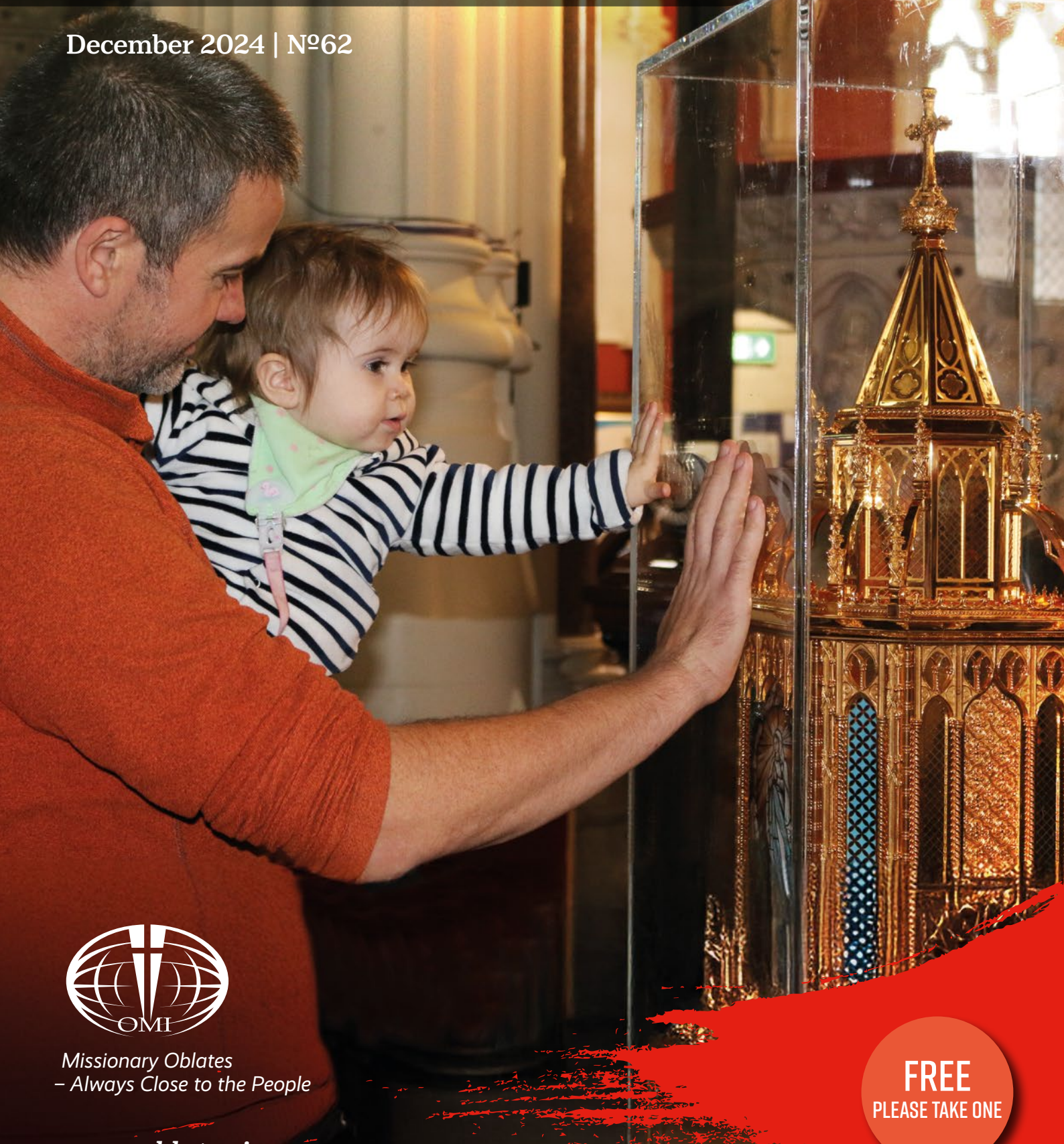


# OBLATE CONNECTIONS

December 2024 | Nº62



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OBLATE CONNECTIONS

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# CONNECTIONS

As we approach the darkest time of mid-winter and begin our preparations to celebrate the Nativity, we try our best to brighten our homes. With brightly lit Christmas trees, lights and decorations, we do all we can to dispel this winter darkness. The streets and shopping centres are also aglow with lights and decorations as they try get our attention. These weeks preceding Christmas are indeed wonderful and magical, and not just for children. They brighten our eyes and fill our hearts.

Prayers, liturgy and the lights in our parish churches are also trying to dispel this mid-winter darkness. The gradual lighting of the Advent Wreath points to and draws our attention to the deeper mystery and meaning of this sacred time of the year. As scripture reminds us, 'When peaceful silence lay over all, and night had run her swift half course, your almighty Word leapt down from the heavens.' (Wisdom 18.14-15). Into our personal lives, homes, and parish communities comes Christ, the Light of and for the world. As much as Advent is our preparation to welcome Jesus, it is also about the Light of the World dynamically coming to each of us personally.

