


AMMI *Lacombe* Canada MAMI

Oblate Spirit



Christmas 2023

Peace



A Christmas prayer



Perhaps we are expecting too much from our leaders around the globe. One would have thought we would have learned more from two disastrous world wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York, to name just a few conflicts. Last year it was Russia invading Ukraine, and just recently we saw war break out in the Mideast that started with an attack on Israel.

Even though it is so frustrating, and we feel so helpless when we hear the news, we know there are those among us who are willing to open their hearts and reach out with prayers and support for those in need.

Amazingly, our Christmas story is based in Bethlehem, which is in the Palestinian-controlled West Bank, 10 kilometres from Jerusalem, a global cultural and religious centre just 100 kilometres south of Nazareth in Israel, the home of Jesus in his youth.

Can a territory this small have such a huge impact on our world? Obviously! Can't people who live within kilometres of one another find it in their hearts to live peacefully? Obviously not!

Each time there is a confrontation on our small planet, the poorest people seem to pay the biggest price. We continue to try in our small way to reach out to those most in need ... to house, to feed, to educate, to help heal. That is the Oblate way. Hopefully, that is a roadmap to peace. Please join us on that journey.

John and Emily Cherneski
Communications Coordinators

Christmas Wish List



CANADA OUTREACH

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

KENYA

~ Prison Ministry	\$25
~ Children's Schooling.....	\$50
~ Needs of the Elderly.....	\$40
~ Families in Need.....	\$50

PERU

~ Br. Blaise's Mission Works.....	\$50
~ Santa Clotilde Hospital.....	\$25

UKRAINE

~ St. Nicholas Church Psychological Support Centre	\$100
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Kenya Wish List

Prison Ministry

Ministering to the poorest of the poor and the abandoned is fundamental to St. Eugene's vision. This includes the women in Langata Women's Prison who range in age from 18 to 30, many of whom are single mothers. In addition to spiritual and pastoral care, the Oblates try to assist with the most basic needs, including toiletries, medication, and blankets.

Children's Schooling

Schools in St. Eugene De Mazenod Parish are government-run, but come under the sponsorship of the parish. This includes a primary school and two secondary schools. The majority of the students come from communities that are economically and educationally disadvantaged. As Kenya's economy weakens, families struggle to pay for school fees and even for food for their children. The Oblates recognize the importance of education for the advancement of the children and assist where they can.



Elderly

During pastoral visits, the Oblates realize that many elderly lack the bare necessities such as mattresses and blankets. A basic need for every human being is to be respected and valued. It would be wonderful to provide a gift of a warm blanket or a mattress in addition to the Body of Christ.

Families

The lingering effects of COVID and the weakening economy in Kenya have had a painful impact on the livelihood of all peoples to whom the Oblates minister. This includes people living in the slums as well as small-scale farmers and people who are self-employed. Some families lack basics such as warm clothing and blankets or something as simple as a bicycle for transportation to their workplace. Providing water through the various bore holes has been beneficial in providing a source for clean water. It is our hope that we could provide small solar power stations to address the unreliability of power, especially in remote areas.

Fr. Greg surveys the new solar system at the postulancy





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

De Mazenod Door responds to increasing needs

BY BRIDGET SAULNIER AND DIANE DOWNEY

HAMILTON – Given the tough economic times facing Canadians, and the nation-wide housing crisis, 2023 has been a most challenging year at De Mazenod Door Outreach. The hardships faced by people in our community are motivating our entire team to do more for the people we serve in Hamilton, Ontario's inner city!

De Mazenod Door was named after St. Eugene de Mazenod, the founder of the Oblates and the patron saint and intercessor for the poor.

Our guests, who come to the De Mazenod Door for daily meals, are often unhoused or underhoused, living in poverty. Many are living with critical illnesses, injuries and disabilities, and may be coping with addictions and mental health issues.

While the need for the daily meal program continues to grow, the dedicated staff and volunteers find the willpower and the faith to answer the call, and in return, we get to bear witness to the Holy Spirit working among us.

