

2017-
2018

YEAR OF OBLATE
VOCATIONS
2018 - 2019
Come and See!
THE JOY AND GENEROSITY OF OBLATE LIFE (John 1:39)



MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

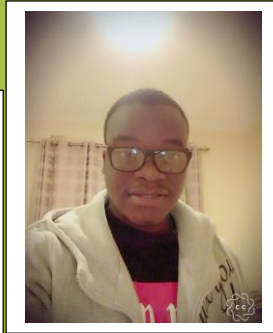
DEMAZENOD HOUSE OF FORMATION INFORMATION MAGAZINE

COME AND SEE!! THE JOY AND GENEROSITY OF OBLATE LIFE

USER

THE MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE |

THE VOCATIONS DIRECTOR,
MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE
P.O BOX 320009
15601 WOODLANDS
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA
CELL PHONE: +260 979 387 271



Dear reader, peace and Love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with You. The year 2017 for the pre-novitiate community oscillated upon three major principles, Prayer, love and work. With this spirit, the year proved to be a success, thus the transition into 2018 set aglow a spirit of Hope for more of God's blessings.

This Being the year of Oblate Vocations, De Mazenod House of Formation presents you yet another edition of the information Magazine to familiarize you with what happens within and beyond the confines of pre-novitiate life.

Rev Fr. Chibwe Tembo, the vocations Director sheds more light on the year of oblate vocations in the first article and prenovice Br. Emmanuel Chota reflects on what vocation really is.

Life in the pre-novitiate is a life of work, and so, prenovice Br. Lewis Simutowe gives an insight on the work culture of the pre novices.

Meet prenovice brother Joshua Bangweta who shares his personal experience of his first days in the pre-Novitiate and how he is gradually falling more and more in love with the Oblate way of life.

They say "if you are to move mountains tomorrow, start by moving stones today." Such is the spirit that the oblate formators inculcate in the oblate prenovices at a very early stage. They do not wait for such a time that one is ordained in order to be sent to announce the goodnews to the world. Missionary work starts with the first 'YES' that one makes in joining the oblates. As such, prenovice Br. Ben Polito shares his Pastoral experience at the University Teaching Hospital, and in the same line, Prenovice Br. Stanko Simukonda shares his pastoral visits at Mwembeshi Open prison.

The program at De Mazenod house is designed in a way that it fosters integral growth of a person. Thus Sporting activities are not left out in the program. Prenovice Br. David Chisha comments on our Friday sports day where all prenovices showcase their soccer skills. In this particular Article, he captures one of the main soccer Fridays (last Friday of every month) which is dedicated To Fr. Ronald Walker.

Finally, the world today, we can say, is incomplete without social media. Prenovice Br. Democracy Mudenda shares his knowledge about the merits and demerits of social media.

It is our hope and greatest wish, that the information shared in this magazine will be valuable to the reader. May the Light of the Risen Christ keep shining in your life that you too may emit its glow to those you meet, minister to and live with.

Prenovice Br. Raphael Banda

A LOOK INTO THE VOCATION OFFICE

In July 2016 a vocational congress was held in Aix-en Provence in France and thirty-two Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Vocation directors from all over the world attended the congress. It was at this congress that a proposal was made to call the Superior General in council to proclaim a “YEAR OF OBLATE VOCATIONS.” In response to the call from the congress, the Superior General in council proclaimed 2018-2019 a year of Oblate Vocations with a theme “Come and See” (John 1:39) the Joy and Generosity of Oblate Life.

The Year of Oblate Vocation was launched on the 8th December 2018, on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. The Eucharistic celebration for the launch was presided by the Superior of the delegation Very Rev. Fr. Sakala, OMI at Oblate Center House chapel in Lusaka.

This is our year to thank God for the vocations to Oblate life in Zambia and the whole world. A year to thank God for the positive response we get from many young men who want to join and share with us the charism of our holy founder St. Eugene de Mazenod.