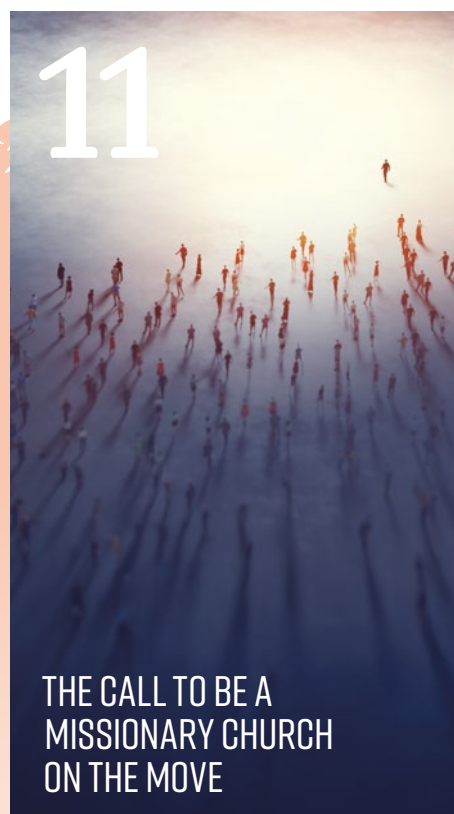
During these days and weeks of Advent we are more than usually busy preparing to celebrate Christmas. The call of Advent, however, is for us to slow down every so often so we can recall and remember for what we are preparing. Increasingly we speak about getting for

Christmas as if it's a thing, single day, rather than a season of joyful celebration. As followers of Christ, we live and move in a very fast-moving world. Advent calls, invites and even challenges us to prepare a way of Jesus. We are asked to stay awake, keep watch and wait in joyful hope. While it is important to ask for what are we preparing, it is a far deeper question to ask for whom are we preparing. For whom are we waiting and hoping? Advent calls us to prepare to experience the presence of God personally. Christmas is the celebration of Emmanuel; God who is with us.

Pope John Paul II, wrote that the mystery of the birth of Jesus that took place over 2000 years ago must be lived today and every day. The Word that found a dwelling in and through Mary comes to knock on our hearts this Christmas and every Christmas, today and every day.

May the Christ the Light and the Light of Christ fill our hearts, homes, families, parishes and our communities as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity this year.

- Br. Michael Moore, OMI





## A word from Fr. Lorcan O'Reilly, OMI

The Gospel for the Third Sunday of Advent, presents us with various groups of people – the crowd, the publicans and soldiers – who, touched by John the Baptist's preaching, ask him: "What then should we do?" (Lk 3:10). What should we do? This is the question they asked. Maybe it's a question we can ask ourselves: what should we do concretely in these days as we draw near to Christmas? How can I do my part?



In response Pope Francis suggests that we choose to do something concrete, even if it is small, that fits our lived reality so as to prepare us for this Christmas. For example: I can call a person who is alone, visit an elderly neighbour or that person who is ill, do something to serve a poor person such as giving to a food bank or find some other way to help someone in need. Closer to home maybe I need to ask forgiveness, grant forgiveness or resolve a difficult situation. Perhaps I have neglected prayer and after so much time has elapsed, it's time to ask the Lord for forgiveness. Our Advent invitation is find something concrete and do it! Let us also remember that as we do what we can, we don't do it alone for God walks with us to support us. So as we begin the Jubilee year may we through our words and actions be witnesses to hope.

My prayer for us all this Advent is that Mary, mother of hope, will help us to hear God's voice in prayer and to serve him with compassion in our sisters and brothers. May she lead us to her son Jesus, rekindling our love for him for he alone can fulfil all our deepest hopes.

- Fr. Lorcan O'Reilly, OMI  
Province Leader

**“May we truly be a Missionary Church in and for today's world.”**



**CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**



**THE HISTORY AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF FILCHAMP**



**NOVENA AND LENTEN RETREATS AT WISTASTON HALL**

# LIGHTING AN ADVENT CANDLE

– Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

**I**n the days of apartheid in South Africa, Christians there used to light candles and place them in their windows as a sign to themselves and others that they believed that someday this injustice would end. A candle burning in a window was a sign of hope and a political statement. The government didn't miss the message. It passed a law making it illegal to place a lit candle in a window, the offense being equal to owning a firearm; both were considered equally dangerous. This eventually became a joke among the kids: "Our government is afraid of lit candles!"

And well they should be! Lit candles, more than firearms, overthrew apartheid. Hope, not guns, is what ultimately transforms things. To light a candle as an act of hope is to say to yourself and to others that, despite anything that might be happening in the world, you are still nursing a vision of peace and unity that's based upon something beyond the present state of things and upon deeper realities and powers than what the world admits. To light a candle is to state publicly that you believe that, at the end of the day, more than what you see on the evening news will shape the final outcome of things. There are other powers also at work. To light a candle is an act of political defiance and an act of hope.

