



OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

NATAL PROVINCE

THE MOTHER PROVINCE OF THE OBLATES IN AFRICA

OMI NATAL *Update*

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Top News

Consultation For New Provincial And Council

Provincial Assembly Albini Hall Durban 6 December 8.00am to 2pm

Provincial Assembly Mazenod Bulawayo 3 December 8,30 to 3pm

Patronal Feast Friday 7th December OL of Fatima Durban North

Oblate Mission In These Days

Interchapter in South Africa

Some of the delegates at prayer during the Interchapter
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Top News

Provincial Assembly December 6th

The current administration of the Natal Province completes its three year term in February. It is now time to review this term and to consult for the new Provincial and Council to lead us from 2008-2011.

The Provincial assembly will take place in two venues: Durban and Bulawayo. This is to save on travel costs

Durban

Our assembly in Durban will take place at Albini Hall Congella on Thursday December 6th, the day before the Patronal feast on December 7th. This will allow those travelling to Durban to attend both events.

The format will be simple:

- 8.30: Morning Prayer
- 8.45 Provincial's Report
- 9.45 Tea
- 1015 Group discussion
- 11.00 Report back
- 11.45 Introduction to Consultation process
- 12.00 Eucharist (Mass of Holy Spirit)
- 12.30 Consultation
- 1.00 p.m. Lunch

The consultation process for the new Provincial will be conducted by an independent animator. The forms will be sent to Rome in order to meet the deadline of 30 December.

All members of the Province and the scholastics are expected to attend. Prenovices may attend as observers if they wish.

Bulawayo

The Bulawayo assembly will take place on Monday December 3 at Mazenod. The same programme will apply.

Pious List and Christmas Collection Envelopes

These were given out at the Annual Oblate Retreat. If any have not collected these or were not at the retreats to collect them, please contact Father Merlin Ince, (031 2086912 or 0832706462).

Challenges for Ministry

Interchapter Meeting in South Africa

With a performance presented by the novices from Our Lady of Hope Oblate novitiate near Johannesburg and with a multimedia presentation on various impressions of the Oblate mission on the continent of Africa, the Interchapter meeting of 2007 had its unofficial beginning on Sunday evening, September 30. The multimedia presentation was the creation of the host-provincial, Fr. Peter GALLOWAY.

Some 60 Oblates from all over the world (the Central Government, the provincials of 29 provinces, and an auxiliary staff of moderators, translators, secretaries, liturgists, drivers, etc.) came together from 1-12 October for the two-week Interchapter meeting at the Good Shepherd Retreat Centre at Hartebeesport, located in the Oblates' Central Province of South Africa.

The official opening of the meeting took place on October 1, with a welcome from the Superior General, Fr. Wilhelm STECKLING, and from the president of the Regional Conference of Africa, Fr. Macaire MANIMBA, the provincial of Congo.

The central purpose of the 2007 Interchapter is to study the response which the Congregation and the Units have given to the mandates of the 2004 General Chapter, to consider the difficulties encountered, and to share means of implementing these mandates and overcoming the difficulties. It is also the occasion to begin planning for the next General Chapter, vis-à-vis both theme and methodology.

The participants listened to reports from the five regions of the Congregation as well as from the Central Government. There were also reports concerning the progress of the Governance Committee and the General House Committee, both of which had been mandated by the 2004 General Chapter. The Superior General gave a major report, in the name of the Central Government, on the topic of Internationality in the Congregation.

Through various small-group and large-group discussions, the participants were able to give voice to their concerns, challenges and hopes regarding what remains to be accomplished before the next General Chapter (2010). While many issues surfaced, the participants prioritized their list of concerns into these seven topics (in the order of importance):

1) Internationality: as it impacts Oblate life (formation, community life, the mission, etc.). International houses of formation.

2) The human and spiritual formation needed to live in today's reality (religious life, community, the mission). Training formators to be able to facilitate this.

3) Evangelizing in a secularized society: defining the Oblate mission.

4) The demographic shift in the Congregation: (sharing of personnel South to North; preparation for this on the part of those being sent and of those receiving and other issues such as inculturation).

