

Fr. Provincial's message

It is my pleasure to convey you my warmest wishes for a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

The Christmas period is a special period for all of us. It is a time of celebrations, of closeness and of hope. A time, too, to focus on the message contained in the story of a child in the manger, born to parents without a home, and reliant on the hospitality of strangers.



The circumstances of the birth of Christ, with its homelessness and powerlessness, are being re-enacted particularly in our context, in the conditions of the war affected - particularly the orphaned children, directionless youth and women headed families - as they wait, not knowing what the future will hold for them.

Besides the postwar situations, many people in various contexts, including priests and religious, are also worried about the future. It is a time of uncertainty, where life has been a struggle at all levels, viz. social, cultural, psychological and spiritual...etc.

Focusing on these above stated realities, the few recommendations we made during the Provincial Congress, may give us opportunity to renew our life and mission in context.

As we now face into a New Year, particularly for us the Oblates, the 'Year of Vocation,' we, as a province, are challenged to embrace the new. We need courage to depart from what has not served us well, and we need the inspiration to make new connections with each other.

This fundamental awareness of the importance of our connection with each other should be transparent, informing all our plans and actions, and should give us the wisdom to generate new models and new policies that will ensure inclusive action, in our present life and mission.

Our solidarity is the heart beat of our life and mission. Our bonds must be stronger than we think, and stronger than that which at times divides us.

My wish, at this Christmas of 2017 and New Year of 2018, is that, together, we will continue to seek to build the true 'Oblate Spirit' of which our pioneers dreamt, embracing the values, possibilities and responsibilities contained in that dream.

I wish each and every one of you a blessed and happy Christmas and a New Year of restored hope and faith in our live and mission.

Rev. Fr. Edwin Vasantharajah OMI
Provincial Superior



Father General has appointed Fr. S. Edwin Vasanthrajah OMI, as Provincial of Jaffna, for a second term of three years. Rev. Fr. S. Edwin Vasantharajah OMI, the Provincial Superior and his Council members Fr. Maria Sebastian Santhiapillai OMI, Fr. Sebastian Anthony-muthu Croos OMI , Fr. Victor A. Jeyasingham OMI, Fr. Eugene Benedict OMI and Fr. Francis Loshington Antonipillai OMI, were installed on the 21st of May 2017 at a Eucharistic Celebration, presided over by Fr. Louis Ponniah, OMI, at St. Eugene de Mazonod Chapel, at Columbuturai.

The newly appointed Provincial Administration had its maiden meeting on 13-14th June 2017. Besides assigning portfolios to the Councilors, some Councilors were requested to coordinate the Oblate District Communities; together with a Secretary selected by each District Community.

Councilor	Portfolio	District
Fr. M. Sebastian Santhiapillai	Community	Jaffna
Fr. S. AnthonymuthuCroos	Mission	Mannar Vavuniya
Fr. Victor A. Jeyasingham	Formation	----
Fr. Eugene Benedict	Finance	East-South
Fr. F. Loshington Antonympillai	Personnel	Kili-Mullai

Formation

The Formators...

- ✦ Rev. Antony Sylvester OMI (The Rector of the Juniorate) has been appointed a Spiritual Director to the National Seminary, Ampitiya, at the request of the Conference of Bishops . He shifted from the Juniorate on 29th July, 2017.
- ✦ Rev. Fr. Jeyarajan Coonghe, OMI, (the Director of the Pre-novitiate) has been appointed the Rector of the Juniorate and was installed on the 15th of October, 2017.
- ✦ Rev. Fr. P. P. Philip, OMI has been appointed the Spiritual Director to the Juniorists.
- ✦ Rev. Fr. Stany Antony, OMI, Rev. Fr. Jegan Kumar Coonghe, OMI have been appointed formators at De Mazenod Scholasticate, Jaffna.
- ✦ Rev. Fr. Victor Jeyasingam, OMI was appointed a member of the formation staff at the De Mazenod Scholasticate, Jaffna.



