



FREE

Please Take One

# Oblate Connections

Oblate Connections – No.29, 8th December, 2015

The 8th of December marks the official beginning of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Oblate Congregation. I doubt that when St. Eugene and his first companions gathered they had little idea that two hundred years later people in over 60 countries around the world would be remembering their commitment to share the Good News of the Gospel to those on the margins of Church and society.

This issue of Oblate Connections contains many expressions of how that mission has been lived here at home and throughout the world. In London we have marked the 150th celebrations of Tower Hill and Kilburn parishes. In Dublin we have recalled the mission of Belcamp College and the on-going work of the Oblate Lourdes Pilgrimage. In Wales we have celebrated the commitment of the first group of the Friends of St. Eugene on Anglesey. From the cold of the Arctic to the warmth of South Africa we recall the huge contributions made by Oblates who have lived the vision of St. Eugene.

Yet in the midst of these celebrations, as this issue of Oblate Connections goes to print, I am very aware of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Mali and the on-going war in Syria. Two days after the terrorist

attack in Paris, Cardinal Vingt-Trois celebrated a special Mass in memory of the victims in Notre Dame Cathedral. The Cardinal told the assembly, "The savage killings this black Friday plunged entire families into despair, and this despair is all the more profound because there can be no rational explanation that would justify the indiscriminate execution of dozens of anonymous people... The only Christian response is to be messengers of hope in the heart of human suffering." The terrorists succeed if their actions shake Christians' hope founded on faith in Christ and on a belief that all of history, including moments of suffering, is in God's hands, he said. The appropriate response to the "barbaric savagery" of the terrorists is "to demonstrate additional trust in our fellowmen and their dignity."

This year as we light our Advent candles maybe we can remember those who have lost so much. Maybe their lighting will also be a reminder for us that darkness will never prevail and that we have a hope that in the words of Ron Rolheiser is founded on "the deepest reality of all is that God exists, that the centre holds, that there's ultimately a gracious Lord who rules this universe, and this Lord is powerful enough to rearrange the atoms of the planet and raise dead bodies to new life."

- Fr. Lorcán O'Reilly OMI

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<a href="#">Lighting a Candle</a>	2
<a href="#">Tower Hill 150th Celebrations</a>	3
<a href="#">Oblate Receives Nunavut's Highest Honour</a>	4
<a href="#">200 Years Through The Eyes of Our Saviour</a>	6
<a href="#">Denis Hurley Centre</a>	8
<a href="#">Belcamp College Reunion</a>	10
<a href="#">The Friends of St. Eugene - Service of Commitment</a>	12
<a href="#">International Mass – West Kilburn, London</a>	13
<a href="#">Lourdes Concert</a>	14
<a href="#">WYD and Rome Pilgrimage</a>	16



# To Light a Candle is an Act of Hope

- Fr Ron Rolheiser, OMI

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

They had reason to be! Lit candles, more than firearms, overthrew apartheid. Hope, not guns, is what ultimately transforms things. To light a candle as an act of hope is to say to yourself and to others that, despite anything that might be happening in the world, you are still nursing a vision of peace and unity based upon something beyond the present state of things and this hope is based upon deeper realities and powers than the world admits. To light a candle is to state publicly that you believe that what's real and what isn't is ultimately determined by powers and issues that go beyond what's seen on the evening news. To light a candle is an act of political defiance. It's also an act of hope.

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

There's a story told about Pierre Teilhard de Chardin that helps illustrate this. Teilhard wasn't much given to wishful thinking or even to an optimistic temperament, but tended rather towards a lonely realism. Yet he was a man of real hope. For example, on one occasion, after giving a conference within which he laid out an historical vision of unity and peace for the world that paralleled the vision of scripture, he was challenged by some colleagues to this effect: "That's a wonderful, idealistic vision of things, but suppose we blow-up the world with a nuclear bomb, what

happens to your vision then?" "That would set things back some millions of years," he replied, "but this will still come to fruition, not because I say so or because the facts right now indicate that it will, but because God promised it and in the resurrection of Jesus has shown that He is powerful enough to deliver on that promise."

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

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

We light advent candles with just that in mind, accepting that changing the wind is a long process, that the evening news will not always be positive, the stock markets will not always rise, the most sophisticated defenses in the world will not always protect us from terrorism, and secular liberal and conservative ideologies will not rid this planet of selfishness. But we continue to light candles and hope anyway, not on the basis of a worsening or improving evening newscast, but because the deepest reality of all is that God exists, that the centre holds, that there's ultimately a gracious Lord who rules this universe, and this Lord is powerful enough to rearrange the atoms of the planet and raise dead bodies to new life. We light candles of hope because God, who is more real than anything else, has promised to establish a kingdom of love and peace on this earth and is gracious, forgiving, and powerful enough to do it.



