

‘Oblate Associates in the Triennium: A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission’

Archives

July, 2015 [11-15] A Charism in Context!

“Good morning, good afternoon, good evening.” With a smile, Father Fabio Chiardi OMI launched the 2015 Charism Congress, greeting Oblates, Associates and guests from around the world. His salutation acknowledged the fact that it was 7:00 am in the morning for some groups, 3:00 pm in the afternoon for others, and 10:00 pm for still others. Spanning the globe, the Charism Congress [June 30 - July 3, 2015], was truly an international experience, being broadcast live three hours a day in eight different locations throughout the world: Rome, Obra, Kinshasa, Durban, Manila, Colombo, Ciudad de Mexico and San Antonio. This Congress was unprecedented as, through the gift of technology, a truly international assembly was able to participate in a lively, inspiring and challenging conversation about the Oblate charism in today’s context.

During the morning sessions of the Congress, major papers were presented and broadcast live, internationally; there were sixteen of these. During the afternoon sessions, at each locale, local participants presented papers on a variety of topics related to Oblate life. Reactions, insights and concerns were shared. Mindful of Pope Francis’ injunction to religious congregations to, *‘remember the past with gratitude, live the present with passion and embrace the future with hope,’* Congress participants reflected on the charism with an eye to the Spirit’s invitations for the future. Over the course of the next few years, the papers will be published in *Vie Oblate Life*. It is estimated that there will be over a hundred texts to draw on, so it will take a little time to get them all out!



I am truly grateful to have been a participant of the Congress and it was a real honor to present a paper on Associates. Entitled, *“Give us a portion of your Spirit”: Oblate Associates and the Oblate Charism*, the paper was, among other things, an opportunity to share the Canadian experience of Association. Perhaps our experience will inspire others in the Oblate world! The Congress was, for me, inspiring, hope-filled and, to use a favorite word of Saint Eugene’s, edifying. Without a doubt, the Spirit has plans for the Oblates and all those who love and share their charism. In these years of the Triennium, we pray its fruits will bloom throughout the Congregation.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates
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June 16-30, 2015 [10-15] Sharing a Spirit

"I knew Blessed Eugene de Mazenod through his writings. I knew his spirituality, his charity, his love of the Church and the poor. I was wholeheartedly won over by it, so much so that today I can tell you, I feel I am a spiritual daughter of Blessed Eugene... That is what I wanted to tell you! Although a lay person, in spirit I feel, a part of your religious family. I desire to live as you do, feel as you do, serve like you, love like you and, like you, to always do the will of God" (June 11, 1980)."

In 1996, the late Father Fernand Jette OMI prepared a text to be presented at the first Congress of Lay Associates to be held in Aix-en-Provence. In precarious health, he wasn't able to attend the Congress and the talk was never delivered. Eventually however, it was published - Oblate documentation 237 – January 2001.

In his presentation, Fr. Jette used the above quote. He had received it in a letter written in 1980 by a fifty-year old woman from northern Italy. She was, for him, a model of someone who has caught Eugene's spirit. Today, we read it and we hear the heart of an Oblate Associate.

With quote in hand, Fr. Jette had asked, *"How many men and women are there in the world today who react like her and who would react even more if they knew Eugene de Mazenod better?"*

Fr. Jette's question should resonate in our hearts. Although I think he would be pleased with the development of Oblate Associates across the Congregation, the truth is that there are still many who do not know St. Eugene or his charism. It is both invitation and challenge for us: how do we make St. Eugene and his charism better known so that it might be a Spirit-inspired gift to the men and women of today's church?

