

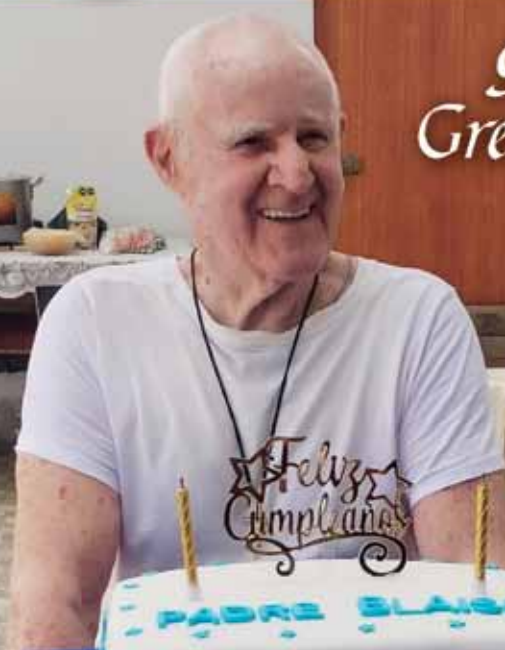
Oblate Spirit

AMMI *Lacombe* Canada MAMI



May 2025

90
Great Years



Everyday heroes



We recently heard much about Alex Ovechkin, who broke Wayne Gretzky's NHL goal-scoring record. They are hockey players. To some, they are heroes. They are entertainers, millionaires.

We don't hear as much about Oblates like Br. Blaise MacQuarrie and Fr. Moe Schroeder. They are Oblates. To many in Peru, they are heroes. They are difference makers, spiritually wealthy but cash poor.

Br. Blaise (cover photo) was recently celebrated by his beloved Peruvian friends on his 90th birthday. He has spent 58 years improving the lives of countless poor families in Chincha Alta, Peru.

Fr. Moe, now retired, spent years establishing and operating a hospital in remote Santa Chlotilde, Peru, breathing life into many who couldn't find or afford medical assistance.

They are just two examples of Canadian Oblates whose mission has been to help those in need. They are both aging, but their legacy work continues. Both want their MAMI friends to continue to support their work in Peru. They couldn't have had such an impact without your ongoing support.

Peru is just one example of several countries where the Oblates have made a huge difference in the lives of those in need. In 2024, support to MAMI reached an astonishing \$1,766,899.41 (see details starting on Page 18).

You, our wonderful MAMI supporters, are our real heroes. You don't score goals; you save and change lives around the world. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

John and Emily Cherneski
Communications Coordinators



St. Dorcas women meet with Canadian visitors

A spiritual high

BY TANYA MYRFIELD-WOLFE

MAMI ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

SASKATOON – What a day it was that Sunday in Méru during a trip to the Oblate Kenya mission! The sunshine and energy set the stage for something truly unforgettable. After a busy morning of masses and community visits, I was ready for more but had no idea what was coming next. Everything changed when we arrived at Gachanka Catholic Church and met the incredible women of St. Dorcas.

I can still feel the energy. We stepped out of the van and excitement filled the air: singing, clapping, and feet stomping in rhythm, turning our arrival into a celebration. Before I even realized it, I was swept into their circle, laughing and dancing, my feet moving to the beat. The joy was contagious, wrapping around me like a warm embrace.

Under the tin-roofed shelter, just outside Gachanka Catholic Church, we gathered for a short but deeply meaningful meeting. The St. Dorcas women had come together with a mission ... to strengthen their community through action.

They named themselves after St. Dorcas, a woman from the early Church known for her kindness and service to those in need. In the Bible, she was described as being “full of good works and acts of mercy.” When she died, the widows she had helped mourned so deeply that they called for the Apostle Peter, who miraculously brought her back to life. She was more

than just generous, she was a pillar of support, a source of hope for the people around her. The women we met in Méru embodied that same spirit. They weren't just doing good; they were transforming lives, ensuring that no one in their community was left behind.

Their projects are impressive. They keep goats for milk, both as a source of sustenance and as a business opportunity. They make soap, raise chickens for eggs, and established a micro-loan system to ensure no woman faces financial struggles alone. Every effort is purposeful, rooted in faith and love. They aren't waiting for change to happen, they are making it happen, together.

But what stood out most wasn't the list of achievements. It was the unshakable spirit behind them.

