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Oblate Connections

Oblate Connections – No.37, 8th December, 2017

Welcome to our Advent issue of Oblate Connections. By the time you read this you may already be tired of the Christmas music and adverts that have been bombarding us since the end of October. More and more we hear people say to us how busy they are. I have friends who attended their work Christmas parties back in November because December would be just too busy! To use a Christmas analogy: all our activities, busyness and hectic diaries can mean we have filled “our inn and leave no place for Him.” Yet there is no doubt that despite all the pressures of life and the hurry we are fundamentally caring, warm and welcoming people.

Pope Francis in his Christmas Day message last year concluded, “On this day of joy, we are all called to contemplate the Child Jesus, who gives hope once again to every person on the face of the earth. By his grace, let us with our voices and our actions give witness to solidarity and peace.” So how can we answer this call? I think Ron Rolheiser offers some ideas when he says, “To have Christ in our lives, to put him back into Christmas, involves something much more

than protesting commercialism. It involves creating time for him, time for the poor, time for hospitality, time for celebration, time for prayer, time for the itinerant couple who show up unannounced on a busy night. To make a holiday is to, ultimately, make a holy day. We must create some room in the inn!”

At Christmas we will celebrate the mystery of God’s entering our world. Christmas also teaches us that God is as much domestic as monastic, a God of the body as well as of the soul, a God who is found in barns as well as in churches, in kitchens as well as in cathedrals. I pray that each one of us in the weeks ahead will find the time to create some space to appreciate and maybe be challenged by the presence of God in the people and world around us. Christmas is a time when we reach out to others and maybe the most valuable gift we can give our families, friends and even the stranger is our time.

Finally I want to take the opportunity to wish all our readers a hope filled Advent and a blessed and peace filled Christmas.

- Fr. Lorcán O’Reilly OMI

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Incarnation

- God is With us

– Fr Ron Rolheiser, OMI

For many of us, I suspect, it gets harder each year to capture the mood of Christmas. About the only thing that still warms our hearts are memories, memories of younger, more naïve, days when the lights and carols, Christmas trees and gifts, still excited us. But we're adult now and so too, it seems, is our world. Much of our joy in anticipating Christmas is blunted by many things, not least by the commercialism that today is characterized by excess. By late October we already see Christmas decorations, Santa is around in November, and December greets us with series of Christmas parties which exhaust us long before December 25th. So how can we rally some spirit for Christmas day?

It's not easy, and commercialism and excess are not our only obstacles. More serious are the times. Can we, amid the many cruelties of this year, warm up to a season of tinsel and festivity? Can we continue to romanticize the pilgrimage of one poor couple searching for shelter two thousand years ago amidst the plight of the millions of refugees today who are journeying without even a stable as a refuge? Does it mean anything to speak of peace after various elections polarized our nations and left millions unable to speak civilly to their neighbors? Where exactly is the peace and goodwill in our world today?

Closer to home, there are our own personal tragedies: the death of loved ones, lost marriages, lost families, lost health, lost jobs, lost time, tiredness, frustration. How do we celebrate the birth of a redeemer in a world which looks shockingly unredeemed and with hearts that mostly feel heavy and fatigued? The Christmas story is not easily made credible. How do we maintain the belief that God came down from heaven, took on human flesh, conquered all suffering, and altered the course of human history?

This isn't easy to believe amidst all the evidence that seems to contradict it, but its credibility is contingent upon it being properly understood. Christmas is not a magical event, a Cinderella story without midnight. Rather its very centre speaks of humiliation, pain, and forced fleeing which is not unlike that being experienced by millions of refugees and victims of injustice on our planet today. The Christmas story mirrors the struggle that's being experienced within our own world and within our own tired hearts.

Incarnation is not yet the resurrection. Flesh in Jesus, as in us, is human, vulnerable, weak, incomplete, needy, painfully full of limit, suffering. Christmas celebrates Christ's birth into these things, not his removal of them. Christ redeems limit, evil, sin and pain. But they are not abolished. Given that truth, we can celebrate at Christ's birth without in any way denying or trivializing the real evil in our world and the real pain in our lives. Christmas is a challenge to celebrate while still in pain.

