



*Missionary Oblates  
— Always Close to the People*

**FREE**  
Please Take One

# Oblate Connections

Oblate Connections – No. 44, 7th October, 2019

This year Pope Francis has invited us to see this month of October as an opportunity to renew our awareness of the mission of the Church. It is his desire that “the Good News that in Jesus forgiveness triumphs over sin, life defeats death and love conquers fear, be proclaimed to the world with renewed fervour, and instil trust and hope in everyone.”

In this issue of Connections, you won’t read anything about Brexit but you will discover the many different ways this mission is being fulfilled by members of our Oblate family at home and throughout the world. Over the summer a small group travelled to Zimbabwe to share in the missionary experience. It was an opportunity to stand in solidarity with a people suffering greatly at this time. While in September over 600 people travelled from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Jersey as part of the Oblate pilgrimage to Lourdes and in answer to the call of Our Lady to come in procession. Like Mary we are invited to share in the mission of her Son. This call to mission is something for each and everyone of us.

As Pope Francis reminds us:

*This missionary mandate touches us personally: I am a mission, always; you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission. People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that are life-giving. As far as God’s love is concerned, no one is useless or insignificant. Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God’s love.*

With this assurance we should be confident that each of us has something to offer to the mission of the church. Each one us is needed! There will be situations and times that might make us doubt our contribution. At other times we may be unsure about what to do and struggle to answer the question “What would Christ do if he were in my place?” Yet in the face of all the turbulence of the present moment let us remember we are God’s beloved and the fact that we might be the only Good News some people meet today.

– Fr. Lorcán O'Reilly OMI

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<a href="#">A Different Kind of Bucket-List</a>	2
<a href="#">Lourdes 2019</a>	4
<a href="#">Oblate Zimbabwe Missionary Experience 2019</a>	8
<a href="#">Festival of Life – Poland</a>	10
<a href="#">Gathering of the Friends of St Eugene</a>	11
<a href="#">Celebrating 125 years of serving the Church in Australia</a>	12
<a href="#">From the Archives</a>	14
<a href="#">Crewe events</a>	16



[www.oblates.ie](http://www.oblates.ie)

# A Different Kind of Bucket-List

—Fr Ron Rolheiser, OMI



## What's still unfinished in your life?

Well, there's always a lot that's unfinished in everyone's life. Nothing is ever really finished. Our lives, it seems, are simply interrupted by our dying. Most of us don't complete our lives, we just run out of time. So, consciously or unconsciously, we make a bucket-list of things we still want to see, do, and finish before we die.

What do we still want to do? A number of things probably immediately come to the fore: We want to see our children grow up. We want to see our daughter's wedding. We want to see our grandchildren. We want to finish this last work of art, of writing, of building. We want to see our 80th birthday. We want to reconcile with our family.

Beyond these, more important things, we generally have another list of things we were too busy, preoccupied, or economically disadvantaged to do earlier in life: We want to walk the Camino, travel to the Holy Land, see the historical sites of Europe, back-pack through parts of Asia, travel the country with our grandkids, enjoy our retirement.

But in fantasizing about what's unfinished in our lives there's the danger of missing out on the richness of what's actually going on in our lives and our real task in the moment. The better question is: How do I want to live now so as to be ready to die when it's my time?

In a wonderful little book on contemplation, *Biography of Silence*, Spanish author, Pablo d'Ors, stares his mortality in the face and decides that this is what he wants to do in face of the inalienable fact that he's

one day to die. Here's his bucket list: "I have decided to stand up and open my eyes. I have decided to eat and drink in moderation, to sleep as necessary, to write only what contributes toward improving those who read me, to abstain from greed, and never compare myself to others. I have also decided to water my plants and care for an animal. I will visit the sick, I will converse with the lonely, and I will not let much time go by before playing with a child. In the same manner I have decided to recite my prayers every day, to bow several times before the things I consider sacred, to celebrate the Eucharist, to listen to the Word, to break bread and share the wine, to give peace, to sing in unison. And to go for walks, which I find essential. And to light the fire, which is also essential. And to shop without hurry, to greet my neighbors even when I do not like seeing their faces, to subscribe to a newspaper, to regularly call my friends and siblings on the phone. And to take excursions, swim in the sea at least once a year, and to read only good books, or reread those that I have liked. ...I will live for those things according to an ethics of attention and care. And this is how I will arrive at a happy old age, when I will contemplate, humble and proud at the same time, the small but grand orchard that I have cultivated. Life as cult, culture, and cultivation."

