



OblateWORLD

MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE



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Front Cover: Father Clyde Rausch, O.M.I. teaches the art of icon painting at his studio in San Antonio, Texas.

Back Cover: Father Ron Walker, O.M.I. passed away recently after a legendary ministry to the people of Zambia.

The Missionary Oblates thank the following for contributing information to this issue of *Oblate World*:

"I come from the end of the earth."
Diocese of Churchill – Hudson Bay Canada.

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OBLATE WORLD magazine seeks to *inform* our readers about the mission to the poor in which Oblates engage around the globe; to *educate* our readers about the teachings of the Catholic faith and the Missionary Oblates; and to *inspire* our readers so that they may enhance their own spirituality.

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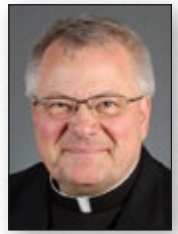
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MISSIONARY
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MARY IMMACULATE

Serving the world's poor®

From the *Provincial* Fr. Louis Studer, O. M. I.



Dear Friend,

I recently attended the First Vows of four young men who had just completed a year at our Oblate novitiate. Father Luc Tardif, O.M.I. gave the homily during the Mass and used a phrase that caught my attention – “The Good News is not Fake News.”

That sentiment was truly present during the First Vows ceremony. There is nothing fake about the deep love these young men have for the charism of the Missionary Oblates. There is nothing fake about their commitment to serve the poorest and neediest people in the United States and around the world. Our newest Oblate seminarians are very much Good News.



After accepting the vows of Wilbroad Kapembwa, the young man told me that he was attracted to the Oblates because of our “unflinching zeal to preach the Good News to the poor with their many faces.” He said the Oblates are never phony, that we are “sincere missionaries” who never separate ourselves from the people we serve.

Making their First Vows recently were, left to right: Joey Methe (Canada), Michael Kabazo (Zambia), Lazaro Leal (United States) and Wilbroad Kapembwa (Zambia).

As I read through the stories in this magazine, I couldn’t help but think about how much Good News there is in our *Oblate World*. Bringing the Word of God to the most isolated villages in the Arctic is Good News. Preserving land so that it will remain unspoiled for future generations is Good News. And celebrating 75 years of missionary activities in Haiti is also some very Good News.

For me and my brother Oblates, your partnership in our ministries is certainly Good News. Our Oblate ministries simply would not exist without the prayers and support of friends like you. You truly are creating Good News in the lives of the poor, and there isn’t anything fake about it.

Fr. Louis Studer, omi.

Fr. Louis Studer, O.M.I.
Provincial, United States Province



Making A Difference For 75 Years In Haiti

When the Missionary Oblates arrived in Haiti 75 years ago, most of the poor were largely being neglected by their clergy. There was a debilitating sense of hopelessness in society, and unfortunately most priests chose to isolate themselves from the problems of the poor.

But when the Oblates arrived from the United States, they brought a different attitude, one of solidarity with the poor. They opened parishes in the poorest neighborhoods, ministered to people living on the streets, and opened schools for impoverished children.

The early Oblates in Haiti were fulfilling the commandment of their founder, St. Eugene De Mazenod, to “lead people to act like human beings, first of all, and then like Christians and, finally, to help them to become saints.” The Oblates continue to follow that commandment every day.

“I have received a good number of scratches, dents and bruises from my endeavors,” said Fr. John Henault, O.M.I. who has ministered in Haiti since 1964. “I wear these battle scars as medals with pride. I need to have something to show the Lord in order to get into Heaven.”



Today Fr. John is one of 110 Oblates ministering in Haiti. The Oblates are the largest male religious congregation working in the country, and most of them are now native vocations. There are also 25 men who are discerning or being educated to become Missionary Oblates.

The Oblates staff 24 parishes and run several primary and secondary schools. They have programs to help people of all ages who have one common characteristic – they are the poorest of the poor.

In Quanaminthe the Oblates run the John Paul II Institute, a school for 200 children who come primarily from families who became refugees after natural disasters. The families are so poor that they cannot afford the school uniforms and fees to attend the schools run by the government. So without John Paul II Institute, these children would have no place to receive an education.

In Les Cayes, the Oblates are responsible for Foyer St. Etienne, a nursing home for the elderly poor. Residents at the home would be living their final days on the streets if not for the Oblates. Instead, they live their lives in modest comfort, with their basic physical and spiritual needs being met.





“When you think you’ve seen it all, ‘been there, done that,’ that’s when God springs something new on you to get your attention,” said Fr. Fred Charpentier, O.M.I. who runs Foyer St. Etienne and has been in Haiti for more than 50 years. “We see both joy and calamities. We know that the Lord is with us so we fear not. I am convinced that the people of ‘Goodwill’ here in Haiti will prevail in the end.”



Temporary church

A Church Rises From The Rubble Twice

If patience is a virtue, then the people of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Fon Eles, Haiti are some of the most virtuous people in the world.

In 2010 an earthquake devastated Haiti including the town of Fon Eles. Thirty parishioners from St. Anthony were killed in the earthquake, and all of the buildings reduced to rubble. The parishioners, along with their pastor, Fr. Joe Corriveau, O.M.I. were determined that the earthquake would not end their parish. They began to slowly rebuild.

Shortly after the rubble was cleared, the people of St. Anthony constructed a makeshift building to serve as their church, a tapestry of tarpaulins and sheet



New St. Anthony Church

metal. During Mass the parishioners asked for one blessing every day – that a new church would rise from the rubble.