The Year of Oblate Vocations invites us to focus on the following:

- Contemplate and follow Jesus’ vocational ministry
- Pray for vocations
- Sharing and listening to vocation stories and experiences
- To have a well-organized vocational ministry
- To have a vocational manual



REV FR. CHIBWE TEMBO, OMI

**VOCATIONS DIRECTOR OF THE
MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY
IMMACULATE, ZAMBIAN
DELEGATION.**

May I thank my Oblate brothers working in various ministries and pre-novices who make tireless efforts and contributions helping to promote vocations to Oblate life. Please continue sharing your rich stories and experience of your Oblate life to the young people you meet in your ministries.

Let us not get tired of inspiring young people to join our ranks by living and sharing our charism with them.

Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate

Fr. Chibwe Tembo, OMI

Vocation Director

VOCATION

It is of great importance to start by posing a question, 'what does the word vocation mean to you as an individual?' vocation as defined in the dictionary simply means a strong feeling of suitability for a particular career or occupation. In the Christian perspective the word vocation means a call, a call from God to a particular way of life be it marriage, religious life or single life. It is a way in which one decides whole heartedly to offer his or her service to God, the church and the faithful. But one has to go beyond holding vocation simply as a call. Yes vocation is a call from God yet it is not just a call but the meeting point of two loves.



Article written by Pre-Novice Brother; Emmanuel Chota.

Third year.

Vocation is the meeting point of two loves, on one side it the meeting of God's love and my love, your love, our love, and on the other side it is the meeting point of the love of neighbor and my love. It is not simply a call to respond to every day but rather an invitation to love. When vocation is taken simply as a call, one may or may not respond to this call, it is the call that proceeds from love such that even if you do not answer it today, tomorrow or did not answer it yesterday it won't be a missed call with no assurance that it will come again. Vocation is the God's love to you and me which begins from womb to tomb, from birth to death. Vocation is an invitation to love, to love God and to love one's neighbor in the light of rendering service to one another. It is the greatest command. When we meet the love of God we choose freely to follow Him, by offering our love through our service to the poor with their many faces.

Therefore, our vocation, my vocation, your vocation is not simply a call that we have to respond to, but it is that meeting point of Love, which is God, in order to offer ourselves and our services to God. It is an invitation from Love to love in order to love.

WORK CULTURE IN THE PRE NOVICIATE

The Pre-novitiate is the first stage of formation in our Oblate life, and during this same period, we do our first BA Degree in Philosophy and Spirituality studies for four years in Zambia, before proceeding to the Novitiate in South Africa or U.S.A.

The Pre-novitiate is one of the most enjoyable stages of formation in the program, in such a way that it is characterized by various activities such as, Livestock production, Vegetable gardening and raising of chickens, which are activities done for self-sustainability. There are also social activities like sports, which we do, sometimes with other communities or among ourselves as St. Eugene says “ first of all be human, then a Christian and strive to be a Saint.” We also have prayers for our Spiritual growth, these and many other activities are done to keep ourselves in prayer and our Oblate Spirituality.

PRE NOVICE

BROTHER LEWIS SIMUTOWE



LORD JESUS CHRIST, ETERNAL SHEPHEARD, YOU CALLED YOUR DISCIPLES TO BE OBEDIENT TO THE FATHER AND SERVANTS OF EACH OTHER. RAISE UP NEW APOSTLES IN YOUR HOLY CHURCH. TEACH THEM THAT TO SERVE YOU IS TO REIGN, TO POSSESS YOU IS TO POSSESS ALL THINGS. KINDLE THE HEARTS OF YOUR PEOPLE WITH THE ZEAL FOR SOULS. MAKE THEM EAGER TO SPREAD YOUR KINGDOM UPON THE EARTH. GRANT THEM COURAGE TO FOLLOW YOU, WHO ARE THE WAY, THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE, WHO LIVE AND REIGN FOREVER AND EVER.