*Life as a cult, culture, and cultivation:* I'm a two-time cancer survivor. When first diagnosed with cancer seven years ago, the prognosis was good. I had a scare, but time still stretched out endlessly before me. But when the cancer returned four years ago, the doctors were less optimistic and told me, in unequivocal terms, that my time was probably short, no more endless days. That prognosis clarified my thoughts and feelings as nothing ever before.

Stunned, I went home, sat down in prayer, and then wrote this mini-creed for myself, with a different kind of bucket-list:

*I am going to strive to be as productive as long as I can.*

*I am going to make every day and every activity as precious and enjoyable as possible.*

*I am going to strive to be as gracious, warm, and charitable as possible.*

*I am going to strive to be as healthy as long as I can.*



The collage includes a large portrait of Pope Francis on the left, a circular portrait of St. Ignatius of Loyola in the bottom left corner, and two circular photographs in the bottom right showing Oblate priests interacting with elderly women.

**“Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you! Do not be afraid to dream great things.”**

*- Pope Francis*

**We are all ministers of the Mercy of God**

For more information on becoming an Oblate Priest or Brother please contact:

Fr. Leo Philomin, OMI, The Presbytery,  
Darndale, Dublin 17.  
[l.philomin@oblates.ie](mailto:l.philomin@oblates.ie)

[www.oblatevocations.com](http://www.oblatevocations.com)

*I am going to strive to accept others' love in a deeper way than I have up to now.*

*I am going to strive to live a more-fully “reconciled” life. No room for past hurts anymore.*

*I am going to strive to keep my sense of humor intact.*

*I am going to strive to be as courageous and brave as I can.*

*I am going to strive, always, to never look on what I am losing, but rather to look at how wonderful and full my life has been and is.*

*And, I am going to, daily, lay all of this at God's feet through prayer.*

Not incidentally, since then I have also begun to water plants, care for a feral cat, and feed all the neighborhood birds. *Life as cult, culture, and cultivation.*



# Lourdes 2019

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate have been organising their annual pilgrimage to Lourdes since 1883, only 25 years after Our Lady appeared to Bernadette at the Grotto.

This year over 600 pilgrims, from all over England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and the island of Jersey made the journey to Lourdes with the Oblate Community once again. Many travelled there for the first time, some as long-serving members of the Oblate Hospitalité team, others travelled as assisted pilgrims, and some 100 young people are part of the Oblate Youth Service.

Many pilgrims, young and old alike, came away feeling deeply affected by the special experience that Lourdes has to offer – it is a place of healing, a place of encounter and a place of peace. Fr. Vincent Mulligan OMI said of Lourdes that it “has always been a very special place to me and I have seen many people get a real sense of peace and healing there.” Those who went to Lourdes as a volunteer felt that they received much more than they gave. Miriam McDonnell, head of medical section of the pilgrimage, said “It’s very rewarding to be caring for our assisted pilgrims who remind us what’s really important in life.”

There were also many who were unable to travel with us and so we offered a ‘digital pilgrimage’, extending an invitation to those at home who wished to accompany us on our days in Lourdes via the internet, through daily emails, live videos and social media updates each day. Next year we travel to Lourdes from the 19th-24th of September 2020. Save the dates!