De Mazenod Door officially opened a new state-of-the-art commercial kitchen at St. Patrick Catholic Elementary School on Sept. 1. The blessing and ribbon-cutting ceremony was led by Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, of Hamilton. Bishop Crosby



Bishop Crosby
signs the door

was the first person to sign the door, which was taken from the St. Patrick Parish's Pastoral Centre where the outreach ministry originated. The physical door will be on display in the new space.

The new kitchen provides ample space for volunteers to prepare breakfast and lunch meals that are served every day, year-round, to the growing number of people who are struggling with food insecurity in Hamilton.

The daily meal program is seeing an alarming increase in the number of meals served. As of Aug. 31, there were 99,457 meals served, compared to 85,955 in the same period in 2022. Almost 4,000 meals were served in one September week; on several occasions, between 600 and 700 meals were served in a day.

"We are struggling to keep up with the need, and the need keeps growing," said Fr. Tony O'Dell, OMI, pastor at St. Patrick Parish. He and Fr. Jarek Pachocki, OMI, established the outreach program in the summer of 2012.

Modern new kitchen





Fr. Jarek and friends

“When I stand in this modern new kitchen, I am in awe of how far we’ve come, from our humble beginnings when we started giving out sandwiches and coffee to our neighbours who came to the door of the church,” said Fr. Tony.

“I pray that we can continue to meet our community’s need for support. We are here to serve our guests. We offer them kindness and compassion while helping to meet their most basic human need for food. We simply couldn’t do it without our community partners, generous donors and our many volunteers.”

De Mazenod Door relies on donations and sponsorships to support our programs, and volunteers to deliver all these programs. In addition to the daily food security program, De Mazenod Door has expanded its ministry in 2023 to include the following priority areas:

De Mazenod Housing is an intentional approach to housing for people leaving the shelter system. It provides long-term, safe housing in a sober-living environment. Launched in 2020



during the pandemic, the ministry now houses 16 individuals in two congregate living houses (Eugene's Place for men, and Mary's Ark for women), and two apartments, Eugene's Pad 1 and 2. Two more apartments are being renovated for tenants to move into this fall: Eugene's Pads 3 and 4.

De Mazenod Farm grows fruit and vegetables for the kitchen and provides an environment for students to learn about horticulture and farm animals, as well as a place for

inner city individuals and families to visit and volunteer, close to the city where people can "get away" and relax in nature. The farm is meant to be a place of tranquility and peace for all.

Fr. Tony and Fr. Jarek were thrilled to welcome animals to the farm recently, and our De Mazenod and parish community is referring to them as 'Noah's





Fr. Tony at Humankind Gifts

Ark', as the animals arrived two by two. Miniature goats, horses, donkeys, kittens, ducks, ram sheep and other animals now call the farm home, and there is the promise of horse rides in the future for children.

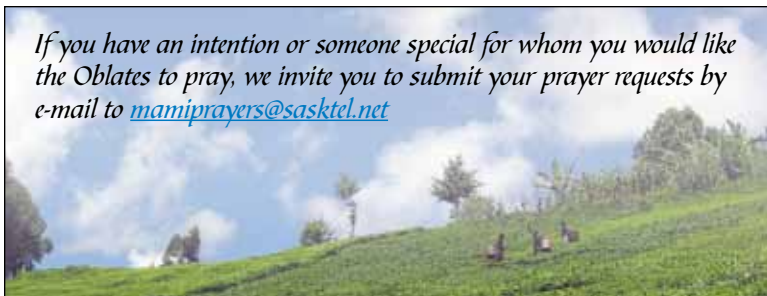
The farm welcomes volunteers and visitors from every walk of life including frontline workers, those suffering with autism, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), acute stress disorder (ASD), anxiety and other

challenging mental illnesses. Two of our goats, TJ & Sutton, have already visited and brought joy to a local nursing home! Beyond focusing solely on the farm's yield of produce to feed the hungry, we wish to develop the farm's potential as a sacred, welcoming space to nourish the spirits of those struggling.