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates
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June 1-15, 2015 [09-15] Taking up our Call

It's an inspired combination: Vatican II, Oblates, Associates, and Pope Francis, all with a common vision. Vatican II tells us that the church is the entire People of God and, co-responsible for mission and ministry within the Church, all the baptized are called to be evangelizers. The Oblates echo the thought in *Evangelizing the Poor at the Dawn of the New Millennium*, writing: *"The Church who evangelizes is the people of God including all its members – laity, priests and religious. It is urgent that we accord the laity their full*



responsibilities. It is equally urgent that we help form them for mission. This must be a priority. Everyone who is baptized is called to be an evangelizer"

[EPM 13]. In Oblate Association, lay men and women are called forth and empowered to take up their role as evangelizers, inspired by the Oblate

charism. Pope Francis would approve. Article 120 in *Evangelii Gaudium*, *"All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples."* Men and women taking up their role as 'missionary-disciples' in service to Christ, the Church and the world: it is the gift of Oblate Association.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates
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May 16-31, 2015 [08-15]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Announcing: The Aix-Experience: a Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of St. Eugene



Star of the North Retreat Centre is sponsoring a pilgrimage to Aix-en-Provence, April 16-26, 2016 for Oblate Associates and their friends.

'In the Footsteps of St. Eugene' will take us to the Oblate Mission Centre in Aix, to Marseilles, and to Lourdes.

Animator: Sandra Prather, HOMI.

Estimated cost: \$1,500 [excluding air fare].

Maximum Group: 30 people, first-come, first served basis.

Registration opens June 1, 2015.

Interested persons or for more information, please contact

sandramprather@gmail.com



endorsed by OMI Lacombe Canada.



submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator for OMI Lacombe Associates,
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May 1-15, 2015 [07-15]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission



It has arrived! The new **OBLATE ASSOCIATES' BROCHURE** was unveiled at Convocation and distributed to District Animators. Attractive, inviting and informative, the brochure is one resource we are happy to have as we look to 'grow' Associates in OMI Lacombe Canada.

We invite you to use the brochure in an **intentional** way. It is meant to be given out on an **individual and personal basis** to people who you think might be interested in Association.

The brochure will direct people to call the District Office where the District Secretary will take their names and forward them to the District Animators.

District Animators will follow up the requests, beginning a process whereby interested individuals will invited to explore becoming an Associate.

Each District has its own method of welcoming new people but there is a common first step: inviting the individual to attend a few BOC meetings as a Guest as a way of getting to know more about the Oblates and Associates.

Clearly, if we are going to ask people to consider Association, we must also be prepared to welcome them! Oblates and Associates, we all have a role in walking with people who are interested in St. Eugene's charism.



The District Secretaries are in the process of putting individual labels on each brochure. Once this is done, the brochure is available from either the District Secretaries or your District Animators. Please feel free to use them!

submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator for OMI Lacombe Associates, sandramprather@gmail.com].

April 1-15, 2015 [06-15]

It's an exciting time for OMI Lacombe Canada as the 'Renewing Our Life and Mission [ROLM]' process enters another phase with April's Convocation. The Convocation can be seen in many ways as a culminating moment in the Province's history to date. After all, as the **OMI Lacombe Canada Statutes** remind us, the establishment of OMI Lacombe was considered '*an opportunity for refounding both the apostolic and community life of the new Province*' [Preamble, Statutes]. Four dimensions were identified as underlying its founding: *1. a refocusing of mission towards the poor and the most abandoned; 2. a strong emphasis on local community; 3. the preparation of effective leadership at both the local and the province levels; and 4. providing for the more active presence and life of associates with the community* [Preamble, Statutes].

The ROLM process touches each of these dimensions. It invited the entire Province, including Associates, to revision mission; leadership is now working at setting up those new missions. The process focused on working extensively and collaboratively with the local districts. Procedures and processes surrounding leadership have been discussed and these will be presented at Convocation, and finally, there will be Oblate Associates of the Province from each District present and participating in the Convocation activities.

Nothing happens in isolation. The life of the members of the Province since 2003 and the work of previous leadership teams all contributed to this graced moment. For the Oblate Associates, it is a real privilege to be a part of this unfolding reality for OMI Lacombe. Convocation invites us all to take seriously the Triennium invitation of '*a new heart, a new spirit and a new mission,*' seen in concrete actions. We pray for the success of April's Convocation.



Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates [sandramprather@gmail.com].