# *150th Anniversary Celebrations at English Martyrs, Tower Hill London*

The year 2015 is a special period of time in the history of English Martyrs Parish, Tower Hill. This year we have been celebrating the 150th anniversary since the foundation of English Martyrs Parish. On the 6th February 1865 the area of Tower Hill, London, then known as Rosemary Lane, was confided to the pastoral care of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The mission was entrusted to Fr. Robert Cooke O.M.I., who was the Provincial at the time, by Edward Hearn, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Westminster on behalf of Cardinal Wiseman.

The celebration of 150 years was inaugurated on 22nd February with the 11 am Mass by the Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Fr. Louis Lougen who travelled to London from Rome. This Mass was celebrated with the 'Friends of St. Eugene' – a Lay Association of the OMIs of the Anglo Irish Province – who came from various parts of England. After the Mass Fr. Louis led an afternoon of reflection with the Friends of St. Eugene.

There was another homely celebration organised by the Parish Pastoral Council on 21st June with a Mass of Thanksgiving. It was attended mostly by our parishioners together with the English Martyrs School and a few invited guests, especially some Religious Sisters. After the Mass, the congregation moved to the school grounds for a picnic to celebrate the event.

To mark this special year in the life of our Faith Community, the closing of the celebrations took place on the 1st November with the Bishop in charge of our area – Tower Hamlets. The Auxiliary Bishop Nicholas Hudson of the Diocese presided at this Thanksgiving Mass while the English Martyrs School children led the singing. Bishop Hudson also thanked all the Oblates who gave of themselves for this particular mission here in Tower Hill from 1860s onwards. He said "Today we salute them and thank God for the graces he worked through them. Pride of place must go to your founding Father, Fr. Robert Cooke, to whom you have a fine memorial towards the back of the church". He also reminded us that: "On this day, we recall with affection another Saintly person who was also part of your earliest days, Mother Magdalene Taylor, Founder of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God. When the Oblates moved to Prescot Street, she and three sisters moved into a small house in Chamber Street. She was declared Venerable only last year; and is likely too to be canonised in due course".

After the celebration of Mass Bishop Hudson joined the parishioners for refreshments and a friendly chat with them.

- Fr. Francis Daniel OMI



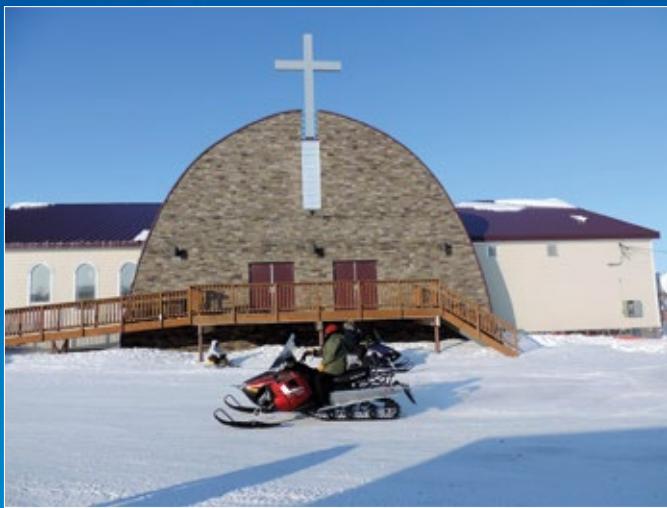
# Oblate Receives Nunavut's Highest Honour

Nunavut is the largest, northernmost, newest, and least populous territory of Canada. It was separated officially from the Northwest Territories on April 1, 1999... The creation of Nunavut resulted in the first major change to Canada's political map since the incorporation of the new province of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1949. In September 2015, the Advisory Council of Nunavut named 95 year old Father Robert LECHAT to the high honor of the Order of Nunavut for his many years of service in the Far North of Canada.

Years of service, hard work, dedication, struggle and blessings make a tremendous life of a person one beautiful gift to others. Would it be 30, or 40, perhaps even 50 years of loving compassion and fight for rights, respect, culture and most of all for salvation of God's children – for Father Robert Lechat OMI it was never a question of "How long" but a question "who next can I give to my everything to." He lived his life to the full, he served completely and he sacrificed all asking for nothing in return. Traveling in storms, blizzards, in hunger, always to be for others and to give his best. Storms for him were never too severe, his long travel never too long, his help needed never too late, his response always on time. They call him Ataata Lisa – man who has only good things to say about others. He lived in the dark, cold Arctic for 50 years, never complaining and never tired.

Fr. Robert dedicated his life in the Diocese to two communities Igloolik and Hall Beach-Sanerajak. Sacramental, prayer books, liturgical and sacrament study programs, Scripture translation and documents of the church, very intensive study programs for our leadership sessions - it was mainly all of his work. He dedicated all to the people of the Northern part of Canadian Arctic. Speaking the language he reached everyone at every age and was respected by all.