"With the help of many dedicated volunteers we are producing a whole bounty of goodness while cultivating a community of love and compassion," said Fr. Tony.

Humankind Gifts is a social enterprise gift shop selling new items and donated artisan crafts and artwork, with all proceeds going back to De Mazenod Door outreach.

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



Reaching out to those in need

EDMONTON – On behalf of Sacred Heart of the First Peoples and the thousands of people we serve, we would like to extend a hearty and wholesome THANK YOU to AMMI Lacombe MAMI and their associates for the continued support of all our outreach programs. This support truly makes a substantial difference to many lives. However, not only does the need continue, the demand for a helping hand increases almost daily.

Our outreach programs include the following:

Daily Lunch Program – now serves in excess of 300 people. Each lunch contains a sandwich of meat, cheese, mustard and mayo; a bottle of water or juice; and a treat such as muffin or cookie.

Emergency Hamper Program – approximately 40 food hampers are picked up every week. Each hamper contains non-perishable goods including canned protein, pasta and sauce, vegetables, cereals, juice and bread. Each hamper contains enough food to supply a family of four for two days.

Daily Outreach Clothing – serves from 100 to 200 people daily. Gently used clothing such as shirts and blouses, sweaters, pants, jackets, sweats and hoodies, new underwear and socks and women's feminine needs are distributed.

Volunteers packing lunch bags





Beading class project

World Day of the Poor – on this day a full hot meal and clothing packages are served to 500 people in St. Kateri Hall. In addition to the dinner, these items are distributed to an additional 150 people living on the streets that cannot attend in person.

Children's Christmas Party – Over two separate Christmas parties, 500 children receive gifts and snacks during face painting, singing, balloon animals and other party activities. These children would not otherwise have a gift to open on Christmas morning.

Christmas Hamper Program – Last year more than 400 food hampers were picked up or delivered in order that families would have a Christmas day meal in celebration of the birth of the Lord.

Christmas Day Dinner – this celebratory meal is a traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings. In past years, the attendance at this event has been between 500 and 700 people during the course of Christmas day. This attendance has required that we cook up to 41 turkeys.

All our charitable ministries are operated through our rectory offices and are staffed by up to 100 Sacred Heart Church volunteers during peak periods. We do not have any paid employees working within these programs. The annual budget needed to support the cost of these ministries may exceed \$100,000.



Sewing class

Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples has taken the lead in truth and reconciliation, putting “reconcili-action” into high gear. This has taken the shape of teaching traditional beading, traditional food preparation such as bannock, plains Cree language, drumming and singing, and a sacred sowing circle. In addition to these teachings, we also have programs in knowledge of traditional teachings, promoting mental health and well-being and opportunities to sit and speak with our elders. The annual budget for the truth and reconciliation actions are estimated at \$50,000. If you would like to walk and heal with Indigenous folks, we ask you to consider supporting these Indigenous programs.



Again, as we say thank you, we seek the Creator’s blessings on all of you for your support over the past few years and we pray that support may continue.

May God Bless You All,
Fr. Susai Jesu, OMI
Ron Martineau,
Chair of the
Finance Committee

Drum making

Peru Wish List

Br. Blaise MacQuarrie's projects

Br. Blaise continues to work like the 'energizer bunny.' He currently has four projects under way: a new chapel for one of the parish communities; toilets for the chapel; putting windows and doors into a new classroom; building a larger dormitory at the parish retreat centre. Recently 400 teenagers made a spiritual retreat to get ready for Confirmation. The retreat centre is well used by many groups even from other parishes. Blaise also continues to provide mattresses for the poor, as well as bibles, rosaries, catechisms, and crosses.

Santa Clotilde Hospital

The poor people living in the jungles of the Peruvian Amazon are fortunate to be able to access the Santa Clotilde Hospital located along the Napa River. There is always a need for powdered milk for malnourished newborns, medicine and equipment updates. Patients that can't be treated at Santa Clotilde are moved to the out-patient house in Lima.