5) Animation of religious and community life in the local community.

6) Special issues of youth ministry today.

7) Criteria for accepting and promoting candidates in light of the realities of today's world.

In the second week, some members of the Central Government explained various policies that have been enacted by the Superior General in Council, as well as some items of general interest vis-à-vis upcoming events and ongoing discussions. However, the primary focus of talks and discussions was to encourage the participants to look ahead to the 2010 General Chapter.

There were presentations concerning possible themes for the Chapter as well as about methodologies for such a gathering.

In the discussions that followed these presentations, some points of convergence surfaced. The participants at the Intercapitular meeting hope that the Central Government and the future pre-capitular commission will consider them when they choose the theme or the focal point of the next General Chapter. The most frequent subject to be mentioned was that of the quality and integrity of our religious life which is always in need of conversion in both the personal and communal dimension, and always centering on the person of Jesus Christ.

Lest this conversion be seen as simply an exercise particular only to the Oblate community and the individual Oblate, it is important that it happens in view of the mission to the poor with their many faces, as they exist in the various res and contexts where the Oblates live and carry on their ministry. The next General Chapter will also be a graced

moment for the Congregation when it will, in a spirit of gospel-driven leadership, elect a new Superior General and General Council. As mandated by the last General Chapter, there will also very likely be a consideration of updated structures of government on all levels, in light of the needs of the Oblate mission. There was frequent reference to the need to begin preparations of the next General Chapter in the very near future so that the very process of preparation is for communal discernment and growth for the whole Congregation, similar to the process of the Immense Hope project before the last General Chapter. Whatever document comes from the 2010 Chapter should stimulate a continuation of this process of conversion and growth.

Challenges for Ministry

Assistant Novice Master Murdered

The Oblate novitiate community in South Africa, the Northern Province and all Oblates are mourning the death of the Associate Novice Master, Fr. Allard Msheyene 'MAKO, shot and killed by roadside carjackers on October 5.

The forty-two year old Oblate priest, ordained in 2003, had gone to lend weekend help at St. Peter's parish in Nelspruit. After celebrating a Friday evening liturgy at 18:00 in Ka Nyamazane, he took a young man home and then was returning to the parish. A short time later, he was found lying by the road at Msogwaba township, and was taken at 19:30 by ambulance to Themba Hospital, Kabokweni. He was soon transferred to a larger hospital in Nelspruit, where he underwent emergency surgery. He was conscious and recognized those who spoke to him, and at that stage could give some response. The bullet had done its fatal damage, however. Fr. Zweli MLOTSHWA, anointed him at 5:30 Saturday morning, October 6. Fr. Allard died a couple hours later.

Police were soon on the track of one of the suspects. On the next day, three police officers from KaNyamazane police station arrived at the Mayibuye High School outside Nelspruit just before midday. The suspect was apparently warned about the police presence at the school.

"The suspect rushed out and fired shots at the police officers, injuring one of them in the leg," said Mpumalanga police spokesman Superintendent Abie Khoabane yesterday. He then

disappeared. Constable Patrick Fakude, 28, was rushed to Nelspruit Medi-Clinic in a serious condition.

Challenges for Ministry **Archbishop Tlhagale Calls for Church Sanctions on Criminals**

Murderers should not be buried from Catholic churches, and recipients of stolen property should be banned from receiving Communion, Archbishop Buti Tlhagale OMI of Johannesburg said at the funeral of Father Allard 'Mako.

"We have every reason to be outraged," he said in his attack on both the government and a society which seems unable or unwilling to deal with crime.

"The justice system in this country, in an attempt to reverse or undo the harshness or cruelty of the apartheid system, has simply softened its policies and laws to a point where criminals feel that they can commit murder and get away with it, or that if they are caught, they will simply get a slap on the wrist," he said.

"It is a futile, meaningless and hopeless cop-out to blame crime on poverty, or even to consider crime as a long-term result of the apartheid policies," Archbishop Tlhagale said, noting that, "Criminals are homegrown.