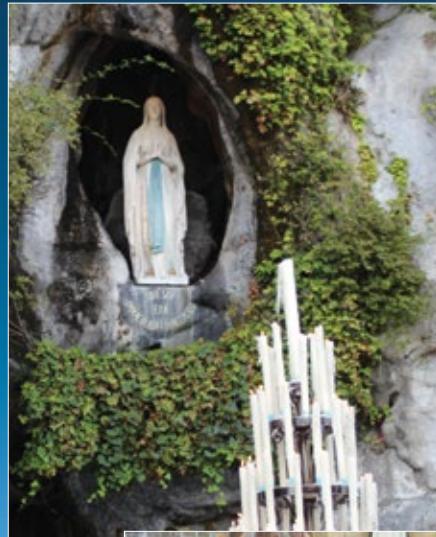
If you would like more information on the Oblate pilgrimage to Lourdes please visit [www.oblates.co.uk](http://www.oblates.co.uk) or email [lourdes@oblates.ie](mailto:lourdes@oblates.ie)

**The following is an extract from the homily given by Bishop Ray Field at the Mass at the Grotto**

St. Bernadette received her first commission at the 11th Apparition. “Go and tell the priests to build a chapel here”. Abbe Peyramale (with his 3 curates) was not impressed. “Who is this lady of whom you speak”. Bernadette had to reply that she did not know.” Then, replied the priest, “tell her that the priest is not in the habit of dealing with people whom he does not know”.

At the 16th Apparition Bernadette was to say to the ‘woman’ “what was her name’. The lady looked up to heaven then slowly opening her hands in a gesture of divine majesty and grace, she replied, “I am the Immaculate Conception”. Little Bernadette understood neither the words nor their significance. Of course the Abbe when he heard it, was dumbfounded and poor Bernadette could not have known their significance. Our Lady, in speaking to Bernadette, used only the language that Bernadette knew the Pyrenean Patois. Her words on this occasion were: “Quy soy era Immaculada Conceptiou”.

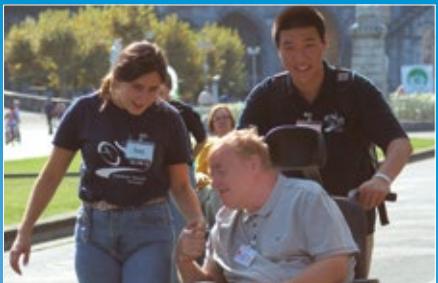
The story of Bernadette like that of Mary is so familiar to us that we let it mask the scandal. Mary would have an important part in God’s plan to bring salvation to God’s people, but it is unthinkable that God would have forced Mary to have the child against her will. Mary is an important example of one who is obedient to God even at great risk to herself. When we reflect on Mary the one word that comes to mind to describe her whole life is the word “AMEN”.



It may be translated into 'so be it'. 'your will be done'. 'do whatever you want to do in my life'. This is all the more striking especially when she could not understand why things were happening the way they were. The same was true of Bernadette who also opened herself to God's call though she also could not fully understand the things that were happening to her.

The call and the challenge to each one of us is that like Bernadette and the Blessed Virgin Mary (The lady on the rock), we might be able to say 'yes' to all that God wants to do in our lives. It is a challenge to be open to the Spirit of God so that we may be able to give birth to the Saviour in our hearts.





[Return to Contents Page](#)



Dates for the  
2020 Pilgrimage:  
19th – 24th September



# Oblate Zimbabwe Missionary Experience 2019

My name is Sorcha Dempsey-Roberts. I am 19 years old and live on Anglesey in North Wales. I was fortunate enough to get a place on this year's missionary experience trip to Zimbabwe. The excitement of finding out that I had been successful in gaining a place on the trip was quickly replaced with nerves and questions. What if I couldn't bring anything to the experience? What if the young women and children at the centre didn't want us there? And the biggest question of all for me personally, what if we did more harm than good by going out there? These questions circled around and around in the months leading up to the trip and only intensified as the day to fly out to Zimbabwe got nearer.