Four months after the earthquake on the feast of St. Anthony, Fr. Joe knew that his beloved parish was back, even though it was still primarily a tent church. On that day, 61 children made their First Communion during a 2 ½-hour Mass.

“It was filled to the brim and believe me

Making A Difference For 75 Years In Haiti

Continued from page 5.

it was hot like an oven, which did not seem to bother anybody except me,” Fr. Joe joked.

For more than four years Fr. Joe raised funds to rebuild his parish. Every time some money would come in, part of the construction would take place. Eventually the new church was completed. Then the hurricane season arrived, and Hurricane Matthew blew most of the parish away.

“As Oblates we take a fourth vow, one of perseverance,” said Fr. Joe. “That gives us the strength to stand up when a hurricane or an earthquake strikes.”

After Hurricane Matthew Fr. Joe and his parishioners did not give up. They began raising funds and rebuilding. It took nearly two years of work until the parishioners celebrated the consecration of their new parish church on June 13, 2018.

The consecration Mass lasted 3 ½-hours and was attended by dignitaries including the Archbishop

of Port-au-Prince. A choir of 40 voices sang hymns in Creole while Mass was celebrated in French. There was a large offertory procession of 15 Haitians, some carrying baskets on their head containing fruit and produce.

Even a live rooster, chicken and goat were presented to the Archbishop.

Father Joe beamed with pride during the celebratory Mass. It was one of the happiest days of his 57-year ministry in Haiti. He concelebrated the Mass with the parish’s new pastor, Fr. Michard Jean-Jacques, O.M.I. Father Joe has known Fr. Michard his entire life, having baptized him as an infant.

After the Mass Fr. Joe sent a letter to benefactors who had supported his rebuilding odyssey over the past eight years. He wanted them to be aware

that their perseverance had finally paid off. †



“Thank you for your prayers and your sharing with us and the people of Haiti. Your interest and missionary spirit gives us the courage to keep going. I and my fellow Oblate missionaries are grateful for your generous help and the concern you manifest for us. May you be generously blessed by the Lord!”

Fr. Joe Corriveau, O.M.I.

Oblate Crossings

Four Novices Make First Vows

Four young men recently made their First vows as Missionary Oblates after completing a year of discernment at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Novitiate.

Lazaro Angel Leal is from Texas and is currently studying to become an Oblate brother at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. Michael Kabazo and Wilbroad Kapembwa are from Zambia and are currently studying for the priesthood at St. Joseph's Institute in South Africa. Joey Methe is a native of Canada and has returned home to study for the priesthood.

Lazaro has known the Oblates his entire life, having been baptized by an Oblate. Michael grew up in an Oblate parish in Zambia and was inspired by how the Oblates reached out to the poor. Wilbroad began attending an Oblate parish in Lusaka after high school and was impressed by the Oblates' unflinching zeal to preach the Gospel. Joey resigned from a successful career as a graphic designer to discern his calling to the priesthood.



Left to right: Joey Methe, Michael Kabazo, Lazaro Leal, Wilbroad Kapembwa

Three Men Join Novitiate Community

At the Oblate novitiate, three young men are currently discerning their calling to religious life.

Mark Hernandez is an American novice who gave up a lucrative career in the banking industry to pursue his calling to the priesthood. David Chisha is from a small town in Zambia and was impressed by the Oblates' outreach to the most abandoned, including prisoners. Democracy Mudenda is also from Zambia and said the Oblates show "true joy, love and care in their commitment and zeal for the salvation of souls."



Left to right: David Chisha, Democracy Mudenda, Mark Hernandez

Celebrating
25
Years



of the Missionary Oblates Woods Nature Preserve

Based on articles by Sr. Maxine Pohlman, S.S.N.D.



In 1993 two women, Margaret Morrissey and Annie Hoagland, had a special vision for the Mississippi river bluff area in Alton and Godfrey, Illinois. Wanting the land along the bluffs to be unspoiled for future generations, they tried to persuade area landowners to enter into legal agreements to preserve their land. But they were unsuccessful until the Missionary Oblates agreed to get involved. The Oblates' Provincial Council unanimously dedicated 16 acres as an Illinois Nature Preserve – now named the Missionary Oblates Woods Nature Preserve.

“This was the beginning of what later developed into the (now independent) Oblate Ecological Initiative at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Novitiate which began in 2001,” said Oblate Provincial Fr. Louis Studer. The Ecological Initiative was a mission of the Oblates' Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) office.

The first priority in preserving land is to protect biodiversity, which is necessary for the continuation of life in our common home. Biodiversity is



threatened by habitat fragmentation, degradation and

destruction; by pollution, invasive species and by climate change. A well-managed, healthy preserve can help deter threats to biodiversity.

Nature preserves also contribute to the integrity of creation because they help counter climate change in three ways: holding seeds which are sources of plants and food for animals to repopulate other areas; providing linkages for climate change induced movement of species; and providing carbon sinks.

The Missionary Oblates Woods Nature Preserve includes 16 acres of high-quality forest. The land is a habitat to threatened and endangered species like bald eagles, timber rattlesnakes and the great plains rattlesnake. They are also part of a large forest block in combination with two neighboring preserves.

In order to maintain the integrity of the Preserve, the Nature Preserves Commission, in collaboration with La Vista Ecological Learning Center, hosts volunteer work days on the second Tuesday of each month. Volunteers spend time removing invasive species like bush honeysuckle, winter creeper and invasive trees.