There are few who had been given the most precious and most important Order in Canada – “Order of Nunavut”. This year his name was selected and he once again made the journey to Iqaluit, the Capital of Nunavut. Ninety five years old, strong and determined, walking with the aid of one cane from the aircraft, straight and firm, smiling but humble Fr. Robert entered Iqaluit airport and was greeted by representatives of Nunavut Legislature and by Bishop Anthony Krotki and Fr. Daniel Perreault. At the celebration Inuit from Igloolik and Hall Beach were present and many from Iqaluit who personally knew Fr. Robert from years before.

The Order of Nunavut, the highest Order in Canada, was given to Fr. Robert by the Commissioner of Nunavut. Beautiful introductions were made by the Honourable George Qulaut, son of our late spiritual leader of Igloolik, Pacome Qulaut, and were followed by the choir singing “O Canada”. After receiving the Order Fr. Robert made a speech in Inuktitut and the closing ceremony was on the way. A short reception with native food brought even greater smiles on the already happy faces.

A Report from the Diocese of Churchill - Hudson Bay

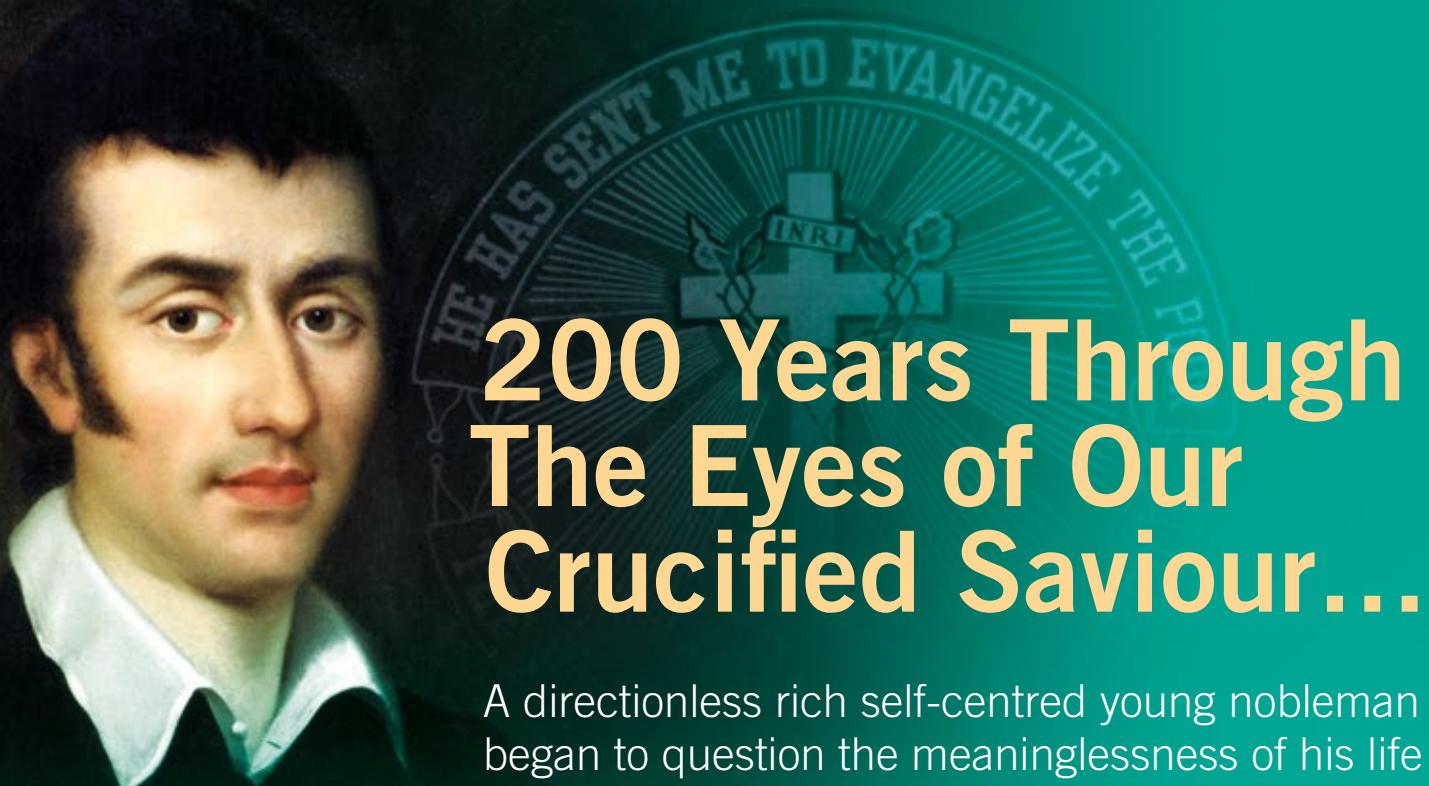
Is God calling you to be an...  
**Oblate?**



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

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# 200 Years Through The Eyes of Our Crucified Saviour...

A directionless rich self-centred young nobleman began to question the meaninglessness of his life and to search for a happiness that eluded him.