## Sandra Jones Centre

All questions and nerves I had were promptly left at the gates of the Sandra Jones Centre as children ran towards us excitedly asking only one thing of us – to love. The incredible staff at the Sandra Jones Centre were welcoming and assuring and helped put all nerves at ease almost instantly.

The incredible children and young people wanted us to play, to listen, to love and to respect. Bonds were built quickly as we learned their favourite games, got stuck in the classrooms doing art, music, sport and maths.

In addition to a school for the younger children at the Sandra Jones Centre, there is also a vocational programme for the older girls teaching invaluable skills in agriculture and business. In addition to rearing

chickens, there are 4 poly-tunnels growing a range of vegetables on the centre grounds. Incredible young women, some of whom have been through unspeakable hardship, work incredibly hard throughout the year in maintaining these tunnels. They grow a range of veg including cucumbers, pepper, chillies and more. We spent time working in the poly-tunnels, but despite trying our best, our work was not a patch on what these young women could do, which was a very quick icebreaker and brought a lot of laughter to our time gardening. Despite this, the time working with the girls in the gardens has provided some of my fondest, most valuable and meaningful memories from this experience. It was a way to break-down the barriers between us and was crucial in the relationships that developed throughout the month spent at the centre.

Underpinning our work at the Sandra Jones Centre was our faith as a group. Each morning we would meet for morning prayer and reflection and this was vital in the success of both our teamwork and in our day to day actions. Whether we were reflecting on an event or moment that we had found particularly difficult or challenging emotionally, focusing on a successful interaction or bond, or discussing the difficulties of being so far away from family and friends at home, it was important to take time to reflect on these things and ensure that we were processing everything and taking the time we needed. Some days could be extremely emotionally challenging. Hearing first-hand what some of these young people have



been through was incredibly hard-hitting. However, building relationships where an individual felt comfortable and trusting enough to share this with you was a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Throughout all of this, it was so comforting to know that there was a team of people with you to support you, and getting together to reflect and pray was a vital part of the success of the mission.

Days went on and our relationships with these incredible young people were getting stronger and stronger. Some of us would take it in turns to stay at the centre overnight to read to the younger children before bed, listen to the older girls' choir rehearsals and to spend more time getting to know these young women. I will treasure the time spent on these evenings for the rest of my life. As barriers were broken down it became more and more apparent these girls were like any other girls. They loved to chat, to play card games, to sing and dance and laugh as they tried to teach us some of their favourite songs and dances.

As our 4 weeks at the centre came to an end, the realisation that we would be saying our goodbyes soon became a looming worry for the whole group. After a month of building relationships and breaking down barriers, it was time to leave the centre. This was, and I believe will always be, one of the hardest things I have ever had to do, and I know that the rest of the team would agree. These children and young people gave us much more than we could have hoped to give them. We showed them that they were loved unconditionally, they were dignified and wonderful human beings and that they were worthy. In return, they taught us so much more. About humanity, faith, kindness, community and family.

### St Luke's

After leaving the Sandra Jones Centre we headed to St Luke's Mission and Hospital outside of Bulawayo. This was an incredibly hard-hitting experience as we saw a very different side of healthcare to the one we have here in the UK. It was eye-opening to see these incredible nurses, doctors and hospital staff working in some of the harshest conditions without once complaining. Patients would walk for miles to get to the hospital and the staff were working tirelessly to ensure everyone was seen to. Something that hit me the most was the women's ward. Women had walked incredible distances to arrive at the hospital sometimes months before their due-date in the hope that there would be bed available to them when the day came. Despite this, the women were living and cooking together and again, it really showed how much value there is in community.

After leaving the hospital, we drove out into the bush to visit sites of both existing boreholes, and sites for future boreholes. This was extremely valuable and educational as we got to see the effect that these boreholes were having out in these incredibly rural communities. Families would again walk for miles for access to this life-saving water that would not be there if not for the work carried out by WEFA. Driving further into the bush to see the sites for future boreholes was exciting as we could see what a positive effect this could have on a community.