Parent's Day at St. Joseph's Juniorate

About eighty relatives - parents and siblings - of the Juniorists gathered at St. Joseph's Juniorate, Columbuturai for the Parents' Day Celebrations. They arrived on the 26th of May and reluctantly bade good-bye on the 28th after the breakfast. It was a very happy and relaxed gathering. Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Gnanapragasam, the Bishop of Jaffna, kindly accepted to celebrate the Eucharist on the 27th morning, while there was also a cultural program in the evening.

Pre-novitiate - 2017

For the year 2017 there were eleven pre-novices who successfully completed their six-month Pre-Novitiate formation at the Oblate Pre-novitiate, Gananodayam, Mannar, and entered the Sacred Heart Novitiate at Bandarawella on the 25th of July, 2017. Among them two candidates, Mariyanayagam Chryntine Croos and Anthony Kanikairaj are from the Province of Jaffna.



Formation

Rev. Fr. Jagath Anthony OMI
The New Novice Master



Rev. Fr. Philip Anselm Jagath Anthony, OMI, was installed as the New Novice Master of the Sacred Heart Novitiate, Sidupiyani, Bandarawela on 31st October 2017 by Fr. Irwin H. Morais OMI, the Provincial of the Oblates of Colombo province.

Fr. Roshan Silva OMI, former novice master and few other Oblates also were present at the Installation ceremony.

We wish and pray for God's Special Blessings and Spiritual graces on Fr. Jagath as he takes up this important responsibility of forming and choosing candidates for the Oblate family.

De Mazenod Scholasticate - Jaffna

Oblate Study Club

Oblate Study Club of De Mazenod Scholasticate organized a session on the 14th of November 2017 at 6.30 PM at the Scholasticate library. This evening's agenda was coloured by some presentations of the scholastics based on the 36th General Chapter document, Life and Spirituality of great Oblates namely Rev. Fr. B. A. Thomas, OMI and Rev. Fr. Maria Louis Paran, OMI plus with some Oblate News around the Globe. The audience for this evening was the Oblates from the vicinity, namely those who belong to the communities of Amalautpavam, Thodarpham and the Juniorate.



A Music Album Dedicated to St. Eugene



A CD, by the name "Nalindor" (to the poor), with ten songs and hymns about the life of St. Eugene, composed by the scholastics, was released on the 21st of May 2017 to mark the feast of St. Eugene De Mazenod. We are proud of our Scholastics.

Ongoing Formation...

- Fr. Mariathan Deloshan Rajeeve, OMI returned from India, on the 13th of April 2017, after a three-month diploma course on *Pastoral Communication, at Bangalore, India.*
- Fr. Sebastian Reginald, went to *Atmadarshan, Center for Spirituality and Counselling* in India to update himself in Spirituality and Counselling.
- Fr. Pathinathan Sathiyaseelan, OMI returned to Sri Lanka on the 24th of July 2017, after obtaining Licentiate in Spiritual Theology, from Gregorianum, Rome.
- Fr. Ramesh, OMI has successfully completed his Master 's degree in Business Administration in Jaffna ICBT Campus (International College of Business and Technology).
- Fr. Innasimuthu Selva Vijendran successfully completed M.Sc. in *Counselling & Psychotherapy.* He studied at Anugraha Institute of Social Sciences, Nochiodaipathi, Dindigul, India.
- Fr. Provincial attended the Asia-Oceania Regional Conference from 13 to 18 March 2017 in Philippines. The theme of the conference was '*Living the Spirit of the 36th General Chapter.*'
- There was a Training Session for the Treasurers organized by the AORC, on 13th & 14th March 2017, in Philippines. Fr. Alphen Segar, from the Finance Committee followed the Session.
- The Asia-Oceania Formators' Conference was held from the 5th to the 10th of March 2017, at Melbourne, Australia. Fr. Soosai Damian, Superior of the Scholasticate, participated in the conference.
- Eleven Oblates – ordained between 1976 and 1985 – were invited by the CBCSL (Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka) to participate in the on-going formation program, which was held from 17th July 2017 to 20th July 2017, at the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka, Ampitiya.



Asia-Oceania Unit Leaders & Finance Officers

Mission

Preachers' Community

In the year 2017, the preachers' community at *Amaithy Aham*, Vavuniya toiled hard to bear witness in conducting Grand Missions in five parishes in the dioceses of Mannar, Jaffna and the Archdiocese of Colombo.

