

China Mission



The Partners in Mission Program thanks Debbie Van Der Zweep (St Simon's Parish, Rowville Vic) for her undying enthusiasm, hard work and dedication. Debbie has recently returned home after 5 months working in Beijing at the baby home and orphanage, as well as teaching English.

Currently, we have Daniel Gonsalves (St John Vianney's Parish, Mulgrave Vic) in Beijing, assisting the mission and battling the Chinese winter. Daniel chose to participate in the program after first experiencing the work being done when he visited the baby home and orphanage as part of the immersion experience last year.

Earlier this year we said good bye to Maureen and Tony Brown (St Eugene's Parish, Burpengary Qld) and Evelyn Waters (Surfers Paradise, QLD) as they embarked on their adventure to work in Hong Kong. We wish them all the best during their time in Hong Kong, working with the students of our Oblate schools and we ask that you keep them in your prayers.

Lastly, we'd like to thank Fr Irek Dampc omi for his supervision and leadership in Beijing over the past few years. Fr Irek has since returned to Melbourne to continue his studies and has passed on his mission duties to Fr Giovanni Zevola omi. We wish both Fr Dampc omi and Fr Zevola omi all the best in their new roles.

We are currently accepting applications for Partners in Mission – Beijing (July – December 2012). For further information please contact Lesley on ph: 03 9795 5077 or email: pim@oblates.com.au. Applications close 30th April 2012.

Applications are also open for the Hong Kong Summer Program. This program involves working with students on conversational English in preparation for their exams. It will be held from 18th July to 14th August. For further information please contact Lesley on ph: 03 9795 5077 or email: pim@oblates.com.au. Applications close 30th April 2012.

Kenya A Light in the Darkness

In Kenya, power rationing occurs due to low water levels in the hydro schemes. It is common to lose power three or four times a week, with no warnings and no indication of how long.



Kionyo Oblate parish runs St Stephen's Computer College started by an Australian Oblate Fr Mario Azrak OMI, back in 2003. Classes are held each day for courses in Computer Applications and Maintenance and Trouble Shooting over a 2-3 month period. In addition, there is now an intensive 3-week course, for teachers, during the December holidays. The challenge is how to give value to the students when the power goes off for one, two or even eight hours (once or twice a month it goes off for 24 hours!). It is also frustrating for the students because they don't know whether to stay or go home and pick tea.

So, when the Old Boys Association from Mazenod WA said they wanted to do something to help me in our mission here, I discussed the priorities with the Parish Priest Fr Daquin and he was happy for us to purchase a backup generator. It successfully runs nine desktop computers and two laptops in the office. In the house, we are also enjoying the generator at night when it runs two fridges, several lights, the TV, a desktop computer and two laptops.

Jesus brought the light of true love into the darkness of our world, our power supply not only peels away the darkness/loneliness of night-time, but it also allows knowledge to brighten the darkness of ignorance for our youth who struggle to enter university. Our cheap applications course gives them one on one time with a computer, extended tuition time, free Saturdays to practice and no travel or accommodation costs.

It will also come in handy on Sundays when we host special "movies with values," on the big screen, for the youth and smaller children. It is a real treat and keeps them away from the local liquor, drugs and other 'distractions'.

Enjoy your power supply in Australia!

Fr Gerry Conlan OMI

Fr Giovanni Zevola OMI

Fr Giovanni Zevola OMI as a young boy in the southern part of Italy, had a great desire to be a missionary. After a time of discernment and prayer in order to clarify his call and explain to family how it could be possible to go somewhere else when there are many needs in your own home. It was a time of enthusiasm and tears when the bishop allowed that young fellow to leave because "we cannot win God in generosity".



A little diocese facing a shortage of priests gave the little they had, out of generosity, and Fr Giovanni became a missionary in Asia. He considers himself to be "the widow's offering" (cfr Luke 21).

Many years have passed since he left Italy for Asia, first a few years were spent in the Philippines, then 20 long and enjoyable years in South Korea and now in China.

Once again the desire to be that "little coin" because we cannot win God in generosity, much we have received and still we are receiving from Him. The main reason why he finds himself now in China is the desire to finally come to believe that he is not the one giving, but God first and foremost is the Giver.

Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

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