They cared for the sick, supported one another, and lifted their entire community. Nothing about their work felt small. Every effort carried purpose, every action rooted in faith and love. Watching them, I realized that spirituality wasn't just something they spoke about, it was woven into everything they did.

When we left for supper, their impact stayed with me. Community isn't just about sharing resources; it's about creating a space where everyone feels supported. Strength doesn't come from standing alone, but from standing *together*. The women of St. Dorcas embodied this in every way.



A visit
with the
St. Dorcas
women



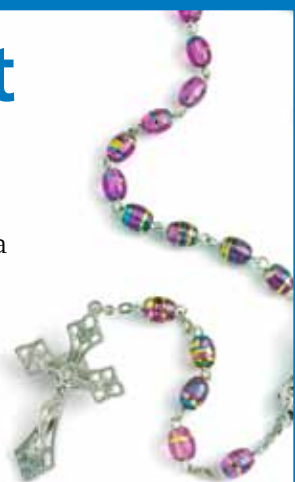
That day in Méru, I wasn't just a visitor, I was part of something bigger. The women of St. Dorcas showed me the true meaning of faith, resilience, and joy. Their energy will stay with me, a reminder of what's possible when people lift each other up.

Tanya Myrfield-Wolfe

Risen Christ rosary

We invite you to receive a Risen Christ Rosary. Purple oval-shaped beads wrapped with wisps of gold and blue metallic paint run the length of this bright rosary. Each glass bead features a multitude of colour and no two beads are exactly the same. The centerpiece is the dimensional image of the Risen Christ.

Please indicate on the enclosed gift form if you wish to receive a Risen Christ rosary.



Experience an Oblate mission awareness tour in Kenya

BY MARY BATTLE

VANCOUVER – As a supporter of MAMI, are you curious about how your donations are utilized to assist the local population? Are you interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the activities of the Oblates in Kenya? Would you like to spend a few weeks living simply and experiencing the joyful lifestyle of the Kenyan people?

If your answer to any of these questions is yes, then you may consider participating in an Oblate mission awareness

School children welcome the Canadian visitors



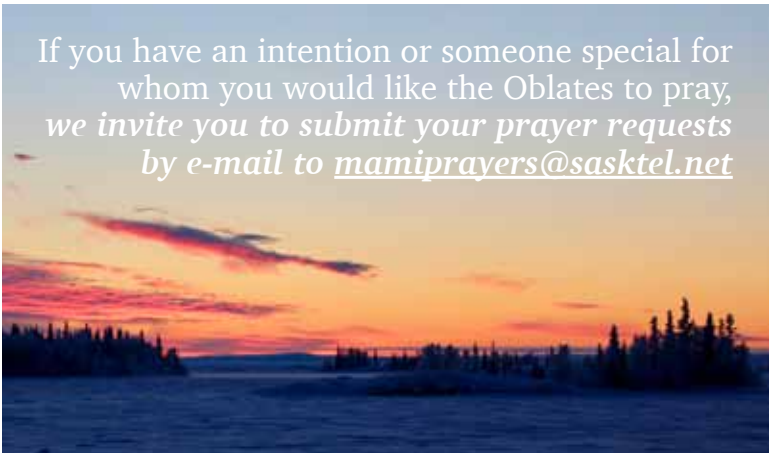
tour. These trips, which last between 17 to 21 days, involve visits to numerous mission sites operated by the Oblates.

Participants will have the opportunity to observe the ongoing work and engage directly with both the Oblates and the beneficiaries of their efforts. While the tour does not involve building schools or digging wells, visitors will interact with teachers and students in local schools and witness first-hand the positive impact of donations on improving the lives of the Kenyan people.

You will be inspired and uplifted by the colourful sights, joyful sounds, and genuine love in which you are immersed while in Kenya. Typically, our mission trips also include a safari for a few days, giving you a chance to experience the breathtaking wildlife and landscapes for which Kenya is renowned.

For those who are looking for inspiration from the resilient Kenyan people, wish to see their contributions in action, and want to support and encourage the work of the Oblates, you won't regret contacting Mary Battle, for further information about an Oblate Mission awareness tour. She can be reached by email at marybattle@telus.net.

This journey promises to be a life-changing experience, filled with heartfelt interactions and moments of beauty amid the simplicity and joy of Kenyan life.