In July 2018 we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Preserve. The theme of the celebration was “More Important Now Than Ever.” In the past 25 years more land has been developed and forests have continued to degrade; so preserving high quality forested area has only increased in importance.



The 25th Anniversary celebration was attended by over 40 people, including Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick, representatives of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and the Great Rivers Land Trust, faithful Preserve volunteers, friends and the Oblate Novitiate community.



Father Jack Lau, O.M.I. served as the emcee, expertly weaving together the presentations with his passion for land and La Vista in particular. The other speakers included Debbie Newman, Natural Areas Preservation Specialist with the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission; Pen Daubach, an Illinois Nature Preserves Commissioner; Sr. Maxine Pohlman, S.S.N.D., who works with the Preserve volunteers; and U.S. Provincial Fr. Louis Studer, O.M.I.

During his speech, Fr. Studer pointed out that Oblates are “down-to-earth” priests and brothers seeking practical solutions to issues. “Oblates are close to the people,” he said. “Oblates preach the message of Jesus Who often used images from nature in His teaching.”

Sister Maxine spoke of the work of the highly-dedicated people who healed the acres by removing trash, invasive species and planting native wildflowers. “They work hard, meeting monthly to tackle a job that looked impossible, but the volunteers have made a huge difference in just a few years.” She also pointed out that, for several years, Oblate novices have taken part in Preserve work.

After the presentations, the hike into the Preserve was a real eye-opener for participants who got to experience firsthand what land can look like when it is maintained by people who have learned to do the task correctly. A clear view of the Mississippi River, the presence of native wildflowers and the absence of big honeysuckle bushes and invasive trees make the Preserve a beautiful example of what protected land can look like and how it can serve the community of life in this region.

“On behalf of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, I offer our sincere thanks and congratulations to all who have supported this effort these past 25 years,” Fr. Studer said. “And to all who will continue to support it for many years into the future.” †



The Favelas Are My Kind of Place

As Superior General of the Missionary Oblates, Fr. Louis Lougen, O.M.I. works among the grandeur of Rome. His office is just a few blocks from the Vatican, a long way away from the 18 years he ministered in the favelas (shanty towns) of Brazil. When asked recently if he would rather minister at the Vatican or in the favelas, Fr. Lougen answered without hesitation, "I would go to the favelas, the favelas are my kind of place." Here Fr. Lougen writes about his time with the poor in Brazil and how the Oblates are currently working in "favelas" around the world.



years of my life. I knew very closely the life and hardships of the poor and I saw the presence of the living God in people who had nothing but poverty and hardship. Their resilience in the midst of destitution was truly amazing. Their capacity for joy and communion with one another in the face of hopelessness, violence and utter disregard by others was astounding.

In the favelas the Oblate charism was crystallized within me – to bring the Good News to the poor. It was an exciting time because the country was under a military dictatorship and the Church was a force of resistance in solidarity with the people. We supported the poor in their struggles for justice and human rights. It was a time of danger, sorrow and pain, but it was also a time of joy, love and goodness radiating from the poor.

When I was elected Superior General it was a calling that I'll admit was a little hard to accept. I love the Congregation and I took a vow of obedience, but if you asked where I would rather go it would have been back to the favelas of Brazil. But being Superior General has opened my eyes to other "favelas" all over the world where the Oblates are working to improve the lives of the poor with the Good News of Christ.

It was in Brazil that I learned so much about being a priest, a missionary, an Oblate of Mary Immaculate. After four years of theology, it was among the poor that I went to "finishing school." I was sent there to preach the Gospel, and in return the poor, through the witness of their lives, brought me closer to God and opened the meaning of the Gospel to me. The poor evangelized me.

The time I spent in the favelas of Brazil were among the most blessed



In Senegal, the Oblates and their Oblate Associates have formed a group called the *Friends of St. Eugene*, named in honor of our Oblate founder, St. Eugene De Mazenod. This group ministers in a kind of “favela” in the rural zone, where some 800 people suffer drought and oppressive heat without any medical assistance. The Friends of St. Eugene provide basic medical supplies to villagers, both to Christians and to Muslims, and it is for most people the only medical attention they will ever receive.

Last year I was in the “favelas” of Cuba where four Oblates are working in seven parishes. I was shocked by the poverty of the elderly there. It is impossible for them to live on their pensions. So the Oblates at each parish have created a lunch program for the elderly people. After the celebration of the Mass during the weekdays, the community provides food and the Oblates eat together with the elderly and usually there is singing, dancing and fellowship. It is a wonderful, simple ministry and it is a way for the Oblates there to be close to the people.

In Scripture we are told that God will do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine with the Holy Spirit working among us (Eph. 3:20). I discovered that in the favelas. It was there that I experienced God more and more as

mystery, the mystery of love, of community and of solidarity; and I was walking in that mystery.

When my time as

Superior General is over, I would not hesitate to go back to the favelas. I would be very happy back in Brazil, but maybe it is a place like India or Bangladesh where our Oblate family is much younger. These younger Oblate foundations are always asking me to send them an older Oblate to journey with them. Maybe I am that older Oblate, a type of wisdom figure, although I don't know how much real wisdom I have to share with them!

