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## Cardinal Sebastian Koto Khoarai, OMI (1929-2021)

Created a cardinal by Pope Francis in 2016, the retired bishop of Mohale's Hoek, Lesotho died on Saturday, April 17, at the age of 91.

Cardinal Sebastian Koto Khoarai was born on September 11, 1929, in Koaling, in the diocese of Leribe, in what was then the British colony of Basutoland. He was baptized at the age of eleven, on December 12, 1940, at St. Paul's Church in Butha-Buthe. He studied philosophy and theology at the major seminary of Saint Augustine, in the city of Roma (Lesotho), in the territory of the archdiocese of Maseru, which was then the capital of the kingdom.

### An O.M.I

He chose to join the congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and was admitted to the novitiate on January 5, 1950. He made his religious profession on January 6, 1951.

Ordained a priest on December 21, 1956, he baptized his father two days later. After holding several responsibilities in parishes and seminaries in the years in which the country was on its way to independence, the young priest was appointed the first national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Lesotho in 1975.

### Bishop

On November 10, 1977, Paul VI elected him as the first bishop of the newly created diocese of Mohale's Hoek. He was consecrated bishop on April 2, 1978. In the years that followed, Bishop Khoarai led his flock assiduously, with

the number of baptisms growing by more than 20 percent. Mohale's Hoek Diocese also saw a healthy growth in vocations to the priesthood, so much so that the major seminary could not accommodate all the candidates.

From 1982 to 1987, Bishop Khoarai was president of the Lesotho Bishops' Conference. Thanks to his action, as well as the efforts of other bishops, the Catholic Church has become the prime educator of the small landlocked nation within South Africa, with a population of some 2 million people.

In May 2006, he handed in his resignation having crossed the canonical retirement age of 75 by nearly two years. However, he continued serving his diocese as apostolic administrator until Pope Francis accepted his resignation on February 11, 2014, at 84 years of age. The same day, the Pope appointed Fr. John Joale Tlhomola, S.C.P., as the new bishop of Mohale's Hoek.

### First cardinal of Lesotho

At the consistory of November 19, 2016, Pope Francis created Khoarai Bishop a cardinal. At age 87, he became Lesotho's first cardinal. Unfortunately, his health did not permit him to come to the Vatican to receive the cardinal's red hat and the ring from the Pope.

Following his death, the number of cardinals worldwide now stands at 224, of whom 126 are below the age of 80 and, hence, are eligible to vote for a new pope.

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**VATICAN**


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**A new Oblate Bishop on the feast day of the Founder**

The Holy Father Pope Francis has appointed Fr. Luis Alberto HUAMÁN CAMAYO, OMI, as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Huancayo, Peru. At present, he is the General Councilor for Latin America of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The Pope has now assigned him to the Titular Episcopate of Tepelza.

Fr. Beto, as he is commonly known, was born on February 5th, 1970 in Tarma Peru. He made his First Vows as an Oblate in 1997 in Asuncion, Paraguay, Perpetual Vows in Rome in 2001, and was ordained a priest on October 6th, 2001 in Tarma, Peru. He studied philosophy at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology and Civil of Lima and at the Catholic University of Bolivia. While studying in Rome as a Scholastic at the International Roman Scholasticate he obtained the Bachelor of Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University (2001). He exercised his pastoral ministry in the parishes

of “Christ the King” in Chinchá, “Our Lady of Peace” in Comas Lima, and “Saint Eugene of Mazenod” in Cochabamba, Bolivia. While in Cochabamba, he was also the chaplain to the prisons. He has also served as a professor at the Institute of Religious of Cochabamba and of the Conference of Religious of Peru.

Fr. Beto has also served in several other capacities in the Oblate world: Superior of the International Scholasticate BOLPER in Bolivia; Bursar and later Superior of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate of Peru; member of the General Finance Committee of the Congregation and currently General Councilor for Latin America.

In the meantime, the Holy Father Francis has appointed Msgr. Carlos SALCEDO OJEDA, OMI as Bishop of the Diocese of Huancavelica (Peru), transferring him from the office of Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Huancayo, the position which will now be taken over by Fr. Alberto Huamán.

**Oblates and Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples**

*Compiled by Fr. Harry Winter, OMI*

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate continue to play a significant role in many of the most difficult missions around the world. We are well known and highly regarded in the Church for our availability. Although, with good humor, we like to joke that we are specialists in making missions difficult, the simple truth is that Oblates are laboring with great zeal in many of the most challenging areas of the globe. The Church counts on us, as Pope Francis insisted in his address to us on October 7, 2016.