The incarnate God is called Emmanuel, a name which means God-is-with-us. That fact does not mean immediate festive joy. Our world remains wounded, and wars, strikes, selfishness, and bitterness linger. Our hearts too remain wounded. Pain lingers. For a Christian, just as for everyone else, there will be incompleteness, illness, death, senseless hurt, broken dreams, cold, hungry, lonely days of bitterness and a lifetime of inconsummation. Reality can



An Advent Prayer

Advent: a time to once more reflect on the great mystery in which God's Son emptied the divine self and assumed our human condition in Jesus Christ.

*My prayer this year in my old age:
Lord help to accept more fully my humanity
in the light of your incarnation.
Help me to accept more readily my vulnerability
in the power of your passion.
Help me to accept less fearfully my mortality
in the hope offered by your
death and glorious resurrection.*

- Richard Haslam OMI (aged 91)

be harsh and Christmas does not ask us to make make-believe. The incarnation does not promise heaven on earth. It promises heaven in heaven. Here, on earth, it promises us something else – God's presence in our lives. This presence redeems because knowing that God is with us is what ultimately empowers us to give up bitterness, to forgive, and to move beyond cynicism and bitterness. When God is with us then pain and happiness are not mutually exclusive and the agonies and riddles of life do not exclude deep meaning and deep joy.

In the words of Avery Dulles: "The incarnation does not provide us with a ladder by which to escape from the ambiguities of life and scale the heights of heaven. Rather, it enables us to burrow deep into the heart of planet earth and find it shimmering with divinity." George Orwell prophesied that our world would eventually be taken over by tyranny, torture, double-think, and a broken human spirit. To some extent this is true. We're a long ways from being whole and happy, still deeply in exile.

However, we need to celebrate Christmas heartily. Maybe we won't feel the same excitement we once felt as children when we were excited about tinsel, lights, Christmas carols, and special gifts and special food. Some of that excitement isn't available to us anymore. But something more important is still available, namely, the sense that God is with us in our lives, in our joys as well as in our shortcomings.

The word was made flesh. That's an incredible thing, something that should be celebrated with tinsel, lights, and songs of joy. If we understand Christmas, the carols will still flow naturally from our lips.



Bluebell

With thanksgiving in their hearts young couples moved into the new housing scheme of Bluebell, Dublin in 1953 – a new beginning for them, full of hopes and dreams for the future. They became the foundation stones and the pillars of the parish of Bluebell - An Cloigín Gorm.

Thanksgiving for the Past

It's because of the generosity of the Dowling family who donated the land and the house called 'Cremorne' in the early 1960s the parish of Bluebell was established in 1967. The blessing and consecration of Our Lady of the Wayside Church was celebrated on Sunday, 5th March 1967. Most Rev Dr J. C. Mc Quaid Archbishop of Dublin was the chief celebrant.

The first priests in the parish were Frs. Hayes, Granville, Hickey and Kearney. The Oblates of Mary Immaculate arrived in 1972 and have been here ever since. They were joined by the Daughters of Charity Sisters for a few years and by the Holy Faith Sisters for the past 17 years.

Family life was very important in Bluebell parish in those early days. Many of that younger generation have now moved on to other parishes, bringing with them the values they learned and various precious experiences they encountered in Bluebell. In some families, that 'younger generation' are now called to care for their parents. Despite many difficulties and constant changes there is still a very deep and beautiful sense of community and family in our parish. With thanksgiving in their hearts the parishioners continue to keep the flame of faith alive in Bluebell and further afield.