Another Br. Blaise project nears completion





Poor families collect trash from the streets

A heart for the poor

BY BLAISE MACQUARRIE, OMI

CHINCHA ALTA, Peru – Not too long ago a couple came to our house, four blocks from the church. Over a cup of hot coffee, they revealed their difficult living situation.

The next morning, my great friend Santiago Geurra joined me to see the couple's place. They live close to our house, and I know the area because we built many houses there. Seeing this family's abode would easily break one's heart.

They opened the crooked wooden door and we had to duck upon entering. Now in, we had to keep ducking because the roof was made of tree branches and feed bags. The place was littered with trash the man (tall and thin) collected from the streets. When we got to the far end of his dwelling, I saw a little cage where he kept some hens. There was a strong smell, but I guess one gets used to that over time.

Their bedrooms were something else ... tiny and broken. When it rained everything got soaked.

In my heart and mind, I had already made a decision for this family of six that included two teenage girls and two younger boys, one sick with something that has no cure.

Before leaving I did ask the man to get the rocks needed for the base. A few days later we returned to this man's shack and the rocks were there for the foundation of their little house.

When we help the families with the building of their little homes, the family pays 30 per cent of the total cost of materials and labour. They do this gladly. This family is not Catholic, but in their poverty they are decent people.

Once their little house was constructed, I asked them if they believe in miracles and urged them to go to the parish church for the 7 p.m. mass.

Santiago, my right-hand man, met the couple (dressed in their best) and seated them at the centre of the church. After mass, Santiago passed them an envelope. They opened it and found their 30 per cent payment ... the same money they gave me! They cried!

A few days later the man came to thank me once again for the miracle, leaving me with a chicken ready to roast.

I gave it to another poor family.



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.

Help for the souls of Ukraine

MAMI funds, raised after Russia invaded Ukraine last year, are being directed to Ukraine, not for guns and bullets to fight a war, but to support those in need.

The ongoing war places a heavy mental and physical burden on the people of the country, many of whom turn to the church for solace. In response to a growing need, St. Nicholas Parish in Kyiv is converting the church's basement rooms into a Psychological Support Centre. MAMI funds have helped offset some of the cost of this major renovation with some of the donations received last year.

Fr. Pavlo Vyshkovskyi, OMI, is the pastor at St. Nicholas. His letter of thanks to our MAMI office outlined the dire situation facing the people of Kyiv.

"The war has been going on for almost 600 days. People become more impatient, embittered, fearful and poor. War takes more and more lives. Last week, we had a funeral in our church of a 47-year-old chairman of our parish council," wrote Fr. Pavlo.

Preparations for
the Psychological
Support Centre



“People who have lost their homes, their loved ones ... their arms and legs in the war, come to the church. In this situation, we want to bring them hope, and your help is even more valuable at this time when there is so much need to rush to help those in need.

“Once again, we would like to thank you very much for not leaving us alone with the enormous pain and suffering that we experience every day in the midst of the sirens and bombings. This situation all the more urges us to create a centre for help and rehabilitation of spirit and body in the basement of our church.

“We remember you in our prayers every day and we ask you not to forget about us. Thank you very much for your solidarity and the gift of your heart. May God reward you and bless you abundantly.”

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



A missionary response to 9/11



Joe Gunn

BY JOE GUNN

Ask a North American if they remember what they were doing on “9/11” and you will likely hear them refer to the year 2001. The shock of passenger jets flying into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon building in Washington, DC, caused almost 3,000 fatalities and precipitated the “War on Terror” half a world away.

But for some Canadian missionaries, “9/11” has other significance, as well.