Together with our reputation for working with the poor and most abandoned, the fact that we are called to collaborate closely with the

Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (C.E.P.) is a great sign of our recognition as a missionary Congregation in the Church. This Congregation, formerly called Propaganda Fide, was established by Pope Gregory XV in 1622 and has as its goal “...to direct and coordinate throughout the world the actual work of spreading the Gospel as well as missionary cooperation...”

Presently the C.E.P. is made up of 35 Cardinals, 5 Archbishops, 2 Bishops, 4 Directors of National Pontifical Mission Societies and 3 Superiors General. These Superiors General are Jesuit Fr. Arturo Sosa; O.F.M. Minister General, Fr. Michael Perry; and Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Fr. Louis Lougen. Some of the responsibilities are: participating in the Plenary Assemblies of the C.E.P., and availability to the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation on affairs

related to the mission of evangelization and the growth and structure of the Church in those areas under the responsibility of the C.E.P. in which the O.M.I.'s are serving.

Besides the fact that the Superior General of the Oblates is a member of the C.E.P., we have also been called upon to make personnel available for significant positions of responsibility in the C.E.P. The memory of our former Superior General, Archbishop Marcelo Zago, who was named Secretary of the C.E.P. by Pope St. John Paul II, continues to be held in high esteem in the C.E.P. and the Church at large for his contributions to evangelization and mission, especially in the area of inter-religious dialogue.

Fr. Ryzsard Szmydki, O.M.I., who has served both as the OMI Assistant General for Mission and Provincial of Poland, is presently the Under Secretary for the C.E.P., the fourth person in the organizational structure of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Fr. Tadeusz Nowak, O.M.I., former Provincial of

Assumption Province, Canada, is currently the General Secretary of the Pontifical Society of the Propagation of the Faith. At the Pontifical Urbaniana University, under the authority of the C.E.P., another Oblate, Fr. Alphonse P. Rakotondravelo, former Superior of the Oblate Scholasticate in Madagascar, serves as librarian for the Pontifical Mission Library.

Most frequently, Oblates involved in their local mission around the world are not aware of the high esteem the Congregation enjoys in the Church. We do not like to blow our own horns. But once in a while, it is good to recognize and thank God for what the O.M.I.'s do for the Church all over the world. The spirit of availability, grounded in our vow of obedience, and the heritage of St. Eugene de Mazenod, that nothing be left undared to extend the Savior's Kingdom, continue to make Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate ready to go to the most challenging missions. Whether laboring on the peripheries of the world or in the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in Rome, Oblates are serving with excellence. The Church counts on us!

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## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

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### SUPERIOR GENERAL

**Thank you for your prayers and support!**

L.J.C. et M.I.

Rome, 5 May 2021

Dear Oblates and Friends,

I hope you continue in the joy of the Easter season and also in remembering Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in this month of May!

I would like to communicate that after a successful surgery, and a month of recuperation in the United States, I arrived at our General House in Rome on Monday, May 3, 2021. I am feeling very well, although with less energy at this time, but the doctor said that will improve in the coming months.

I want to express my most profound gratitude for your prayers and support during the past seven months as I awaited surgery. You sustained me by your prayers and messages of support. I am very thankful. I was unable to respond to all the emails, letters and cards that poured in, but please know that I have kept you also in my prayers.

Let us continue to work for a healthier world for everyone, especially for the poorest who are most afflicted by this present pandemic, and who always suffer the most due to lack of access to medical assistance.

With immense gratitude and my prayers for you,

Father Louis Lougen, OMI

Superior General

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**AFRICA-MADAGASCAR**


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**OMI MISSION OF SAHARA****The family grows in a time of pandemic**

*written by Monsignor Mario León OMI  
(Apostolic Prefect of Western Sahara)*

These have not been easy times even for the Christian family in Dakhla, formerly Villacisneros, where we Missionary Oblates have a mission. I say "even" because no doubt many can say the same thing. Here in Dakhla, our parishioners have certainly lived through difficult times... as if it were a long "Passion". Here too, the economic crisis has hit hard, with the closure of hotels, restaurants, factories and fish processing plants... Our parishioners - our brothers and sisters in Christ - are migrants, who have come to work, to save money and to leave... if possible for the Canary Islands. With the increase in the number of COVID19 cases, the economy has suffered terribly, and the first to be hit has been the weakest link: the poorest of the poor, the migrants.