An important ground work for the Mission was meeting every single family in the parish.

The preachers also organized programmes for the groups of Youth, Drug Addicts, Teachers, Students, Pious Associations, etc.; normally these meetings helped the preachers in making the preaching, seminars and devotional activities contextual and meaningful. They also use to organize AGAPE (Eucharistic) celebrations at zonal levels to reconcile local groups.



Youth Empowerment Centre

The Youth Empowerment Centre at Arialai, which was blessed and named Gnanadeepam on 25th January 2017, organizes many programmes for the youth towards which the youth are attracted and thus, empowered.

Fr. Philip Ranjanakumar OMI, the Director of Gnanadeepam, works tirelessly with full of enthusiasm to bring the youth together and he organizes varieties of programmes for the youth, especially language classes, skill development and leadership programmes.

A Volley Ball Tournament for the youth was organized from 22nd to 25th February 2017. Twenty-two teams from different parts of Jaffna participated.

Thus, the thrust of this Centre is to give the youth opportunity for meaningful occupation, so as to wean them from addiction and loitering aimlessly. We are grateful to **HAVONOS and Wilde Ganzen** of Holland, who helped the Oblates build and equip the Youth Empowerment Centre.



MAMI - Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate

The programmes for the Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate (MAMI) are regularized now under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Jegan Coonghe, OMI, the Director of MAMI. The members are regular to come together for their weekly meetings and for the devotion to St. Eugene De Mazenod on Fridays at St. Eugene De Mazenod Chapel, Jaffna.

Mission

LEBARA Scholarship - Changed Strategy

On the 24th of February 2017 Fifty-six organizers and teachers gathered at Thodarpaham to evaluate the new strategy of distributing LEBARA Scholarship. Since the earlier practice of distributing cash to the students had many drawbacks, from 2016 onwards the strategy has been changed: only the university students continued to get scholarship in cash, whereas coaching classes were started in 76 centers in remote areas and outskirts of cities, for the O/L and A/L students. From this new strategy the number of beneficiaries has jumped from 2000 to 6000. Moreover instead of the time, cost and hassle of students travelling to tuition centers, now education is being brought to their door step.



Oblates at Nesakkarangal, Iyakachchi

Mr. Ryle Abraham is a regular benefactor of *Nesakkarangal*; who helped to build the administrative residence. The Oblates at *Nesakkarangal* coordinate programs between benefactors, government and the beneficiaries.

Donation of Bicycles to the Poor Students

Forty bicycles were distributed to students living around Iyakkachch on the 11th of May 2017. The bicycles were kindly donated by Mr. Ryle Abraham, a Catholic from Colombo. The deserving students were



were selected by the Grama Niladhari (Govt. Village Officer), who knows the living condition of the people in his area, and by the Principals of the schools where the students are studying. Thus, 37 Hindu students and 3 Christian students were the beneficiaries; most of whom were girls. Now these students will be able to attend the schools and the week-end coaching classes conducted by the vagaries of local transport.

Mission

OBTEC, Kilinochchi

Thirty Eight boys and girls from the newly erected Deanery of Mullaitivu gathered at OBTEC. (Oblate Training and Education Center) in Kilinochchi, for a two-day residential workshop on “Leadership and Peace-building”, conducted by the CPR (Centre for Peace and Reconciliation) Animators.



The CPR regularly conducts residential programs for various groups in the Northern Province. The youth who came from different parishes of Mullaitivu Deanery were appreciative of this program, as it is a stimulus to rebuild their lives from the ashes of the three-decade civil war. Fr. Provincial encouraged the youth to make use of such opportunities to creatively discover new horizons for their future.

International Peace Day –



The International Peace Day 2017 was celebrated in Nedunkerny in a grand scale by CPR (Center for Peace and Reconciliation) on 12th October at Nedunkerny Maha Vidiyalam. Mr. Paranthaman, the Divisional Secretary of Vavuniya North Division was the Chief Guest for the programmes.



