

AMMI *Lacombe* Canada MAMI

Oblate Spirit



Christmas 2021

Seeds of Hope



Planting the Seeds of Hope



Christmas might seem to be the wrong time of year to work with a gardening theme, but this sure seems to be a time in our lives where we need to sow Seeds of Hope. We need hope for our health (COVID), hope for the future of humans and the Earth, and hope to heal damaged relationships.

The De Mazenod Farm in Hamilton once again serves as a great metaphor for all aspects of hope. A bountiful harvest in its first year of operation has helped feed thousands who grace the volunteer-led operation at De Mazenod Door every day of the year. The demand is soaring (more than 120,000 meals served this year) while the financial support is declining because of pandemic-related costs to donors.

So, as we pondered our annual Christmas list, one of the farm's requests was donations for seedling plants, which are gifts that multiply. Another is to help defray the costs of a new well to provide water for the farm, a need that was brought into sharp focus this year because of the heat wave and ensuing drought experienced.

From Canada (Christmas hampers and toys for children in Edmonton), to Peru (milk for babies and shelter for the poor), to Kenya (blankets and warm clothing for the elderly), there is no shortage of need for those most in need, those living on the fringes of society.

We are always so thankful for your prayers and support of the Oblates. It is no coincidence that where you find the Oblates, you will find those who most need our help.

May you experience a blessed, healthy and peaceful Christmas season.

John and Emily Cherneski
Communications Coordinators



Christmas Wish List

CANADA OUTREACH

- ~ De Mazenod Door and Farm \$50
- ~ Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples \$50

KENYA

- ~ School Fees for Children \$50
- ~ Medical Care for Prisoners \$25
- ~ Food Parcels for Needy Families in Slum and Parish..... \$50
- ~ Blankets and Jackets for Elderly \$50

PERU

- ~ Bibles and Notebooks \$10
- ~ St. Clotilde Hospital \$25
- ~ Houses – Building Materials and Labour..... \$100

Canada

A NEED TO GROW

BY DIANE DOWNEY

HAMILTON – The De Mazenod Door remained open during the entirety of the COVID-19 pandemic and we served more than 117,000 meals during 2020. We are already poised to far surpass that number for 2021 even though donations remain down, much due to corporate cuts because of the pandemic.

On top of food costs, other supplies necessary have doubled in price, especially moving toward a greener, more environmentally-friendly way of serving. We believe that we are all called to be good stewards of our earth and it's integral that we do our part.

We have been so pleased with the fruit and vegetable yield as well as the eggs that the chickens and farm have produced this year for use at our De Mazenod Door for meals for our guests! The earth there has been worked, tilled and readied and contains much love and an abundance of Holy Spirit-driven fertilized ground, perfected for planting.

Christmas donations to De Mazenod Door will help support the well and water projects, lumber, farm equipment, plants for 2022, meals and supplies.

A bountiful harvest





Barn raising

During this first year of our farming venture, we acquired mobile vats to hold water to use with hoses connected for watering of the farm, especially during a large part of the summer that brought a drought to our area. At this writing, we have just dug down 120 feet to get a well so watering becomes much easier in the future. Ensuring that all of the plants got enough water was not an easy task during 2021!!

We are in the midst of building an outbuilding/barn that will hold equipment, including tractors, and will also serve as a regular barn because ... the animals are coming! Two by two! Along with our laying hens, our goats and donkeys will soon be in their new home! These will provide much calming as they are extremely therapeutic.



Our hope is to have a small petting farm for children and visitors, and trails have been made for some wagon rides. There is so much happening at De Mazenod Farm, each and every day. It's like a little piece of Heaven of our very own. It is so peaceful and so prayerful! We hope that everyone has the opportunity to experience it.

Fr. Tony with a new arrival



As well, this pandemic gave cause for us to totally think outside the box. For a year and a half now, we've opened up St. Patrick's, our beloved, newly-renovated parish outside of mass hours so that our homeless population could come inside daily for respite, a snack, a place to get washed, have a nap in a pew and/or use the facilities. The entire world was screaming 'wash your hands' and such a large part of our population had nowhere to go or any place to do such a thing.

This non-profit organization isn't one to rest on its laurels or sit still very long, waiting for 'something' to happen.