March 16-31, 2015 [05-15]

Conversion and transformation: the themes of Lent and the invitation of the Triennium process. *“Change our hearts this time,”* we sing and, *“Put a new and constant spirit in me,”* we pray. To be formed and transformed unto Christ is, as it was for St. Eugene, our fervent hope and desire. To that end, Associates undertake a commitment to life-long formation: *“Ongoing formation in the charism of Eugene and the mission and spirituality of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the life of the Oblate community is asked of Oblate Associates.”* [OMI Lacombe Oblate Associates Policy Manual].

Such on-going formation is one of the gifts that arises from Oblate community life. The regular meetings between Oblates and Oblate Associates are a prime opportunity for sharing faith and life. As we prayerfully ponder together the Triennium Reflections, we not only learn from one another but we are challenged and inspired by each other. That we need this in our lives is one of the dimensions of poverty: we are admitting that we don't have all the answers and that there is always something to learn from another.



As our Lenten journey draws to an end this year, perhaps we might commit ourselves, as Oblates and Associates, to continue on the path of transformation by committing ourselves to our common formation.

March 1-15, 2015 [04-15]

CN 4 reminds us, *'The cross of Jesus Christ is central to our mission. Like the apostle Paul, we "preach Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2: 2).'* At the recent commitment celebrations of the Oblate Associates across the country, each Associate was given a small Oblate cross. That it was a high point of the celebrations seems clear. One Oblate Associate from Brother Anthony District, reporting on how the celebration had been truly a gift and grace for her, noted, *"Everyone's faces glowed on receiving their crosses from Brother Louie [Superior of the District]. That was perhaps the most moving and meaningful part of the celebration."*



Her sentiments were echoed by the local Superior in a neighboring District. He describes his experience: *"The ceremony went very well. What was very touching for me and those who made the commitment was when I gave them their small cross."* In receiving this uniquely Oblate symbol as a sign of their commitment, Oblate Associates can look to Cn 63: *'The Oblate cross which is received at perpetual profession is a constant reminder of the love of the Saviour who wishes to draw all hearts to himself and sends us out as his co-workers.'* While the Oblate Associate commitment is not a perpetual profession, it is a freely chosen decision to live, as Eugene did and the Oblates do, under the power of the cross, serving as witnesses to it. In this second Triennium Year, as we consider both our poverty and our need for life-long formation, may our Lenten journeys bring us to the foot of the cross, so that we might know its power and be formed by it.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates
[sandramprather@gmail.com]

February 15-28, 2015 [03-15]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

It has been an exciting month for OMI Lacombe Canada and the Oblate Associates. Across the country, Associates have made their formal commitments as Oblate Associates of the Province. February 17th was the big day for Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba as they welcomed their Associates into OMI Lacombe.



Ontario had held celebrations earlier, in September and December 2014, and in British Columbia, a group from Salt Spring Island made their commitments in mid-January, 2015. As of this writing, we don't have the final numbers of how many Provincial Associates there are but we are happy to say that every district is represented.

Our challenge now will be to continue to grow together in faith, community and service, in the Spirit of St. Eugene, with all the Oblates. We will also be looking to encourage others to consider the call to Association!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates
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February 1-14 2015 [02-15]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

I have a friend who is a potter. What always amazes me is how she is able to take ordinary lumps of clay and work them into something wonderful. Under her guiding hand, beautiful mugs, vases, bowls and dishes are brought into being. Her patience is remarkable. She works the clay, warming and softening it, shaping and reshaping it until it takes the shape she wants. Slight imperfections - an unexpected crack, a wonky side, or a misshapen handle - are patiently worked over, massaged and manipulated until they are worked in and disappear. Thus are masterpieces created!

Thus also, disciples! You will note a new logo accompanying our communiques. Regional Counsellor Father Warren Brown has sent it to us, inviting us to use it for Year Two of the Triennium. With the year's theme being life-long formation, the Scriptural references are apropos: "Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" [Isa 64:8]. Isaiah is echoed by Jeremiah: "He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel" [Jer 18:6].