At around the age of 25 he experienced a moment of intuition that changed his life. One Good Friday, in the presence of the Cross he became aware that it was Jesus Christ the Saviour who was looking at him in love. Eugene de Mazzinod was able to find in this loving look his source of permanent happiness. Impelled by this realisation, his life became outward looking and he began to see others through the eyes of the Saviour. They were as lost as he had been, and he was driven into action to bring them into the same experience that had captivated him. He dedicated himself to bringing the Good News of salvation to those who were poor and abandoned because they had no one to lead them to an understanding of God's love for them.

Two hundred years ago, on 25 January 1816, he invited others to join him in his adventure as Missionaries. Initially working in the south of France, in 1841 they were called to bring their message to Britain and Ireland and further afield to Canada – and eventually, to some 67 countries of the world. We give thanks that in receiving Eugene's message, they in turn became missionaries and in the vast majority of those countries the Anglo-Irish Oblates and their co-operators have been present!

Two hundred years later we pause to marvel at what God has done through the Oblate missionaries and all who participate in this adventure as partners and associates. It is a moment of giving thanks for those who have been bringers of the Gospel and the sacraments. If we focus only on the missionaries, however, we miss the point of our jubilee: to give thanks for all whose lives have been touched by this missionary zeal.

What a history we have to be grateful for! It is God's history that is reflected through the smiles and serenity of the suffering who have been taken to Lourdes each year. It is reflected through the lives of young people who, like the young Eugene, have found a meaning and direction. It shines in courageous people who have made mistakes in their lives and then have found the possibility of a new beginning. It echoes in the faith of countless people who have come to know the loving embrace of Jesus as Saviour in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies. How many families have praised God because they received an Oblate welcome when tragedy drove them away from their homes and country as they were desperately searching for the possibility of a normal life.

Impressive is the map of the spread of the Anglo-Irish Oblate missionaries around the world: Africa, Asia, Australia, South and North America. Everywhere incalculable numbers of people have come to know the Gospel for the first time and have been nurtured in their life of faith – and often in their material necessities too. I am personally indebted to these men who came to South Africa and started the parishes where I was born and grew up. It was the Anglo-Irish Oblates who directly taught me to know Jesus in Johannesburg – and who trained generations of South African Oblates. It was these courageous missionaries who paved the way in serving those whom society cast aside. Wherever there was suffering, we could be sure that the Oblates were present with the comfort of the Saviour!

How much we have to give thanks for in our 200-year history – how many people join in our magnificat of

praise in Brazil, Indonesia, Australia, and every other country where these missionaries have been! And how richly have the Oblates themselves been evangelised and enriched by the very people they served.

As we look back on two centuries of existence, however, we are also aware of how many mistakes we have made, how many people we have hurt by what we have done or what we have failed to do, how many opportunities we have missed, how many regrets we have... Only the loving look of Jesus the Crucified Saviour can bring healing and forgiveness and teach us not to repeat our failures.

It is also to the Saviour's Cross that we bring our sadness at the ageing of our missionaries and the decreasing numbers of vocations. It is the look of the Saviour, however, who lovingly reminds us that the vision and mission of St Eugene is alive and continues to touch people through his associates, Friends of St Eugene and partners. Just as the people of Britain and Ireland welcomed the Oblate ministry in 1841 and they, in turn, became missionaries – so too, today, those who received have become missionaries in their homes, in their families, parishes, places of work... The missionary process continues in new and different ways.

January 25 invites us to pause and reflect, and the only possible place is at the foot of the Cross. Just as Eugene was embraced by the loving look of God , so too may we continue to allow ourselves to be looked at and renewed – and in this way continue the 200 year-old adventure started by Eugene as it is expressed in our Rule of Life:

"The cross of Jesus Christ is central to our mission. Like the apostle Paul, we "preach Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2: 2). If we bear in our body the death of Jesus, it is with the hope that the life of Jesus, too, may be seen in our body (cf. 2 Cor 4:10). Through the eyes of our crucified Saviour we see the world which he redeemed with his blood, desiring that those in whom he continues to suffer will know also the power of his resurrection (cf. Phil 3: 10)." Constitution 4

- Fr. Frank Santucci, OMI



## Missionary Visit To The Oblate Mission, Zimbabwe

### June - July 2016\*

Join our month long annual missionary experience to Zimbabwe. Work in the Sandra Jones Children's Village and experience the Oblate Mission and life in the Zimbabwean bush. Places are very limited. Applicants must be 18 or older. \*Dates TBC

**For an application form, or more information please contact:**

Ronan Lavery, Oblate Partners in Mission Office,  
Denis Hurley House, 14 Quex Road, London, NW6 4PL.  
Ph: +44 (0) 20 76247296  
E-Mail: lavery.ronan@googlemail.com



# Denis Hurley Centre

Provident and wise Creator, As your mighty plan unfurled,  
You made us to share your labour, In the building  
of the world...