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*



A loving tribute

CHINCHA ALTA, Peru – Bro. Blaise MacQuarrie, OMI, was surprised and celebrated on his 90th birthday by those who have worked with him and whom he has served for many years.



Among those in attendance were men who worked with him in the quarry and building houses, sports fields, chapels, classrooms and more. There were people who knew him since he arrived as a young Oblate to work in Chinchá in 1967.

Each person came with a story and infinite gratitude for everything Br. Blaise has meant in their lives. He enjoyed his day because he was together with those he loves so much ... his friends.



Gifts for Br. Blaise

Some of those who worked with Br. Blaise



Answering the call

BY FR. VADYM DOROSH, OMI

UKRAINE – A few months ago, a military unit approached our Oblate delegation in Ukraine and asked for a chaplain for their brigade. I answered the call as part of my Oblate mission and was drafted into the army to stand with our nation's defenders.

I started as a chaplain for a battalion, and now I minister to a whole brigade spread over six districts. With seven battalions and one chaplain, the need is enormous.

Every day I try to nourish the spiritual lives of these brave men and women. In the midst of war I celebrate Mass in all sorts of conditions. About 50 uniformed officers join me on Sundays and holy days in a renovated church, a sanctuary amid chaos.

I also visit the soldiers at their positions, pray with them, bless them and distribute Bibles. One soldier told me, "Your visits remind us we are not alone – God is with us here."

Supporting soldiers returning from the front is a big part of my work. Building trust is critical as many are struggling with





fear and trauma. But I find they are very open to God in these moments.

A young soldier once asked me, “Father, how do I find peace after all I have seen?” We sat together, and I listened as he shared his burdens. Moments like these show how much spiritual guidance is needed in chaos.

Unfortunately, the war goes on, and the work is enormous. We pray for peace and victory – for our freedom and yours. Another Oblate, Fr. Anton Litviov, is also a military chaplain, and others help when they can. The shortage of chaplains is a big problem across many units.

The Oblate missionaries started their ministry in Ukraine in 1989 among the poor and those who had little contact with the church. Since the Russian invasion in 2022 we have been supporting refugees and those in need.

Today, about 30 Oblates are in Ukraine, Crimea, and Russia. Among us are two auxiliary bishops: Radoslaw Zmitrowicz, OMI, and Jacek Pyl, OMI. Our superior in Ukraine is Fr. Vitaly Podolan, OMI.

Dream for a better world

BY MOSES KHISA, OMI

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – The 38th commemorative march in honour of Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, coinciding with what would have been his 95th birthday, was my fifth time participating in this enriching event since I arrived in the U.S. for studies in 2019.

The temperature was a biting minus 1 C, a good excuse for a Kenyan-born to stay indoors. However, my admiration for MLK as a profound figure and champion of justice inspired me to join the march.

Witnessing the presence of children from diverse backgrounds was a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility in making the MLK Jr. dream, which is our dream, a reality. The vibrancy in the diversity of the marchers that I've experienced has always been moving, reflecting the potential of love in action.

This experience rekindled my dream, instilled by my parents in infancy, that the dream for a better world is attainable.

My father's involvement in justice and my mother's charity to the poor is a dream I have shared since childhood. Although I didn't aspire to be a priest from my initial childhood, the dream of having a better world was foundational in my journey towards becoming a Missionary Oblate.

This year's theme for the march in San Antonio was, "We



Moses Khisa, OMI, at the MLK march

are the dream; it takes all of us.” This resonates powerfully with me. Our MAMI family has continued to do its part in making the dream for a better world come true for others through spiritual and material support, which is a challenge and an inspiration for my own contributions.

As wisely said by John F. Kennedy, *“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”* The dream of a better world for everyone is possible if we each make “our” contribution.

Michael Sandel, in *Towards Contributive Justice*, puts it eloquently: *“...we are most fully human when we contribute to the common good and earn the esteem of our fellow citizens for the contributions we make.”*

As I now prepare for final vows, it is really a preparatory march toward collaboration with MAMI (Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate) to touch the lives of the poor with their many faces.



A marcher engages Fr. Warren Brown, OMI, in a discussion

Moses (left) joins other Oblates at the march



Welcome our new Provincial Superior

OTTAWA – Fr. Andrzej (Andrew) Stendzina, OMI, was appointed as Provincial Superior of OMI Lacombe Canada for a three-year term on Jan. 30 by the Superior General in Council during the plenary session in Rome.