And so are we. The texts, combined with Articles 45-47 of the Constitutions, invite us to see on-going formation as God being the potter and we the clay. Patiently and lovingly, God shapes and forms us for God's on-going work of creation and redemption. It happens as we allow; just as hardened clay cannot be molded, neither can hardened hearts. Our prayer this Triennium year may be to have that softened heart, open to the work of God's hand.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe
Associates [sandramprather@gmail.com]



January 2015 [01-15]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium: a New Heart, a New Spirit, a New Mission YEAR TWO

It's a new year, and not only on the calendar! With January already well under way, Oblates and Associates also enter a new year of the Triennium. From December 8, 2013 through to December 7, 2014, we've 'fanned the flame of Oblate life and mission in anticipation of the 36th General Chapter and the 200th anniversary of the Congregation.' Through reflections and sharing, we've prayed for a New Heart as we focused on Year One's themes of 'Life in Apostolic Community' and 'Vowed Life: Chastity.' We've been invited to make concrete gestures of conversion that demonstrate our deepening understanding of these realities.

Our Triennium new year began December 8, 2014 and runs until December 7, 2015. During this time, congregation-wide, Oblates and Associates will focus on 'A New Spirit: Lifelong Formation' and 'Vowed Life: Poverty.' Praying for a new spirit can be a dangerous endeavor: as the disciples found out, one never knows where Spirit will lead! To take up the invitation to on-going, lifelong formation, something we might have thought we were done with, may lead us into new places. We might find ourselves challenged to consider our poverty in a new way: economic, personal, and spiritual.



The traditional greeting for a new year is, "Happy New Year." For us, entering the new Triennium year, perhaps our greeting might be, "Have a Blessed New Year – and an unsettling one!"

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates sandramprather@gmail.com

April – November 2014, # 01-16

April 1 – 15, 2014 [01-14]

‘Oblate Associates in the Triennium: A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission’

Association takes on the spirit of the Triennium and is moving ahead in OMI Lacombe Canada! Our new Provincial Animator, Sandy Prather, is happy welcome the newly appointed District Animators from across the country. Father John Brioux, Ms. Marie Luttrell, Ms. Lucie Leduc, Father Mark Blom, Father Paul Fachel, Mr. Brad and Ms. Christine Taylor, Brother Thomas Novak, Father Roy Boucher and Mr. Ken Hart all have accepted the call to foster Association



within their districts. During the Triennium, we are invited to bring a new heart, a new spirit and a renewed mission to our ministry, our communities and our congregation. Association in OMI Lacombe Canada is an integral part of the Triennium spirit; together we can move forward!

Submitted by Sandy Prather, Provincial Animator, Oblate Associates.

April 16 – 30 [02-14]

‘Oblate Associates in the Triennium: A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission’

To foster and maintain a vital Oblate Association is one of the four founding pillars of OMI Lacombe Canada [#67]. It is an undertaking that reaches beyond our province. As Witnessing in Apostolic Community recognizes, the charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod is bigger than the Oblate Congregation and is shared with others who are drawn to it [WAC 39]. Here in Lacombe Canada, we want to engage Association with a new heart and an energizing spirit, recognizing and building mutually enriching relationships between baptized and Oblates for the purpose of mission. We might each ask ourselves, “How do I contribute to building these new forms of relationship that Association in OMI Lacombe dares us to live?”

Submitted by Sandy Prather, Provincial Animator, Oblate Associates.

May 1-15, 2014 [03-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Got the Spirit of the Triennium in your life? An excellent way to start is by using the Triennium Reflections offered by Oblate General Services in Rome. These are available two times a month from the OMI World website and they focus on particular themes. Each one combines

Scripture and various writings from Oblates sources, in a reflective way that invites faith-sharing. They are designed to be used in Oblate groups and Oblate Associates are to be part of those groups! So says Second Assistant General, Father Gilberto Pinon. In his December 8, 2013 letter to Associates worldwide, he invites the broader Mazenodian family to join their local Oblate units in participating and collaborating in the Triennium preparations. Our Provincial agrees: Fr. Ken Forster's Advent letter 2013 encourages Oblates to use the Triennium Reflections AND to include Associates in their faith-sharing where possible.