There is a common saying that goes like, it's only after you have stepped outside your comfort zone that you begin to change, grow and transform, and this saying is reminding me of the knowledge about the Oblates of Mary Immaculate I acquired during my first year and through different experiences. I come from an Oblate background in the sense that my parish happens to be the first Oblate parish in Zambia. And this gave me courage that I know about the Oblates, yet I only knew a little. But before I share my experiences in the first year, I would love to give a gist of who the Oblates are. Their official name is Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate but at times called Oblates, Oblates fathers or O.M.I. who were found by St. Eugene De Mazenod. It all began on 8th September, 2016 when my six brothers and I were officially accepted into the pre-novitiate house. Speaking for myself during my stay at De Mazenod house in first year, was in some ways challenging because it was a different experience, a different people with different backgrounds and a different kind of lifestyle. Coming from a home where I used to eat alone and at my own time to a community life where we eat together as one family and share different ideas. And little did I realize that this was the beginning of getting to know how the Oblates live in community. But because of the people (formators and prenovices) we found were so welcoming and helpful, we felt at home and incorporated into the programme.

As a young person, trying to fit myself in the new community, I carried with myself expectations about the community life especially that of the Oblates, though I had ideas of who Oblates were back home. Entering in the Oblate way of life, I found community life so interesting and impressive especially with the programmes that were set in the early stage. Oblate spirituality being one of the programmes that one has to do during first year, helped me to realize and know more about the Oblates. I remember one of the sessions of Oblate spirituality talking about St. Eugene De Mazenod's life history and how he founded the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.



We were also doing sports and working in our respective areas of responsibility, this gave me a thought that being a priest is more than just being in church, preaching to the faithful and celebrating Mass but more than that. As if it is not enough, we could talk about the Oblates who are involved different works, those who minister to the most abandoned, the poor, parish work, and many other ministries.

My experience in the first year is so vast with so many things such as presenting topics concerning the Oblates and the church at large and giving reflections on radio Maria Yatsani in Bauleni.

In a nutshell, one might ask, what is the main aim of the first stage (first year), well it introduces one to the oblate way of life, helps one to deepen his vocation and getting to know more about the founder, St Eugene and the Oblates.

PreNovice Br. **JOSHUA MBANGWETA**

THE PLIGHT OF THE SICK: A UTH PASTORAL EXPERIENCE

The pre-novitiate house in its preparation for future ministries of Oblates in initial formation take up different dimensions of pastoral work/placements. Hospital ministry is part of the pastoral placements that pre-novices do for six weeks in their second year and another six weeks in third year, twelve weeks in total. Pre-novices at the end of it get acquainted with basics in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Nevertheless, the presence of the Oblate pre-novices never go unnoticed at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka. Oblate pre-novices are the only group doing pastoral for such a length and get certificates in Clinical Pastoral Education. However, the most important aspect of UTH pastoral experience is our closeness to the poor, the sick. The plight of the sick cries out for the salvation in their moment of illness, seen as moments of trial. It is only through Jesus Christ the great physician that they can fully have firm hope of a perfect healing and our presence is only a manifest sign of Christ's love. We stand with the sick in difficult moments although we cannot offer a surest hope of healing, we clothe them with the love of Christ. Their conditions of pain, hopelessness, instability and illness compels us to love and care for our brothers and sisters in their sickness for we cannot give what we do not possess. Christ's love and the zeal to serve are our primary conditions in our pastoral engagements and thus we give love in humble service. It is in serving where we find joy and generously put ourselves at the service of the poor.



Each and every year, the Missionary Oblates assign pre-novices to the University Teaching Hospital for a six weeks period of clinical pastoral experience. The aim of this experience is first, to extend the love of our Lord Jesus Christ to the patients, to understand the true human dignity and to fulfil the founders words "reaching out to the poor with their many faces."

PRAYER FOR OBLATE VOCATIONS

Holy Father, we come to you because Jesus asked us to pray that you send workers into your harvest. You so loved the world that you sent your son so that we might have the fullness of life.

He in turn sent the twelve and the apostle Paul to announce the good news of salvation.