Fr. Andrzej
(Andrew)
Stendzina

Fr. Andrew was born Nov. 10, 1960, in Lubliniec, Poland. He made his first profession as an Oblate on Sept. 8, 1982, his final profession on Sept. 8, 1986, and he was ordained in Fort Simpson, NWT on June 17, 1990.

Fr. Andrew possesses extensive experience in a variety of ministries, including formation work, Indigenous ministry, and parish leadership.

Fr. Andrew has served in roles at Sacred Heart and St. Raphael in the Northwest Territories, Our Lady of Mercy (Enoch) and St. Albert in Alberta, and St. Augustine's in British Columbia. Andrew has held leadership roles in the Oblate community in Grandin Province and, more recently, in the BC District.

Residing in Ottawa, Fr. Andrew is presently serving as Vicar Provincial. He will be installed as Provincial during the provincial council meeting in June.

The consultation process for the provincial council has begun and the four provincial councillors will be appointed during the April-May 2025 plenary session of the general council.

Let us keep Fr. Andrew in our prayers as he prepares to take on this new leadership role, replacing Fr. Ken Thorson, OMI, who has served in that capacity for the last six years.



MAMI helps further education in Kenya

A cause worth considering

Supporters of MAMI (the Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate) are touched by the support the organization offers the poor around the world.

MAMI “is one of the charities to which I contribute the most,” said Louis, a supporter from Manitoba. “The services to

the poor provided by the Oblates, whether here in Canada, in Africa or South America, is truly impressive,” he said, referring to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI).

“While there are many deserving charities with which to share our wealth, to me, AMMI (MAMI) is one of the most worthy.”

He said his support will continue after he passes.

“I have included AMMI in my will, so they will receive a significant part of it.

“I feel confident that every dollar that I contribute almost totally reaches the poor. The expenses of operating the charity are assumed by the Oblates and their volunteers.”

In Canada, when you donate to an organization like MAMI, you get a charitable tax credit that helps reduce the taxes owed, before and after death. MAMI supporters are also assured that every dollar they donate is earmarked for the missions and the destitute people they assist.

“May God bless the Oblates and all their missions,” Louis concluded.

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) channel donations through MAMI to provide support for some of the poorest people in Canada and missions around the world.

Through prayer and with material offerings, MAMI supporters help the Oblate priests and brothers who are sharing God’s gifts in many areas of the world.

For example, when Ukraine was attacked by Russia three years ago, Canadian MAMI supporters responded in overwhelming fashion to offer aid in excess of \$500,000 channeled through the Oblates in Poland.

In 2024, countries such as Angola, Bangladesh, Colombia, Congo, Namibia, Nigeria and Haiti were also among the beneficiaries of Canadian compassionate aid. The Oblates, through MAMI, provide support such as food, clothing, shelter, education and spiritual guidance to those in need, those who feel like they have been forgotten by the world.

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/>

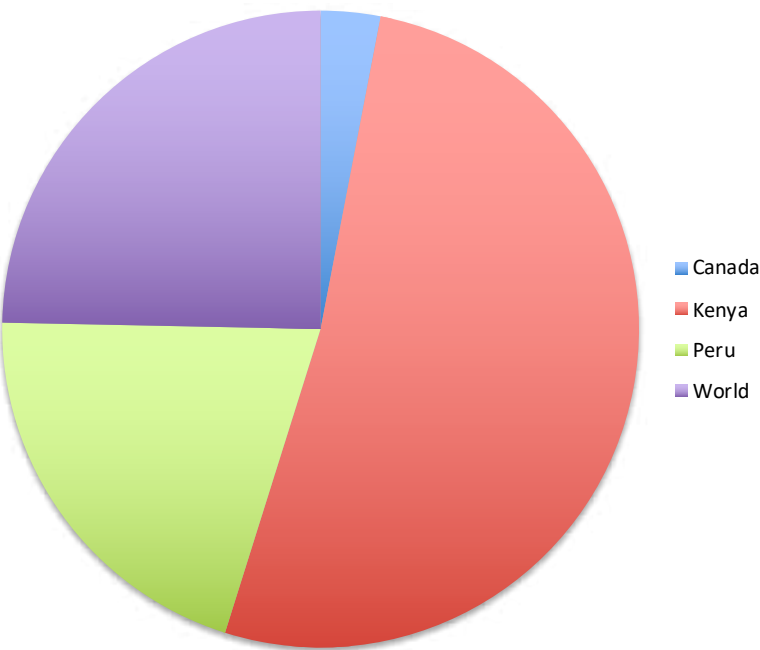
GIFT PAYMENT OPTION



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.