“The presence of our associates may be a catalyst to provoke a deeper sharing among us,” Father Ken writes. The Triennium is about embracing conversion: personal and communitarian conversion through the “sharing of faith” with one another. The broader our dialogue, the more open we become. Put the Spirit of the Triennium in your life - Oblates and Associates - by entering into this process of renewal!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

May 16 – 31, 2014 [04-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Please pray this week for the Oblate Gathering being held at Queen's House, May 23-25, 2014.



‘A New Heart: Animating the Animators’ is a national gathering of the District Animators for Oblate Associates for OMI Lacombe. The Associates Commission, mandated by the Provincial and Council, is hosting this gathering and it is a key step as we look to promote Association across Canada. The purpose is to explore with the animators how best to implement the Policy for Oblate Associates in their region. We will share our lived experiences of Association; explore the Associates' Policy in depth, including a discussion on the 'Identifiers'; consider how our current reality meets the vision of the Policy; access resource and formation materials; and plan for the next steps at the district level. We will pray, share and reflect together in true Oblate spirit and Oblate hospitality. Please join us in prayer support for this important meeting.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

June 1-15, 2014 [05-14]



Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Eugene's charism is alive! That was the experience of the District Animators this past weekend as they gathered at Queen's House to begin the process of implementing OMI Lacombe Canada's Policy for Association. Enthusiasm ran high as the participants, reviewing the policy in depth, could see how it can be lived in each of their districts. "It's something concrete that we can work with," one of them remarked, "We've been waiting for this." The policy, by giving us clear directions and a solid basis on which to build, is the next step in creating, celebrating and consolidating Association across the country. Over the course of the next few months, expect to see good things happen!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

June 16– 31, 2014 [06-14]



Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Years ago, the painter Vincent van Gogh wrote, "*I long so much to make beautiful things. But beautiful things require effort and disappointment and perseverance.*" As we take up the task of animating for Association within OMI Lacombe Canada, we engage in making a beautiful thing. That it will take effort and perseverance is a given; I trust there is not much disappointment! Our District Animators are starting the necessary conversations in their districts around implementation and discernment. These conversations are in view of clarifying the Provincial Identity of an Oblate Associate. The policy is clear: "*The Oblate Associate of OMI Lacombe Canada Province is a man or woman who recognizes a Spirit initiated call to the Oblate charism, based in the life of St. Eugene, to live in intentional relationship with the Province of OMI Lacombe Canada and ultimately with the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate worldwide*" [Policies for Oblate Associates, OMI Lacombe Canada, October 2013]. It's a beautiful vision; let's not be put off by the effort and perseverance required!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Canada Associates.

July 1-15, 2014 [07-14]



Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Invitation and opportunity; discernment and conversation; gift and blessing. Over the course of the next few months, we will see these happening in our districts. As described by the Core Team's letter of June 18, 2104, District Animators are starting the discernment process for associates of the province. Current district associates will be **invited** to consider their call to provincial association. It is an **opportunity** for them to consider what it means to be an Associate of OMI Lacombe Canada. **Discernment** questions and **conversations** between individual associates and animators will lead to recommendations. The various leadership levels will receive these recommendations and name individuals as Oblate Associates of OMI Lacombe Canada. It is **gift** and **blessing** as **invitation** and **opportunity, discernment** and **conversation** lead us to the reality of Oblate Associates of the OMI Lacombe.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

July 16– 31, 2014 [08-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

A few weeks ago, I began the discernment process necessary if one would like to be an Oblate Associate of OMI Lacombe Canada. I'm in good company: each district associate across the country will be invited, over the course of the next few months, to consider engaging in the same process. It was, for me, a very moving experience and a valuable one. The animators had given me a discernment tool, a series of reflections based on the basic elements of association. As I reflected on each of them, it was a real opportunity to think about Eugene's charism, why it is important to me and how well I am living it out. The subsequent conversation I had with the animators was a valuable in helping me realize, once again, how important the Oblates and their charism are in my life. It was a privilege to enter into the process and I am looking forward to the next step.



Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

August 1-14, 2014 [09-14]



Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

One of the appealing things about Eugene de Mazenod is his willingness to be daring. Whether it was establishing a youth sodality, going to the prisoners of war, or preaching in the local dialect, he would do whatever was necessary to make the Good News accessible to all. Indeed his penchant for innovation was characteristic of his life: *“Where there are new needs, we must create new means,”* he wrote as Bishop of Marseilles and he encouraged initiatives that responded to the needs of his diocese. Today, the Triennium summons us to that same creativity: we are to cultivate a **new heart** inspired by a **new spirit** so that we might discern a **new mission**. OMI Lacombe’s ‘Renewing Our Life and Mission’ plunges us into the same considerations. What new needs do we see in our own times and how do we respond creatively? What role do Associates have in the future Lacombe Canada is envisioning? If Associates are responding to a Spirit-led initiative that calls them to be sharers of the charism, cooperators in mission and companions in community, are Oblates daring enough to create new means for that to happen? Is there really a new heart and a new spirit?
Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

August 15 – August 31, 2014 [10-14]



Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Rome 2010, the 35th Chapter of the Oblates: at the front of the large conference room, a member of the Oblates and Associates’ Commission, Mr. Vincenzo Teodori, stands up to address the capitulants. He begins by summing up the findings of the three years of Commission work. *“In examining the existing forms of collaboration among the Oblates and laity across the congregation,”* he states, *“the Commission discovered a common spirit which extended across the various cultures and environments.”* The spirit that united everyone, Mr. Teodori explained, was *“. . . a request from the laity for a closer communion with the Oblates, a communion characterized by a co-responsible sharing in the mission of evangelization of the most abandoned, one which shows our complementary vocations.”* [35th Chapter, Oblates and Associates Commission Address to the Chapter.’ The Commission members went on to challenge the chapter delegates: *“Can you see the laity as partners with whom together you face the challenges of evangelization in different cultures, and with whom you find the most effective solutions?”* New needs, new means: Associates as carriers of the charism and cooperators in mission. What does that look like? In OMI Lacombe Canada, as we renew our life and mission, perhaps together we will discover that.
Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

September 1-14, 2014 [11-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

As we move into the reality of having provincial associates, it's worth noting that Association is for the purpose of mission. Like the vowed Oblates, Associates feel called to service with an Oblate heart. To be involved in service one of the commitments Associates make. That doesn't presume or imply a direct link to an already established Oblate work, however. Associates live out their call to service in their own milieu and as they are called. As such, Associate ministries are diverse and rich. Oblate Associates can be found working in diocesan offices, schools, retreat centres and prisons. They might be catechists, social workers, business people, or care givers. They visit the sick and the elderly, help with their local food bank or St. Vincent de Paul and offer prayer ministry and support. Wherever they go, they take the Oblate charism with them.



Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

Sept 16-30 [12-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

Leave nothing undared!" OMI Lacombe Canada begins their district meetings this month. During September and October members of each of the districts will gather to engage the next step of the Renewing Our Life and Mission [ROLM] process, that of creating possible scenarios for future ministries for the province. Associates will be there too, alongside the vowed Oblates, prayerfully considering with them the needs of the Canadian church and society, and how OMI Lacombe Canada might best respond. The invitation and hope is for a renewal of both Oblate life and Oblate mission. As Association grows, we recognize increasingly that we are on a group journey and we commit ourselves to a future together.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

October 1-15, 2014 [13-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, a New Spirit, a New Mission



We have a couple of things to share this week. First is to note that as Summer gives way to Fall, OMI Lacombe is holding 'Renewing Our Life and Mission' District meetings across the country. A sure sign of the times is that Associates are participating in the discussions in all five of the districts. We pray that the meetings are fruitful and life-giving for everyone!