With these words – written by Archbishop Hurley himself to the tune of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' – the centenary celebrations for this great Oblate and renowned Son of Africa came to a resounding end. Denis Hurley – for 45 years Archbishop of Durban and the 'scourge of Apartheid' – was born on 9 November 1915 and so it was fitting to mark 100 years since his birth with a whole weekend of events. And his heritage as an Oblate – Hurley was a member of the OMI's for over 70 years – was a key element in the celebrations.

Archbishop Hurley stands out as a towering figure – literally, he was 6'3" – in the Church in South Africa and 11 years after his death he continues to be an influential force. This is partly because of his pioneering role in fighting for justice and being a voice for the voiceless, in his time in the Struggle against Apartheid. Pope Francis recognised this in a personal message sent for the Centenary. His current challenge to us all to be a Church for the Poor is one that Hurley epitomised in his own life and ministry, both at the political level, campaigning for those suffering injustice, but also at the personal and pastoral level. As a bishop and in his retirement years, he always had time for the most marginalised.

That is why the enduring gift to him for his 100th birthday was the official opening of the Denis Hurley Centre, a welcoming place in the heart of Durban where the unemployed, homeless, refugees, drug users and the sick find practical help and support.

The nearly £2 million needed to build the centre came in part from collections through the Denis Hurley Association in the UK and the Oblate Parish at Sacred Heart Church, Quex Road, London. Their contribution, and that of many other overseas and



Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, Hon Senzo Mchunu cutting the ribbon with Mr Paddy Kearney (Chair of the Denis Hurley Centre Trust) and Cardinal Wilfrid Napier.

South African donors, was acknowledged by Cardinal Wilfrid Napier, current Archbishop of Durban, during the opening blessing. Also recognised was the significant contribution by the Irish Government (the Ambassador was present) and by the South African government (the Premier of the Province, the Mayor of the City and a senior cabinet minister all had a role in the centenary celebrations).



Cutting the 100th birthday cake:  
Sr Marion Millane HF and the Irish Ambassador, Liam MacGabhann



Jeremy Hurley places a garland on the statue of his late uncle Archbishop Denis, which has been handed to him in the Hindu tradition by Ela Gandhi (grand-daughter of the Mahatma).



**Above:** Religious leaders blessing the staff and volunteers at the Denis Hurley Centre: The group includes representatives from the Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Methodist, Anglican and Catholic communities (including Fr Paul de Cock OMI from Cedara – front row second from right).

**Top Right:** Gathering for the opening of the Denis Hurley Centre (l to r): Bishop Barry Wood OMI, Sr Marie-Henry Keane OP (from the UK-based Denis Hurley Association), Bishop Mike Vorster (Methodist Bishop) and Hon Senzo Mchunu, Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The Hurley Centenary was not just for Catholics but for the whole of South African society and this was evidenced by the extensive coverage in the Durban papers (3 front page stories!), a feature on the national nightly TV news, and the many articles reflecting on what Hurley meant for South Africa today. If pride can be allowed, all Catholics and especially the Oblate family, had a reason to feel proud of the association with Hurley.

The weekend began with a lecture given by Monsignor Paul Nadal, Hurley's Vicar General. He reflected especially on the years after the Second Vatican Council at which Hurley had himself been an influential figure. Mgr Nadal – a keen cyclist, walker and runner who in his 70s and 80s has raised tens of thousands of pounds for the Denis Hurley Centre – pointed out that Hurley was not just a visionary but a strategist who made sure the vision of the Council was implemented in practice. The key role of lay people in building and running the Denis Hurley Centre is evidence that this continues today.

Hurley's commitment to ecumenism and to inter-faith relations was recognised in a book launch and a workshop led in part by theologians from St Joseph's Cedara, the Oblate training college near Durban. The fact that Christian and Muslim volunteers are working side by side at the Centre to feed the homeless was seen as an example to the world of how faith can bring people together rather than setting them in conflict with one another. Cedara was also present in force when 30 Oblate students from across Africa joined the Provincial, Fr Vusi Mazibuko OMI, and Oblate fathers young and old at a special Mass at the Cathedral. Barry Wood OMI, the auxiliary bishop



Fr John Paterson OMI with Cardinal Napier

of Durban, presided at another of the Masses and other bishops, Anglican and Methodist bishops, and heads of male and female religious congregations all played a role in various events. At the official opening all the religious leaders – Christian and non-Christian – stood together to give a silent blessing to the staff and volunteers who work at the Denis Hurley Centre.

The events culminated in a grand orchestral concert with a 50-strong orchestra, choirs of 80 singers, Tibetan and Zulu drummers, and renowned local soloists in a programme that brought together music from the world's major religions. Hearing the Muslim call to prayer inside the Cathedral or the haunting oboe melody from 'The Mission' touched the hearts of all present. In honour of the Oblate devotion to Our Lady, a special violin and harp arrangement of 'Ave Maria' also featured.