We are working hard every single day and because of that, miracles are happening!

Church happens here every single day at De Mazenod Door, Farm, Housing, and the Rest and Hygiene station - all beyond the building walls. Yet, God and St. Eugene de Mazenod are right there, smack dab in the middle of it all.

*(Diane Downey provides program support for
De Mazenod Door Outreach at
St. Patrick's Parish in Hamilton, Ont.)*



THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS

BY SUSAI JESU, OMI, AND MARK BLOM, OMI

EDMONTON – As summer turned to fall and the calendar turned to September, we at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples were reminded that the Christmas festive season loomed large on the horizon. Although these ministries are constantly on our minds, it was time to put the planning into high gear for Christmas. The Christmas events always add to our daily outreach ministries of our food bank items, daily lunches and clothing program and run simultaneously together.

The children's Christmas party has grown so large that we were required to divide the party into two parties.

Approximately 800 children receive a minimum of two gifts each during the party. These children may not receive a gift during the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The children also enjoy clowns, face painting and balloons shaped into animals during these parties.

Our Christmas hamper program is designed to ensure those less fortunate will have an excellent meal on Christmas



Christmas party 2020



Christmas party 2020

Day. The hampers come complete with a turkey, potatoes, gravy, stuffing, canned vegetables, cereal and all the trimmings for a Christmas Day celebration. Last year more than 3,200 family members that would not have had access to a meal on Christmas Day received groceries.

For the single folks, a Christmas Day meal with turkey and all the trimmings is prepared and served to those that do not have anywhere to go on Christmas. In 2020, a total of 41 turkeys were cooked over a three-day period to serve between 700 and 800 people.

All our charitable ministries are operated through our parish offices and staffed by up to 150 volunteers. We do not have one paid volunteer in any of our programs. Our annual budget needs to raise in excess of \$50,000 for these charitable ministries. We humbly seek your support in order that we may continue to do the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis has called us to look at our relationship with creation and our use of resources so that we create a culture of sustainability out of reverence for God and one another. Material gifts are



Delivery of food hampers



Preparation of food hampers



Susai Jesu, OMI

very meaningful to children and Sacred Heart has a tradition of offering gifts to children of the inner city who would not likely receive a gift at Christmas.

We now offer gift cards to children instead of buying, wrapping, and presenting gifts to kids knowing that these gifts may not suit them. Gift cards allow the children the joy of finding something they really like at the store. It's exciting for them and we feel that these gifts will be appreciated and not soon discarded. In this small way we try to honor the concerns of creation and some of the vulnerable who live upon it.

Christmas donations to Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples will go to the children's Christmas party and Christmas hampers for the needy.

WANTED

YOUR STORIES!

There are many charities and good causes that solicit your support. Yet for some reason you have chosen to offer the Oblates your prayers, friendship and assistance.

We are curious:

Why did you choose us?

How did you hear about the Oblate missionary work?

How have the Oblates supported, inspired and encouraged you?

What are some of your best memories of Oblates and their missionary work?

Send your stories (and photos) to:
lacombemissions@yahoo.ca



Kenya

THE VALUE OF ELDERS

BY PRAVEEN MAHESAN SELVADURAI, OMI

KIONYO PARISH, Kenya – A basic need for every human being is to be respected and valued. We learn to value people when we need them, but our faith teaches us to value the relationship rather than their productivity. As I spend my precious time in Kionyo Parish, I see the need of valuing our elders, especially the *wazee* and *wamama*, mature men and women who fought a good fight to establish the faith in Kionyo Parish.

Some even went to jail for a few nights many years ago, due to the distrust and dislike of some people. But all is forgiven and peace among all remains, although one cannot neglect the value of our large water project by the Oblates, MAMI members and other benefactors in partnership with the local people. Suddenly people were much appreciating the partnership with the Catholics.

As I carry the Body of Christ to the sick and elderly, I feel their need for respect and being valued in the last part of their lives. Even though they are older now, and less energetic and active, when we speak about matters of faith they recall the mercy and love of God, despite all their hardships. They become excited when they hear that baba padre amekuja na Ekaristi (Father has



Christmas donations to Kenya will contribute to school fees for children, medical care for prisoners, small food parcels for needy families in the slum/parish and warm blankets or jackets for the elderly.

come with Holy Communion). I rarely see such excited faith in the younger generation, who are sadly caught up in technology.