Second, we've a change with our District Animators. Father Paul Fchet, OMI has found it necessary to step down from his role as the Oblate District Animator for Association for Saskatchewan. Fr. Paul's commitment and enthusiasm for association is very much appreciated and we are grateful for his contribution. We wish Fr. Paul the best as he moves forward. We will not be leaving Saskatchewan orphaned however. District Associate Animators Christine and Brad Taylor are now joined by Father Bill Stang, OMI who has accepted to 'step into' Fr. Paul's shoes as the new Oblate Animator. Thanks, Fr. Bill, for your 'Yes!'; we wish you all the best in your new role!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates

October 16-31, 2014 [14-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, a New Spirit, a New Mission



This month, we are happy to welcome formally the first group of Oblate Associates of OMI Lacombe. Eleanor Rabnett, Erin Ryan, Ken Mansfield, David Morgan and Suzanne Massie made their formal commitments at Queen of Apostles Retreat Centre on Thursday, October 2, 2014 before the assembled Ontario District Community and Core Team. It's great to see the process of bringing former District Associates into Provincial Associates working. Progress is definitely being made! Some of the other districts are looking at December 8, 2104 as their date to hold the formal commitments, so as the months unfold, we will be welcoming more Associates into Lacombe!

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates



November 1 - 14, 2014 [15-14]

Oblate Associates in the Triennium:
A New Heart, A New Spirit, A New Mission

The meetings are over; it's time to take a deep breath and see where we are. In the space of the last six weeks across Canada, each district of the districts has held their Fall meeting. Over the course of four days, we've met, sharing life and faith and working at the 'Renewing Our Life and Mission' [ROLM] process. Inspired by the spirit of the Founder, we've considered how compassion leads to commotion. Looking to Scripture, our founding documents and the signs of our times, we created and proposed scenarios for the Leadership Team to consider as they make decisions regarding future ministries for OMI Lacombe Canada. By the accounts of the participants, the week was sometimes confusing and tiring but more often, it was exciting, inspiring and hopeful. Tapping into an energy and a hope we did not know we had, we encouraged one another, recognized the riches present in this province, and the willingness of the members to offer themselves creatively and freely to mission. Associates and Oblates experienced a true time of gift and grace. As we hand the results of the meetings over to the Task Force and the Leadership team, we pray that the Spirit continues to be present, guiding the process and the work.

Submitted by Sandra Prather, Provincial Animator, OMI Lacombe Associates



November 15 – November 30, 2014 [16-14]

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Formation, both initial and on-going, is essential for both Oblates and Associates and, fortunately, there are several excellent resources available on-line for anyone wanting to learn more about St. Eugene and the Oblates. One plunges us immediately into Eugene's world while the other invites us into reflection on the charism and the way we are living it today.

The first resource, Oblate Frank Santucci's daily blog, "Eugene de Mazenod Speaks to Us," offers excerpts from Eugene's diaries and letters. Organized around various themes, they give us de Mazenod's actual voice and we encounter a man who is passionate, strong and faith-filled. Following the blogs daily, we see how Eugene responded in Spirit-filled ways to the

various events in his life, in the church and with the people in his life, especially his family and confreres.

Frank's blog is an excellent way to come to know Eugene de Mazenod. To access the site, go to <http://www.eugenedemazenod.net/> or simply type in 'Eugene de Mazenod Speaks to Us.' That gets you to the site and you can sign up for a daily email delivered directly to your inbox.

The second resource is the Triennium Faith Reflections being issued by General Services in Rome. As I write this, Faith Sharing Encounter # 19 is the latest one available on the OMI World site. Suitable for individual or group use, the reflections follow the Triennium themes, so this past year they have been about community. Each contains prayers, Scriptures, writings from Oblate sources and questions for reflection. Thought-provoking and inspiring, the reflections are valuable for the light they shed on our Oblate tradition and the challenge they invite us to today.

Accessing the reflections is easy: go to the OMI world site and click on the Triennium Logo. The Faith Reflections available to date come up and can be downloaded in PDF or Word.

On-going formation in the Oblate charism is not onerous or time-consuming. A few minutes each day spent reading Fr. Frank's blog; a prayerful reading and sharing on an Oblate Triennium theme once a month: these will lead gently into an in-depth encounter with the charism we love and share. What are you waiting for?

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