A new book *“Canada-Chile Solidarity 1973 – 1990: Testimonies of Civil Society Action”* dedicated to the memory of another 9/11 – 50 years ago. On September 11, 1973, a CIA-backed *coup d’état* overthrew the first democratically elected socialist government in the Western Hemisphere. Some 80,000 persons were jailed (including some Canadian citizens), more than 30,000 people were tortured, and 3,200 killed by the military that retained repressive dictatorial power for 17 years.

As a teenage student then, I was inspired by the leadership of missionaries and faith community leaders who opposed this injustice. Catholics organized letter-writing campaigns to defend human rights, end torture and political imprisonment, stop Canadian mining companies and banks from investing in the dictatorship, and settle refugee families.

In the early 1970s the almost 3,000 Canadian missionaries

ministering in Latin America did much more than proselytize.

Forty Oblates of Mary Immaculate from several South American countries had presented a lengthy memorandum to the Canadian government in response to Pierre Trudeau's review of Canadian foreign policy. Oblates argued for a counter-balancing role to the U.S. in the region, because (Canada) "is one of the very few prosperous nations about which there does not linger an odour of repressive colonialism." They denounced the 10 countries living under military dictatorships at the time; they criticized how international debt payments were equivalent to 75 per cent of foreign aid received in the region; they criticized "tied aid" that allowed only Canadian products to be purchased; and demanded that exports from the region be more fairly priced" (IDOC, 1970, pg. 74.) Oblate views received important coverage in Latin America, and in eight Canadian newspapers. An editorial in the Toronto Daily Star agreed with "The Oblate Fathers' Wise Prescription." (TDS, January 10, 1970.)

Canadian faith communities changed federal policy. Churches saved lives by quickly bringing Chilean refugees to Canada. Missionaries had better information on the ground than the Canadian government and media; church leadership at home was informed and committed to act; church staff mobilized effective lobby efforts in Ottawa and engaged their own membership in the pews; and churches worked collaboratively with each other and in partnership with civil society groups.

This is not just a historic account. We might all ponder how our faith communities can once again address today's social justice issues with similar commitment, resolve and organizational capacity?

(Joe Gunn serves as Executive Director of the Centre Oblat: A Voice for Justice. He lived in Latin America for seven years and authored the introduction to Section 1 of the new book referenced in this article.)



Kenya

NOTEBOOK

BY GERRY CONLAN, OMI

NAIROBI, Kenya – We heard from Kisaju

that the mother of our cook had died, so we sent donations. Fr.

Greg Oszust and community attended the funeral. She had been quite sick

for some time. May she rest in peace.



Gerry Conlan, OMI



Kionyo Church at night

I was happy to get a snap of Kionyo church at nighttime and it looks smart with the lighted cross on top. Other landscaping improvements are continuing slowly, which make the place very nice.

Kiirua farm is doing well, but we are having tree issues. As we wait for trees to grow, it was reported to the authorities that two neighbours had stolen some small trees from our “forest.” It means we need to get serious about a boundary fence.

Pruning dead trees
at Kiirua farm





Bible fellowship training

The Méru oak tree seedlings have hardly progressed over four years, and the drought two years ago didn't help. I suggested we dig around each seedling and form a "dam" where we can put manure and mulch to maximise moisture and fertiliser. We also discussed cutting down some dead gum trees (caused by the drought and competition) plus some other small gum trees where we want to plant apple trees.

Six beehives are now installed on the farm and are populated by bees.

AUG. 26

We had a strange and worrying incident at Karen, when Paul (our Australian volunteer), came home from town in an Uber. A small boy had been hiding in a bush watching Paul fiddle with the gate access, entering a temporary code. After Paul entered, the boy tried to enter the code as well. Our guard opened the gate to investigate who was playing around, and the boy dashed inside. Paul was still around so they both looked for the boy and marched him outside.

The pre-novices were demanding Fr. Praveen give the boy food. But he said it is not good to feed them at the gate because tomorrow we will have 50 people doing the same and creating chaos every day. They finally took some bread to the boy. The next day, I spoke to Kennedy, our worker, about the boy and girl at our gate. He said they are his neighbours, and their

parents don't care where the children go. The mother sells vegetables in the market nearby and father repairs bicycles. They both leave early in the morning and return about 9 p.m.