'Thanksgiving for the Past, Celebrating the Present, Hopeful for the Future'

Celebrating the Present

As we placed with respect our Bluebell Parish Register of the Dead in our Sacred Space during our Jubilee Eucharistic celebration, we acknowledged the past and, realising that we are 'standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before us', we set out to harvest the giftedness of our present parishioners, families and friends. When we listen to their personal experiences of liturgical celebrations, meetings, scouts experiences, football matches, seniors' outings, community centre tales, youth gatherings etc. in our parish, it is impossible not to feel how much their hearts, and ours, are passionate with admiration and love for our beautiful Bluebell church building and community. It is with this same passion that preparations for our Golden Jubilee celebrations 'took off'. Teams sprung into action from various corners of the Bluebell community, lists were drawn up, meetings attended, Ministers of the Word and Eucharist organising themselves, invitations sent out, church grounds got a new face-lift, Parish Register organised, spring clean of church, past musicians contacted, choir practices organised, sound system checked, caterers contacted, greenery pruned and pruned again, appeals sent out for photographs of past events/celebrations, Jubilee cake baked, laughter and surprises coming from various places, photograph gallery emerged, ladders appeared,

skip ordered, printers contacted, kitchen - very.. very busy... Great preparations, great fun and laughter all leading to a wonderful uplifting experience on Wednesday, 5th October 2017 - our Eucharistic Celebration led by His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Diarmuid Martin, assisted by Frs. Tony Clancy and Eduardo Nunez, diocesan priests and many Oblate priests, brothers and friends of Our Lady of the Wayside, Bluebell, Dublin.

Hopeful for the Future

We are now called upon to renew the flame of our burning hearts and promise that we will continue the mission of Christ for future generations. The world needs the Light of Christ. We must face the challenges and opportunities of the next 50 years with one clear aim: To continue to build a Christ centred community with a clear vision of an open-hearted, cooperative parish, united in a common purpose and one which will call each of us to gentle yet focused leadership, so that together we can meet the changing needs of all. Through the example of our patron- Our Lady of the Wayside may we serve Christ and his Church.

– Margaret Alford / Anne Ryan CHF.



What's in a Name

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8th has long been a very special day in the life of the Oblates. In this article Fr. Bonga Thami reflects on the importance of our devotion to Mary.

In a beautiful and very emotional letter dated December 22, 1825, addressed to Fr. Tempier, Eugene narrates, in detail, his experience during the audience with Pope Leo XII in Rome regarding the approbation of the Constitution and Rules and the new name given to the Congregation. Reading this letter, one is overwhelmed by a profound sense of joy and gratitude contained in it, as experienced by the Founder. What struck me most in this letter is Eugene's fascination with the new name of the Congregation and the role of Mary as its patroness and model, he exclaims, "The Oblates of Mary! This name satisfies the heart and the ear."

Thoughtfully listening to the Founder's words contained in this letter, one has an impression that during this time in Rome, St Eugene, among other things, clearly understood and rediscovered who Mary really was. Eugene discovered Mary as the most comprehensive model of apostolic life as needed by his congregation. Consequently, "in her, we recognize the model of the Church's faith and of our own."

The name of the Congregation was thus born from a discovery that, in order to respond in an authentic way to the urgent needs of the Church, its members should identify with Mary Immaculate. As a result of this discovery, in the same letter, Eugene immediately made an appeal to his sons, "let us renew ourselves especially in devotion to the most Holy Virgin and render ourselves worthy to be Oblates of Mary Immaculate!"

I believe this same appeal is still valid for each and every member of the Oblate family especially today where the Church stands in greatest need of Oblates. As Pope Francis reminded us in his message to the Congregation, "today, therefore, there is need of you, of your missionary courage, your availability to bring to everyone the Good News that frees and consoles." Our mission as Oblates in the Church and in society is not yet over. To respond generously, as we have done for over 200 years, we are called, once again, to turn our gaze towards the Immaculate Virgin and look on her as our mother so to draw inspiration from her generous "yes".

It is important to highlight the fact that the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate was born from an experience of a personal encounter with Christ Crucified which Eugene had on a Good Friday. Hence, the spiritual experience that is the key to Eugene de Mazenod's life is centred on Christ crucified. His spiritual life was always oriented and centred upon Christ.