This experience is a difficult one to put into words. The people you meet, relationships you build and the team you work with really add up to make the five weeks unforgettable and invaluablely meaningful. I cannot thank the other volunteers, the staff at the Sandra Jones Centre and St Luke's, or the Oblates enough for this missionary experience and I would encourage anyone who gets the opportunity to seize it. You won't regret it.



# *Festival of Life motivated youth to live “Like Fire” - Poland*

One thousand young people, one week, one God. Workshops, conferences, concerts, games, Masses, prayers, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and much more. What else do you want to see at a Catholic youth gathering? “Festival of Life”, the annual youth programme organized by the Polish Province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and five dioceses in Poland, had all of the above...

It was held at the “Niniwa” Oblate Youth Centre in Kokotek. Apart from the Oblate youth and the young people from the five dioceses, many groups and individuals from several other parts of the country also participated at this unique event.

The theme this year was “Like Fire”. It was embedded in the Old Testament texts concerning the incredible adventures of Elijah! Just to mention a few: miracles, conflicts, challenges, but also moments of doubt and helplessness. During the Festival, the young people had an opportunity to discover similarities between themselves and the great Prophet. Throughout the week, the theme was deepened further by the guest speakers. One significant lay speaker among them was Sylwia Jaśkowiec, a famous Polish cross-country skier, who has taken part in World Championships and the Winter Olympic Games. She not only shared her journey of faith, but also addressed some interesting topics like “How to combine sport and faith”, “How to distinguish good ambition from bad ambition” and “How to open ourselves to God”.

Each of the seven days had conferences, group activities, and workshops. After the Holy Mass and dinner, each evening offered a ‘fun’ event or two. Among them were concerts, a musical theatre, a stage play, and the Festival Run. The concert of “Arka Noego”, a well-known children’s band, attracted an audience of over two thousand people. This year, probably, the most spectacular event was the musical theater.

Performed by over one hundred artists, it was about the Prophet Elijah and his story from the Book of Kings. However, the event most often mentioned after the week ended was the Festival Run, a 7km run with obstacles, through the forest, lake and swamp. The participants reached their limits of strength but they had smiles on their faces at the end.

The Festival gave ample freedom to the participants. None of the events was made compulsory. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed 24 hours a day inside the chapel, and all those who wanted to be alone with the Lord grabbed this blessed opportunity with both hands. There was also a chill-out zone, where you could do some sports, grilling, or just relax.

Fr. Louis Lougen, the OMI Superior General, and Paweł Zajac, Provincial of the Polish Province joined the young people for the final day of the Festival. “We must listen to the voice of young people more and more, as you are not only the future, but also the present of the Church”, Fr. Lougen said during his homily.

“Life Festival is a huge undertaking. We are counting on the fact that the festival will permanently appear on the calendar of young people from all over the country”. Krzysztof Zieliński, an Oblate youth and a member of the organizational team, commented after the successful ending of the Festival.

– Originally published in OMI World



# Gathering of the Friends of St Eugene



In July 2019 all roads led to Anglesey, Wales where the Holyhead group hosted a gathering of the Friends of St Eugene for the groups from Rock Ferry, Crewe and Amlwch. The day began with Mass celebrated by Fr Frank Murray OMI in St Mary's Church. During the Mass five Friends made their first commitment – 2 from Crewe, 1 from Amlwch and 2 from Holyhead – and the remainder of those present renewed their commitments.

As part of the commitment everyone promised to live the charism of St Eugene in their daily lives by praying and living simply with a spirit of openness to others especially the poor and marginalised. Also through acts of Friendship, Service and Prayer to make a difference in the world and the local community.

After the Mass everyone gathered in the parish hall for coffee, cake and chat. Calories were then burnt off on a cliff top walk. Lunch then followed in the hall. After lunch a light -hearted quiz took place.

It was an enjoyable day where friendships were renewed and new friends made.