A New Church at Kanagarayankulam Parish

The newly built Church, dedicated to Christ the King, at Nedurnkeny of Kanagarayankulam Parish was blessed and opened by Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsly Swampillai, the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Mannar on 15th October 2017. The painstaking efforts of Fr. Wenseslaus OMI, the Parish Priest with the generous contribution of the parishioners and the well-wishers made the task a great success. During his address the Bishop appreciated the Oblates for their valuable presence in this difficult mission.

Animation for the Youth and Children

St. Xavier's Parish, Punkuduthivu, celebrated their church feast on 20th May 2017. Fr. Philip Ranjanakumar OMI and Fr. Justin Velautham OMI enthusiastically accepted the invitation of the Parish Priest to conduct worship, workshop and animation for the youth and children. The focus of the programs was on *Divine Presence* and the importance of *education* for growth.



Mission

Animation for the Elders



Christmas get together for the *Mannar Diocesan Elders Union*, held 15.12.2017 at the Diocesan Family Centre, under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Alban Rajasingam, OMI, the Director of this Union. Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsly Swampillai, the Apostolic Administrator of Mannar Diocese, was the Chief Guest and Rev. Fr. Jerome Lambert, OMI was one of the Guests of Honor at this get together. The many elder members, who gathered, came out with their talents and abilities, in the form of cultural programs at this joyful occasion. This Union was started by Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, the Bishop Emeritus, and now, there are over 2500 members from all the parishes of the diocese.

Lenten Commitments

Lent - 2017

Oblates of Jaffna Province were specially committed during Lent-2017:



Fr. Philip Ranjanakumar, OMI was invited by the Sri Lankan Tamils in France to accompany them in their Lenten devotions. It is to be noted that Fr. Phillip has the experience of being a member of the preachers' community at Vavuniya.

Three Grand Missions were preached by the Preachers' community in Vavuniya during Lent and Easter Season, in the Parishes of: Mathagal, Katkidanthakulam and Manipay

The Province organized Lenten Services for the school children at the De Mazenod Chapel, Columbuturai. The Education Department of Sri Lanka encourages such religious activities during

school hours. The Oblates arranged transport for the children from different schools.

It should be noted that these particular Lenten programmes earned a valuable appreciation from the people.

Year End Program

Institute of Counseling and Ongoing Formation (ICOF) - Valarpirai, organized its 'Year End Programme' on Nov. 03, 2017. The program was organized in such a way that the children could show up their talents and abilities on an open stage. Rev. Bro. T. Jenistan Benedict, OMI, presided over this function. The Chief Guest for this function was Mr. N. Deiventhirajah, Director of Education - Jaffna Zone who appreciated the great services of the Oblates in the field of psycho-social formation of the children in the schools.



Ceremonies & Celebrations

Vows & Ordinations

First Vows..

On 22nd August 2017 three of our Novices from Jaffna Province ...

Bro. Jesuthasan Rohan Peries, Bro. Pathmanathan Anton Reginald and Bro. Alfred Arunraj made their First Profession at Sacred Heart Novitiate, Bandarawella.



Final Vows...

- ▲ Bro. Anthonypillai Jude Carowf made his perpetual profession on the 25th of March 2017, at De Mazenod Church, Columbuturai, Jaffna.
- ▲ Bro. Anthonypillai Jude Carowf was ordained Deacon on the 26th of March 2017, by Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundaranayagam, the Bishop Emeritus of Jaffna.
- ▲ Bro. SiyastanJenis Amirthanathar and Bro. James Surenthiraraj Sahayathasan made their final profession on 01st of May 2017 at the General House Chapel, Rome.

Priestly Ordination

Fr. Keethapongalan Bede Sujaharan OMI

Fr. Keethapongalan Bede Sujaharan omi is the eighty-ninth priest to be ordained for the Province of Jaffna. He was ordained on the 19th of January 2017.

Fr. Sujaharan is originally from Marisankoodal Parish; did his final studies at Gregorianum in Rome and obtained Licentiate in Practical-Philosophy. Since his parents have migrated to Mullaithivu District he celebrated his First Mass at St. Peter's Church, Mullaithivu.



Fr. Anthonipillai Jude Carowf OMI

Fr. Anthonipillai Jude Carowf OMI is the ninetieth priest to be ordained for the Province of Jaffna.

