

CELEBRATING
125
YEARS
OF THE OBLATE
MISSION IN AUSTRALIA

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Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

Celebrating 125 Years of Oblate Charism

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate celebrated the arrival of the Order in Australia and the dedication of St Patrick's Fremantle as a Basilica from August 15–18.

The Oblates landed in Fremantle in 1894, under the supervision of Fr Matthew Gaughren OMI, the Anglo-Irish Provincial who was accompanied by two other priests, Fr Daniel O'Ryan OMI and Fr Roger Hennessy OMI. On the night of Thursday, July 19, the three priests were welcomed to our shores by 350 people.

The 125th anniversary is an opportunity to give thanks for the past, to acknowledge the many blessings in our Province today and to prepare for another 125 years of service in Australia.

To mark this special occasion, the Province hosted the De Mazenod Family Gathering in Fremantle, with the theme 'Respond with joy to our call to Evangelise'. In all, 63 people from across Australia and from a variety of ministries gathered together. They included 40 lay people and 23 Oblate Fathers.

Participants were asked to prepare for the gathering with a community meeting in their home state, followed by three online formation sessions based on the Oblate Charism. The preparation program allowed for us to maximise the time together during the gathering and spend time listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit in the Oblate missions in the Province. The gathering also offered the opportunity to build and strengthen connections between Oblate ministries and create an awareness of the vocational opportunities that exist within our community and, ultimately, creating a formal Oblate Lay Association.

continued...



CELEBRATING

...continued cover article

The event provided the opportunity to share and learn from each other, to explore the recent vision and mission document developed by the Oblates and to address the realities facing the contemporary life and mission of our Church.

At the end of the gathering, participants were asked to 'think big' and brain storm about what can be possible now and into the future. A colourful array of ideas came to light, many of which can be implemented in the short term, and there were certainly some long term plans ... Watch this space!

More importantly the participants left with a greater understanding of the Oblate charism and a sense of renewed faith.

The weekend concluded with Mass at St Patrick's Basilica commemorating the 1894 arrival. It was celebrated with the Oblates of Australia and Priests from the Archdiocese of Perth.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all those involved in preparing for the gathering, the participants and all who prayed for us during this celebrating. Let us all continue to pray for another 125 years of Oblate Charism.



MAMI

From the Director

Since the last newsletter we have celebrated the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the Oblates in Australia. The gathering in Fremantle, Western Australia launched the De Mazenod Family, which embraces all those who live and work in the missionary spirit of St Eugene de Mazenod. You who support the missionary work of the Oblates through your prayers and donations are indeed members of the De Mazenod Family.

This year you have raised close to \$400,000, which has been sent to our various missionary projects. Your prayers and generosity have been behind the success of so much good.

May this year's celebration of the Birth of Jesus be a moment of grace for you and your family.



The image of the nativity with Fr Charlie Burrows and an Indonesian mother and child praying before the Infant Jesus is symbolic of all that the De Mazenod Family is about.

Please send your intentions to the MAMI office so your needs can be included in the novena of Masses offered by our Oblate Camberwell Community.

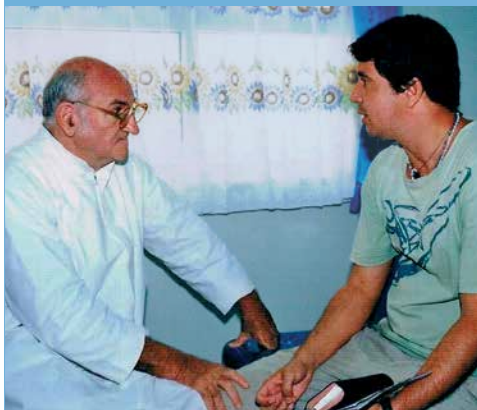
May you have a blessed and grace-filled celebration of the Lord's birth.

Fr John Sherman OMI



ANNIVERSARY

Fr Charlie Burrows OMI



I first met Charlie Burrows briefly when I was a novice in St Mary's Seminary in 1972. He and John McLaughlin had started their preparation for Indonesian language study as they were given the obedience to Indonesia, to be the second group to join the pioneer group of Kevin Casey, Pat Moroney, Pat Slattery and Dave Shelton.

After ordination, I was sent to Sefton Parish and there his reputation was well established. I heard about this tough, friendly young Irish priest who was brave enough to do things that others wouldn't normally do. One thing that he did was drive the "Pink Panther" bus picking people up for bingo and taking them on excursions. There is a story that he once drove the bus under a low bridge and the bus got stuck. The parish had dances in the hall for young people and he was the "bouncer", ready to handle any troublesome person. He was well liked in Sefton and many people remember him.