We move on with the pain of frustration unless we value our elders. I remember the last person I anointed and last person I laid to rest. I

always insist (with the catechist and family members), that the Eucharist of Jesus Christ must be brought to them.

I came to realize that old age is not “expired material” but a valued part of humanity in the eyes of God. We are now preparing to celebrate with them a special Elders Day.

Let me suggest that this Christmas can be a surprise for them with the gift of warm blankets and jackets, to show our warmth and love.



GIFT PAYMENT OPTION



We have the ability to accept donations by way of credit card! Please complete the gift form enclosed, visit our website at www.omilacombe.ca/mami/donations/ to give on-line, or call our office toll free: 1-866-432-6264 and we will be pleased to assist you in facilitating your donation to the Oblate missions.

Peru

THE GIFT OF WATER

BY BLAISE MACQUARRIE, OMI

CHINCHA ALTA, Peru – One day Fr. Santiago approached me about a social problem in Fatima, one of his many communities in his Peruvian parish.

He said one of the communities, where 500 families live in reed shacks, does not have clean running water. He asked if I could help and my response was a quick yes. I told the good Father that I would take on the project but I would need the signature of the local bishop. No problem, he said, because they are great friends.

The first thing I did was visit the leader of the community, and we formed a committee of three men and a woman. We developed a plan for the water system, and outlined the responsibilities of the committee.

Each family was to pay \$3 for all types of tube fittings, glue and so on. Also, each family was to dig a specific length of ditch and they were to provide their own shovel for the digging.

With plans in hand, we went to see the bishop who lived 100 kilometres away in a city called Ica. He gave me a hug and made me feel comfortable. He checked the plans, smiled, signed and stamped them and wished me well with the project. I must say, God rest his soul, he was a very good person