## What is hope?

First, it's not wishful thinking. I can wish to win a lottery, but that wish, in itself, contains no real power to make it happen. Second, hope is not simply temperamental optimism, an upbeat temperament that always sees the bright side of things. An unwavering optimism about things can sometimes be helpful, but it's no basis for hope; like wishful thinking it lacks the power to make its own dream come true. Finally, hope is not simply shrewd observation and common sense, a talent for sorting out the real from the fluff. Useful as this is, it's still not hope. Why not? Because hope doesn't base itself upon a shrewd assessment of the empirical facts, but upon belief in a deeper set of realities: God's existence, God's power, God's goodness, and the promise that flows from that.

There's a story told about Pierre Teilhard de Chardin that helps illustrate this. Teilhard wasn't much given to wishful thinking or even to an optimistic temperament; he tended rather toward a lonely realism. Yet he was a man of real hope. For example, on one occasion, after giving a conference where he laid out a vision within which ultimately unity and peace will be achieved on earth in a way that parallels the vision of scripture, he was challenged by some colleagues to this effect: "That's a wonderful, idealistic vision of things, but suppose we blow up the world with a nuclear bomb, what happens to your vision then?" Teilhard replied, "that would set things back some millions of years, but this will still come to fruition, not because I say so or because the facts right now indicate that it will, but because God promised it and in the resurrection of Jesus has shown that He is powerful enough to deliver on that promise."

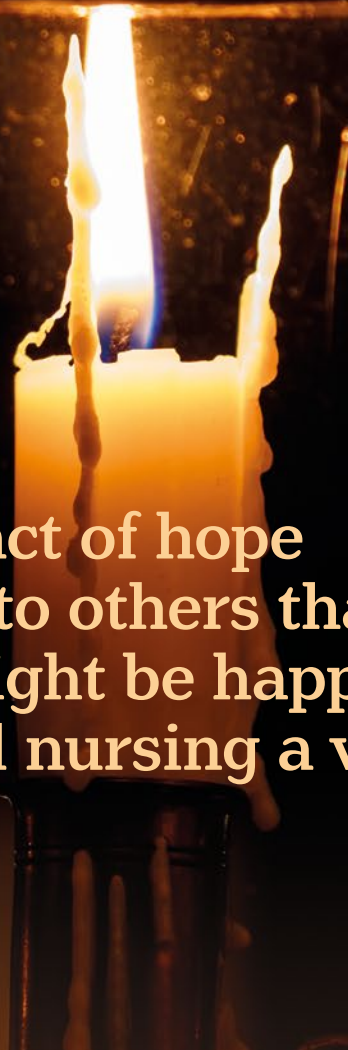
Hope, as we can see from this, requires both faith and patience. It works like yeast, not like a microwave oven. Jim Wallis, the founder of Sojourners, expresses this colorfully: "All politicians are alike," he says, "they hold a finger up and check which way the wind is blowing and then make their decisions in that direction. That will never change, even if we change politicians. So, we must change the wind! That's hope's task – to change the wind!"

When we look at what has morally changed this world – from the great religious traditions coming out of deserts, caves, and catacombs and helping leaven whole cultures morally, to apartheid being overthrown in South Africa – we see that it has happened precisely when individuals and groups lit candles and hoped long enough until the wind changed.

We light Advent candles with just that in mind, accepting that changing the wind is a long process, that the evening news will not always be positive, the stock markets will not always rise, the most sophisticated defenses in the world will not always protect us from terrorism, and secular liberal and conservative ideologies will not rid this planet of selfishness.

However, we continue to light candles and hope anyway, not on the basis of a worsening or improving evening newscast, but because the deepest reality of all is that God exists, that the center holds, that there's ultimately a gracious Lord who rules this universe, and this Lord is powerful enough to rearrange the atoms of the planet and raise dead bodies to new life. We light candles of hope because God, who is the ultimate power, has promised to establish a kingdom of love and peace on this earth and is gracious, forgiving, and powerful enough to eventually make it happen.

**“To light a candle as an act of hope is to say to yourself and to others that, despite anything that might be happening in the world, you are still nursing a vision of peace and unity”**



### Christmas Novena Mass Cards

You can now obtain Christmas Novena Mass Cards and other items online from the Oblate Mission Shop. The suggested donation for each Christmas Mass card is €4.00 and your donation will help fund Oblate Missions.