Last year for Easter, we Oblates were unable to be present with them. We were confined to Laayoune, 535 km away. We suffered because we could not be with them. And they certainly suffered for not being able to meet and celebrate their faith with us in church. In Dakhla, Christians live as one family. Once again, many may say... "but so are we". Of course, and praise the Lord! But here in Dakhla, our brothers and sisters are alone. Their families are thousands of kilometres away. They live "overcrowded" in their houses, with hardly any privacy, three, four... seven in the same room... It's terrible... not feeling "at home" where you live! However, they feel at home in the church. Isn't it so wonderful? That is one of our purposes: that they feel the church (building) as their home and the church (community) as their family.

So, the months of confinement have been for them a time of real and hard isolation. On the one hand, they were without work... and as they live from day to day, a day without work is a day without money... how to pay the "rent" for their part of the room, food, etc.? At the beginning they were forbidden to go

out in the street... impossible! How long can you keep 15-20 people within just 60 square meters? Even praying is difficult for them... how do you find calm and silence in the midst of so much noise? We tried to make up for the distances and the "absence" like everyone else... with our prayer, our messages of encouragement and hope.

This year, thanks be to God, we have been able to be present. It is true that there is still a confinement from 9 p.m. onwards (on Holy Wednesday, it was brought forward to 20:00 because of the appearance of the dreaded "UK variant" of COVID-19) and we still have the usual restrictions on capacity, distancing, the use of gels and masks... but we have been able to celebrate Holy Week! Moreover, the family has grown!

In a "pastoral juggling act" we try to offer formation and preparation for the sacraments of Christian initiation for some of our parishioners who ask us to do so.

Normally this would take 2-3 years. But here we try to do it in less than a year, since only few of our parishioners remain in Dakhla for more than a year. And this Easter Sunday the Lord has given us two new sisters: Juliette, the younger of the two, was baptised, confirmed and given her first holy communion. Petula, baptised in an evangelical church, was admitted to full communion in the Catholic Church and then she received confirmation and her first communion. A gift of the Spirit! The family is growing!

The joy was indescribable. They could hardly stand still in their places... they needed to sing, to celebrate, to pray, to praise... the "rigidity" of the measures imposed by the COVID19 did not please any of us... even though we bore it with patience and joy. But from time to time, like the cork that pops out of the bottle of wine, our joy simply overflows...

Amen! Hallelujah! Today we have experienced a great joy, this is the day the Lord has made! Let it be our joy and our gladness! No, one can never confine the Holy Spirit, not even in times of pandemic.

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**ASIA-OCEANIA**


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**PHILIPPINES****Fr. “Jun” Mercado, OMI passed away**

Fr. Eliseo “Jun” Mercado, Jr. OMI, the first Director of the General Service of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation based in Rome, Italy, from 2003-2007, passed away on May 23, 2021 in Cotabato City, Philippines. He was 6 days short of his 73rd birthday. He had been an Oblate religious for 54 years, and a priest for 47 years.

Jun was formed as an Oblate both in Manila and in Rome, and acquired post-graduate degrees in Missiology and Islamic Studies.

Jun served in various Oblate ministries in the Philippines—in the parish, in schools, in mass

media, in peace advocacy, in inter-religious dialogue, and in spiritual direction of seminarians.

In his early years as an Oblate, Jun was active in opposing the dictatorship of President Ferdinand Marcos. He was most well-known and recognized, however, for a life lived in solidarity with Muslims in southern Philippines, and for espousing their right to self-determination.

At the time of his death, Jun was the Philippine Province’s Archivist, residing at the Oblate Novitiate in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. He also continued in his advocacy work as Senior Policy Adviser of the non-government Institute for Autonomy & Governance.

**BANGLADESH****Tears of Joy**

*Fr. Ajit Victor Costa, OMI*

“She stood behind Jesus at his feet, crying. She began to wash his feet with her tears, and she dried them with her hair, kissing them many times and rubbing them with the perfume” (Luke 7:37-38).

On March 8, 2021, while conversing with Jugen Kisku, I found the tears of joy in his eyes. Because on that day, Jugen and fifty three other villagers of Shahabajpur, a village under St. Paul’s Parish, Rajshahi Diocese, received the Sacrament of Baptism and became Catholic. Among them, 35 received the Sacrament of Confirmation and marriages of 18 couples were rectified. These new followers of Jesus, belong to “Santal” ethnic or indigenous group.

Jugen is the present “Manjiharam” (Leader) of the village. As a lad, he was blessed to receive the primary school education in a Catholic Boarding School, run by the PIME Fathers (Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions). Fr. Emili, PIME, was the Parish Priest and In-Charge of the boarding. In the boarding school, he was never asked to change his traditional faith, the ancestral belief system, with which he grew up. But

Jugen was immensely impressed by the simple life-style, generosity, kindness, affection, prayerfulness, tenderness, and loving heart of Fr. Emili. Many years later, after having raised a family and being blessed with two daughters and a son, he began to dream of becoming a Catholic.