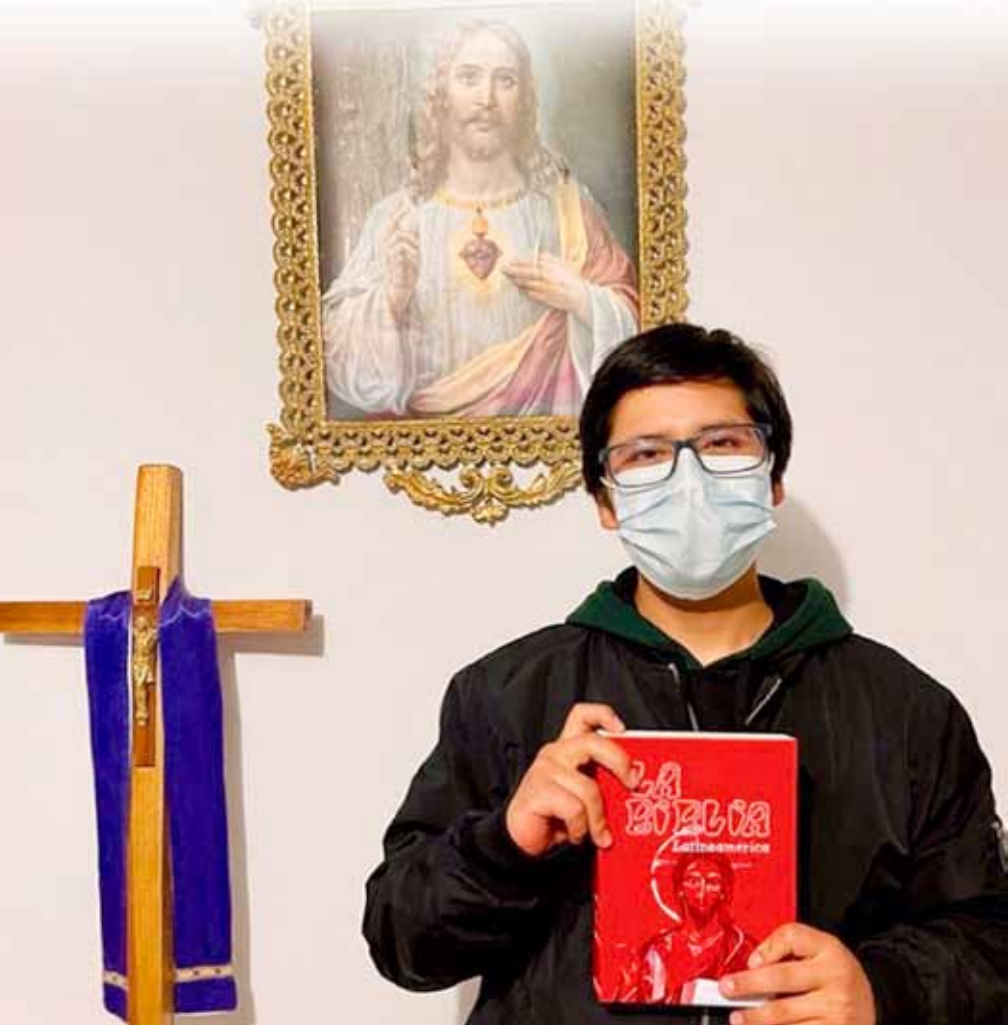


and a great bishop. He actually let me build our parish house four blocks from the parish church!

I wrote a note to another great Oblate priest, Fr. De Gaul in Holland. Two weeks later I received a letter from Fr. De Gaul approving the project, and a check soon arrived to pay for the necessary piping.

I then met with a company that makes truck springs to ship overseas. They send several truck trailers loaded with the springs from Chinchá Alta to Lima. As these

Christmas donations to Peru will help buy bibles for young people in the Andes, notebooks for school children, building materials for houses and the needs of Santa Clotilde Hospital.





trucks were usually empty returning from Lima, I asked the boss if he would help us transport 600, five-metre-long pipes back to Chinchá Alta. He agreed, never batting an eye.

The loaded truck arrived at the parish at about 5 p.m., just when a group of teenagers were taking a break from the retreat they were attending. We needed a number of people to put these tubes in storage, and the teenagers were only too willing to help.

With the tubes stacked in a safe place, it was a question of how to get them to the community for the project. Early the next day I asked the committee to begin the process of digging the ditches that were already marked with white lime.

Overjoyed to learn the tubes had arrived, men and women went into action. Much of the digging was done by candlelight at night because many worked in fields during the day.

The next step was to move the pipes. In speaking with the committee, I suggested we form a human chain by having all able-bodied people come to our parish, pick up a tube and walk. And they gladly did.

There were elderly women and men, young girls and boys,

children carrying a tube, one at each end.

They formed a long line and had to walk two miles in the heat of the summer. They chatted as they walked, excited with the anticipation of clear running water at their homes. Their long line passed through the centre of Chincha Alta and, as you can imagine, they blocked traffic. But no one was offended because this community was doing something concrete and necessary for their lives.

Once delivered, work began on placing the tubes in ditches. Not a penny was spent on manual labour, but the smiles on their faces were worth a million dollars.

To date we have worked on 22 clean running-water projects. Thousands of families now enjoy that precious liquid at their homes.



Check out our Facebook page:



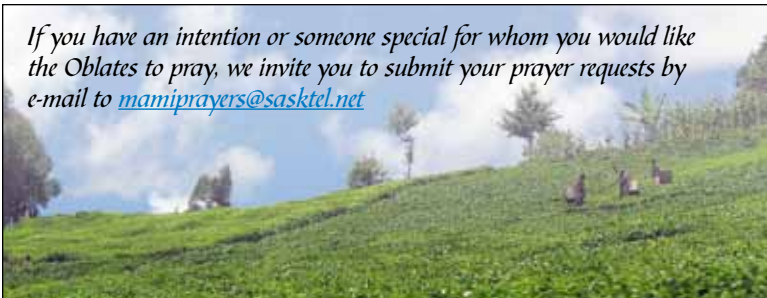
Lacombe Canada MAMI

Website: <https://www.omilacombe.ca/mami/>



YouTube Lacombe MAMI Oblate Missions

If you have an intention or someone special for whom you would like the Oblates to pray, we invite you to submit your prayer requests by e-mail to mamiprayers@sasktel.net



Eye-opening road trip

BY DIANE LEPAGE, AMMI Lacombe
Canada MAMI Executive Director

SASKATOON – One of my dear friends, Tracey, reached out and invited me to participate in a special gathering in late September at the Muscowequan Indian Residential School, the last residential school still standing in Saskatchewan. Its doors closed in 1997.