He was ordained a priest by his Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin B. Gnanapragasam, the bishop of Jaffna, on the 5th of October 2017. He is the 4th child of Mr. Mrs. Anthonipillai from Sillalai, a traditional catholic village in the diocese of Jaffna. He will be ministering as the Assistant Chaplain in the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna.



Ceremonies & Celebrations



Oblate Day

Fifty-four Oblates gathered at Thodarpaham, Jaffna, on the 17th February 2017, to celebrate the anniversary of the approval of the Constitution and Rules in 1826. Rev. Fr. Jebaratnam, the Vicar General of Jaffna Diocese was the Chief Celebrant. The pre-novitiate choir from Gnanodhayam, Mannar, enriched the celebration.

Feast of St. Eugene de Mazenod

A good number of Oblates, Priests, Religious, Seminarians and friends were present at St. Eugene de Mazenod Chapel, Columbuturai, Jaffna, on 21st May, 2017, to celebrate the Feast of St. Eugene De Mazenod.



Jubilarians of the Year



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| · Fr. Vethanayagam OMI | - 60 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. Alban Rajasingam OMI | - 50 years in Religious Life |
| · Fr. Fr. Edwin Vasantharajah OMI | - 25 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. Celestine Mascringhe OMI | - 25 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. A. Emmanuel OMI | - 25 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. Atputharaja OMI | - 25 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. Loshington OMI | - 25 years in Priesthood |
| · Fr. Anthonimuthu Croos OMI | - 25 years in Religious Life |

...were felicitated in the concelebrated thanksgiving Holy Mass on the 1st of December at the end of the Congress. We appreciate and thank them for their witnessing life and ministries.

Ceremonies & Celebrations

Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando - Bishop of Mannar

We, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate - Jaffna Province, congratulate on the appointment of **Rt. Rev. Dr. Fidelis Lionel Emmanuel Fernando** by His Holiness Pope Francis to become the 3rd Bishop of the diocese of Mannar. His Lordship is not new to at least some of us as he was our Rector and professor at the National Seminary, Ampitya, Kandy. We know that His Lordship will use his many gifts with generosity and faithfulness to serve God and to lead his people in the diocese of Mannar and beyond. We assure him of our prayers for his ministry.



We also take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to both the Retired Bishops **Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph** and **Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kingsley**, who was the Apostolic Administrator of the diocese from January 2016, for their fraternal love and support.

His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando was given a grand welcome on 30th of December 2017 by the Catholic Church of Mannar.

New Beginnings

Gnanothayam - Affiliated to Aquinas College, Colombo.

“Gnanothayam”, the Oblate Institute for Religious Studies in Mannar, has been affiliated to St. Aquinas College of Higher Studies in Colombo to conduct Aquinas College Diploma Course in English.

The agreement was signed by His Eminence Malcom Cardinal Ranjith, who is the chancellor of the Aquinas College and Rev. Fr. Edwin Vasantharaja OMI, the Provincial Superior of the Jaffna Province on 11th of July 2017 at the Archbishop’s House, Colombo.

This new beginning will provide the youth of the Northern part of the country with the opportunities for higher studies.

It should be noted that “Gnanothayam” has been rendering its marvelous service in the field of Religious education to the diocese of Mannar for many years. The Priests, religious and the people of Mannar are grateful and appreciative of “Gnanothayam” for its tremendous service.

It is believed this new beginning will be a blessing for the people of the area.



St. Henry’s College Illavalai, Jaffna

On August 1st, 2017 Rev. fr. Godfrey Joel OMI was installed the rector of the College by the outgoing Rector Rev. Fr. J.A. Jesuthas. St. Henry’s College, Illavalai, Jaffna, which was founded in 1904 by Rev. Fr. L. Rodrigo OMI, has been once again given to the Oblates after 1976.





A New Place for Worship

A new chapel was blessed and opened by Rev. Fr. Edwin Vasantharaj OMI, the Provincial Superior, on August 30th, 2017 at OBTEC, Kilinochchi. A long felt need to construct a chapel for a community was successfully completed.