His Marian devotion too flows from the same source. In his contemplation of the Cross he was led to look upon the woman who was there beneath it, standing in silence. Having deeply experienced the reality of God's love for him, personally, revealed through the Paschal mystery, Eugene sees in Mary the Mother given to us by the suffering Christ, henceforth "we shall always look on her as our mother." In her Eugene sees the person who has given us Christ, "she received Christ in order to share him with all the world."



Renewing ourselves in devotion to Mary is an appeal to look upon her who considered events, meditated them in her heart and committed herself to the fulfilment of the will of her Lord.

With all the difficulties that religious life is currently experiencing, decreasing vocations, aging members, social irrelevance... it is precisely amid these uncertainties, where we are called to look upon Mary and from her we are reminded that "nothing is impossible with God" (Lk 1:37). This is the hope which does not disappoint; which enables us Oblates to keep writing our great history well into the future. It is to that future that we must always look, conscious that the Holy Spirit spurs us on so that he can still do great things with us.

In his letter, announcing the year of Oblate vocations, Fr. Louis Lougen, has invited us to renew our trust in Mary's prayers and to recall the special grace accorded to Eugene while praying before the statue of Mary Immaculate on August 15, 1822. That grace lifted his worries about the future of his little missionary group and gave him the assurance that it was not just his own idea, but truly the work of the Spirit.

Therefore, "let us renew ourselves especially in devotion to the most Holy Virgin and render ourselves worthy to be Oblates of Mary Immaculate!"



November 2017 meeting of the Friends Link group

At present, there are seven groups of Friends of St Eugene with almost 100 friends working in the Oblate Anglo-Irish Province. All are actively living the spirituality of St Eugene.

Friends of St. Eugene are people who wish to learn more about St. Eugene and how they can live out his gift to the church in their own lives by making it relevant and meaningful for today. They support each other through Friendship, Prayer and Service to make a difference in their local area. Friends of St. Eugene usually undertake a project during Advent and Lent to help poor and marginalised people either locally or abroad. Each group decides the need in their own area.

People often question the need for another group in the parish. However, this is not just a prayer group or a scripture group though both are included in the meeting. Nor is it merely an action group that supports the church, the parish and those in need. Nor is it

just a meeting for a chat and a coffee. But, every meeting contains an element of all these - prayer, service and community.

The closeness that has developed between the groups is overwhelming. Groups from Merseyside and North Wales have developed close links as have the Birmingham and London groups. Good practices and ideas for projects are shared in the regular Link meetings where each group is represented. Genuine friendships have developed in the groups and between the groups. This culminated in the first Provincial gathering of Friends that happened in June 2017.

Friends of St. Eugene groups continually welcome new members. It is also hoped that new groups will soon form in Leith in Scotland and in Darndale in Dublin.

To find out more contact Kirk Jacob at kirk.oblate.partners@gmail.com or your local parish priest.



Oblate Mission in China

A six-month missionary experience working at the “Five loaves and two fish” centre with migrant students and teaching English. This is an opportunity for the living out the Gospel values in day to day service of others is a powerful means of evangelizing in the China Mission. Volunteers from Australia and other parts of the Oblate world come together to support this important mission. There are two opportunities each year to take part in this experience. Applications are now been taken for the upcoming experience that will start in March 2018.

For more information on either of these experiences contact:
Mr. Ronan Lavery, Oblate Partners in Mission Office,
Denis Hurley House, 14 Quex Road London NW6 4PL.
Tel: 020-7624-7296 | Email: lavery.ronan@googlemail.com'



Oblate Mission in Zimbabwe

Join our month long annual missionary experience to Zimbabwe. Work in the Sandra Jones Children’s Village and experience the Oblate Mission and life in the Zimbabwean bush. Places are very limited. Applicants must be 18 or older. Applications are now been taken for the experience that will start in June 2018.

Volunteer Opportunities

Lourdes Pilgrimage 17th – 22nd September 2018

The Lourdes pilgrimage relies on a dedicated team of volunteers to enable it to bring our assisted pilgrims to Lourdes each year. People come from all walks of life and this is an opportunity to join other members of the Oblate Hospitality team in caring for the sick.