€4.00  
order online

€1.95 Post and packaging per order

### Light a Christmas Candle at the Grotto Online

You may also wish to light a candle at the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Inchicore for a loved one, near or far this Christmas. We will light this on your behalf and we will send you an “I lit a candle for you at the Grotto” card, or email you an e-card €5.00

Please phone Barbara in the Mission Office on: 01-4542888 or email: [mami@oblates.ie](mailto:mami@oblates.ie)  
For further information please visit: [www.oblates.ie/mission-shop](http://www.oblates.ie/mission-shop)



€5.00  
order online



# Saint Bernadette Relic Pilgrimage Visits Mary Immaculate, Dublin

**F**rom the 23rd-25th of October 2024, an historic event took place at the Oblate Parish of Mary Immaculate, Inchicore. For the first time ever, the Relics of Saint Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes visited Ireland and made a pilgrimage of the entire country. The Oblates were honoured to be named as one of the locations where the Relics would stop. Over the courses of those days, great numbers came to the parish to spend time in prayer with Saint Bernadette's relic and also to have a "mini-Lourdes" experience with many of the services and masses following on from how they are prepared during a Lourdes pilgrimage - the Torch-light Marian procession, Water Gesture (with water from the Spring at the Grotto of Lourdes transported to Ireland especially for this), Mass of Saint Bernadette, Our Lady of Lourdes, and Anointing of the Sick. All involved in these days, from the Parish Team at Mary Immaculate, Volunteers from the Parish and from the Oblate Pilgrimage Hospitalité were inspired and uplifted to see such a profound expression of faith and devotion from the huge numbers who came to Inchicore over these days.

We spoke to a number of people, parishioners, volunteers, members of the Lourdes pilgrimage and asked them to share a few words about their experience during the Visit of the Relics:



## Kay Curran

Here in Mary Immaculate Church in Inchicore a full mini-Lourdes pilgrimage took place during the 2 days of the relics visit. For anyone who was never at Lourdes, they got to experience a real taste of Lourdes-and one of the highlights was the water gesture at the Grotto at the back of the church. It was exactly like what happens at the baths in Lourdes. The Torch Light procession around the grounds of the church was just like Lourdes. We even got a little misting of rain during this evening. The whole event was a most peaceful and prayerful experience not only for myself, but I think for all who attended.

For many people who for one reason or another could not travel they talked about how it was a privilege to experience what Lourdes is like.

It was great to see so many of our pilgrimage team helping out, including some of our youth group who helped where needed.

I was one of the helpers at the table selling the religious items. I was amazed at the amount of men, women and children who came to us for anything we had of Bernadette from medals, Mass cards, Lourdes water and candles to light at the Grotto. A number of women told us they were proud to have the name Bernadette. One little girl told me she also was called Bernadette and the smile on her face would light a million candles. I loved every minute of it.

I think Fr. Vincent would have been so proud of all that took place during these days. I'm sure he is now in heaven. Lord rest you Fr. Vincent.



**Bernadette Kane** (Avista Children's Disability Services)

It was an honour and privilege to have been in the presence of the relics of St. Bernadette, and in such extraordinarily beautiful surroundings. It was such a memorable day. I met lovely people and the way you guys organised everything was flawless. Organising an event like that takes massive work, as I well know! May God and St. Bernadette bless you all.

**Fr Paul Horrocks**

It was as though our church in Inchicore, Dublin, was waiting one hundred years for the visit of the relics of Saint Bernadette ! Such was the impact of having the gilded box in a glass case placed near the sanctuary in the centre of the church. However, more significant, was the awareness of the presence of the saint who reminds us of the love and providence of God, drawing us to conversion, hope and to a deep joy. It could only be God's initiative that beckoned many from near and far to come to the church on this occasion. These relics provided a distinct focus drawing our attention to the spiritual presence of Saint Bernadette. She in turn is remembered for being a messenger of Our Blessed Mother, reminding us that she is a mother who cares for us, her children. In a quiet, unassuming way, this presence drew us to hear the Word of God, participate in the various forms of prayer and especially to celebrate of the sacraments of the Eucharist, the Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation with a renewed and lively faith. Having had the privilege of being a chaplain in the sanctuary in Lourdes, I was also struck by the similar generosity, good spirit and efficiency of the many helpers of the three parishes of the area, as well

as the volunteers of Lourdes who were responsible for providing the water gesture. We were blessed, in keeping with the message of Lourdes, with a taste of what the Church is called to be, believers co-operating, using their talents in the service of others for the sake of the Kingdom of God.





**Eamon O’Callaghan** (Oblate Youth Service)

The 23rd–25th of October 2024 were historic dates in the life of the Oblate Parish in Inchicore, as we were honoured to welcome the Relics of Saint Bernadette for the first time. Not only were the Relics in Inchicore for the first time, they were on the island of Ireland for the very first time as part of a pilgrimage around Ireland, visiting each of the dioceses in the country.