Youth Empowerment Centre

On the 25th January 2017, the Youth Empowerment Centre *Gnanadeepam* was declared open by Rev. Fr. Edwin Vasantharajah OMI, Provincial Superior of Jaffna. Fr. Louis Ponniah kindly blessed the Centre.



Manianthoddam Parish to the Oblates

On Sunday the 29th of January 2017, during a solemn Eucharistic Celebration, Manianthoddam has been entrusted to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate as a mission *ad nutum episcopi*, by Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Gnanapragasam, the Bishop of Jaffna. It is a new parish carved out of the Parish of Pasayoor; comprising the substations Udhayapuram, Vasanthapuram, Poompuhar, Ezhiloor and Arialai East. The Oblates have appointed Fr. S. Maria Sebastian

OMI as the Parish Priest. This mission will be also a valuable opportunity for the candidates in formation, at Columbuturai, for their hands-on pastoral experience.

On that solemn occasion the Bishop recounted the services rendered by the Oblate Missionaries since 1847, in establishing the Diocese of Jaffna on firm foundation.



New Beginnings

Another Milestone in the Diocese of Galle



In 2015, Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickramasinghe, the bishop of Galle, requested the Provincial to help out in two parishes temporarily for two years; thus the Oblates began their new mission in the diocese of Galle. Fr. Sebamalai Perera, OMI was assigned to take charge of St. Sebastian Parish at Akkuressa and Fr. P. Jesuthas, OMI was assigned to be the assistant priest at Deniyaya Parish.

As the Bishop and the Presbyterium wanted the Oblates to continue the mission after two years in their diocese Fr. Provincial proposed that a Mission Centre be established so that the Oblates can live in community and continue to serve the plantation workers in the diocese.

Now, a small rented house is established as a Mission Centre. And, one of the substations of Deniyaya parish, viz. Anningkanda, is declared by a decree as the quasi parish in the Diocese of Galle and entrusted to us, the Oblates.

We appreciate the service of the two vibrant pioneers, Fr. Thaya and Jesu of this mission. We also express our gratitude to His Lordship, the Presbyterium and the Lay Faithful of the diocese of Galle.

Meetings & Programmes ...

College of Education Chaplaincy in Vavuniya



On the 11th of March 2017 thirty-nine graduate students and two staff members from the College of Education (Vavuniya), gathered at *Amathiahham* (Oblate preachers' house), Vavuniya for an exposure programme.

Rev. Fr. F. L. N. Croos OMI, the Chaplain of the College of Education, organized this Program to fulfill the desires expressed by the students themselves and he made use of this opportunity to explain to them the missions and ministries of the Oblates.

Spiritual Renewal and Bonding

The Oblates perpetually professed within ten years – gathered at *AnnaiIllam*, Kilinochchi, on 18th April 2017. It is an occasional gathering of the young Oblates for spiritual renewal and bonding.



Meetings & Programmes ...

Visit of Rev. Fr. Peter Stoll OMI,

Rev. Fr. Peter Stoll OMI, General Counselor for Asia-Oceania visited the Oblates of Jaffna Province, from 20th to 30th March 2017, We are grateful to the General Administration for sending Fr. Peter Stoll to accompany the Province of Jaffna. He met Fr. Provincial, Councilors, members of the preparatory commission for the Congress, and had a meeting with all the members of the Province; where he emphasized the context in which the mission of Jaffna Province takes place. His visit was nothing but systematic and organized.



Congress - 2017

Oblate Congress in Jaffna Province - 2017



The Oblate Congress of the Jaffna Province was held at Gnanothayam, Keeri, Mannar, from the 29th of November to the 1st of December, 2017. The theme of the Congress was “*The Oblate Life and Mission in Context.*” The Congress was inaugurated with the Holy Eucharistic celebration, presided over by His Lordship Bishop Kingsley Swampillai, the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese. Very Rev. Fr. Peter Stoll, OMI, the General Counselor for Asia Oceania Region and Rev. Fr. Emile Moraes, OMI from Colombo Province served as facilitators at the Congress. Active participation of more than 90 percent of the members of the Province was felt to be the vital strength of the Congress. It was evident that the participants of the Congress were able to experience the blessing of the community spirit during the days of the Congress.