In Lourdes, everyone has something to offer and volunteers travel out as pilgrims and over the course of the five days work to support our assisted pilgrims. We would love to hear from you if you think would like to join our medical or hospitality teams.

For more information about travelling as part of the team please contact:
Barbara Hogan – mamioblate@eircom.net





Fr. Bertrais, Kiu Katiam village, Laos, 1957 (from the Joel M. Halpern Laotian Slide Collection)



Continuing service to the Hmong – Thailand

The Thai-Lao Delegation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate inherited one of the treasured ministries of the congregation from the late Fr. Yves Bertrais (1921-2007), a French Oblate who spent long years living with the Hmong people in Laos. He ate, worked and stayed with them. He lived like one of them.

The difficulty of having no written language compelled him, together with two other missionaries in 1953, to invent the first system of writing for the Hmong people called the Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA). This RPA system is the commonly used system at present. The byproduct was that he was able to put into writing their oral traditions, practices and beliefs, as well as translations of the Holy Scriptures, the Order of the Mass and the other sacraments. To further the service and ministry to the Hmong people around the world, he began the Good Shepherd Hmong Center (GSHC) in Lomsak, Petchabun, Thailand in 1996. Its main objectives are the proclamation of the Word of God and the preservation of culture and tradition of the Hmong people through print and social media. To meet the objectives, the Good Shepherd Hmong Center collaborated with Radio Veritas Asia in Quezon City, Philippines. Through shortwave broadcasting, Sunday homilies and reflections, topics on Hmong culture and tradition, news from around the world, and Hmong language tutorials are being aired daily for 30 minutes, reaching countries like mainland China, Laos, and Vietnam. All radio contents transmitted, however, are being produced at the Good Shepherd Hmong Center in Lomsak.

Twenty-one years later, the OMI Thai and Lao Delegation reaffirms its commitment to continue this ministry despite the challenges that the center encounters. One of the challenges is to have its own workplace it was asked to vacate the rented place it has been using for 20 years.

The Center has found refuge in a two-story building owned by the Diocese of Nakhorn Sawan. However, the place and the facilities available are not conducive to the normal operation of the center. Two years have been spent in order to get the approval of a new project: the OMI Pastoral Center. Generous groups and individuals, local and abroad, have contributed to make the project possible.

The Thai-Lao Delegation has already started the construction of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate Pastoral Center in Lomsak, Petchabun. The Center is comprised of the Good Shepherd Hmong Center as well as the Yves Bertrais Multi-purpose House. The blessing of the foundation of the Center was done on July 2, 2017, presided over by Fr. Gerry Gamaliel DE LOS REYES, the Delegation Superior. A simple yet very meaningful para-liturgy was prepared. The Oblates of the district, together with their parishioners and other Oblate friends totaling around a hundred people were present. (OMI Philippines Newsletter, September 2017)



The Thai-Lao Delegation has already started the construction of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate Pastoral Center in Lomsak, Petchabun.

Oblate Retreat Centre

A Good Start to 2018

Individually Guided Retreats

26nd-28th January & 5th-9th February

An Individually Guided Retreat is a very special experience providing the opportunity for a person to explore and deepen their personal relationship with God.

An Individually Guided Retreat is undertaken in silence, a silence which allows the retreatant to find an inner stillness which better enables the person to hear God speak to them: "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)

In this inner journey the retreatant is guided by a trained Spiritual Director. Each day the retreatant meets their director and is invited to share, in so far as they want to, their prayer experience. The director will suggest passages of Scripture which might help the retreatant in their personal journey with God.

For information on these and our other events please contact the Oblate Team at:
 Oblate Retreat Centre, Wistaston Hall,
 89 Broughton Lane, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 8JS
Tel: +44 (0) 1270 568 653 or
E-mail: director@oblateretreatcentre.org.uk
 www.orc-crewe.org



The Year of Oblate Vocation

8 December 2017 – 25 January 2019

When celebrating 200 years of the Oblate Congregation (7th October 2016), Pope Francis recalled the words of his predecessor, John Paul II on the 3rd of December 1995 at the Canonisation of Eugene de Mazenod; '(He) was a man of Advent, a man of the Coming. His influence is not limited to the age in which he lived but continues its effect in our time. What St. Eugene wanted to achieve was that, in Christ, each individual would become a fully human person, an authentic Christian, a credible Saint.'