A young scholastic from Lesotho once asked me a beautiful question, “What is my dream for the congregation?” After some thought I realized that my dream is the same as that of our founder, St. Eugene De Mazenod. It is a dream that we remain always close to the poor, the poor that nobody else is taking care of. It is a dream that is realized in places like the favelas. At first glance they seem like they are just ugly, violent and cruel. But when you go beyond the appearances, and meet the people of the favelas, you discover such beautiful human and Gospel values where very simple and ordinary acts are performed with extraordinary generosity, love and sacrifice. You really experience Jesus' words, “The Kingdom of God is among you!” (Lk. 17:21) †

The Art of Faith

His artwork is admired by people all over the world. But Fr. Clyde Rausch, O.M.I. doesn't paint icons for personal glory or the admiration of others. Instead, he paints for just one client.

"God is my best customer," said Fr. Clyde. "And I'm not even the painter, that's the Holy Spirit."

Since the 1980s Fr. Clyde has been painting (often referred to as writing) icons that now grace churches, retreat houses, seminaries and other sacred places throughout Europe and the United States. He developed his artistic skills as a missionary priest in Sweden, and continues his work today in his studio at Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas.

Becoming an internationally-acclaimed iconographer was a ministry that Fr. Clyde never expected. In fact, he didn't become serious about art until he was in his mid-40s. His previous

painting experience involved walls, barns and some occasional sketching.

Father Clyde was born in South Dakota and grew up on a farm. While in high school he began experiencing a calling to the priesthood and started corresponding with the Oblates who ran parishes about 20 miles away. Father Clyde said what first struck him about the Oblates was that they didn't send him generic form letters. Instead, he received personal letters about his possible vocation. Those personal letters

eventually led him to join the Oblate community and he was ordained in 1968.

Father Clyde's first assignment was looking like he would become a missionary in the Oblates newly-open missions in Brazil. But Fr. Clyde's allergies and the hot tropical weather created second thoughts for his superiors. Instead of Brazil, he was sent to a much different new Oblate mission – Sweden. It would be his home for the next 29 years.



*"God is my best customer.
And I'm not even the painter.
that's the Holy Spirit."*

Much of Fr. Clyde's time in Sweden was spent at a parish in the city of Taby near Stockholm. In addition to parish ministry, he also ministered at area hospitals and prisons. He found the people to be tough and resilient, like modern day Vikings.

For two years, Fr. Clyde ministered at an Oblate mission in the northern part of the country, just 100 miles from the Arctic Circle. At that time he met Oblate Bro. Olof Åsblom, an accomplished iconographer. Father Clyde found Bro. Olof's serene religious icons fascinating, and especially appropriate for the quiet and reserved nature of the Swedes.

With the help of Bro. Olof, Fr. Clyde began to develop his icon painting skills. He discovered that an iconographer is not just a painter but

also a writer, someone that tells a story through the artwork.

"It's not something that you can just sit down and start to paint," explains Fr. Clyde. "You have to do your homework, read the Scripture, study and pray before you start. You have to create a relationship with the subject you are going to paint."

Sometimes Fr. Clyde can complete an icon in as little as a few weeks. Other icons can take years to finish. Father Clyde said a good iconographer can't force the timeline. Occasionally he gets "writers' block" and has to set an icon aside for several months. God will let him know when it's time to restart.

Father Clyde also explains that icons are not just representations of events in the Bible. They are works of art full of symbolism. The people in the icons are painted looking serene, portrayed as saints in Heaven. Even the frame



is symbolic, representing the border between Heaven (the picture) and earth (outside the frame). Frequently Fr. Clyde paints outside of the picture and onto the frame, showing the connection between present and past.

“The picture will pull you into it, or it will come out to you,”

Fr. Clyde explains.

In addition to painting icons, Fr. Clyde also began teaching classes in the art form while in Sweden. Over the years he instructed hundreds of students to paint icons using their head and heart. The classes were truly ecumenical as most of the students were not Catholic.

After 29 years in Sweden, Fr. Clyde was selected to represent the Oblates of Europe at their international headquarters in Rome. He served six years as the General Councilor for Europe. Then he served another six years as the treasurer for the Oblates’ worldwide congregation.

In 2013 Fr. Clyde’s tenure in Rome was over and he decided to return to the United States, finding a home with the Oblates in San Antonio. Most days he can be found in his studio working on icons

or teaching the art form to students two days a week.

When a person expresses interest in taking a class, Fr. Clyde never asks them if they have any artistic talent. Instead, he chooses students who have a deep faith and want to express that faith to others.



“Jesus doesn’t pick us because of our talent, he picks us because he loves us,” said Fr. Clyde.



In Fr. Clyde’s classes, students use the same technique as iconographers from centuries earlier. No detail is too small, from the type of hair on the brushes to the wood used for the icon. Father Clyde and his students also make their own paint, through a combination of colored pigments, egg yolk and water.



While the painting process might be precise, the actual artwork does not have to be perfect. The lines can be crooked and the body parts don't have to look exactly right. Father Clyde reminds his students to not sweat the details. If something doesn't look right, or the spirit moves you in a different direction, just paint over the old and start something new.



Because of his reputation, Fr. Clyde routinely gets requests for commission work. But he turns most of the offers down. The few commissions he does accept are usually for a special purpose, like an icon depicting Mother Teresa with the Blessed Mother holding the infant Jesus that was commissioned by a St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Wisconsin.

"It's hard to do commission work because I can't paint within a timeframe," said Fr. Clyde. "It gets finished when it gets finished."