In 2017, Fr. Ranjit Costa, OMI, was instrumental in helping his eldest daughter to get married to a Catholic boy. He prepared her for the Sacrament of Baptism, and solemnized their marriage before a large crowd at Shahabajpur village. They witnessed the beauty of Christian marriage and many of them expressed their desire to become Christians. Sr. Lila and catechist Promila, began catechizing them. When Fr. Rocky Costa, OMI, took over from Fr. Ranjit as the Parish Priest, he continued the project, in the midst of COVID-19.

The final outcome of the efforts of all them was that on March 08, 2021, the villagers of Shahabajpur received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and the Eucharist. In the presence of Most Rev. Gervas Rozario, Bishop of Rajshahi Diocese, Fr. Ajit Costa, OMI (Delegation Superior), Fr. Rocky Costa, OMI (Parish Priest), Fr. Lintu Areng, OMI (Asst. Parish Priest), some religious nuns and a few invitees from other Catholic villages witnessed the special event.

Like St. Joseph, Jugen as a lad, once dreamed to welcome Jesus in his heart. In the year of St. Joseph his long cherished dream has now been fulfilled. The entire village welcomed Jesus with 'tears of joy', upon reception of Sacraments.

In 2009, Oblates undertook St. Paul's Parish, an indigenous Parish, with only 9 villages. Thanks to the robust evangelization of the Oblates among Santal, Uraon, and Pahari communities, today the parish serves 33

villages. Several other small villages are also following the course of catechumenate. Every year one or two indigenous villages become Catholics. The farthest village is 35 kilometers away from the centre. Since there are no constructed churches in most of these villages, the Oblates often use the house of the village leader for Eucharistic Celebration and prayer services. Villagers dream to have a small village church of their own for worship. They trust in God's Providence.

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## CANADA-UNITED STATES

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### OMI LACOMBE

#### **De Mazenod Door Outreach Program adds Farming Initiative**

*De Mazenod Outreach ministry will operate a local farm to grow food for Hamilton's poor*

On April 8, 2021, the De Mazenod Door Outreach program, which offers sustenance to the poor and marginalized in inner-city Hamilton, providing food for the hungry and drink for the thirsty for approximately 400 guests daily, 365 days a year, announced the launch of the De Mazenod Farm, yet another initiative to help the poor and marginalized.

The Outreach Program was started by Fr Tony O'Dell, OMI and Fr. Jarek Pachocki, OMI, soon after arriving in Hamilton in 2012 and setting up home at St. Patrick Church. Named De Mazenod Door after St. Eugene de Mazenod, the founder of the Oblates and the patron saint and intercessor for the poor.

"The door is the symbol of openness, welcome and hospitality," said Fr. Tony, "and now with our Farm, it is also a place of new growth, sustenance and abundance. Our goal is to create a sustainable source of healthy, locally-grown food for our guests."

The De Mazenod Farm, a 19-acre property is located in rural Ancaster, Ontario. The land had been sitting idle when Fr Tony suggested that we use the farm and put it back into use to support our programs and contribute back to the community.

Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, Bishop of Hamilton, also expressed his delight. "With this

most recent development at the DeMazenod Door Outreach, we will be able to provide fresh food for the poor and marginalized in downtown Hamilton", he said.

The De Mazenod Farm will grow over 40 types of vegetables and herbs including beans, peppers, potatoes, beets, cabbage, carrots and cauliflower. Once harvested, the produce will be sent to the De Mazenod Door kitchen, where it will be used to create homemade meals for the Door guests including hearty soups, stews and casseroles.

The Farm will also be home to 36 laying chickens who will provide eggs for every Tuesday's breakfast: an egg baked in a golden toast nest. Guests already eagerly look forward to their "eggs in a basket" and will soon find it even tastier when it is made with farm-fresh eggs.

A special garden will grow flowers that will decorate our church for special feast days and Sunday during the summer and fall. We will also plan to create prayer spaces on the farm, where people can "get away" and relax in nature.

More than just the fresh food it will produce, the Farm will also be a place of community building, seeking to engage, educate and empower all who visit and wish to lend a helping hand. The Farm will welcome volunteers from every walk of life including many frontline workers suffering with Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) who are eager to contribute in any way that they can.

"With the help of many dedicated volunteers, we will produce a whole bounty of goodness and cultivate a community of love and compassion," Fr. Tony further stated.