After the summer break the Friends of St Eugene groups in Britain resume their monthly meetings where they pray together, plan their service projects and make friends.

– Veronica Conlon

If you are interested in joining a group or learning more about a Friends of St Eugene group near you – email: k.jacob@oblates.co.uk

# Celebrating 125 years of serving the Church in Australia

From 15 – 18 August the Oblates and their friends of celebrated the arrival of the Order in Australia

The Oblates first landed in Fremantle in 1894, under the supervision of Fr Gaughren OMI, the Anglo-Irish Provincial who was accompanied by two other priests, Fr Daniel O’Ryan OMI and Fr Roger Hennessy OMI. On the evening of Thursday 19 July, the three priests were welcomed to our shores by 350 people.

The Provincial remained as Parish Priest of Fremantle for the first year, a clear indication of the Oblate commitment. Fr. Daniel O’Ryan’s surviving letters offer glimpses of the scene: Catholics were ‘for the most part poor working people’ and their Church was ‘liable to be blown away during any storm’. He pictures small scattered clusters of Catholics in Coogee, Hope Valley and Rottnest Island.

We are fortunate to have a long letter from a parishioner, Mrs J. Townsend, giving a warm appreciation of the three Oblates: they were ‘young men – all Irish-men – good preachers – strong active men – who have made things boom here. ...These Oblates were certainly not lacking in missionary zeal.’

The 125th Anniversary is an opportunity to give thanks for the past, to acknowledge the many blessings in our Province today and to prepare for another 125 years of service in Australia.



To mark this special occasion the Australian Oblates hosted a De Mazenod Family Gathering in Fremantle, with the theme ‘Respond with joy to our call to Evangelise’. Sixty-three people from all around Australia and from a variety of ministries gathered together. These were made up of 40 lay people and 23 Oblate. Fr Oliver Barry, the current Anglo-Irish Provincial joined the celebration as a sign of the deep connection between these islands and Australia.

Participants were asked to prepare for the Gathering with a community meeting within their state, followed by three online formation sessions based on the Oblate Charism. The preparation program allowed for us to maximise the time together during the gathering and spend time listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit in the Oblate missions in the Province. The gathering also provided us with the opportunity to build and strengthen connections between the Oblate ministries and create an awareness of the vocational opportunities that exist within our community and ultimately creating a formal Oblate Lay Association.



The event provided the opportunity to share and learn from each other, to explore the recent vision and mission document developed by the Oblates and to address the realities facing the contemporary life and mission of our Church.

On conclusion of the gathering, participants were asked to 'Think Big' and brainstorm on what can be possible now and into the future. A colourful array of ideas came to light many of which can be implemented in the short term and certainly some long term plans...watch this space!

More importantly the participants left with a greater understanding of the Oblate Charism and a sense of renewed faith. The weekend concluded with Mass at St Patrick's Basilica commemorating the arrival, which was celebrated with the Oblates of Australia and Priests from the Archdiocese of Perth. Let us all continue to pray for another 125 years of the living of the Oblate Charism in Australia.

# Brazil – A New Oblate Mission (1962)

## – From the Archives

Within the Provincial Archives lie the administrative and photographic endeavours of evangelization and pastoral care of disadvantaged Brazilians by Irish Oblates missionaries. What prompted the Oblates to undertake such a mission in Brazil? – a country encompassing an area the size of Europe and containing in the 1960s time, a population of over 70 million people contained within an area of some 5.5 million square miles.

In an interview in the *Lourdes Messenger*, in 1962, Fr. Patrick McDonnell, OMI, Provincial, Dublin, stated “*The decision was directly inspired by the appeal of the Holy Father (Pope John XXIII) in his address to Ireland at Christmas, 1960... I felt that we had to respond to this appeal for South America.*” At this time, Brazil was a region starved of religious needs, a vast section of its citizens living in abject poverty, illiterate and open to Spiritism and Communist propaganda or coup d'état. The late 1950s and early 1960s was a time in which a successful communist coup d'état, under Fidel Castro, had already succeeded in taking over power in nearby Cuba. Added to this situation was the ‘inroad being made by highly-financed non-Catholic missionaries from the U.S.A’.