As part of this very special occasion, the Oblate Youth Service were invited to attend and assist at the torch-light procession around the grounds of the Oblates. This was a real privilege for the 18 young men and women of the Youth Service who saw each other for the first time since our week in Lourdes at the end of September this year. Upon arrival, we got straight to work as we were handed several boxes with hundreds of candles, which we had to distribute and light for everyone in attendance. There were people of all ages there to witness this once in a lifetime event, from young children (some young enough to be in a pram!) right up to those who have been parishioners of the Oblate parish for many years. Just before the procession began, eight of us volunteered to carry the statue of Our Lady and lead the procession from the front.

It was the most special evening for me personally as I got to carry the statue and also stand beside it on the altar of the grotto while my very proud nanny, Ann Begley, watched on from the choir. It was my second time in Lourdes this year with my nanny, who has been 37 times. It’s safe to say that I will be going to Lourdes for many more years to come, as it is an experience you simply cannot explain to someone who hasn’t gone themselves.

We were also delighted to see some of the guests that we assisted in Lourdes again, namely Declan, Jimmy, and Mae. A huge thank you to Pdraig Corcoran and Suzanne Phelan for all of their hard work both in Lourdes and behind the scenes on the night, providing pizzas for us afterwards. It was the best way to finish the night, having a catch-up and chatting with Jimmy, who made us all laugh and cry in Lourdes.

**Martin O’Flaherty** (Kairos Community Trust, London)

My name is Martin Flaherty and I am one of the Kairos Community Trust volunteers who goes to Lourdes to assist the pilgrims. The reason I travelled to Inchicore was not to only see the relics of St. Bernadette but also to visit the friends who have actually become family.

When I arrived at Inchicore I met up with Aidan and Conor Murphy, who seemed pleased to see me.

The place was buzzing with people getting everything ready for the opening Mass. I started helping where I could and got that feeling of being part of. I must admit I did take a quick look at the relics and said a few prayers.

The Mass went really well and the church was packed to the brim for each of the services, and I realised the fantastic community feeling. That evening Carmel Murphy and Gerry Bennett asked if I would carry the Oblate sign in the procession the following evening, which I did. I really got that feeling of being accepted and wanted.

The following day was very busy as well, and I met up with some more people who go to Lourdes. When the procession the following evening, I was a little nervous that I didn’t let anybody down, and the procession was very moving and exactly the same as Lourdes.

That night I got back to my digs and actually had that feeling of being closer to my faith and religion.

I would like to thank everyone who I met on my visit — Aidan, Carmel Murphy, Fr. Gerry Baird, Fr. Lorcan, Linda, Patsy, Caroline, Barbara, Aidan, Michael and Ann. Hope to see you all soon!

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A special word of thanks to the Parish Team of Mary Immaculate in Inchicore, and all the volunteers from the Parishes of the Inchicore-Bluebell Pastoral Area, Scouts, Oblate Lourdes Hospitalité and Oblate Youth Service, Order of Malta who so generously gave of their time over these few days and also in the build up to the visit of the Relics. Ní neart go cur le chéile!





# Jubilee 2025

## Youth Pilgrimage to Rome

July 28 – 3 August



Oblate Youth will travel to Rome after an invite from Pope Francis to join him there to mark the holy year. Join groups from around the world and celebrate the Jubilee with prayer, activities and all the excitement of Rome.

Express your interest to Fr Eduardo or Padraig  
**Padraig Corcoran:**  
 oys@oblates.co.uk or oys@oblates.ie

**Fr Eduardo Nunez-Yepe OMI:**  
 e.yepe@oblates.ie

Designated safeguarding person:  
 Suzanne Phelan:: safeguarding@oblates.ie

Places are limited and are part sponsored by The Oblates. Age 18-35





# JUBILEE AN ENCOUNTER OF HEARTS

**What does Jubilee mean to the ordinary person? The Bible and our Church tradition describe it as a special year, a holy time of forgiveness, a moment of grace, liberation, a period of respite and thanksgiving, a celebration. At its heart, Jubilee invites us into something profound – an encounter of hearts.**

Moving toward the Church's Jubilee means launching on a sacred journey that requires preparation. As Oblates and Associates, we join the rest of the Church walking toward the holy Jubilee, each on our own path yet united as a community. Jubilee offers a rare moment of encounter with others, the universe, and God. It brings us together in shared experience, even as conflicts and tragedies fragment our world. Jubilee places God at the center of our celebration, inviting us on a pilgrimage to find what our lives seek.

## **Preparing Hearts and Homes**

Rome breathes the Jubilee spirit. Workers repair roads, restore basilicas and renew the metro. Our General house has established a committee for this important spiritual encounter. We will open our doors to pilgrims. While residents may face some discomfort, this time offers precious opportunities to be evangelized by the poor. Many seek God's grace, mercy, and blessings. Our preparation takes two forms: external and spiritual. While physical preparation matters, preparing our hearts remains essential. We must create space for God to speak through silent prayer, novenas, attentive listening, and compassionate action.