So most of Fr. Clyde's work ends up being donated to various Oblate ministries and other religious institutions. Several of Fr. Clyde's works are prominently displayed within a few blocks of his studio, at Oblate School of Theology, Oblate Renewal Center and the recently completed Oblate Seminary Residences. He does sell all occasion cards of his work with the proceeds going to support the Oblates' ministries in Tijuana, Mexico.

While Fr. Clyde appreciates the acknowledgement of his artistic skills, he prefers people look past the picture and into the true meaning of the art. It's not about painting; it's about discovering a deeper understanding of one's faith.

"This is my main form of prayer right now," said Fr. Clyde. "When I go to the studio I don't go there to paint, I go there to pray using a paintbrush." †

Continued on page 16



“You have to do your homework, read the Scripture, study and pray before you start. You have to create a relationship with the subject you are going to paint.”

Fr. Clyde Rausch, O.M.I.





America's Senior Oblate

Fr. Clarence Zachman Celebrates his

70th Anniversary

of Priesthood

At the age of 98, Fr. Clarence Zachman, O.M.I. is the oldest Missionary Oblate in the United States. But you wouldn't know it by his actions. He is always quick with a word of encouragement or advice. He doesn't need a cane, walker or wheelchair to get around, and he still drives.

Recently Fr. Clarence reached a milestone that only a handful of men have reached before – 70 years as a Missionary Oblate priest. In September he celebrated his anniversary at a

Father Clarence was ordained in 1948 and spent most of his early years as an Oblate teaching at Our Lady of the Ozarks College until 1961. He then joined the United States Air Force as a Military Chaplain, and for the next 20 years was stationed in countries all over the world.



"What keeps me young is that I am always looking to improve my personal relationship with God – even as a 98-year-old priest."

special Mass held for Oblate jubilarians at the National Shrine of

Our Lady of the Snows. Father Clarence was one of the first to arrive, one of the last to leave and had no problem driving himself to and from the event.

"I am so grateful to the Lord for allowing me to have so many joyous years of ministry, and being able to become friends with many wonderful people," said Fr. Clarence. "What keeps me young is that I am always looking to improve my personal relationship with God – even as a 98-year-old priest."

"As Oblates we are called to serve the poorest of the poor," said Fr. Clarence. "As an Air Force chaplain, I met many people who needed help, especially during wartime. I was honored to serve people serving our country."

Father Clarence retired from the Air Force in 1981 and then ministered at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows. Today he can still be found many days at the Shrine – talking, counseling and praying with pilgrims.

Here Fr. Clarence reflects on his 70-year journey as a Missionary Oblate priest:



To my friends,

My vocation came first from God. Then it came from my parents who were a sign that God is love. They had eight children. The three girls became Franciscan Sisters and two of the boys became Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

I attended grade school at an Oblate parish. It was at First Communion that I asked Jesus what He wanted me to do when I got big. He responded, “Be a priest.” I thought I was not smart enough to do so. But Jesus answered that He would take care of me. I think Jesus must have told my teachers to pass me so that they wouldn’t have to deal with me for another year.

I was ordained in 1948 and ministered at parishes and schools throughout the Midwest. Sometimes I was fearful, but Jesus was always there reminding me not to worry. He would help me. He would never let me down. In 1961 I joined the Air Force as a military chaplain. I was 41 years old, two years past the maximum age limit.



It took an Act of Congress for me to join. My ministry over the next 20 years was one of love – a love for the service men and women, and for their families. I enjoyed every day of my work.

I retired from the Air Force in 1981 and came to the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows. I helped out wherever I was needed. I would

tell the pilgrims that God wants me to give them a message – that God loves you. That is the Good News. Eventually I developed the habit of telling people a simple message, “God loves you and so do I.” I’m sure I’ve repeated this phrase tens of thousands of times. It’s such a simple but vitally important message to be reminded of.

During my retirement God has always had a plan for me. And I know that He will continue to have a plan for me for as long as I live. It’s simple, just let God be God, because God is love. I am always being reminded of His love. God has taken care of me every single day, and He will do so for every day to come.

Fr. Clarence

“I come from the
end of the earth.”

As the leader of the Diocese of Churchill – Hudson Bay in Canada, Bp. Anthony Krotki, O.M.I. is in charge of one of the largest, and smallest diocese in the world.

By land, the diocese covers about 1.4 million square miles of primarily Inuit territory. By population, there are only 9,000 Catholics living in isolated missions with names like Whale Cove, Arctic Bay and Coral Harbour.

“It’s a very hard place to live so we don’t worry about the rest of the world much,” said Bp. Tony. “But the North is a place of incredible joy because we are never alone, we are always part of a strong Inuit family.”

Just a year after being ordained in his native Poland, Fr. Tony arrived in the Canadian Arctic in 1990 to minister in some of the world’s most isolated Catholic missions. He served as pastor of several mission churches before being named the local bishop in 2013. His entire diocese includes just seven priests, five of whom are Missionary Oblates.

The Oblates have been ministering in the far north of Canada for more than 100 years. The harsh climate makes their ministries some of the most difficult in the world.

Bishop Tony experiences this harshness often, including a near-death experience when his snowmobile broke down on an eight-hour trip to a mission site. Navigating by the North Star in subzero weather, Bp. Tony eventually arrived at the mission site several hours late after nearly freezing to death.

“At a point during that ordeal I had no feeling in my face. I thought I was done,” said Bp. Tony. “All I could do was pray and look to the North Star for guidance, and God delivered me to safety.”