The final word on the centenary should go to Fr John Patterson OMI who at 92 is a near contemporary of Hurley. With tears in his eyes, he said that Hurley's life was all about love and helping other people to love; he felt the Centenary had helped us to do just that.

– Raymond Perrier

*More photographs of the Centenary Events can be found at [www.denis hurley centre.org](http://www.denis hurley centre.org) or on the Facebook page 'Denis Hurley Centre'.*

*An interview with the Director of the Centre is on the Vatican Radio podcasts:*



# Belcamp College Reunion

*Belcamp House was built in the 1765 for Sir Edward Newenham MP and featured an Oval Room, modelled on the Oval office in the White House – both the work of architect James Hoban. Newenham was an ardent supporter of the Republicans in the US – he even had a miniature castle erected to the memory of George Washington in the back garden. It was taken over as a boys' boarding school by the Oblates in 1893 with various extensions being added down through the years. Due to falling numbers however, Belcamp College finally closed its doors in 2004 and both building and farmland attached were sold. Lying idle the building was vandalized on numerous occasions culminating in fires in the original mansion in March 2011 and the college buildings some days later. At the moment the plan is to turn the ruin into an apartment complex and to restore the mansion to its original glory.*

On the 24th of June 1965, this writer and a number of his classmates sat the final exam of their Leaving Cert at Belcamp College, Dublin. Afterwards, having said goodbye to the late Fr. Connellan, we walked, suitcase in hand, the few hundred yards to catch the 42 bus into Eden Quay and out into the world. It had been a glorious year with the Belcamp Senior football team led by John McGee winning the Leinster Championship for the first time and missing out rather unluckily by the slimmest of margins to St Columb's,

Derry, in an All Ireland final replay. The 1967 team reached the All Ireland semi-final only to be beaten by St. Colman's, Newry. Then the Joe Brady-led 1968 team won thro' again to the All Ireland final only to be beaten by Colaiste Chriost Ri, Cork. Most of the members of these teams and classes of the mid 1960s had never met one another since – something which prompted this writer with the help of Aidan Carolan to organise a reunion of past pupils of this era.

After 18 months of planning past pupils started to arrive in Inchicore from as far away as Toronto and California on the afternoon of Sept 12th last. Familiar heads, some with less hair than before, some with somewhat larger figures, and some who never changed a bit, started to appear and made their way to the welcoming reception kindly provided by the Oblates. All attending wore a name badge and soon the talk was mighty and the chatter and laughs started to fill the building - it looked as if we never left the place! We were delighted to meet the Oblate Provincial, Fr. Warren, some of our former Oblate teachers, Frs. Tom Scully, Paul Byrne and Vincent Mulligan and several of the community at Inchicore.

Then it was time for Mass celebrated by our classmate Mick O Connor OMI, Kilburn, with Bernadette Kennedy leading a hastily formed choir. We remembered our deceased teachers and our classmates from that time, Tony Carew, Brendan O Reilly,

John Sproule, John Kehoe, Eddy Kenny, Neil Boyle, Ciaran Earley OMI, Denis Cormican OMI, Anthony McDonagh, Pat Clarke, Donie Riney, Terry Kelly, Billy Flynn, John Dillon, Brendan & Paddy O'Donnell, Seamus & Joe McAllister, Seamus Cullen, Pat Mahon, Noel Crinigan, Peter Coffey, Fr. Michael Finnegan, Raymond O'Hagan, Peter & Patsy Magee and Liam Carolan. Prayers were offered for the ill Mick Long, fullback on the '65 team and who unfortunately has since died.

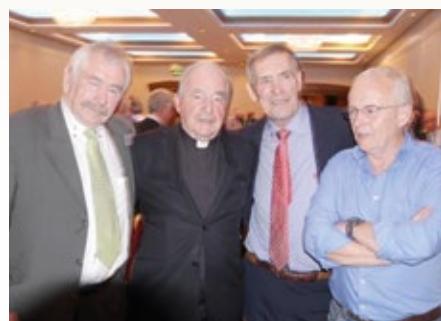
Fr. Mick in his droll fashion reminded us that it was the carbolic soap and the lack of showers (one per term) that many of us still have good heads of hair, the days when the footballers got raw eggs, while those who volunteered to pick potatoes on the farm had the luxury of chips for their tea. Fr. Tom McCabe OMI then put on a presentation of old photographs and some videos including a recent one on the Belcamp ruin – the devastation of the building we all knew so well of old was quite a shock.

After this we adjourned to dine in the nearby Red Cow Hotel where we were joined by a number of guest Oblates and by Brigeen O'Reilly, widow of Brendan and Nial Carew, son of Tony, both members of the 1965 team. Captains John McGee and Joe Brady spoke on

behalf on their teams while Fr. Scully regaled us about his visit to South Africa many years ago. Helped by Willie Quinn's singing, the socialising continued into the small hours. Some days later we had the happy task of handing over a €1000 cheque – the proceeds from the reunion, to Fr. Paul Byrne OMI for the Oblate Mission fund.