## **Meeting Today's Challenges**

Amid our joy, we cannot ignore world tragedies, especially in the Holy Land. The slaughter of innocents and the rejection of refugees tests how deeply we feel others' pain. Pope Francis warns, "We may be tempted to conclude that our world is losing its heart" (DN. 22). Though primarily a Catholic celebration, the Jubilee Year calls all humanity to embrace its original meaning: freedom for captives, forgiveness of debts, family reunion, and rest for the land (Lev 25: 10-14). CB Samuel notes, "Jubilee restores identity, especially for the poor... it's a problem of the heart, not economics."

## **Building Hope Together**

This Jubilee belongs to everyone: lay people, workers, youth, clergy, religious, elderly, mothers, and fathers. As the Mission Committee prepares for the Youth Congress in Rome (July 22-29, 2025), we recognize our young people as bearers of hope for our time. In a world that Pope Francis describes as "losing its heart," their energy and vision matter more than ever. Each of us, especially our youth, must ask: How can I bring life to this moment of grace? How can this Jubilee transform my encounters with others and with God? These questions transcend geography, inviting us all to participate in this profound renewal of spirit.

May the Spirit guide and transform our hearts. Through the words of the Jubilee Prayer 2025, we join in hope: "May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel, transforming humanity and the cosmos from within."

Kapena Shimbome, OMI  
General Councillor, Africa-Madagascar ([www.omiworld.org](http://www.omiworld.org))

# THE CALL TO BE A MISSIONARY CHURCH ON THE MOVE

**O**n Sunday October 27, Pope Francis brought the gathering in Rome on Synodality to a close. In his closing remarks, he calls all members of church to a new radical vision and commitment to being a missionary church in and for the church in today's world.

The gospel that Sunday was the encounter blind Bartimaeus had with Jesus, (Mark 10.46-52). When we first meet Bartimaeus, he is blind and sitting by the side of the road. On hearing that Jesus is close, he cries out for help. Jesus calls him to himself. He throws off his cloak, runs to Jesus and he is healed. He then follows Jesus as his disciple. Pope Francis challenges us to follow the example of Bartimaeus. Today, each of us are called to get up, go to Jesus to be transformed and then, we are to follow Jesus as missionary disciples. As Pope Francis said, 'Brothers and sisters, not a seated Church, but a Church on our feet. Not a silent Church, but a church that embraces the cry of humanity. Not a blind church, but a Church enlightened by Christ, that brings the light of the gospel to others. Not a static church, but a missionary church that walks with the Lord through the streets of the world... this is the synodal church: a community whose primacy lies in the gift of the Holy Spirit, who makes us all brothers and sisters in Christ and raises us up to them.

What does this mean for us here in the Anglo-Irish Province? As Oblates, our Rule reminds us that we are a 'Missionary Congregation. Our principle service in the Church is to proclaim Christ and his Kingdom to the most abandoned'. (C.5). This also applies to everyone, in whatever way, who are part of the wider Oblate

Family. In the Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis says to each of us, 'Because of their baptism, all members of the People of God have become missionary disciples... every Christian is challenged here and now, to actively engaged in proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel.'

Let us pray with and for each other as members of the Oblate Family, that we will each come to Jesus with courage and confidence because we have heard him calling our name. May we each have the strength and faith to follow him as Missionary Disciples. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through the example of St. Eugene, may our eyes be open to see the faces of the poor and our ears be opened to hear their voices. May we truly be a Missionary Church in and for today's world, on the move together as we share in the mission and ministry of Jesus of proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

– Br Michael Moore, OMI

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1 Evangelii Gaudium 120





# Celebrating the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology, has always held a special place in my heart and in my spiritual journey. Saint Francis is possibly the most well-known, deeply admired and precious saint, in my view, within the Catholic Church. I am mostly drawn by his simplicity, and the attractive combination of joy and self-discipline in his life.

St. Francis offers us an example of authentic admiration and deep respect for the integrity of creation, peace and justice. He was a lover of the needy, unfortunate and poor, who was loved by God's creatures. Saint Francis invited all of creation - plants, animals, natural forces, even Brother Sun and Sister Moon - he has given honour and praise to the Lord through creation.

As a result of this influence in my life and in the life of others in the Darndale Belcamp Parish, we celebrated the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on the 4th of October 2024, at 5pm. The Eucharistic celebration was celebrated by Frs. Eduardo and Michael, OMI, in the camp, to show solidarity and be inclusive of all the people of God.

Like St. Francis the people of the camp were simple, welcoming, hospitable, generous, and invited us to share in how God's love has been present in their lives and in the world around them. Despite their simplicity and relative poverty, it was a most enjoyable and special time in the camp site with the young and not so young.

The Mass was truly a Eucharistic encounter of God's love for his people. Everyone participated in the prayers, readings, singing and the breaking of bread, received as the Body and Blood of Christ. Gathering around the table as we celebrated Eucharist, was a real communion of our faith.