2024 Projects Funded

\$1,247,279.27



| | |
|--------|--------------|
| Canada | \$37,754.82 |
| Kenya | \$646,401.92 |
| Peru | \$255,291.33 |
| World | \$307,831.20 |

PROJECTS FUNDED

CANADA

MAMI continues to support the following projects in Canada:

- Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples
- De Mazenod Door in Hamilton
- Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples



Access to fresh water in Angola

KENYA

MAMI funds assist the Oblates in Kenya and respond to many needs in the parishes and community, including:

- Education of students (the cost for a student in a high school day school varies between \$400 and \$500 Cdn and for a boarding school about \$700 per year)
- Boreholes (wells) to provide better access to potable water
- Solar power to decrease reliance on unreliable power

and to decrease costs in mission and parish buildings

- HIV/AIDS assistance
- Langata Women's Prison
- Support of the mission



Food for Nigerians



Food delivery in Zimbabwe

PERU

In 2024 MAMI funds in Peru supported the following projects:

- Blaise MacQuarrie's projects to provide houses and beds for the impoverished
- Amistad Radio in Aucayacu
- New ceiling for the parish hall in Aucayacu
- Santa Clotilde Hospital (biohazard incinerator, pharmacy, laundry and storage building, and medical warehouse)
- Tertiary Care Patient House in Lima



Pharmacy storage at Santa Clotilde hospital

WORLD

MAMI continues to fund various projects around the world including:

- Angola: the formation of catechists, the printing of the OMI Angola History Book, water tanks
- Bangladesh: food assistance and church materials
- Colombia: maintenance and computer for San Dionisio Parish
- Congo: education of students, formation of catechists and Oblate formators, solar panels for Fr. Aloys Complex School in Panu
- Haiti: education and food for St. Michael Archangel School, provincial archives, repairs and furniture for Mother of Love School, and solar power system for Notre Dame du Rosaire de Mont-Organise
- Namibia: emergency food assistance
- Nigeria: solar electricity and security cameras as well as food assistance for De Mazenod College
- South Africa: solar system equipment for St. Joseph's Scholasticate in Cedara
- Sri Lanka: repairs to the juniorate (where potential candidates for priesthood study philosophy prior to entering the novitiate)
- Zimbabwe: food assistance



An Oblate distributes food in Namibia



Fr. Daquin blesses a child

With profound gratitude

BY FR. DAQUIN IYAN, OMI

ST. EUGENE DE MAZENOD IRINDA PARISH

MÉRU, Kenya – On behalf of the children whose lives MAMI (Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate) you have profoundly touched through your education sponsorship, we write to express our heartfelt gratitude for your continued support of needy children in Kenya, particularly in Méru.

Through MAMI's unwavering generosity and commitment, you have given these children an invaluable opportunity to pursue their education and secure a brighter future. We are pleased to provide an update on the beneficiaries of your sponsorship:

1. Duba Guyatu Kame Sharon – A diligent and determined student, Sharon successfully completed her four years of secondary education at St. Mary's National Secondary

School last year (2024). She was a candidate for the Kenya National Examinations and is now eagerly awaiting her results.

2. Keinde Royford K. – Royford, like Sharon, was also a candidate for the Kenya National Examinations in December 2024. Having been educated by MAMI for four years, he too is awaiting his results with great anticipation.

3. Kendi Winnie Mwirigi – Kendi is currently enrolled at St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya, pursuing a Bachelor of Education degree in Special Needs Education. Her passion for learning and her dedication to this vital field will culminate in her graduation in April 2026.

4. Abigael Kinya – A promising Form 1 high school student, Abigael has successfully progressed and is now entering Form 2 this year (2025).

5. Norbert Murithi – A Grade 4 student whose educational foundation continues to flourish, thanks to MAMI.

The Oblates support education in Kenya



6. Immaculate Mukiri – A young learner in PP1 (Pre-Primary 1) who has begun her educational journey with enthusiasm and hope.

Your dedication to these children's education has made an incredible difference. The impact of your ministry is deeply felt, not only by these students but also by their families.