Bishop Tony says the people who live in these small, isolated villages are the most resilient people he has ever met. One young couple, Yolanda and Levi, remind Bp. Tony that no matter what hardships are put in your path, they can be overcome with help from your Inuit family and God.



Yolanda and Levi had five children die and had given up hope. In talking with Bp. Tony, they decided to try again and gave birth to a son. They named him Tony in honor of Bp. Tony. In the hospital in Ottawa, Yolanda



“God can take the roughness and cracks in our lives and turn it into something beautiful, shiny and wonderful, all we have to do is trust in Him.”

played hymns sung by Bp. Tony in her native language so little Tony would already know part of his culture when they returned to the village.

Seven months later, little Tony died. It was a devastating time for the young couple, Bp. Tony and the entire Inuit family. As people gathered at the couple’s house, Bp. Tony was so overcome with grief that he couldn’t talk with anyone. He sat in a corner of the room. Then a 5-year-old came over to him and gave him a hug, and said the most healing words possible: “Tony I love you.”



into something beautiful, shiny and wonderful,” said Bp. Tony. “All we have to do is trust in Him.” †

“This little girl hugged me so hard that I couldn’t breathe,” said Bp. Tony. “It was as if God had given me a squeeze to remind me that I was loved and that things would be O.K.”

As he travels throughout the vast Arctic, Bp. Tony carries a crosier that was made from a neighbor’s prune tree in his native Poland. Bishop Tony’s sister had the cane made

to remind her brother of where his faith journey began. As a rambunctious child, Bp. Tony used to steal prunes from that tree.

The crosier is symbolic of Bp. Tony’s faith journey. On one side of the cane the wood is not impressive. It is rough and has several cracks. On the other side, however, the wood is beautiful, smooth and pristine.

“God can take the roughness and cracks in our lives and turn it into something beautiful, shiny and wonderful,” said Bp. Tony. “All we have to do is trust in Him.” †



Oblates Respond To Tijuana Migrant Crisis

During the migrant crisis in Tijuana, Mexico six Missionary Oblates have been responding to the thousands of desperately poor as best they can. Below are excerpts from recent communications with Fr. Jesse Esqueda, O.M.I. one of the Oblates working in Tijuana to bring relief to the migrants:

“Most of the migrants are staying at a shelter. The shelter was originally close to the border, but after some of the migrants tried to cross over they moved the shelter further away. The shelter is now about 40 minutes from the border and about 10 minutes away from where we live. The shelter is much better now, part of it is indoors and that's where they are putting women and children. But most of the people are outside. They say there are about 6,000 people in Tijuana. They have many needs: food, drinking water, socks, everything. They have arrived here from a long and dangerous journey and they have almost nothing.”

“We have heard of a few instances of violence,

but the great majority of them are very respectful, and are just trying to escape a difficult situation in their countries. They are willing to wait their turn and see if they have a case for asylum. The waiting part is very difficult because they don't have work and they need something to do.”

“We have about 20 migrants staying with us for now. That number includes four women, four children and 12 men. As we get to know them, they tell us their stories and it's very moving. They've come from a very painful past, they're seeking a safer, better life for their families. We've asked what they will do if they can't get into the U.S., will they stay in Mexico? They

say definitely yes they will stay in Mexico, they don't want to go back to their country because of the violence and gangs.”

“I am very moved by our parish community here in Tijuana. Even though they themselves are very poor, they've been bringing clothes and shoes and blankets,



Father Jesse with migrant children currently living at the Oblate parish.



different things they have at home, whatever they can spare to help.”

“We go to the refugee camp (shelter) several times a week to take blankets, socks, underwear and food. On Saturday our young adults together with the migrants staying with us cooked a traditional Honduran meal (Baliadas) and we took them to the camp. Recently we took our migrant friends to Walmart to buy them clothes, shoes and hygiene supplies.”

“There has been a lot of talk and news coverage about the migrant caravan staying in Tijuana. It has been a very political issue, but regardless of your views about this issue there are thousands of people (children, women and men) who are in desperate need of food, water, clothing and shelter. They are staying outdoors in tents and wait in very long lines to get a little food.”

“It started raining in Tijuana which will make the next few days extremely difficult for all of them. We are giving shelter to a group of children, women and young adults at our Youth Retreat Center. I ask that you pray for the safety of everyone, especially the children!”



**“For I was hungry,
and you gave Me
something to eat; I was
thirsty, and you gave
Me something to drink;
I was a stranger, and
you invited Me in.”**

(Matthew 25:35)

Sailing Away to A Missionary Life

For six years Bro. Daniel Bourg, O.M.I. was a member of the U.S. Navy. He spent much of that time aboard the USS Enterprise, working as a steam/propulsion mechanical operator. It was his job to help make the ship go.

Today, Bro. Daniel is an Oblate seminarian whose path to the priesthood is propelling rapidly. He is ready to go into a missionary life of service to the poor and needy.



until settling in rural Minnesota. At the age of 17, he moved to San Antonio, Texas and began attending St. Anthony High School, which had formerly been an Oblate junior seminary.

“At that time I had a feeling God might be calling me to the priesthood, but it wasn’t the right time yet,” said Bro. Daniel.

So Bro. Daniel enlisted in the Navy and served for six years, including a

“When you work deep in the belly of the ship, you don’t get the attention like the people up on deck,” said Bro. Daniel. “But without the people down below, nothing gets done. I see the Oblates as those people, they don’t get the glory, they just make things go.”