After them, from generation to generation, you have continued to send workers into the whole world so that everyone might know you. Then you chose Saint Eugene and through him you brought into being a family of missionaries who have passionately taught "who Christ is" in every corner of the world and have established new Christian communities

More than ever the world needs to know your merciful love and needs those who will help the men and women of our time to "become first of all human beings, and then Christians and finally, saints."

Therefore, send us generous young men, passionate for Jesus, willing to make of their whole life a total oblation to you, to become close to the poorest and most abandoned, and to proclaim the gospel.

May they burn with the same fire that you enkindled in Saint Eugene: may they come to be part of his family and, with all the Oblates, may they continue the work of redemption.

Jesus told us that whatever we ask of you in his name, you will grant it.

So we make this prayer to you with faith, sure that you will hear us. Mary immaculate, who first gave Jesus to the world, be with us as we pray.

Oblate formation centers the Oblate's life on responding to the call of Jesus Christ "you did not choose me but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16; cf. C. 1).

Like the apostles, the Oblate commits himself to follow Christ and he patterns his entire life on that of Christ, "cooperating with the savior and imitating his example" (C. 1). Like our founder, the Oblate is passionately committed to Jesus Christ." Like St Paul, the Oblate seeks to say "for me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). It is in Jesus Christ the savior that the Oblate finds the Centre, unity and meaning of his life. Oblate formation is at the service of this response.

THE PRISON MINISTRY

The prison service or the correctional service is one of the agencies of criminal justice, whose aim is to rehabilitate, to control and take care of the prisoners. Our primary mission as Oblates is to proclaim Jesus Christ and his kingdom both to those who do not know Him and those who have lost sight of the hope which He brings; in order to lead them to the fullness of life. Most of the prisoners have lost hope in God because of the sufferings and pain they go through in prison. One obvious question which they ask themselves is that, is God present in their suffering? This is simply because their sufferings are too much for them to bear and this question has led most of the prisoners to lose hope in God.

One ministry our founder Saint Eugene De Mazenod was involved in was the prison ministry, to help the prisoners and to bring hope to them. Just like we are challenged in the Gospel of Matthew: 25 vs 34-40, when Jesus identified himself with the sick, hungry, strangers and prisoners. Today Jesus Christ wants us also to find him in those people who are abandoned and persecuted and those who are suffering due to different reasons.

My visit at *Mwembeshi Open Prisons*, was a challenging moment and at the same time a life giving experience, the reason being that the joy and happiness the prisoners showed to us was extraordinary to me. Because almost everyone had a Bible others even the Rosary. And this shows how God is working in their lives through preaching from different pastors and priests. Prison ministry is one of the ministries neglected by many people because of the misconceptions behind it. However, for me, working with such people is really a good thing because you really give hope to the hopeless, and this is the call of our Lord Jesus Christ to give hope to the hopeless. My dear brothers if we want to achieve this mission of our Lord Jesus Christ then working with everyone, especially the abandoned such as the Prisoners is the right way to go.



Prenovice Br. **Stanco SIMUKONDA**

Ron-Walker dedication Tournament

Ron-walker dedication tournament is a general sports tournament held by pre-novitiate brothers from congregation Oblates of Mary Immaculate (O.M.I) toward the end of every semester. Initially the tournament occurs at Demazinod house of formation located in Makeni Bonaventure area Lusaka, the formation house consist of four hostels were pre-novice brothers occupies and the hostels are named after some of the first oblates priest and brothers who worked in Zambian delegation as followers, Fr. Charlie Hassenauer, Paul Duffy, Jack Joyce and John Keplinger. The tournament consist of four categories that is volleyball, pool table and soccer, during tournament the four hostel are combined into two groups John Kaplinger combines with Jack Joyce while Charlie Hassanauer with Paul Duffy.