"They come from our own communities," he added. "The stolen guns that kill randomly are at times hidden away by members of the family. That gun, they say, brings bread home. It keeps hunger and starvation at bay.

He suggested that the church should impose penalties on criminals. "Some of these heartless criminals claim to be members of our church communities. Such criminals ought not to be buried from our churches. Why should we bend backwards to accommodate cold-blooded murderers?" he questioned.

His attack was also levelled at those who indirectly benefited from the proceeds of crime.

"People who knowingly and consciously receive stolen property or assist the criminals in their sordid trade are members of our church community. They ought to be banned from receiving Communion."

"Money from the sale of drugs and stolen property or from bank robberies should not be accepted in the church as part of a tithe or Sunday collection," he said, noting that the "injunction of the Gospel on this matter is clear."

Good News about People **Oblate Organises African Catholic Exegetes Conference**

Father Paul Decock was the organizer of this year's Pan-African Association of Catholic Exegetes. The association met in South Africa for the first time. This Association aims at bringing together Catholic exegetes from all over Africa every two years. The Association was founded in Yaoundé (Cameroon) in 1987 after a number of exegetes had already met on two previous occasions, once in Kinshasa (1978) and once in Ibadan (1984). Since the foundation the association has met regularly every two years.

This year's congress took place at Koinonia, Johannesburg from the 2nd until the 8th of September and was opened by Archbishop Buti Tlhagale OMI of Johannesburg.

Among the participants was the well known Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya (of Kisangani, DRC), a founding member and still very active in the Association despite his many responsibilities. The present Chairperson is Archbishop Cornelius Fontem Esua (Bamenda, Cameroon). Cardinal Peter Turkson of Ghana also participated this year.

For more information on the Association, see the website <http://apeca-pace.org/>

Good News about People **Oblate Chairs Psychology Congress**

Father Noel Peters was invited to serve as one of the Chairpersons at the 13th Annual Congress of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA). He also presented a paper at the Conference entitled: "*Understanding Each Other*" The paper described his research on the overall goals of intercultural training in aiming to affect the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains and subsequently people's overall adjustments and effectiveness in cross-cultural settings.

Good News about Ministry

Acts 1: Youth Ministry DUT Affiliated With ACTS

On 21 September, the catholic students of the *Durban University of Technology* (DUT) were officially recognized as a branch of the Association of Catholic Students (ACTS)

Recently appointed chaplain, Fr. Merlin Ince OMI and branch chairperson Sabelo Mthembu of the *Durban University of Technology* celebrated with gratitude and excitement at the realisation of the fruits of many months of planning and preparation for the affiliation of the Catholic students to the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS) The occasion was marked by a special Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Bishop Barry Wood OMI. In his homily, Bishop Barry congratulated the students in their example of taking pride in their faith. In keeping with the spirit of the feast of St. Matthew, he further encouraged them to continue to announce the good news by moving away from a culture of death and into a culture of life.

The Mass was well attended, not only by students of ACTS, but also by various other groups on campus especially the SRC and those from other denominations and faiths. Fr. Michael Hagan, national ACTS chaplain, was delighted to welcome the family of DUT and encouraged the students to make their voices heard on campus such that we enter into active dialogue and participation with all forces in 'evangelising' our world. Also in attendance were Sr. Lukas Lenzen, chairperson of the KZN region of chaplains and chaplains from surrounding institutions. We were also glad to welcome Fr. Stuart Bate OMI (Provincial Superior of the OMI congregation) and Fr. Eugene King OMI (Vicar General of the OMI congregation).

A hearty lunch was served after the mass, on the balcony of the Steve Biko Library. It was quite fitting that our celebration coincided with the special week of celebrating 30 years since the death of Steve Biko who died at the age of 30. This is a great boost to the Spirit of ACTS at DUT and will surely inspire a greater witness to the values of the gospel on campus. We will continue to strive towards our motto: We've got our ACTS together."