Tracey belongs to the Prairie Rivers Reconciliation Committee, one of several reconciliation committees that have formed across Saskatchewan. Their purpose is to build strong relationships and long-term commitments towards reconciliation, with education being a priority for the committee, the



Diane and Tracey



PHOTO: PRAIRIE RIVERS
RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

organizations they represent and for the communities at large. It was an honour to be invited and I looked forward to this three-hour road trip with my good friend.

On that Tuesday morning I rose early to drive to Aberdeen to join Tracey for a drive I knew would be filled with laughter, lots of chatting and time for serious discussions.

Due to a number of unexpected construction projects, we were slightly delayed and I was a bit anxious because we were going to be late and I didn't know what to expect. As we neared the area, we saw an Indigenous man on the side of the road wanting a lift.

I jokingly said, "Pick him up!" and to my surprise, Tracey turned the car around to give him a ride. The first thing he said when he got into the vehicle was, "I come in peace and I will leave you in peace."

Wow!

"Curtis" lives in the area and just wanted a 10-minute ride to the local store so he could buy some wild meat. As we were dropping him off, he took out a small piece of paper, wrote down his name and address and asked us to send him a Christmas card. I don't send Christmas cards, but I definitely will be sending one to him this year. What a beautiful soul to have met that morning.



PHOTOS: PRAIRIE RIVERS
RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE



We finally arrived at the school, a huge looming building at the end of a long, picturesque driveway with trees lining both sides of the road.

On this beautiful autumn day, there were about 40 people gathered outside, some with orange shirts and some wearing cultural clothing. We stood together and listened to heart-wrenching stories from survivors as they shared about the devastating emotional, physical and sexual abuse they endured as children.

A special song written by Cindy Paul, entitled He Can Fancy Dance, was played, a very moving piece of music and lyrics.

Now it was time to enter the building. Before entering, I took part in a smudging ceremony for the very first time and can only describe it as being so very sacred.

Using our flashlights, we were guided through the decrepit hallways and rooms where this dark era of history took place. Walking from room to room, floor by floor, the air was very heavy.

How can one truly grasp the intergenerational impacts that this trauma has had, the effects leading to addictions and premature deaths?

It was a relief to open the back door and walk out into the sunlight once again, only to be met with a green patch of grass holding unmarked graves.

Part of me wanted to scream that this place needs to be torn down, that we need to remove this constant reminder and help take away the pain of so many people. I had a feeling of total helplessness.

Some say this building could serve as a historical educational centre and be used as a healing lodge.

I can't change or fix the past, but this road trip encouraged me to continue to be a part of the healing, with the first step being to meet with survivors ... and to listen deeply!



Kenya

NOTEBOOK

BY GERRY CONLAN, OMI

AUGUST 14

NAIROBI – I was happy to hear Leonard, one of our youth members, was able to bring his fiancé and baby home from Chogoria Hospital. He wanted to pass by Kionyo so he could get them blessed. They named the little girl after my mother, Colleen. I did think it strange he asked me mom's name a couple of weeks ago! He said I've been a good mentor to him for the last five years.



Baby Colleen



Gerry Conlan, OMI

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 cases are increasing in Kenya but no one is panicking – only 29 people have died.

We had the public health officer come and take samples of the 17 students, Oblates and staff who live here. Within 24 hours we heard all were negative. We thank God.



Farm manager
Euticus and
his sons

AUGUST 21

Our Namibian Diocesan priest had a COVID relapse and went back to hospital – but after a few hours was discharged and given an asthma puffer and it has helped. He is still doing well and we thank God for that.

On my way to Kisaju, I visited a brother from the Xaverian Missionaries of Yarumal and had a look at their formation house. The self-reliance work is amazing – cows, pigs, ducks, fish farm, chicken hatchery and organic vegetable gardens. I think we need to visit, learn and duplicate this for the Oblates.



Fish farm at the Xaverian Missionaries of Yarumal formation

AUGUST 28

On the health front, we are all still alive. Vaccines are becoming more common. Most of us have had two jabs. Now we are hearing whispers that Astra Zeneca might not be accepted for travel by some countries. It is so frustrating.