Papers in the Brazil collection show that in December, 1961, Fr. Patrick McDonnell, OMI, Anglo-Irish Provincial, set off from Dublin to Brazil to meet with ‘American Oblates and also with other priests and lay people’. He met with Bishop Benedict Coscia, Bishop of Jataí, and toured across the vast Diocese which was under the Bishop’s administration. This was the area the Bishop wished to share with the Irish Oblate missionaries. No decision was made at this juncture as Fr. McDonnell had to consider the various options available to him. On his return to Ireland in January 1962, he sent a report of his Brazil visit to Fr. Joseph Fitzgerald, O.M.I., Assistant General, Rome, he presented his findings to the Provincial Council and General Administration. Following this consultation, it was decided that a mission settlement would be located in the Diocese of Jataí, in the southern tip of Goias State. The proposed mission agreement to consist of three civil districts, each with its own parish: Mateira, São Simão and Cachoeira Alta, the Oblate Congregation working under the Bishop of Jataí. (see area map above)



In May, 1962, Fr. Leo Deschâtelets, O.M.I. Superior General, Rome, wrote to Fr. P. McDonnell, O.M.I., Provincial, Dublin, stating *‘It is with great pleasure that I avail myself of this opportunity of the project of sending missionaries of the Anglo-Irish Province to Brazil... First of all, may I state that this foundation of the Anglo-Irish province fulfils a long-cherished dream of mine’.*

### Foundation of Anglo-Irish Oblate Mission

The first Superior of the new Brazilian mission was Irish born, Fr. Peter Moriarty, Superior, County Cork, who, prior to this new undertaking, had worked for many years in the Philippines. Three priests who received their obedience for this mission included Fathers, Jeremiah Donovan, Edward Barrett, and John Cribbin. On Sunday, 16 September, 1962, in the Church of Mary Immaculate, Inchicore, a ceremony of “Departure of Missionaries” at which Father P. McDonnell, O.M.I., Provincial, presided and where the assembled Fathers wished the missionaries, “Vai com Deus”. Fr. Jerry O’Donovan’s description of his travel from London to Brazil to Rio de Janeiro to Alameda Franka, Headquarters of the Oblates is a most interesting read.



Brazil Missionaries

The State of Goias, at this time had a population of circa 1,500,000. It had less than 150 priests serving the communities, most of whom were engaged in teaching and other works, which took them away from constant pastoral activity. Parishes within the state had on average 20,000 - 40,000 widely scattered souls with a lone priest to administer to them, with many other parishes, equally as large, for which there was no priest regularly available.



Brazil Missionaries October 1962. L - R: Frs. Jerry Donovan, Peter Moriarty (Superior), Ned Barret, John Cribbin.

### Arrival of The Oblates

The four Fathers to arrive in Brazil in the latter part of 1962 – Fathers J. Donovan and Ned Barret, travelled by plane and landed in Sao Paulo in September and Fathers Moriarty and John Cribbin travelled by freighter, bringing luggage with them. In December, 1963, Fr. Moriarty had his first meeting with Vicar General, Frei Domingos Foley, O.F.M. and in Mateira a ‘formal ceremony was held in the Church with a reading of the Episcopal document making Mateira a parish including two municipios (civil parishes) took place. The parochial territory of Materia was vast and contained developing towns, Mateira, Canal Sao Simao and Cachoeira Alta, but had no resident priest. It had a small mud chapel, Cachoeira had a church in the process of construction, while Canal was more fortunate and could boast of a nicely completed building with seating capacity for a 150 people.

By 8 December 1962, Fr. Moriarty was established as Parish Priest over three towns. In 1963 separate parishes were established in these towns. Fr. Barrett in Cachoeira Alta and Fr. Cribbin in Canal Sao Simao. Later a new town flourished with the muinicipality and parish of Sao Simao, called Itaguacu. As the mission established itself so too did the need of help in the administration of schools.