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 EUROPE
 

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## UKRAINE

**Fourth session of the OMI Tribunal for the Beatification of Fr. Ludwik Wrodarczyk**

On April 22-23, 2021 in Obukhiv near Kiev, in the main house of the Delegation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ukraine, the fourth session of the Tribunal for the Beatification of the Servant of God Fr. Ludwik Wrodarczyk OMI was held.

Witnesses who received various favors through the intercession of Fr. Ludwik Wrodarczyk OMI, were heard by the Beatification Tribunal, headed by Fr. Piotr Miszczuk, MA. At the session, seven witnesses were questioned, including Bishop Stanisław Szzyrokoradiuk OFM, the ordinary of Odessa-Simferopol diocese.

The beatification process of Fr. Ludwik Wrodarczyk OMI was opened by the Ukrainian Bishops' Conference in November 2013 at the request of Fr. Paweł Wyszowski OMI, superior of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ukraine.

On May 11, 2016, Bishop Vitaliy Skomarowski, the bishop of the Lutsk diocese, began the beatification process, during which the Church carefully examines and analyzes the life of the candidate for altars to confirm that he is a true example of Christian life for the faithful.

Father Ludwik Wrodarczyk was born on August 25, 1907 in Radzionków in Upper Silesia (Poland). He made his first religious vows as an Oblate on August 15, 1927, and then began his studies at the Major Seminary in Obra, Poland. He was ordained a priest on June 10, 1933.

In 1939, Father Ludwik Wrodarczyk was sent to the then territories of eastern Poland, today's Ukraine, as the administrator of the newly established parish in the village of Okopy in

Volyn. He arrived there on the eve of World War II, on August 29, 1939.

Father Ludwik is called a martyr of reconciliation in Volyn because, in those extremely difficult and tense times in Polish-Ukrainian relations, he did everything to avoid bloodshed. He served with his medical knowledge to all suffering people, regardless of nationality or religion.

According to witnesses, he was cruelly tortured before his death on December 8, 1943.

*Prayer for the intercession of  
Fr. Ludwik Wrodarczyk OMI*

*Our Lord and God, be glorified in your priest Ludwik, missionary, faithful son of Mary Immaculate. Be praised for the gift of his prophetic faith, for his trust in the power of prayer and for the priestly zeal with which he served the work of your love.*

*Be glorified that with Your word of mercy and reconciliation, he tirelessly exceeded all human boundaries, so that all may be one in praising You, especially the poor and abandoned.*

*Be praised for the gift of bravery with which he accepted the martyr's death and did not want to protect his life, but handed it over to human anger as a ransom for your scattered children. Father of Mercy, for the sake of his servant, Father Ludwik, and for your greater glory by showing his holiness, grant me the grace ... for which I am asking You through Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.*

*Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be ...*

Please inform of the graces received through Ludwik Wrodarczyk OMI, to the Postulator ([postulatore.generale@omigen.org](mailto:postulatore.generale@omigen.org)) or to the Vice-Postulator of the process, Fr. Marek Rostkowski OMI: [del@omi.org.ua](mailto:del@omi.org.ua)

## MEDITERRANEAN PROVINCE

### The Rosary Prayer Chain for Oblate vocations

Pablo Reinedo and Fr. Carmine Marrone, OMI  
The Rosary Prayer Chain for Oblate Vocations is in its eleventh year and growing!

It was in the year 2008 when Fr. Ismael Garcia Moreno OMI, in Spain, launched this initiative of continuous prayer of the rosary. He was inspired by the experience of a group of young people that he followed in Monzòn, in the north of Spain. Every year they organized a prayer chain of 24 consecutive hours on the occasion of the Confirmation day of the young people in the group. "Why not do the same for Oblate vocations?", was the question that was ringing in his mind. So, Fr. Ismael launched the 24-hour continuous prayer initiative for this intention.

In 2009 and 2010, the prayer shifts were extended to 36 hours, beginning on 20 May at 12 noon. Ismael took up the idea again, involving a group of lay people who were put in charge of the "Rosary Prayer Chain" initiative. Pablo Reinedo, a layman, took on the coordination. In 2014, an invitation was launched to pray the rosary every day of the novena for Oblate vocations. Oblates and lay people from the entire Mediterranean Province, and also from other parts of the world, were involved with a lot of enthusiasm. To our great surprise and joy, all available prayer shifts were completed in the week of 21-29 May.