I purchased some high-energy biscuits and gave one packet to Kennedy to give to the children. He said often when he is cooking, they come to see him and say: "Uncle, give us a little food," which he does.

I visited Paul Vorrasi to discover more about the Mirror of Hope charity operating in Kibera Slums. Thankfully their location is on this side of Kibera,



Volunteer Paul Vorrasi at Mater Hospital with Mz Faustino Nyaaagi

so we can easily access it from Karen in 20 minutes. The charity is doing fantastic work and is a good place for our young Oblates to learn and open their imaginations about what can be done. Mirror of Hope is really uplifting and empowering many youth with talks, training and a healthy meal in a beautiful, safe space.



The youth continue to distribute food in the Mathare Slum

Euticus, our farm manager, was busy arranging and supervising a tree cutter on our Oblate farm in Kiirua. We cut down two dead trees in the lower forest, three old pepper trees (one ready to fall onto the cow shed), and four gum trees above the farmhouse that are competing for water with the vegetables and future avocado orchard.

SEPT. 3

The big news this week was the appointment of Fr. Fidele Munkiele, OMI, for a third term of Mission leadership. We thank God for his generosity.

Starting to feel worried about where Kenya is going economically. The government's new taxation laws are killing many businesses, with the result of increased unemployment and half the population going hungry. I had coffee with a neighbour and she told me that family murders are increasing. Dads are killing their children because they have no food to offer them. If true, this is beyond being a sad story, and a great sign of despair.

Now back to the two children from last week living at Karinde just behind our house in Karen. Sadly, they were cooking supper for themselves when the house caught fire and nearly destroyed the houses on either side (these are like blocks of timber units, all shacks joined together). We sent some food with our worker, Kennedy, to help them. He thinks a cloth fell on the fire and they couldn't put it out. Kennedy helped throw water and prevent the neighbours from burning down. Basically, they saved the house, but all the bedding and clothing were destroyed. We are taking a collection in our community to help them.



House fire next door

SEPT. 10

We prayed for the deaths of two Oblates and an Honorary Oblate in Canada this week. Condolences to our brother Oblates there and all their friends and family members.

The youth managed to get to Mathare Slum on Saturday and provide relief for about 50 families. Some of the youth reacted with sadness at the terrible earthquake in Morocco. So let us pray for all the victims and families left without a breadwinner or means to make a living.

The Mission Council met to discuss the extension of our Karen Administration Centre. With the number of men occupying rooms, we are becoming squeezed when we have functions and meetings. When we meet here we reduce our expenses. Next week we have the potential vocation candidates coming. There are 17 candidates, so we are splitting into two groups, and putting two candidates into each room.

I helped with reconciliation at Mary Magdalene Retreat House in Resurrection Gardens. There was a Maltese group called Christian Doctrine running a short retreat for local men in Nairobi. I was impressed by their honesty and courage, leaving great hope for the future.

Solar panels above cars at the postulancy





Méru Gachanka Church construction



SEPT. 17

We had a shock increase in petrol prices, up about 15 cents a litre, and we were told there would be an increase every month until February. Food prices will jump and more people will go hungry. There were furious reactions by people around the country and bus operators immediately increased fares.

Fr. Praveen travelled to Larmudiac parish and addressed the parish leaders to explain the Oblate lay associate program. He had a positive response with some wanting to join immediately, while others said they would share the information with the parishioners.

SEPT. 24

Mwende, the woman Fr. Fidele calls to help with gardening, came asking for work, so I decided to increase the green factor around the house and car park. She broke the hard surfaces with a garden fork and carried some red soil to cover the hard areas, before planting cuttings of the pigface plant which grows well and will be much better than lawn grass during the dry seasons. It always stays green and turn a shade darker during dry spells.