Pope Francis continued, 'the history of the Oblates is that of many consecrated persons who have offered and sacrificed their lives for the mission, for the poor, to reach distant lands where there were still "sheep without shepherds".'

Today every land is a land of mission, every dimension of the human being is a land of mission that awaits the proclamation of the Gospel. The field of mission seems to enlarge every day, always embracing the new poor, men and women with the face of Christ who ask for help, consolation and hope in the most desperate situations of life.'

As we embark upon a special time of Grace for the Congregation – the Year of Oblate Vocation as recently inaugurated by Fr. Louis Lougen from 8th December 2017 to 25th January 2019- may we be encouraged by Pope Francis who asked that we ' look to the past with gratitude, live the present with passion and embrace the future with hope.'

During this holy season of Advent, as we await the Nativity of the Lord, let our prayer be that of the Magnificat -the Magnificat of Waiting – giving thanks to God for the past, living the present with passion and the looking to the future of Oblate Religious Life and Mission with hopeful expectation.

Magnificat of Waiting

My soul reflects quietly upon your fullness and my spirit grows stronger in the hope of your promise, God my redeemer, because you have filled me with the knowledge that you are alive within me.

Yes, day by day, through the course of time, my awareness of the call to be blessed fulfilment increases, for you have done great things for me. Holy is this time and patience is your gift to all who nurture the seed of your love.

You have changed my life: I was confident in my unknowing. You have deflected my fervent thrust toward ironclad goals and set before me your vision of fragile simplicity.

My longing to be a healing and reconciling person to your people is affirmed in the daily comings and goings of my life; my illusions of my own wholeness are mercifully revealed.

You are here now as I remember your intent, to reach through the work of my life so that your fullness may be made known now in our time.



Prayer for Oblate Vocations

Loving God, You called St. Eugene to send forth missionaries to proclaim and live the Gospel among the poor.

Increase our love, we pray, for those who are most abandoned. Extend your loving call to many young people in our community, and grant them the desire to give of themselves, their lives and talents to the service of Jesus Christs and the Church.

May our young people answer your call as Missionary Oblates of Mary Imaculate to serve those who are in need. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Weekend with a Difference

Have you ever felt the call to the Priesthood or Religious Life?

Do you want the opportunity to discern that call?

If so, why not spend a weekend at our retreat centre in Wistaston Hall, Crewe with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate

16th-18th February

18th-20th May

Our call is to Prayer, Community and Mission. Perhaps yours is too.



For More information please contact:

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St Eugene de Mazenod: A Heart as Big as the World
www.oblates.ie/vocations





The “Rosies”, a reason to rejoice

Fr. William Morell recently visited the Oblate Province of Australia. While visiting there, he was able to experience the ministry of the Rosies.

“Jumping for joy” is not a phrase I would immediately associate with St. Eugene, at least not from what little I know of his stature and temperament! But still, the phrase came to mind as I moved around the “Oblate world” in Brisbane during my first days in this land “down-under.” What I saw was thoroughly and beautifully Oblate. One evening, I found myself with the Rosies and their friends.

I must think Eugene would jump for joy at how the Oblates and the Rosies have brought to life, on the streets of Brisbane, the love and concern he himself had for the poor on the fringe of society. Decades ago the Oblates put together an outreach program to form friendships and offer assistance to people on the street. The program and its workers are called Rosies. Today over a thousand volunteers go out to “the evening streets” every night of the week.

Before I left for an evening on the streets with Fr John David, a local Oblate chaplain to the Rosies, the Rosie website told me, “tonight, 20,000 Queenslanders are homeless. Nearly half are women. Over 40% are aged 25 or under. More than 3,500 of those are kids aged 12 and under. We went to a town on the outskirts of Brisbane. I don’t know how many Rosie sites there are across the Australian State of Queensland, maybe a couple of dozen.