In 1964, Fathers Donovan and Barrett became directors of the two primary schools in Mateira and Fr. Cribbin became Director in Canal Sao Simao. Fr. Moriarty also became Director of the local high school in Mateira and Father Barrett became Director of the high school in Cachoeira.



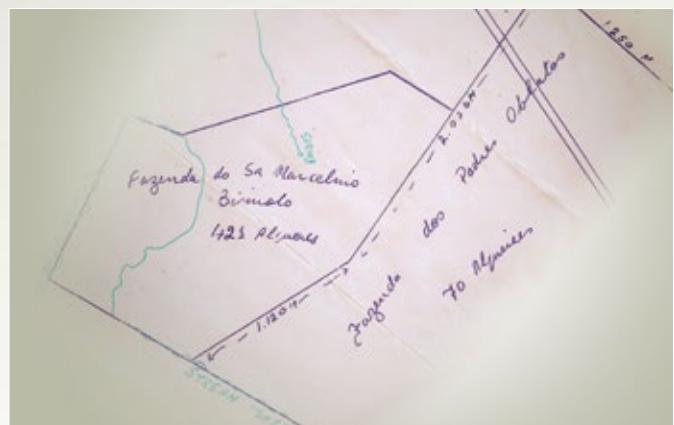
Rescript Approval in Principle to accept Parishes

Brazil suffered a military coup d'état in 1962, which lasted until 1984. In the beginning, the new regime was initially supported by the Brazilian Bishop, but later following assassinations, imprisonment, torture and exile, the Catholic Church began to represent the voice of its people – the poor, the disadvantaged and the landless. At the invitation of the Bishop of Uberlandia, in 1964, Fathers Peter Moriarty and John Joe O’Connell were installed in the Parish of Bom Jesus to further evangelization and pastoral activities.



Bom Jesus Church

In the same year, Fr. William O’Brien, OMI. Provincial, Dublin, authorised the purchase of 400 acre Fazenda, to stabilize the Mission.



Sketch of Fazenda

Fr. John Cribbin, having established his ministry in Sao Simao and in Itaguacu in 1962, moved from there to Rio de Janeiro and worked in the shanty towns surrounding the capital. Together with Fathers, Colm O’Flanagan, Michael Greene and Michael O’Sullivan, they continued their pastoral work in the parish, of St. Joseph Magalhaes Bastos as Chaplains to the prison.

To be continued in the next issue.



# Crewe Events

## Advent Retreats

The coming of God into our world, the Feast of Christmas, expresses, at its deepest level, the incredible love of God for us... and yet, amid the hype and energy of Christmas, we so easily lose sight of the miracle which is Christmas.

This Retreat is ideally suited for groups or individuals who wish to stop for a few moments, to step outside their busy schedules, to rest, be at peace and reflect in a gentle and prayerful way on the Glory of Christmas.

The Retreat will include a reflective input, Eucharist, quiet times of reflection and an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Monday 9th – Wednesday 11th December

Friday 13th – Sunday 15th December.

There will also be the opportunity to participate in a day retreat on Wednesday 4th of December.

**For more information please contact**

**Fr. Brian or Rachel 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](http://www.orc-crewe.org)



## A Date For Your Diary

24th – 25th February, 2020

We are delighted to welcome Fr Frank Morrisey back to Crewe where he will present a Canon Law workshop on theme of preparing our local communities to live their faith in a time of change and fewer priests.

Further details in the next issue of Connections but if you would like to register your interest in attending this event please contact:

Kirk Jacob at the Partners in Mission Office on

**Tel:** +44 (0) 20 7624 7296 or by

**email:** k.jacob@oblates.co.uk

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](mailto:oblate_partners@btinternet.com)

[Return to Contents Page](#)



printed on paper from  
a sustainable source