OCT. 1

As I was driving on an errand run, I stopped for a young fellow waving me down on the new bypass road. I motioned for him to get in the back of the truck. He started tapping on the back window, motioning over his ears and mouth to indicate he was deaf. He started writing on his hand, so I thought I better stop before I ran off the road! I motioned him to come in the front seat. He was smiling and writing thank you.

As I passed his turnoff to Mlolongo, I stopped and gave him \$5. He motioned me to keep driving and came to Ideal Ceramics with me. He wrote a longer message after requesting paper by hand signs. By this time, I was already sympathetic to his condition as I have a nephew and niece who are deaf.

He said he's an orphan, 15, returning to the place he stays in Mlolongo after visiting his sick sister, 14, in Langata Hospital. They go to sleep hungry, and have no money for school. I gave him all the cash I had, another \$3. I felt he was genuine, and I was certain he was deaf and mute. As he walked away he looked back a couple of times, and I felt very sad.

These little God moments remind me very much of my privileged life. I wish I could locate him again and try to get him into a safe place. He had no phone and I was too slow to ask for his neighbor's phone contact.

OCT. 8

Br. Charles from Larmudiac attended the National Prayer Day at Subukia Shrine in Nakuru Diocese. This is a shrine established by the Catholic Church for all of Kenya. It has an interesting genesis from back in the 1990s. People from all over Kenya arrived early and departed for home late – I’m sure a lot of people were tired. Surely, we need a lot of prayers and God’s intervention to cleanse the country of corruption.



Subukia National Prayer day



DONATING SECURITIES

to Oblate missionary works

Do you have publicly traded securities that you would like to donate to the benefit of the Oblate missions? You can directly donate your publicly traded securities (shares) to *AMMI Lacombe Canada MAMI* and receive an official income tax receipt while avoiding the payment of capital gains tax.

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/>

Daring to love like Eugene

BY ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS SYLVAIN LAVOIE, OMI

ST. ALBERT – We never know how our ability to love and bless can affect others around us.

Recently, as I was being evacuated out of Yellowknife after a workshop in Delin , NWT, I found myself halted on the bridge boarding the plane, right behind a father, mother and their tall, athletic son. I observed the son gently reach forward to straighten out the collar on his dad’s shirt. The father turned and gazed at his son with a look that I could only interpret as a mixture of love, gratitude and admiration. Then the son stepped back, put an arm around his mother, and said in her ear, “You are the best mom, you are the best cook.” I could not resist piping up behind them, “And I bet he is the best son.” The mother immediately exclaimed loudly, “He is!”

I wanted to tell them I would share this incident with others, but the line suddenly started again, and the family disappeared into the plane. I was left with a feeling of warmth, energy and gratitude at seeing familial love lived out before my eyes.

Children have three deep human needs as they grow up – to be loved, to belong, and to be valued. I am sure these parents blessed their son with a love that met these needs, and now, he could bless his parents with the same love that he experienced.

During my Aix experience and deeper exposure to the founder’s life and legacy years ago, I was struck by his unique ability to express his love and affection for his parents, and mother especially, as well as his Oblates, the poor, and in the end, all of humanity. That impression was deepened by recently reading the volume “Nihil linquendum inausum” –

An Oblate Breviary edited by Fr. Fabio Ciardi, OMI. Over and over again, Eugene's writings, and that of others, reveal that he had a heart as big as the world, and was not afraid to show and share it.

Between our knowledge of Eugene's love for us, and our experience of the unconditional love of Jesus for us, hopefully we can all move to that place where we are so secure in the Father's love, that we can also bless those around us with the same love that we have received, and make the world a better place, one incident, like the one above, at a time.

Were every child in this world loved as they need to be loved in their early years, most of our problems with addiction, crime and depression, would largely disappear.

Perhaps for us, St. Eugene de Mazenod's famous challenge about "leaving nothing undared" could also be rendered "daring to love like Eugene."



Check out our Facebook page:



Lacombe Canada MAMI



Lacombe MAMI Oblate Missions

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





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