But in the site where I was, the hundred or so folks we met that evening were present in those proportions described on their website.

The Rosies are very sensitive about pictures being taken of their street friends. So I didn’t get the picture I wanted. I sat for a pretty long time on the curb with Mike — maybe not long enough to truly strike up a friendship with him, but long enough to appreciate his humour and outgoing nature... and to learn a bit about his life as an aboriginal and military veteran. He asked me for nothing... we just talked. He broke up our conversation to help a young mother get some food for her kids.



But really, what can one accomplish in a single evening? What kind of friendship is based on one visit? But that’s the point of the Rosies. It’s never a single evening. For many, it’s night after night or week after week. For some it’s a 10- or 20-year experience. And in that fact is another blessing for the Rosies. Students and grandparents, young mothers and retired executives... lots of kinds of “friendships built through ministry” are formed, in addition to the friendships made sitting on the curbs.

Thanks to Fr David, I had a chance to be with Oblates in a setting much more suited to St. Eugene’s zeal than an assembly hall and meeting room. But you know, even when Oblates are gathered in a meeting room, sitting in chairs, not on curbs... even then, I suspect St. Eugene may be tempted to jump for joy when learns his sons are there to discuss how best to stay true to his spirit and to plot the direction of their ministries and lives toward those people most in need of the Gospel and Christ’s compassionate love.

- Published originally on omiworld.org



Subscribe to the Oblate Pools and Support the Oblate Missions

Weekly prizes of €300 and €150

For the past 40 years the Oblate Pools has been raising funds for the Oblate Missions overseas. The subscription for the year is €30/£25. Each subscriber receives a unique code and every Saturday the draw for the winners takes place. The winners are picked based on the results of Football matches in winter and of race meetings throughout the summer. To purchase an annual subscription please email Barbara Hogan at: mamioblate@eircom.net or write to The Mission Office, House of Retreat, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Ireland.

You can also subscribe online: www.oblates.ie
All proceeds from the Oblate Pools is used to support the work of the Oblate Mission throughout the world.





The Camino de Santiago

An Easter Pilgrimage in 2018

This year, why not make your Easter a journey of faith – a pilgrimage? Join a small group of Oblate pilgrims from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales as we set out to walk the final 135km of the ancient Camino route through northern Spain, arriving in Santiago de Compostela just in time for Easter Sunday Mass in the beautiful Cathedral. Celebrate the Triduum along the Way, in beautiful, intimate surroundings.

Dates: Sunday 25th March – Tuesday 3rd April
 Cost: £495pp (€560) (Half board, ex London)

For more information please contact:

Chris Cullen, St. Mary Star of the Sea, 106 Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6AW
 Tel: +44 (0) 131 555 2179 | Chris.oblate.partners@gmail.com



Christmas Crossword

Across

- 5 Who received good news of great joy (9)
- 6 House of bread (9)
- 7 Mittsearchers (anag) (9 4)
- 9 OT book that tells of where Jesus will be born (5)
- 10 Made from distilled wine (6)
- 11 He penned Auld lunge Syne (6 5)
- 14 London gets a wooden one each year from here (6)
- 15 Mary's cousin (9)
- 17 Joseph fled here with his family (5)
- 18 Traditional Italian cake eaten at Christmas (9)
- 20 God with us (8)
- 21 Christmas hymn (5)

Down

- 1 You may dream of one (5)
- 2 Magi gift (7)
- 3 Best selling Christmas hit (5&9)
- 4 Surname of famous actor born in 1899 on Christmas day (6)
- 8 Scrooges Christian name (8)
- 12 Always winter never Christmas here (6)
- 13 Presents (anag) (8)
- 16 New years eve in Scotland (8)
- 19 How many pipers played? (6)



If you would like to share your thoughts or ideas with us please contact: Fr. Lorcán O'Reilly OMI, Partners in Mission Office, Denis Hurley House, 14 Quex Road, London NW6 4PL or email oblate_partners@btinternet.com

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