The spirit and enthusiasm of the reunion together with the ghosts of Newenham, Hoban and Washington will most certainly ensure that the memory of the Belcamp glory days of the 1960s will live on for many years to come.

– Luke Baxter





# The Friends of St Eugene Ffrindiau Sant Eugene Service of Commitment

Prayer-Friendship-Support-Service to the Community

11 am Mass on Sunday October 11th was a unique occasion in St Mary's Church in Holyhead. It was during this Mass that eight parishioners made their commitment as Friends of St Eugene. (Six others will make their commitment later in the year.) Provincial of the Anglo-Irish Province, Fr Ray Warren OMI, and Fr Lorcan O'Reilly OMI, Director of Partners in Mission, were the presiders. Refreshments were served in the parish hall after the Mass to a large gathering of parishioners.

The FoSe have been meeting monthly for the past year and have deepened their knowledge and personal commitment to the charism of St Eugene through the Impassioned for Christ programme. They have responded to the call wholeheartedly to live out the charism of St Eugene in their daily lives through prayer, friendship, support and service to the community. In addition to the monthly meeting the Friends have carried out their individual ministries in the parish and also been of service to the community through a variety activities during the year.

– Veronica Conlan



## Subscription to the Oblate Pools. A Christmas Gift to Support the Oblate Missions

### Weekly prizes of €300 and €150

The cost of an annual is €30/£25 and each subscription purchases a weekly entry to into the Pools. To purchase an annual subscription please email Barbara Hogan at: mamioblaze@eircom.net or write to the Mission Office, House of Retreat, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Ireland.

**All proceeds from the Oblate Pools is used to support the work of the Oblate Mission throughout the world.**





# International Mass

– West Kilburn, London

**Sunday 18th of October in our parish was a great day of festivity, celebration and community. After months of planning and preparation by many people taking on different areas of responsibility, we finally celebrated our Parish International Mass with Bishop Nicholas Hudson.**

Our parish is very multicultural and made up from people representing all the continents. The preparation for the liturgy included music and prayers in as many languages and dialects as possible. Bishop Hudson even managed a few words of welcome in French and Italian! The church and hall were decorated with national flags and bunting made from an old atlas. There was wonderful array of food and drink which each group and nationality prepared and shared with everyone.

The Mass began with a very colourful procession led by our youngest parishioners, each of whom carried a flag to represent all the countries and nationalities that are in our parish. The children, who are preparing for their Holy Communion, greeted the bishop in great style and with wonderful confidence, again in many different languages.

The offertory procession was led by members of the African and Caribbean communities though song and dance. Our confirmation candidates brought forward the bread and wine as well as many other gifts and food. This was a very energetic and lively part of our celebration.

This was a day when we could really see the diverse makeup of our parish community which has gone through many changes over the years.

West Kilburn was once a mainly Irish parish community, and we greatly acknowledge the contribution these wonderful people made and are still making to our parish and neighbourhood. Today our neighbourhood and parish community is made up of many different nationalities, and they are making their contribution and adding their voice to our liturgies, parish community, parish council, liturgy group, catechesis with our younger parishioners and in many other parts of parish and community life.

It is on such a day when we gather together through celebrating liturgy, singing, dancing and the sharing of food, that we can visibly see the Body of Christ. Each of us, regardless who we are or our country of origin, belong here now, we are making a valuable contribution to our parish and have made West Kilburn our home. As St. Paul reminds us in Corinthians 12.27, ‘Together you are the Body of Christ; but each of you is a different part.’

Through the celebration of this international Mass, we were given a very dynamic and active experience of the diversity of cultures that make up our parish. Our hope is that we can continue to build on this very special experience, and as our opening hymn said we will continue to be a parish where all are welcome.  
- Michael Moore OMI

# *Concert In Aid of the Oblate Lourdes Pilgrimage Invalid Fund*



Last year when we returned from Lourdes and raising funds became an issue, it was suggested that we have a concert to raise the necessary funds. Lots of discussion took place around who we could ask to volunteer their time and expertise to make the night a success. After the Garda Band graciously agreed to take part we then proceeded to ask the Tusla Choir and the C.I.E. Male Voice Choir, who were all very supportive and agreed to partake. We then had to organise a venue and the night. When we first suggested that the church would be an awesome setting, we hesitated but then agreed "why not".

Then came the night of the 5th November. It was a great and memorable night. The fundraiser for the Oblate Pilgrimage fund was a resounding success. The lovely church in Inchicore was filled with music and song, and even more importantly filled with people who all joined in a most enjoyable night in a beautiful setting.