Brother Daniel has been going towards life as a Missionary Oblate since childhood, with a few detours along the way. He was an only child in a family that moved around a lot



deployment to the Persian Gulf. Brother Daniel said working on the ship showed him the importance of community life and working together as a team, two characteristics that are also important of a missionary priest.

After his time in the Navy, Bro. Daniel thought he would study theology as a layman. He returned to San Antonio and inquired about classes at Oblate School of Theology. He felt a connection to the Oblates. Not only had he attended high school at their former seminary, his dad was working as a nurse at the Oblate Madonna House, caring for retired Oblates. During a meeting with the local Vocation Director, Fr. Charlie Banks, O.M.I. Bro. Daniel accepted an invitation to take part in a *Come and See* vocation retreat.

“At the *Come and See* I decided that this was something I could do, live and pray at the Oblate pre-novitiate while

going to college to study philosophy,” said Bro. Daniel.

After graduating from D’Youville College with a B.A. in Philosophy, Bro. Daniel spent a year discerning his calling further at the Oblate novitiate in Godfrey, Illinois. He then returned to San Antonio to continue his studies for the priesthood at Oblate School of Theology.

Currently, Bro. Daniel is finishing up his studies and is looking forward to starting his internship later this year at a yet to be determined location.

Another step in the missionary journey to the priesthood for Bro. Daniel. †





Brother Andy Lawlor, O.M.I.

Finding His Calling As An Oblate Brother

When Bro. Andy Lawlor, O.M.I. was a young boy, he was told he wasn't smart enough to be an altar server. But Bro. Andy didn't believe that assessment, and eventually he became the person showing not only priests but also bishops and cardinals what to do at Mass.

"At the age of four I got knocked down and hit my head which caused a learning disability," said Bro. Andy. "When I said I wanted to be an altar server the priest told me I couldn't because I was unable to learn Latin. But God had better things in mind for me."

Brother Andy was born in Ireland in 1947 into a very devout Catholic family that went to church often. The young boy was fascinated by the priests. He used to dress up as one and play Mass in the back yard. As a teenager he felt he had a calling to religious life, but his learning disability, and stereotypes, got in the way.

He contacted several religious orders about joining but kept getting the same response, he just wasn't smart enough. The Jesuits did suggest that he consider life as a religious brother. He attended their formation program for two months but left because he was desperately homesick. He was told he didn't have a vocation, and Bro. Andy believed his dream of a religious life had come to an end.

Since he couldn't join a religious order, Bro. Andy did the next best thing, he started working for them. He found employment with religious communities in Ireland and also when he moved to the United States in the 1970s. He was employed by numerous orders, including the Jesuits, Sisters of Mercy, Columban Fathers and Missionhurst Fathers. After moving to Washington, D.C. he looked for a job as a cook at the various houses for Catholic orders. The Oblates had an opening for a part-time cook, and it changed Bro. Andy's life forever.

“I came to know the Oblates as men of hospitality. They were very welcoming to me when I worked for them,” said Bro. Andy. “They didn’t treat me just as an employee. They invited me to sit down and talk with them. I was part of their family.”

Two of the Oblates living in Washington, D.C., Tom Singer and Tom Cruise, became friends with Bro. Andy. They told Bro. Andy that he might be a good fit for their order, and suggested he pray about a vocation as an Oblate brother. Brother Andy didn’t have to pray long, he was ready. After decades of being rejected for religious life he joined the Oblates’ formation program. He was 47 years old.

The Oblates tailored Bro. Andy’s formation to his skills. Since he didn’t have a high school diploma, it wasn’t practical for him to take philosophy classes at the local college. Instead, Bro. Andy worked at the local Oblate parish and its school.

When he attended the Oblate novitiate, a year away to discerning a calling to religious life, Bro. Andy was treated no different than the other novices. Later he even attended classes



at Oblate School of Theology. His professors told him not to worry about the academics, explaining that the school wasn’t just for seminarians; it was for anyone who wanted to deepen their faith.

Brother Andy has served as an Oblate in a variety of ministries since taking his first vows in 1995. He worked at the Oblates’ Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Midland, Texas, a parish primarily serving the Hispanic community. Much of his recent ministries have been at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows where he helps pilgrims explore new aspects of their faith.

Brother Andy has also been active in the liturgical ministries at the Shrine. He frequently serves as an acolyte during Mass, helping the priest with various ceremonies and processions. The irony isn’t lost on Bro. Andy,

who as a boy was told he wasn’t smart enough to be at the altar.

“Often the celebrant turns to me to ask what he is supposed to do, and then I have to point him in the right direction,” said Bro. Andy with a smile on his face. †

Donor Highlight:

Dee and Jack Moynihan

For Jack Moynihan, a retired Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas, supporting the ministries of the Missionary Oblates is not only a way to help the less fortunate, it's a way to preserve the legacy of his late wife, Dee Jacques Moynihan.

From March 1963 to December 1970, working on weekends, Dee was the editor of several Oblate publications that originated from Oblate Missions, the fundraising operation of the Oblates in San Antonio, Texas. She wrote stories about Oblate ministries in San Antonio, the United States and in foreign countries. She also edited letters she received from Oblates in the missions and included those in the publications.

"Dee always loved being in contact with the Oblates in the field, working to help the poor in some of the world's most isolated places," said Jack. "She spent a lot of time working with the Oblates in the Philippines, helping them to tell their story."