Good News About Ministry

Acts 2: ACTS Retreats Come To Durban

What is believed to be the first of many ACTS retreats was held on the African continent in the archdiocese of Durban, South Africa from July 19-22, 2007. Originating from the *Cursillo de Cristiandad* movement in 1987, this retreat experience takes its name from the Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47, where the early Church is described in terms of worshipping and breaking bread together, receiving instruction, and reaching out to others in faithful service.

Ecumenical in nature and relatively flexible in its manner of presentation, it endeavors to instill in retreatants a desire to enter into a deeper relationship with the Lord and gain a greater interest in parish ministry involvement.

The acronym, ACTS, has come to focus on *Adoration*--the need for prayer and meditation on the word of God; and the importance of fostering *Community* built on faith and love; *Theology*--coming to a deeper understanding of scripture and our Catholic Faith; all of which is meant to lead one to a life of *Service*, especially in one's own parish.

The impetus for bringing this retreat to Africa came from Fr. Alan MOSS. Having finished his term as provincial of the Natal Province in South Africa, and while taking a sabbatical at Oblate School of Theology, he made an ACTS retreat in San Antonio, Texas. Impressed, he contacted an active team member, Bro. Paul HOEMEKE, about becoming a team member himself. For this, he made two retreats, one at Immaculata Retreat Center in Willimantic, Connecticut, and another in Tewksbury, Massachusetts.

On his return to Africa, Fr. Moss spoke to the pastors of two Oblate parishes, St. Ann's and Christ the King in Durban, about recruiting parishioners as team members. With funding from the US Province Sharing Fund, three men and four women came to the United States to experience the retreat. Back in Africa, they began recruiting parishioners for the experience. Meanwhile, the outreach arm of the movement, ACTS Mission, raised funds through bake sales, donations, etc., to send 24 men and 28 women to Africa to present 2 retreats, one for men, one for

women in different centers from July 19-22. Thus, the first ACTS experience was presented in Africa to 47 enthusiastic men and 46 women. (*OMI USA, September 2007*)

From the Provincial Treasurer

1. Pious and Christmas Collection Envelopes

These were given out at the Annual Oblate Retreat. If any have not collected these or were not at the retreats to collect them, please contact Fr. Merlin Ince, the Province Fundraiser (031 2086912 or 0832706462)

2. Employees in Oblate Communities/Houses

We are coming to the end of the year. For the purposes of Provident Fund contributions, we need to be informed **a month in advance** of all changes: salary adjustments, retirements, resignations, new staff etc

Provincial's Diary

NOVEMBER

13-14 Provincial Council Meeting,

DECEMBER

3. Provincial Assembly Bulawayo
6 Provincial Assembly Durban
7 Patronal feast (O.L. Fatima Durban North)
24-31 Retreat Cedara

Dates to Give Thanks

NOVEMBER

06	Sipho KUNENE	Birthday
11	Jean-Lambert NZAJI KALALA	Birthday
14	Nhlanhla NKOSI	Birthday
20	Paul HORROCKS	Birthday
21	Karl STRUVE	Birthday
23	Mthokozisi MNCWABE (Schol)	Birthday
27	Lams MEMELA	Birthday

DECEMBER

02	Merlin INCE	Birthday
06	George PURVES	Ordination
06	Callistus KHATHALI	Ordination
08	Albert DANKER	Birthday
08	John NGUBANE	Ordination
08	Duncan MACKENZIE	Ordination
08	Msizi MICHELSON	Ordination
08	Brian DUFFEY	Ordination
09	Thomas ZONDI	Birthday
10	Albert DANKER	Ordination
10	Derrick BUTT	Ordination
10	Wayne WELDSCHIDT	Birthday
15	Noel COUGHLAN	Birthday
16	Michael GUMEDE	Ordination
16	Lams MEMELA	Ordination
16	Paneng MOHLAKOANA (Schol)	Birthday
18	Allan MOSS	Birthday
20	Daniel CORIJN	Ordination
21	Paul DECOCK	Ordination
29	Paul DECOCK	Birthday

Errors and omissions contact the Administrative Secretary (admin@omi.org.za)

OMI NATAL Update

Newsletter of the Natal Province of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.
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