When we first mooted this fundraiser last year we were entering into the unknown. After much organising and in trepidation at times, the big night arrived. When we arrived at 4p.m. to check that all was in order I went into the church which was in complete darkness. The smell of the beautiful floral arrangements filled the church and the silence and peace reminded me of the quiet time at the Grotto in Lourdes. We then went over to the Oblate House. The hustle and chatter, laughter and fun that was heard was coming from Marion O'Hara and her team who were busy getting tables ready and making the sandwiches for all our performers. Back in the church Miriam and Val were setting up the table with all the beautiful hampers for the raffle, and Nora and Geraldine were setting up their table at the entrance to sell the tickets.

All of a sudden we were surrounded by men in blue (The Garda Band) who were busy taking in their equipment for the performance. The CIE Choir and Tusla Choir arrived in good time they all went over to the House for refreshments and the chat. The craic was amazing as they all mingled together.

Members of the Oblate Youth Service arrived and they took command of selling the tickets for the raffle. They did this very successfully with good humour and a smile and a welcome for all their Lourdes friends who were equally delighted to see them.

Aidan and Phil were outside taking care of the car parking. It was chilly but that did not deter their enthusiasm in welcoming all the crowds attending. As people arrived all you could see was people laughing, chatting, hugging one another all delighted to be meeting up again. The atmosphere was electric. Many of our Friends who come to Lourdes with us travelled from different parts of Ireland to partake in the music and singing and they were delighted to be part of the event.

The moment we were all waiting for had arrived. We were ready to start sharp at 7.30pm. As I got up to say a few words of welcome I looked down on the packed church and felt delighted, but humbled at every seat being filled. I am sure the committee were relieved that what we had set out to do was successful beyond our dreams.

As the concert got underway, people were singing along with all our performers, I saw Miriam, Val, even Fr. Vincent and Fr. Lorcan dancing and tapping to the music, Gerry Bennett was like Lord Snowdon taking pictures of all that was going on.



After a night of music, heavenly singing, in a magnificent setting, it came to an end all too soon. The Garda Band closed the concert with wonderful music and were given a standing ovation by the large crowd who had enjoyed an unprecedented night of music and song underneath the imposing statue of Our Lady. As the people left, all we could hear was when is the next concert? We will be back with all our friends for another memorable night. So many of the people who join us on our Lourdes Pilgrimage turned up to support us and enjoyed meeting old friends and having a chat.

After we had cleaned up and turned off the lights, we left the church in darkness. It was unbelievable that the night was over and that the last two hours had given such enjoyment to so many. I am sure we were the topic of conversation in many homes that night. A night to be repeated, for its financial success and for the enjoyment of our supporters but also as reunion for all those who go on the Lourdes Pilgrimage, so expertly led by the Oblates and their team of helpers.

- Ann Kenny.

## *Wistaston Hall Events*



### **Crewe Events**

#### **Dreams: God's Forgotten Language 29 - 31 January 2016**

Dreams provide us with a rich resource and a portal to our souls. This workshop will explore the theory of dreams and it will also include some practical ways to interpret our own dream life.

### **Individually Guided Retreats**

This is an individually guided retreat. It takes place in silence. Each day will include a meeting with one's director, guided prayer based on the scriptures and the celebration of Eucharist.

#### **Dates available:**

8 Day retreat: 11 – 20 January 2016

#### **For information on these and our other events please contact the Oblate Team at:**

Oblate Retreat Centre, Wistaston Hall,  
89 Broughton Lane, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 8JS  
Ph. 01270 568 653  
or [director@oblateretreatcentre.org.uk](mailto:director@oblateretreatcentre.org.uk)  
[www.orc-crewe.org](http://www.orc-crewe.org)

# Pilgrimage to Rome

Celebrating 200 years of the Missionary Oblates

29 November to 04 December 2016

Departures available from Dublin, Edinburgh, London and Manchester

The cost is £849/€979 and is inclusive of:

- Flight to Rome return (including one piece of hold baggage)
- Airport transfers in Italy
- 5 nights accommodation at the Hotel Lancelot
- Rome City Tax (currently €4 ppn)
- Continental buffet breakfast
- 2 lunches & 4 dinners
- Wine and water with main meals
- Programme of excursions and visits including St. Peters and other major basilicas, Catacombs of San Callixtus and the Oblate General House.



For more information and a booking form please contact:

**Britain:** Kirk Jacob, Denis Hurley House,  
14 Quex Road, London, NW6 4PL.  
Email:kirk.oblite.partners@googlemail.co

**Ireland:** Barbara Hogan, Oblate Mission Office,  
House of Retreat, Tyrconnell Road, Dublin.  
Email: mamioblite@eircom.net



"Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7)

The Oblate Youth Service  
Invite you to  
**World Youth Day**  
**2016**

20th of July - 3rd of August



If you are 16 - 26 and interested in attending the World Youth Day Celebrations in Krakow and Wroclaw please contact:

**Britain**

Andrew Cassidy  
wyd@oblatelyouthservice.com  
Telephone: 0131 554 2482  
07975 718 278

**Ireland**

Padraig Corcoran  
wyd@oblatelyouthservice.com  
Telephone: 01 4531660  
087 7723 255



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

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