However, maybe the reader might ask why the tournament is called Ron-walker dedication? First and foremost Ron-Walker is the short form of the name Ronald Walker one of the Missionary Oblate priest. Fr. Ronald Walker helped much in setting up the formation ministry in Zambian delegation around 1989, by than the missionary congregation Oblates of Mary Immaculate was only five years old after its establishment in Zambia from 1984. Thus the move of opening the formation ministry it was not easy but despite the doubts among the members of delegation, with the help of Fr. Ron the formation was launched in the same year with two first pre-novices to start the program. Fr. Ron worked in the formation ministry in Zambia for more than 20 years, in 2016 is when he went back to United States of America.

The pre-novice brothers introduced this tournament in order to show gratitude to Fr. Ron and the entire Zambian delegation team for their perseverance and hard working in laying the concrete foundation of formation ministry in Zambia, It is an inspiration to every pre-novice in formation. In the other hands, the tournament is one way of deepening the brotherhood within the formation as our founder St. Eugene said "among yourself Charity, Charity, Charity and outside zeal to serve others." The tournament launched on Friday 24th November, 2017 at Bonaventure University College football ground with a football march. Upon the kicking off the march the rain started unfortunately brothers did not retrieve from having the march because there were geared to officiate the tournament, the ground filled with stagnant water everywhere, and it became slippery and it is this climate which made the tournament very interested and enjoyable by the brothers. The march ended 3-3 above is some of the photos which were taken at the end of the game. category of volleyball the hostels of John keplinger and Jack Joyce got 2 games while the hostel of Fr. Charlie Hessenauer and Bishop Dufy got 7 games the total number of games in the volleyball tournament was 9, however Fr. Hessenauer and Bishop Duffy carried the volleyball tournament.

By Br. D.P CHISHA



SOCIAL MEDIA SYMPOSIUM... By prenovice Br. Democracy MUDENDA

Social media is like any other with both merits and awareness to users and that Zambia Conference for communication director Fr. symposium at St. College to emphasis on the

There is in every moment of to enjoy on using media gain from that. Perhaps, in to know what social media is

defined as the collection of online communication channel dedicated to community based input, interaction, contents sharing and collaboration. In this sense the use of social media has come as fastest and simplest media in a way that, each and every one is able to communicate and able to facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas and so on. Above all, the merits of using social media in the communities, working places, and studying places etc. In this aspect, social media is a platform that enables the development in terms of communication in order to receive the information faster and easy ways of finding and seeing what is happening across the globe. It is from this reason that media provides the ability to create social platform websites and services with complete social media network functionality. However, social media is an integral part of life online which helps us in terms of work research, studying, for market business products, promote brands and sales promotions. Hence, media is there to help and allow us to build relationships, share information and engage people. The media should be the system that will help people to live in good and well-constructed societies. This is networking generation world whereby each and every one now wants to form closer friendships, making relationships, marriages and even joining seminary through the use of social media. So the new platform is creating an atmosphere where everyone is given a voice to share one's thoughts and opinions.

Consequently, we cannot demean the work of social media because it has put our lives on first track in the way that, it is now easy to do and find anything on internet compared to the past days. It has also brought cleanliness as far as communication is concerned. The work media has opened up new ways of collaboration and discussion. In the other way, it has been emphasized that each and every one should have an opportunity to check, see what is going on in the world. Among, religious communities it has been easier to access any form of interaction using the media and they have even taken advantage of using it as Sunday missal. It is very important because it has really opened the mind and reawakened some of the progression, ideas, so would appreciate for the coming of social media in this time of networking generation world.

On the other hand, social media has some demerits because it has led many people astray due to the abuse. Many people today find no interest in chatting, talking to each other, sharing a meal together (face to face) without looking, touching and checking their phones (internet addiction). It is in this sense that, the Catholic Church has shown interest in flagging some awareness on the use and abuse of social media, which if not properly controlled, can lead to total destruction of human interactions.



social platform that comes demerits. Thus, this needs non-users. It is for this reason Catholic Bishops Winfield Kunda facilitated a Bonaventure University 'Effects of Social Media'.

our lives a time to relax and regardless of what you may the first place you would like all about. Social media can be

PHOTO GALLERY