Once again, thank you for your noble contribution to the Kenya Mission education ministry and the Oblates in Kenya. Your generosity exemplifies true Christian service and love. We pray for God's abundant blessings upon you, the MAMI Team, and the Board of Trustees, and all those who support this ministry. May you continue to find joy and fulfilment in your efforts to uplift others.

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



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



Kenya

N O T E B O O K

BY FR. GERRY CONLAN, OMI

JAN. 11

NAIROBI, Kenya – I was very happy and proud of our youth member Andrew, who joined me at Nyumbani to talk to the boys who are not behaving the best. The poor nuns are dealing with teenage boys and all the drama that entails.

Andrew spoke for one hour, more than expected, but he had them totally focused as he talked about his life, the challenges he faced and where he is now. I spoke for 20 minutes. There were a few issues of the boys applying peer pressure to others about going to Holy Communion. Andrew said afterwards that they don't seem to have enough male mentorship at the home.

The younger brother of our farm manager Euticus managed to get back to trade school in Nkubu for his second year of training. We thank God for that and the kind donor for helping fund half of his costs.

We welcomed Fr. Alex, a diocesan priest from Mauritius who will stay with us until mid-June doing special studies in addiction counselling.

We thank God and all the good people in Canada for supporting the children here in Kenya who need help getting to school. We have education support for our four parishes, prison ministry and a group of nuns looking after HIV children in Kitui, some distance from Nairobi.

Reagan, the son of Rose, the lovely shoeshine lady who died a few months ago, has returned from Kilifi on the coast. *"I think I made a mistake coming here, it is not good,"* he said. I had



Gerry Conlan, OMI

sent him some Christmas money and he used it to come back to Nairobi. Thankfully, I've managed to convince a Muslim Imam to help him out. He will be attending a normal boarding school.

JAN. 18

Eleven Oblates were able to travel to Lumakanda Parish near Eldoret city to celebrate the one-year anniversary memorial mass for Br. Collins, who died tragically when he was swept away at water's edge.



Memorial mass for Br. Collins

JAN. 25

After 10 hours of test pumping at the Gachanka borehole in Méru, the water level was still only 20 metres below ground, meaning the recharge is exceptionally fast. It's like they intersected an underground river! The flow rate was 36,000 litres per hour. For comparison, sadly, in Kisaju postulancy, the flow



Tank is loaded at Meru postulancy ...



... and delivered to Kiirua farm

rate is only 1,000 litres per hour if they are lucky, and it is often less.

In Méru, we were sad to learn of another attempted theft of building materials for the perimeter wall at Irinda Parish. The police were called and by the time Fr. Daquin arrived at 2 a.m., the youth had been badly beaten. When the boy saw

Fr. Daquin, he called *“Father.”* The police boss said, *“Father, after this beating, we don’t think he will be stealing anything again.”* Fr. Daquin was able to get him released. Harsh as it sounds, escaping prison is a blessing.

FEB.1

We are delighted to celebrate that Br. Sebastian renewed his vows in Manila, Philippines. We thank God for all his formators and brothers in arms. In addition, Br. Makori attended Kionyo during the week and the lay associates renewed their promises. He also mentioned how happy he was to see the 15 local MAMI members present at the ceremony led by Fr. Constant. The oldest is 88, and all of them are still keen to support the Kenya Mission.

FEB. 8

We watched with sadness the fighting, bloodshed and aftermath of fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), not far away from Kenya. The churches in South Sudan have launched a new booklet to help encourage peace and non-violence. So, I’ve started remembering them in daily prayer.

Fr. Andrew Stendzina, OMI, has been named the new

Storeroom roof repair



provincial for our province of OMI Lacombe, replacing Fr. Ken Thorson whose term is ending.

There is new life at Kisaju Postulancy: a baby lamb and fresh lemons appearing on the tree. We hope the poor lamb doesn't get smothered by the four shepherds there! It's amazing how even a newborn lamb can have such a nice effect on the brothers: new life is always a joy.

FEB. 15

Br. Moses Wafula Khisa professed his final vows in San Antonio, Texas. We are all delighted, of course, and look forward to his return in May/June this year.

On Valentine's Day, in Méru, Fr. Daquin and Deacon David celebrated a mass for couples and organized a talk for them on family life and values. What a great initiative!