Dee became acquainted with the Oblates while writing articles for the San Antonio Archdiocesan newspaper, named at that time



"The Alamo Messenger." During that time, she became friends with Fr. Cullen Deckert, O.M.I. who was starting a new fundraising program in San Antonio. Father Deckert asked if Dee could write a few articles for his publications. As the fundraising operation grew, more publications were added and Fr. Deckert turned to Dee for help.

"Father Deckert had so many duties that he turned over the editor position for the magazines to Dee," said Jack. "Dee looked upon this as a ministry and

was grateful that she was able to help raise money for the Oblates through her writing.”

Journalism was just one of Dee’s passions in life. She was passionate about her family, Jack, who she was married to for 47 years, and their two children, Blair and Dana. Dee was also passionate about her career as a teacher which spanned 39 years.

From 1955 to 1963, Dee taught English at Harlandale Junior and Senior High Schools in San Antonio. She then transferred to MacArthur High School where she taught French for 31 years. Dee retired from MacArthur as head of the Foreign Language Department in 1992. During many of her summer breaks, she would take groups of students to France for a month, where she immersed them in the French

language, culture and history.

Throughout her career, Dee



“Dee always loved being in contact with the Oblates in the field, working to help the poor in some of the world’s most isolated places.”

was honored with several prestigious awards. In 1975, she received the Order of the Academic Palms from the French government for her exemplary teaching of the French language, culture and history. She was honored by the Texas Foreign Language Association as the 1984 Texas Foreign Language Teacher of the Year at the Elementary and Secondary Level. The *San Antonio Express-News* recognized her with the 1985 Outstanding Woman of the Year award in the Career-Service category. Finally, she was honored by the North East Independent School District with

the Superintendent’s Award before her retirement.

Upon retiring Dee expanded her writing career as a freelance travel writer, authoring some 80 travel articles about places she visited in Texas, the United States, Europe and the Holy Land. These articles appeared in the *San Antonio Express-News*, the *Austin American Statesman* and the *Texas Highways* magazine.

In 2005 Dee was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. She passed away in 2013. Since that time Jack has maintained a strong relationship with the Oblates. In 2014 he took a pilgrimage led by Fr. Leo Perez, O.M.I. to Lourdes, Avila, Santiago de Compostela and Fatima.

Today, Jack attends a weekly charismatic prayer group at the Oblates’ St. Mary’s Parish. The group is coordinated by Fr. Ed Hauf, O.M.I. who Jack met when Fr. Hauf was the Spiritual Director on a pilgrimage that

Jack took in late 2013 to Italy. Jack also attends a weekly charismatic Mass every Thursday evening at Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto/Tepeyac de San Antonio.

Jack has made donations to the Oblates in memory of Dee, including gifts to improve the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. He is also a member of the Oblate Partners Club, a group of benefactors who offer prayerful and financial support to Oblate ministries.

“The Oblates were Dee’s favorite religious order, and it’s mine as well.” said Jack. “I’m happy to be a bit player with them in their ministries.” †



Oblate Crossings

Hmong Community Honors Fr. Bouchard

The Hmong Catholic Community in St. Paul, Minnesota recently honored Fr. Lucien Bouchard, O.M.I.

for his missionary work in Laos and his work with Hmong refugees and their families. Father Bouchard was a missionary for nearly 20 years in Laos before he had to flee the country after being a target of the Communist government.

The Hmong people are an ethnic minority in Laos and were persecuted, often violently, by the Communists. Six Oblates who worked in Laos were killed by the military. Father Bouchard left Laos just hours before the military came to arrest him.

Father Bouchard returned to the United States in 2005 after serving as a missionary in Borneo. At age 89, he continues to be active in ministering to Hmong communities in the United States.



Seven Oblates Ordained in Zambia

During the summer seven Oblates were ordained to the priesthood in Zambia. The 4 ½-hour ordination ceremony was filled with beautiful Zambian singing and dancing.

Five of the newly-ordained Oblates are currently ministering throughout Zambia in some of the poorest communities in the country. Father Morgan Musukuma, O.M.I. is preparing to become a missionary in Peru. Father Elvis Ngosa, O.M.I. is now ministering to pilgrims at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois.

Father Healy Honored By Veterans

Father Patrick Healy, O.M.I. recently received the Veteran of the Year Award from the Abraham Lincoln Post 11, Grand Army of the Republic. The award states: "Thank you Fr. Healy for spending your career selflessly tending to the needs of our military personnel."

Father Healy ministered as a military chaplain throughout the world, including serving during the Vietnam War. Currently, at the age of 97, he serves full time as the chaplain at the Soldier's Home in Chelsea, Massachusetts a retirement home for veterans.



Higher Gift Annuity Rates!

Good News! We are pleased to announce an increase in the rates for an Oblate Gift Annuity. The new rates are below. You will now get a higher rate of return on your charitable gift annuity, and you will be benefiting the ministries of the Missionary Oblates.

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62	4.8	67	5.3	72	5.8	77	6.6	82	7.7	87	8.7		
63	4.9	68	5.3	73	5.9	78	6.8	83	7.9	88	8.9		
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Father Ron Walker, O.M.I. left a lasting legacy for the people of Zambia. He was one of the first Missionary Oblates to arrive in the country in 1986 and for many years oversaw the formation of future Oblate priests and brothers in the country. Today, Zambia is one of the greatest sources of Oblate vocations in the world. Father Ron passed away last year at the age of 83. He is buried at the Oblate formation house in Lusaka, Zambia.