Like St. Francis's 'respect for the integrity of creation', after the Mass we went around the camp blessing the people, the animals, horses, dogs, pets and the homes. It was a great experience of faith and the customs of this sub-culture of our people in Darndale. They are a very

devout and talented people who love and care for their animals. I was amazed to see the way the animals are cared for and loved.

St. Francis one day, while praying at the church of San Damiano, heard Jesus speak to him from the crucifix: "Go, rebuild my church which is falling down." Francis thought God wanted him to materially rebuild the failing church building, so he started construction maintenance to the church. It was over time, Francis realized that what Jesus wanted from him was to renew the Church and rebuild it by bringing people to a profound and deep encounter with the crucified and risen Lord. Is Jesus asking the same of us today? What is Jesus asking of you/us today?

I sense that God wanted Francis to recall the spirit of the gospel by recognising the face of Christ in those living in deprivation, destitution and poverty, by being with them in a spirit of solidarity with the poor. We are invited to experience God in all of creation. St. Francis truthfully understood the sacredness of all God's creation.

I end with this quote from Pope Francis in his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si*, on care for our common home: "I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. ... He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace".

—Sr. Lumay Thomas, FMM



## Remembering Our Brothers who died since 4 November 2023



### Fr M O'Keefe OMI (1934–2024)

From Cork, Martin entered the OMI Novitiate as a Brother novice in 1956. Assigned to St Conleth's Special School, he studied gardening, and taught these skills to the boys. A call 'to change direction' led him to priesthood, and a life of parish ministry in the UK. He is remembered as 'a gentle and holy pastor who loved people'.



### Fr H. Bromley OMI (1932–2024)

From Donegal, Bert entered the OMI Novitiate in September 1972, He was ordained at Piltown in 1958. He was appointed S. Africa's Central OMI Province where he remained for 5 years before returning home to parish work in Britain and Ireland.



### Fr L. Roche OMI (1940–2024)

From Tramore, Leo was ordained in 1966 & sent to S. Africa's Central Province, where as pastor he saw daily the scars of 'apartheid' & the urgent need in both black and white communities for healing and psychological support. After qualifying as a psychologist. he combined the roles of pastor and psychologist.



### Fr D. O'Donnell OMI (1927–2024)

Ordained in 1953, Donegal born Des was sent to the Australian OMI mission where he worked in parishes before joining the mission/retreat/formation ministry that became his life's work. Dedicated and professional, his deep love of Scripture and post-graduate studies in psychology were twin pillars that supported his life's work.



### Fr P. Dillon OMI (1932–2024)

Born in Rooskey, Co. Roscommon, Paschal was still a child when his family moved to Inchicore. Ordained in 1956, he worked in direct parish ministry & parish appeals ministry in G. Britain. Paschal was a popular pastor who radiated joy and peace. 'He brought joy and laughter wherever he went.'



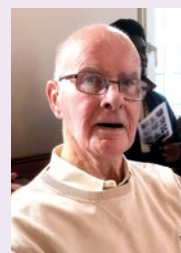
### Fr T. Murray OMI (1962–2024)

From Liverpool, Terry entered the OMI Novitiate in 1979, having completed his G.C.E. exams at St Mary's College, Rhos-on-Sea. Following ordination (1988) at his home parish of Holy Cross, he was assigned to parish pastoral ministry. He worked in parishes in Great Britain and Ireland. At the time of his death, he was Parish Priest at Sacred Heart Parish, Kilburn, London.



### Fr V. Mulligan OMI (1936–2024)

From Collinstown, Co. Westmeath, Vincent entered the OMI Novitiate in 1956. Ordained in 1964, he taught at Belcamp College until 1987, when he joined the MAMI team, becoming MAMI Director in 1991. He was responsible for mission fund-raising, pilgrimage organisation, etc.



### Fr P. Daly OMI (1932–2024)

From Ballybrophy, Co. Laois, Peter excelled at sport in early life. Ordained in 1958, he was a missionary in Natal, South Africa for 21 years, before returning to parish pastoral ministry in the UK and Ireland. He retired to Inchicore in 2013.



# THE HISTORY AND 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF FILCHAMP, KILBURN

**-A FILIPINO COMMUNITY OF FAITH, SUPPORT AND SERVICE**

The Filipino Community in Harmony of Action, Mobilisation, and Prayer (FILCHAMP) was founded by a group of former members of the El Shaddai Charismatic Prayer Group. Their journey began with gatherings in London to pray the Rosary and hold Praise and Worship sessions in the homes of friends and acquaintances. As their numbers grew, they sometimes met in local parks, even braving bad weather to continue their devotion. The support and guidance of lay leaders helped them sustain these prayer activities.