Since then, the Rosary Prayer Chain has retained its current format of 9 days. Thanks to the Facebook profile and the progress made with the translations to facilitate booking, the initiative has spread all over the world and many people are now involved. The aim, of course, is not so much to complete the list of shifts, but to promote prayer and a vocational culture. In last year's edition, 424 shifts were covered by people scattered throughout the Oblate world in 20 countries. Today, the Rosary Prayer Chain is a heritage of the entire Congregation.

For this reason, from this year on, the continuous rosary becomes an initiative officially promoted by the General Administration for the entire Oblate family of the world.

It will be very easy to book: everyone can become an animator of the initiative. Let us make the vocational culture and prayer for Oblate vocations grow in the world!

The world, as Pope Francis reminded us, counts on Oblate Missionaries. And the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate need the prayers of all of us.

Let us move forward together! We were born for times like this!

From May 21 to 29, may we all experience a fruitful novena for Oblate vocations!

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## LATIN AMERICA

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### 1ST ASSEMBLY OF THE OMI FAMILY Latin America on the Road to Synodality

*Lucía Martínez Dojorti,  
Oblate Lay Associate (LaOMI)*

The world is going through an extraordinary event that marked history forever: the coronavirus pandemic. The humanitarian, economic and many other damages caused by the pandemic are well known. However, one social aspect was enhanced: communication.

Video-calls were the protagonists, and perhaps the saviours, in this time of isolation. They

allowed us to continue with many jobs, with education, and to get closer to our loved ones with many other 'online' activities. Of course, not everyone has access to a digital communication device and internet, but those who have these privileges were able to take advantage of them.

Pastorally, we attended masses, catechesis, and different meetings, via online platforms. In this context, a group of OMI lay men and women were able to meet through the aforementioned means, form a team, and with the suggestion of Fr. Sergio Serrano OMI (Advisor of LaOMI - CIAL), take the reins to organize the First

Assembly of the Oblate Family of Latin America. The motivating antecedent to this meeting was the Congress that was to take place in July 2021, which is why at first there was talk of a "pre-congress" for Latin America. With the news that this Congress would be postponed to the year 2022, the group organizing the event insisted on holding it anyway, now under the concept of "Assembly", on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

There are three aspects that make and will make this Assembly a synodal journey:

1. The general organization is done by the laity. However, OMI, COMI, AMMI, JOMI, and of course LaOMI, as well as collaborators and anyone who feels attracted to the charism of St. Eugene are invited to participate in this Assembly.
2. These lay men and women are of different nationalities, from Mexico to Argentina and Chile, passing through all the countries from north to south that make up Latin America, which indicates the region's immense richness of diversity.
3. Although its Latin American character has already been mentioned several times in this article, the invitation to participate is open to

### **1ST ASSEMBLY OF THE OMI FAMILY "The feast is over, and now the house must be tidied up..."**

*A retrospect on the 1st Assembly of the OMI Family of Latin America and the Caribbean*

*Sebastián Cortés Cruz, (LaOMI)*

I still remember the year 2019, when those of us who were asked to animate the OMI Laity at the level of CIAL (Interprovincial Conference of Latin America) thought of activities such as a music festival and many other interesting things... It was a complete failure! But, that was how it all began.

Blessed be God who brings good out of evil, for it was thanks to the pandemic, that we were forced to have videoconferences, online courses, and live transmissions, in order to continue with our work and pastoral missions. Thus, we were able to meet with

everyone in the Oblate world who wishes to do so. The event will be broadcast in Spanish and Portuguese at the same time, and will also be translated into English and French.

The objective of this Assembly will be to bring the Oblate family in the region together, while doing a sincere reflection of our place in the Church and in the world. If you are reading this note before April 24, 2021, we invite you to be part of it, for your participation will be very welcome.

We share with you below the motto of the Assembly of the Oblate Family of Latin America that will accompany us:

"Oblate Family walking together" - LaOMI, OMI, COMI, AMMI, JOMI.

To the faithful of Latin America, we hope to meet this coming April 24 at our Assembly. To the Oblate Lay Associates of other continents, we hope to meet you all at the upcoming Congress in 2022. Nevertheless, we continue to meet the whole Oblate family throughout the world in the Eucharist, in our Centre, who is Jesus Christ crucified.

representatives of the various countries in this region where there are OMI missions. Ideas were put together, we began to look for formation together, we had the possibility of dreaming together according to the realities and concrete needs of each community.

It was thus that, after a long journey, the 1st Assembly of the OMI Family of Latin America and the Caribbean finally took place on April 24, 2021. Its synodal character allowed it to be carried out with the contribution of all the people who belong, in one way or another, to the OMI Family of the Latin American region. Committees were formed, and they contributed their time, resources, sweat and tears to make the event possible and successful.