Immediate Spiritual Preparation...

It was really a great blessing that as an immediate preparation for the Congress Rev. Fr. Emile Moraes, OMI prepared the Oblates spiritually for two days prior to the Congress, to put them on the right track, making them understand the four pillars of religious life, viz., vowed life, community life, prayer life and apostolic life.

The Solemn Inauguration of the Congress 2017



After the holy mass, Very Rev. Fr. Edwin Vasantharajah, OMI, the Provincial Superior, holding the Paschal candle, led the procession from the chapel to the Conference Hall to inaugurate the Congress. In his welcome address Fr. Provincial said, "In the past, the two Provincial Congresses that were held in 2003 and 2010 helped us to plan our life and mission for the future. I hope this assembly too will do the same, particularly helping us to examine whether we are in line with our Vision and Mission Statements of our Province that were formulated during the Immense Hope Project in 2003 as well as with the deliberations of the 36th General Chapter - 2016."

The Success Accomplishment of the Congress

The Oblate Congress of the Jaffna Province - 2017 came to its completion on the 1st of December with the thanksgiving Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Very Rev. Fr. Peter Stoll, OMI, the General Counselor for Asia Oceania.



As a meaningful gesture of the Congress the Steering Committee with both facilitators Fr. Peter Stoll, OMI and Rev. Fr. Emile Moraes, OMI handed over the **Recommendations of the Congress** to the Provincial Administration at the end of the Mass.

We, the Oblates of Jaffna Province, express our sincere gratitude to the Steering Committee, Very Rev. Fr. Peter Stoll, OMI, the General Counselor for Asia - Oceania and Rev. Fr. Emile Moraes, OMI for their service to us for the success of the Congress.

Oblate Vocation Year

Inauguration of the Oblate Vocation Year



The Oblate Vocation Year was inaugurated in grand scale and in a meaningful way in the Oblate Province of Jaffna on the 8th of December 2017 . The day's programmes started with the Holy Eucharistic celebration at

St. Eugene De Mazenod Chapel Columbutural, Jaffna, at 11.30 am followed by festive lunch at 'Amala-Utpavam' the retired Fathers' house.

The inauguration ceremony was organized at St. Joseph's O.M.I. Juniorate, Columbuturai, Jaffna at 4.00 pm, by Rev. Fr. Justin OMI, the Vocation Director with the full support of the Juniorate community. Rev. Fr. Edwin

Vasantharaja OMI, the Provincial Superior was the Chief Guest and Rev. Fr. Jebaretnam, the Vicar-General of the Diocese was the Guest of Honour for the ceremony.

In his address Father Vicar-General, expressed his sense of gratitude to the Oblates for their services in the diocese and assured his full support for the Oblate Vocation Year.

After the significant unveiling of the emblem of the Oblate Vocation Year, Father Provincial officially declared the 'Oblate Vocation Year. Then the anthem for the Oblate Vocation Year was sung by the Oblate Juniorists.

The performances staged by the Oblate Juniorists in the inauguration ceremony of the Oblate Vocation Year were highly appreciated by the audience who were present for the ceremony. A good number of Oblates, Diocesan Clergy, Religious,

Seminarians, Youth, students and MAMI associate participated in this inauguration ceremony.

The programmes staged gave a vital message to the youth and the students with regard to the vocation to the Oblate Congregation.



Let Us Pray



Mr. Amirthanather Knigsly Robin, the beloved younger brother of Fr. A. Eugene Amalraj, OMI who died of blood cancer at the age of 30.

Mr. Varaprahasam Swampillai the beloved father of Fr. James Jeyachandran, OMI who died in India at the age of 94.

May they rest in peace!!!





Merry Christmas

&

Happy New Year

We,
*the Oblates of Mary Immaculate
of Jaffna Province,
sincerely thank you
for all your support and prayers
and for working with us together
in our mission of
evangelizing the poor for the glory of
God throughout the year 2017.*

May the Infant Jesus bless you all.

*Let us continue to work together
in this New Year 2018.*

*May our Beloved Mother
The Queen of Oblates
and our Beloved Founder St. Eugene
De Mazenod intercede for you.*

Happy New Year.



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