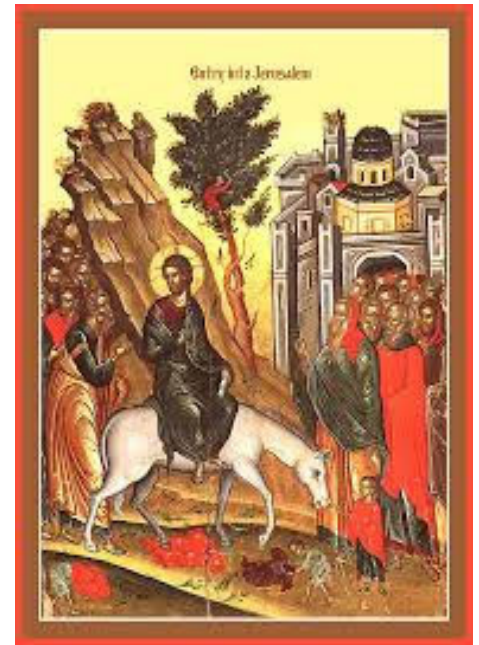
✓ As part of St. Joseph Worker Shrine's 60th anniversary, the Oblate Historical Museum opened on February 16 to commemorate the anniversary of death of **Fr. André-Marie Garin, OMI**. Fr. Garin's chalice was used in the 3 daily Masses offered at the Shrine that day. The *Shrine of St. Joseph the Worker* has been designated as a Center of Mercy in the Merrimack Region of the Archdiocese of Boston during this Jubilee Year.

✓ The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) announces its Annual Seminar theme for August 8-September 9, 2016 in Washington, D.C.: "Re-Learning to be Human for Global Times: Structure and Role of Compassion"; Contact: (cua-rvp@cua.edu)

✓ As just one example of how the Oblate Partnership (cf. p. 9) assists the various Oblate missions, last year a grant of \$5,000 was sent to **Fr. John Henault, OMI**, to assist in his work with lepers in Gonaives, Haiti (cf. OMIUSA, Jan. 22016, p.13). **Diane Conocchioli**, grant writer for the Partnership did the research and application to the foundation that provided the funds.



REMEMBER TO CHECK OUT THE PROVINCE'S WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND LINKS TO OTHER OBLATE NEWS ITEMS: WWW.OMIUSA.ORG



BLESSED IS HE WHO
COMES IN THE NAME
OF THE LORD.
HOSANNA IN THE
HIGHEST!



OMI - USA

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