Each committee had a specific task: making promotional videos, composing songs and music, organizing liturgy, programming, coordinating, animating, transmitting through social networks, and managing three zoom

platforms from Peru, Rome and Chile. There were also those who did presentations, those who did translations, those who took notes and systematized what each team discussed, and any questions raised. There were those who encouraged people to sign up, those who lent their internet facility or broadcast the event in alternative ways when there were technological problems.

Blessed be God who at this time once again performed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, because the baskets were passed around and each person put in his or her own... for the feast.

But what was the purpose of having this “feast”? Was it just to get to know each other, living in different communities and countries, and nothing more? No, there was more to it. Once a feast is over, we have to put the house back in order, and collect the “leftovers”. This time we are doing it together, since the proposals, thoughts, options and objectives of each working team are being collected, in order to make them known in a final synthesis document. We hope to “walk together as an Oblate family”, because this feast was only the starting point of the SYNODAL WAY, a way that is being rediscovered in the Roman Catholic Church, so that we as Church assume the mission among all - not to “help the poor little nun or the priest” nor

to allow them “to do everything in the community without letting anyone else participate”. As Pope Francis, said in his visit to Chile in 2018:

“...we do need you to challenge us; the Church needs you to throw away the old-age identity card, the spiritually grown-upness, and have the courage to tell us: “I like that; this is the way I think we need to go; this doesn’t work, this is not a bridge but a wall, and so forth”. (*Francis, January 17, 2018, National Shrine of Maipú*)

Many challenges are coming, there are new paths to build, realities to attend to, and others to unveil. We need to face our fears and demolish our archaic practices, to allow ourselves to be shaped by the Holy Spirit. Perhaps, because this is a prophetic path, we have to tear down and build, as God pointed out to Jeremiah, not by a destructive conflict but by deconstruction, a term that is often heard nowadays and to which it is good that we pay attention as an Oblate family. We can do so only by being “always close to the people”, or, as Brother Bishop and Argentine martyr Enrique Angelelli said: “One ear in the Gospel and the other in the People”.

A world is open to us, a blank canvas, with the colours of Latin American joys and cries. Mother Mary, pray for us, so that we shall be faithful to your Son and thus do “whatever He tells us”.

## **BRAZIL**

### **St. Eugene’s Post-Novitiate initiates “Fr. Lorenzo OMI Social Action”**

*By Fr. Sergio de Santana, OMI*

*We follow a Master who became poor for our sake. “If you wish to be perfect,” he said, “go and sell what you own and give the money to the poor... Then come, follow me” (Mt 19:21). In answer to his call, we choose evangelical poverty.  
(OMI Constitutions and Rules n.19)*

This Saturday evening marked a very important step in the life of the Post-Novitiate of St. Eugene de Mazenod in Sao Paulo, Brazil. We started the so called “Fr. Lorenzo OMI Social Action”, which has as its goal, bringing food to the homeless, once a month, in an evening.

The name of the chosen Oblate, the North American Father Lorenzo, was due to his dedicated missionary work developed by him with the impoverished of the city of Recife - PE, at the time he lived in Brazil. Father Lorenzo lived in the street with the poor, he had meals with them, in practice he was one with them, living already at that time what today Pope Francis calls ‘the outgoing Church’.

With this action that will be done monthly by all the Post-Novices, we intend to live in practice what the above mentioned Constitution 19 teaches us, where we obey the mandate of Jesus and the dream of our Holy Founder.

May St. Eugene bless us and continue to enlighten us so that, by seeing Jesus in the face of every poor person we meet on the streets, we may allow ourselves to be evangelized by them.

## CRUZ DEL SUR New website of a future Cause!

*Fr. Diego Sáez Martín OMI  
Postulator General*

I am happy to announce that Dr. Michael Krischer, Vice-postulator, and his team have created a magnificent web page on the future cause of Bishop Pedro Shaw OMI "Pa'i Puku", a holy missionary Oblate in the Paraguayan Chaco (1925 - 1984).

He travelled on horseback, on cachapé and sometimes on foot, through arid deserts and vast marshes, crossing rivers and streams, swamps plagued by all kinds of insects and vermin,

mosquitoes, powder kegs and others, knowing neither time, nor hour, nor frontiers, nor limits in terms of his physical constitution...