FEB. 22

We celebrated as a community our 199th anniversary of existence as the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Fr Praveen and his pre-novices prepared well and we invited the priests from Resurrection Garden. The postulancy com-

Some members of the Nairobi youth group



munity also attended and we all enjoyed. The four new postulants and three new pre-novices all read and signed a letter of commitment and understanding of OMI limits and responsibilities.

We were all pleased to see the Gachanka borehole pump and solar power were installed, and all is working well. The water is a little salty and hard, but I think it is temporary hardness, so boiling will fix that problem.



Frs. Faustin and Greg
"fish for supper"

MARCH 1

Our satellite TV service expired, leading us to change to a new system using the internet, which is working well and much cheaper! So, we are all happy, as there are more sports channels to keep the men happy.

Fr. Greg Olszust came to attend the finance committee meeting as he is now the assistant treasurer.

MARCH 8

We got Fr. Greg signed up to internet banking for his new role as assistant treasurer and he joined me to learn various aspects of the banking and other responsibilities.

We are planning further MAMI immersion trips in September and February for those Canadians who would be interested in experiencing the Kenya Mission.

MARCH 15

Fr. Ken Thorson, our current provincial superior, and Fr. Andrew Stendzina, the incoming provincial, are visiting the mission. It is good to have them.



Candidates Charles, Wekesa and David await ordination

MARCH 22

Frs. Ken and Andrew spent the week in Kisaju, Larmudiac and Kionyo/Méru. They were unable to attend the ordination ceremony of the new Bishop Jackson in Méru, but had a nice meeting with Bishop Salesius in Méru the next day. They also met with the bishop of Nakuru and the bishop of Ngong.

Deacons Charles, Wekesa and David went on retreat from March 17-22 to prepare for their priestly ordination on March 25. The retreat master was Fr. Martin, an Augustinian priest.

MARCH 29

It was quite the week: ordinations on Tuesday giving us three new priests for the mission and ministry to relieve young men like me! Then we held the mission gathering Wednesday to Friday where we launched the Strategic Plan.

Fr. Ken Thorson was highly appreciated by the mission members for his 12 years of service, most recently as the provincial superior. His replacement, Fr. Andrzej (Andrew) Stendzina was welcomed warmly as the incoming provincial. Fr. Ken also took time to appreciate our two oldest members, Frs. Daquin and Fidele who will celebrate their 25th anniversary of priesthood in July. To honour their service, Fr. Ken presented each of them with a new iPhone, because they have never had a new one. Now their phone batteries will last longer!



Fr. Andrew is welcomed to Kenya

Food service for the ordination was an issue. We had two stations for the 300 outside guests, while 200 more would sit in the hall. I asked if we could have more than two serving positions because it would take two hours to serve 150 people. The organizer rang the kitchen and they said they could handle at most three serving positions due to a staffing shortage, so I offered two cooks to help and we were able to expand to four serving positions.

At the ordination, the bishop's entertaining homily went for an hour before anyone noticed it. He was walking around asking questions about family and getting lots of answers that caused laughter to ripple through the church. There were about 700 guests who came from all over Kenya.

Later in the week, Fr. Ken gave his final speech as provincial to the mission members and spoke of his appreciation for

all of us for the hard work and fraternal friendship he experienced over the last 12 years as vicar and then provincial.



Fr. Ken's farewell celebration



Fr. Ken's 12 years of service acknowledged

APRIL 6

I joined in a long but good development and finance meeting at Kisaju parish. We discussed a second-car proposal, design for a new church in Kisaju centre, and another one at Hawa (the new prayer house).

I spent two days working with Fr. Greg and teaching him the finance system and online transfers and transaction preparations. Of course it all takes longer than usual, but he's a good student!

Fr. Ken blessed the home and family of newly-ordained Fr. Charles, whose mother gifted Fr. Ken with a rooster because they were so happy with our presence and the gift of ordination for Fr. Charles.



A rooster for Fr. Ken



Remembering

We remember the following Oblates who died in 2024:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| January 8 | Jerome Blackburn (90) |
| January 12 | Vincent Laplante (100) |
| January 12 | Collins Masinde (29) |
| May 20 | Gilles Gauthier (91) |
| May 22 | Wendelin Rolheiser (89) |
| June 30 | Edmond Paradis (86) |
| August 13 | Claude Tardif (95) |
| September 8 | Joseph Hattie (88) |
| December 25 | Jerome Prazma (94) |



Have you
considered
including the
*Missionary
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
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