This week we celebrated Br. Phelix Johya taking his final vows, and Br. Moses Wafula renewing his vows.



Br. Phelix Johya has taken his vows

I helped out a few of the youth because this is such a tough time for them.

I also had a lovely card from a MAMI supporter in Canada. It is such a treat to receive a real letter! Thanks to the lovely woman from Saskatchewan.

SEPTEMBER 4

Covid-19 is taking a backseat in Kenya due to politics, but cases are still increasing. Although most recover, some are struggling to find hospital space.

Our Oblate youth are surviving and being positive during the hard times. In Nairobi, we welcomed Ian, a new member

who will go to the University of Nairobi in 2022.

One youth member sent me a nice message that highlights the lack of mentorship for many youths in Kenya. They just need someone to listen and give a little advice and encouragement.

He wrote: *"Thanks for your Guidance, taking time to read my messages and respond and being like a father to me. May God bless you for your great kindness and humility. Thanks so much."*

Fr. Daquin is busy looking for support for three elders in the parish who have it rough. We've applied for funding through our



Fr. Gerry blesses a car



St. Gregory Prayer House in Larmudiac parish

Oblate Missionary Associates (MAMI) in Canada. I include the descriptions here because they highlight the struggles for many elders in Kenya:

Case 1: Saharah is an 85-year-old woman, guardian of two abandoned grand-children. She is a widow living in a wooden house with a poor leaky roof. She is often exposed to cold and rain. The muddy floor, especially during the dry and rainy seasons, exposes her to serious risks, mainly respiratory and parasitic diseases. We'll be helping replace the roof and installing new wooden walls.

Case 2: Zip is a 53-year-old woman and physically challenged. She struggles to walk with confidence and, as a result, she does not have the required potentials to work in a salaried job. She is very faithful to weekly and Sunday masses, and is a devoted volunteer church worker. She is not married, probably due to her disability, and she comes from a family background in poverty. Her house is in bad shape. The local community helps her with money to cater for her basic needs. The most significant help to her will be to improve her housing to serve long term.

Case 3: Joseph is an old man of more than 80 years, deaf and immobilized in the house due to his age and health issues. His wife is aged as well, mentally challenged, and suffering from a stroke. Joseph is a committed Christian who devoted himself to maintaining the Irinda Church compound fence

for many years until age forced him to remain indoors. He's now incapacitated by his age and health problems. His home requires refurbishment to fix broken wooden doors and windows, requires a cement floor and they need a good pit latrine.

I finally collected the three outstanding work permits for Frs. Faustin, Constant and myself. We need these to remain in Kenya, and the changeover to a new digital version caused a delay of four months.



Fr. Greg installs an activated sliding gate control

SEPTEMBER 11

Fr. Dionisius updated me about the violence in Laikipia County where many people are being terrorized by gangs of pastoralists. The pastoralist gangs have M16 machine guns while the police have AK47s. The problem is not simple. For many years the pastoralists have been pushed off their traditional grazing lands and now their cattle and goats are struggling to find water and feed all year round. This violence happens every year. The government needs to help create more jobs for the youth out there as they are the main people running around with guns. People are starving and can't find enough work.



Fr. Greg's reaction to bee stings

We are very grateful that Fr. Greg is still with us. He almost died last week after he decided to check the bees at 2 p.m. (not a good time), and they seriously attacked him. Not sure how he got to Urafiki Clinic next door, but Maria gave him a special injection and he was



Concrete is poured for the base of a storehouse at the Karen residence

able to breathe again. He had started swelling up and struggling to breathe. Thanks be to God he survived.

We were happy to receive news that Br. Benjamin and Br. Wekesa had renewed their vows in Cameroon. We also received a few nice pictures of the Kionyo youth coming together for Adoration and some sharing time.

SEPTEMBER 19

Fr. Augustine celebrated his anniversary of ordination and we enjoyed a little celebration with him. He was very grateful, saying: *"Although I'm away from home, I feel at home."*

A few weeks ago, Br Charles (in Rome) sent some nice pictures of his time in France visiting the birthplace of St. Eugene at Aix.