In order to revitalize the promotion of the Cause, the Vice Postulator Dr. Michael Krischer and the Pro Pa'i Puku Commission attended a digital conference with the competent Bishop Amancio Benítez Candia, the Postulator General Fr. Diego Sáez Martín OMI from Rome and the Provincial Fr. Jorge Albergati OMI from Buenos Aires on 10 April 2021.

This is how the spirit and enthusiasm arose once again... Do you want to know more about Pa'i Puku OMI or the Cause? Visit the excellent website! - [www.causapaipuku.com](http://www.causapaipuku.com)

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## ANNIVERSARIES - JUNE 2021

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### 65th Anniversaries of Ordinations

09/06/1956	08901	Fr. Charles Beausoleil	United States
16/06/1956	09284	Fr. Maurice Joly	Lacombe

### 60th Anniversaries of Ordinations

10/06/1961	10324	Fr. Edmond Brouillard	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
10/06/1961	10062	Fr. Andrew Takach	Lacombe
24/06/1961	10198	Fr. Bernard Pinet	Lacombe
29/06/1961	09736	Fr. Laurent Desaulniers	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
29/06/1961	10150	Fr. Fernand Dufour	Notre-Dame-du-Cap
29/06/1961	09968	Fr. Noël Poisson	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

### 50th Anniversaries of Vows

11/06/1971	12186	Fr. Thomas Ovalle	United States
26/06/1971	12237	Bro. Etienne Aumond	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

### 50th Anniversaries of Ordinations

13/06/1971	11694	Fr. Michael Brady	Anglo-Irish
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### 25th Anniversaries of Ordinations

08/06/1996	13389	Fr. Antonius Rajabana	Indonesia
20/06/1996	13271	Fr. Lukasz Biecek	Cameroon
20/06/1996	13317	Fr. Jerzy Bzdyl	Poloand
20/06/1996	13314	Fr. Slawomir Dworek	Poloand
20/06/1996	13312	Fr. Dariusz Galant	Poloand
20/06/1996	13320	Fr. Slawomir Kalisz	Australia
20/06/1996	13309	Fr. Joachim Kusz	Poloand
20/06/1996	13316	Fr. Wieslaw Nowotnik	Poloand
20/06/1996	13308	Fr. Bogdan Osiecki	Assumption
20/06/1996	13315	Fr. Wieslaw Przyjemski	Poloand
20/06/1996	13318	Fr. Andrzej Rak	Poloand
20/06/1996	13321	Fr. Marek Rojek	Pologne
20/06/1996	13270	Fr. Grzegorz Skicki	France
20/06/1996	13313	Fr. Krzysztof Szablowski	Notre-Dame-du-Cap

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**Suffrages for our Deceased**


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No. 38 - 49

<b>NOM</b>	<b>PROV/DEL</b>	<b>BORN</b>	<b>DIED AT</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Fr. William Hallahan	United States	05/06/1932	Tewksbury	03/04/2021
Bro. Almas Gagné	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	14/08/1925	Richelieu	03/04/2021
Fr. Wim Joosten	Belgium & Netherlands	07/03/1933	Paramaribo	17/04/2021
Card. Sebastian Khoarai	Lesotho	15/09/1930	Mazenod	17/04/2021
Fr. Alfred Hubenig	Lacombe	28/05/1931	St. Albert	19/04/2021
Bro. Henri Gagnon	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	15/02/1932	Richelieu	25/04/2021
Bro. André Deprez	France	08/05/1937	Marseille	19/05/2021
Fr. Jerzy Kalinowski	France - Benelux	27/10/1936	Figuil	21/05/2021
Fr. Gérard Laprise	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	16/12/1928	Richelieu	22/05/2021
Fr. Eliseo Mercado	Cruz del Sur	20/09/1925	Cotabato City	23/05/2021
Fr. André Jodoin	Notre-Dame-du-Cap	28/08/1930	Richelieu	24/05/2021
Bro. Josef Overkämping	Central European	20/01/1932	Hünfeld	28/05/2021

“They are before God, bearing the sign, the kind of character proper to our Institute, the vows common to all its members, the firm habit of the same virtues.

We are linked to them by the bonds of a special charity.

They are still our brothers and we are theirs.

They now live in our mother-house, our main residence.

The prayers and the love they retain for us will one day draw us to them and we shall live in our place of rest together with them.”

*(Letter of Founder to Fr. Courtès, 22 July 1828)*



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via Aurelia 290, I 00165 Roma, Italy

Fax: (39) 06 39 37 53 22 E-mail: [information@omigen.org](mailto:information@omigen.org)

[www.omiworld.org](http://www.omiworld.org)

Editor & Webmaster: Shanil Jayawardena

Circulation: Shanil Jayawardena