On July 4, 2004, nine members of the group joined the choir at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church on Quex Road, Kilburn, where Fr. Ray Warren, OMI, served as parish priest. Within a few months, Fr. Ray granted them permission to formally organize as a Filipino community within the parish, with a mission to support one another in remaining strong in faith while navigating the challenges of migrant life in the UK. FILCHAMP was officially established on October 4, 2004.

The group was initially known as The Filipino Charismatic Community Prayer Group (TFCCPG) but eventually evolved into the Filipino Community in Harmony of Action, Mobilisation, and Prayer (FILCHAMP), reflecting a broader vision and a commitment to serve its members in a more holistic way. With the support of the Filipino Catholic Chaplaincy, led by Fr. Cirino Potrido, CM, and the guidance of Fr. Joel Bernardo, CM, FILCHAMP undertook a series of lectures and workshops. These activities helped them develop a clear and comprehensive statement of vision, mission, and goals, formalizing their purpose and objectives.

On October 20, 2024, FILCHAMP celebrated its 20th anniversary with the theme, "Remembering the Past with Gratitude, Living the Present in Faith, and Moving Forward in Hope." The celebration was held at De Mazenod Hall and was divided into three parts: Praise and Worship at 2:30 p.m., followed by the Eucharistic Mass at 3:00 p.m., and a program and dinner beginning at 4:00 p.m.

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Claro Conde, who served as the first Filipino Chaplain when FILCHAMP was formed. Now the parish priest of Corpus Christi with St. Joseph in the Diocese of Portsmouth, Fr. Conde was joined by concelebrants Fr. Tom Devereux, OMI, Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Fr. Johnson Susairaj, OMI, Fr. Ilango Jesuraj, OMI, and Fr. Irvin Morastil, OMI.

His Excellency Ambassador Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr., the Philippine Ambassador to the UK, attended as a guest speaker. In his remarks, he praised FILCHAMP for its role in fostering a sense of community and belonging among its members.

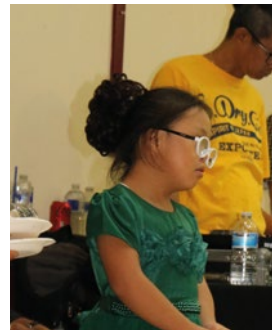
The celebratory program featured performances by FILCHAMP members who showcased their singing and dancing talents, entertaining the audience and adding joy to the evening.



Certificates of Recognition were awarded to thirty-four members who have been with FILCHAMP for five years or more. A special honour, the Pillars of the Community Award, was presented to five members who have been part of the community since its inception. Fr. Tom Devereux, OMI, presented these awards to Nilda Panambo, Susan Alvarez, Jocelyn Ventanilla, Florencio Alvarez, and Floraida Edrozo, commending their tireless efforts, unwavering support, and dedication to the community.

Mary Ryan, President of the Parish Council of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, also addressed the community, expressing her best wishes for FILCHAMP's continued growth and for many more years of anniversaries and achievements to come.

With thanks to Meriam Cadaweng



# Solemn Novena in Honour of Our Lady of Lourdes



2-11 February 2025

Mary Immaculate, Inchicore  
& Sacred Heart Church, Kilburn

The theme of the Novena is St. Bernadette, a saint for our times.

There will be an event, Mass/Service every day, 10am and 7pm.

There will be a Torchlight Procession on the evening of the 11th of February.

Contact us for more information:

Mary Immaculate, Inchicore: [maryimmaculate@oblates.ie](mailto:maryimmaculate@oblates.ie)

Sacred Heart Church, Kilburn: [kilburn@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:kilburn@rcdow.org.uk)

## Scripture Weekend

24th-26th January

Suggested donation ~ £185.00

The Story of the People of God is always identified with the three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Not always, though, we pause and reflect on how their wives influenced that journey of faith. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah were an important part of the history and events known nowadays as the History of Salvation. Looking at those women, we will discover how vital their decisions and choices were to the history and mission of Israel. We will discover that even through what seems impossible, God can bring life, forming in us renewed faith and spiritual character.

Fr Dominik Domagala, OMI, originally from Poland, currently works in the pastoral area of Inchicore, Dublin. Alongside his parish engagement, he is completing a Licentiate in Divinity with a specialisation in Sacred Scripture at Maynooth University. He has a strong interest in the subjects of Preaching and the Old Testament study (Septuagint) within the pastoral context

### For Information or Booking

Contact Rachel: +44 01270 568653 or email:  
[rachel.challoner@oblateretreatcentre.org.uk](mailto:rachel.challoner@oblateretreatcentre.org.uk)

Oblate Retreat Centre, Wistaston Hall, 89 Broughton Lane, Crewe, CW2 8JS

Download a booking form or book online: [www.orc-crewe.org](http://www.orc-crewe.org)

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If you would like to share your thoughts or ideas with us please contact Oblate Communications,  
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