Br. Charles and scholastics in Rome visited the Founder's Tomb



Fr. Gerry offered a retreat for the Mother Teresa Sisters

SEPTEMBER 25

I presented a retreat to the Mother Teresa Sisters at their Kasarani house, where they have about 100 boys and men with various disabilities – physical and mental. They are very dedicated caring for the most abandoned. Not far away they have another house for girls and women with disabilities.

On the way to the retreat, I stopped to give youth member George a new batch of eye minerals I had received from Australia. He's most grateful. Four years ago he was diagnosed with some complicated eye disease and was expected to go blind within two years. His eyesight is now slightly improved since taking this special mix of vitamins and minerals. God is good.

George Arithi, 56, the chairperson of our church building committee, died suddenly. He was the second principal of St Eugene's Day Secondary School in Kionyo, the first day secondary school in all of Méru County.

This school started a revolution in education throughout the whole country and allowed almost all teenagers to attend secondary school. A big thanks to Oblates Ken Forster, William Stang, Harold Kaufman, Sholto Douglas and all the early Oblates in the mission for kick-starting that idea amidst much criticism. The school quickly reached the top 10 of all schools in the whole county.

OCTOBER 3

We were happy to reconnect with Christine, our youth member, who is teaching at a school in Tharaka Nithi: *"So unfortunate from January we've lost 5 girls to early marriages. The children lack role models and they don't see the importance of education."* It is tough for her to turn up every day and try to be positive. But she is doing well.



Trenches are dug for the water project at the Kiirua farm

At a coffee break in Karen with my elderly friend, Eliz, we got talking about jigsaw puzzles and how they can be a great way of relaxing and forgetting about stress. The feeling when you complete it is good. So, I started thinking about whether we can make low cost jigsaw puzzles ourselves and share them with the poorer schools. They would need to be made of wood, otherwise they would be destroyed in one month.

Several members of our Oblate youth group in Nairobi have decided we will go and give talks on a monthly basis to the children. One by one (instead of all at once), we can have a positive input: young people talking about their struggles, but also sharing their success. We have a surveyor, an IT guru, an architect, a nurse, a teacher, a beauty queen, a statistics expert, a banker, a lawyer, and others who are now working.

This week I was very happy to hear from Fabian, one of our youth group members who recently became a lawyer, who shared that he's established an office with a partner and is ready to receive business. All the group were happy for him, so we shall see what we can do to send a bit of work his way. It is always tough starting off in life. I think a blessing of his office will help.

What could a “Synodal Church” look like?

BY JOE GUNN

OTTAWA – The word “synod” does not appear on your computer’s spell check. What does it mean, and why are Catholics speaking so often about it these days?

The word synod comes from a Greek word meaning “assembly” or “meeting”, and it is synonymous with the Latin word *concilium* meaning “council”. In Catholicism, synods are meetings of bishops, although there have been some diocesan synods in Canada where laity were engaged in dialogue and future planning exercises. In short, the best understanding of the term could be expressed as “the path taken together.” This requires listening, dialogue and shared discernment.

Even though the term and concept of “synodality” cannot explicitly be found in the documents of Vatican II, recent theological studies have suggested this idea is a continuation of the desired renewal begun there. Today, synodality is key to understanding Pope Francis’s pontificate.

In 2015, Pope Francis stated, “It is precisely the path of synodality that God expects of the Church of the third millennium ... What the Lord is asking of us is already in some sense present in the very word ‘synod’!”

Francis has announced that the next Synod of Bishops will take place in October 2023. The date was pushed back to encourage the participation of all Catholics in its preparation. The theme of the Synod speaks directly to the pope’s intention: *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*.

The first phase of this synodal “path” is a process rather than an event. Six months of consultations are to take place in every diocese, with all the baptized, from October 2021 to April 2022. The



second phase (September 2022 to March 2023) is the “continental” phase. For example, bishops in Canada and the United States will collate their responses to the questions posed by the Holy See and submit them to Rome. The final phase will take place in October 2023 with the Synod of Bishops meeting in Rome.

Recent headlines have created unease among many Canadian Catholics. Difficult issues have arisen about empty pews, the absence of youth, the role of our church in residential schools and the cover-up of incidents of sexual abuse. Rather than pretending such problems don’t exist, it would be much healthier to learn together about renewed paths toward change. The process of preparing for this Synod presents exactly this kind of grace-filled possibility for inclusion, participation, and missionary conversion.

In Germany, for example, the process of what is being called “der Synodaler Weg” invites Catholics to focus on four themes: the distribution of power, the place of women, the priesthood today and sexual morality. Here, there is no shirking from the need for change.

Readers interested in sharing their views and engaging in this “path taken together” can contact their diocesan office for details. The Synod preparatory documents and diocesan guides for participation are on-line at <https://www.synod.va/en.html>

(Joe Gunn is the executive director of Le Centre Oblat – A Voice for Justice)

Snowflakes from Heaven Rosary



Celebrate Our Lady of the Snow's story with this beautiful rosary. Light blue shimmering glass beads combine with snow-white beads to form the decades of the rosary. The Our Father spacers are marked by silver snowflakes in honour of Our Lady of the Snows. The rosary's round centerpiece features Our Lady of the Snows, and an ornate crucifix completes this devotional piece.

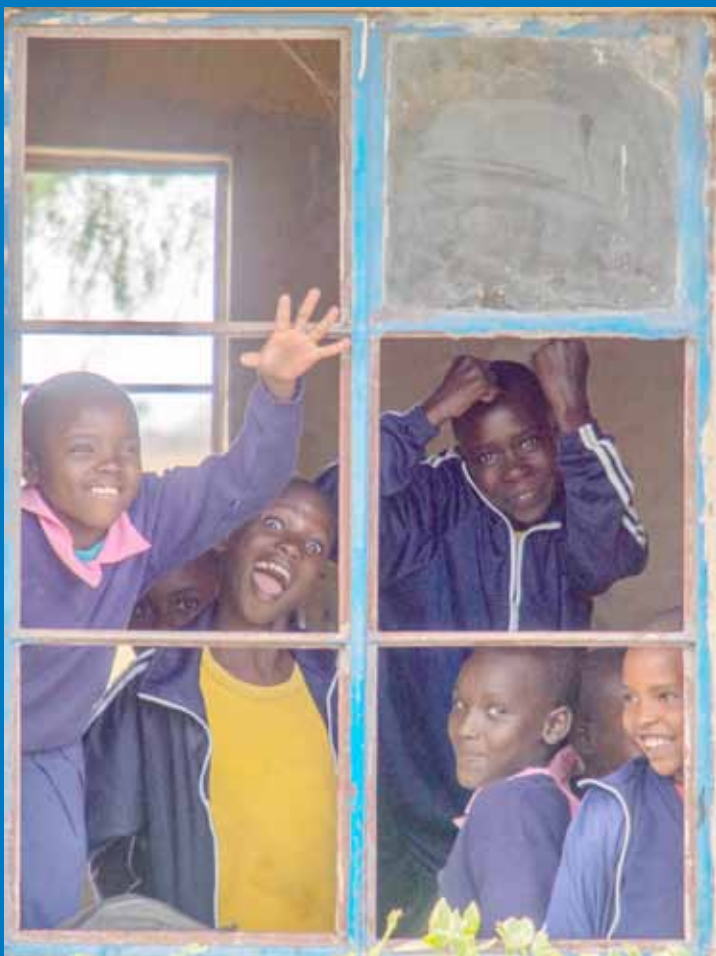
(One per household as quantities are limited.)

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To take advantage of this tax-saving offer, please call Diane Lepage (1-866-432-6264) at our office for further information. A minimum market value of \$5,000 is suggested. We would be happy to facilitate this exchange that benefits you and the poor of the Oblate missions. To view an excellent instructive tutorial on how you can increase the value of your donation of securities and earn a tax credit at the same time: <https://omilacombe.ca/powerful-way-leave-legacy-2/>



Every cent of every dollar
you give will go ***entirely***
to the mission works
and ministries of the Oblates.



Have you
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Oblates*
as a beneficiary
in your will?

*Your gift to
AMMI Lacombe Canada MAMI
would ensure that the good
ministry and mission works of the
Oblates continues in Canada and
throughout the world. You could
even specify an Oblate mission
that is dear to your heart.*




**Communications
Coordinators:**

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