My real encounter and association with Charlie comes from when I was sent to Indonesia in 1983. I was fortunate to join a good community of Oblates there. There was Kevin Casey, as the superior, stationed in Yogyakarta as rector of the newly begun seminary. Then there was John McLaughlin in the parish of Jakarta. Pat McAnally was in Purwokerto. Charlie was, of course, in Cilacap and had been there from the beginning. I was stationed in Yogyakarta with Kevin at the Seminary but really enjoyed the frequent opportunity to be with Charlie in Cilacap. The Parish of Cilacap at that time was huge,

WE REMEMBER

Fr Peter Daly OMI



In 1992 he was based at Mazenod College, Victoria and then Natal Province, South Africa, where he conducted parish missions before he returned to Mazenod College, Lesmurdie, as Rector, from 1993–2001.

In 2011, after his time as Rector of Iona College, Peter had a sabbatical, assisted at St John Vianney's Victoria and

St Eugene's in Queensland, and then served as Rector at Mazenod College Lesmurdie in 2014 and 2015. From 2016 until January 2019, he was the Provincial of the Australian Province. After a short sabbatical, Peter returned to Mazenod College Lesmurdie as Rector in April 2019.

In the days after Peter's death, his brother Oblates gathered for their annual retreat and also had moments to reflect on their shared community life with Peter. I take this liberty of sharing some of their reflections with you.

'Loyalty, friendship, a sense of justice; acceptance of all; a passion for helping our Indigenous sisters and brothers; honest; generous. As Provincial, Peter treated all equally. He was gentle;

very human and understanding the problems of others; affirmative; a passion for helping the homeless and those in prison; young people were drawn to him; calm; a conscientious worker. Peter was a spiritual adviser to many and whether in the education or parish ministry he was a progressive thinker. He was a passionate supporter of Queensland in the State of Origin. As a good son of his parents, Rita and Don, and an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Peter Daly was a person of strong FAITH in Jesus'.

I knew Peter from his time as a student at Iona College, where over three years I was his class teacher. The above comments by his brother Oblates ring just so true. For some years leading up to his death, Peter struggled with ill health. He bore this cross with faith in his Lord and determination. A few weeks before his sudden death, I was with him at Mazenod College and we were discussing a recent book recommended by Fr Michael McMahon, Greg Sheridan's *God is Good for You*. Peter decided to buy a copy for himself, and one for me. He did not forget and gave it to me as I said goodbye to him recently to return to Victoria. It is now a treasured book and message from Peter.

Fr John Sherman OMI

covering more than 2000 square kilometres and the outstations were many and distant, one being more than 90 kilometres from the parish centre.

At every chance Charlie would be out of the city of Cilacap, heading to the outstations. His love for all the people – Christians, Moslems and others – is clear. His focus is to preach and show the kingdom values of care and concern for all.

He had, and still has, incredible programs of helping villages, in education and infrastructure. To his credit and all who supported him, the area has developed and the people have clearly been helped to improve their lives. Now the parish has been divided into several parishes with 22 schools, a maritime academy and other institutes. There have been several films put out by British TV and many videos locally and internationally.

Charlie gives his all to the people, having been in Cilacap for 46 years and contributed so much to the region. He is always thinking of how to improve himself and others, reading and calculating programs and projects.

In recent times, his plea for development and justice and the elimination of the death penalty was recognised. In 2012, he received an award from the acclaimed Maarif Institute, an Islamic institute, recognising his contribution to the development of the people. Because of this, he receives invitations to speak to Islamic groups and universities.



So we might ask what makes this Catholic priest so outstanding. I would say his faith and his intellectual capacity, reading, thinking all the time and working hard to implement plans for people. But that would not be enough! I believe his real charisma is his openness to all people and to creation. He seems to have time for people and, with such an open personality, he enables many people to join with him to implement plans. He always says he listens –to people and their needs – and that is his starting point.

For the Oblates in Indonesia, he is an example of generosity, giving himself totally to the Lord and to the people and country. Don't get me wrong, he is not a saint and he would be the first to agree with that. He is a great believer, as also is Pope Francis, in the Mercy of God. We thank God for his life and Oblate vocation and we rejoice and praise the Lord with him on his 50th anniversary of priesthood. Keep going Charlie! Ad Multos Annos!

Fr Peter Stoll OMI

VOCATIONS



Brother Nghieu

(Anthony Nguyen Van Nghieu OMI) Born in Hanoi, Vietnam on March 10, 1985.

My family has 10 members: grandfather, father, mother and seven boys. I am the third in

the family. In 2004 and 2005, I worked for few years in Ho Chi Minh City. My jobs included: mechanic, selling ice-cream and yoghurt, renting comics, aluminium and glass worker.

I joined the Oblates in 2009. I took the first vows on May 21, 2012, and made the final Oblation on October 7, 2017. I have completed my undergraduate philosophical and theological studies. At the moment I am studying at English. I hope to be able to master the English language, do postgraduate studies in theology and become a true missionary, ready to go wherever I am sent.



Brother Luan

(John Baptist Ha Thanh Luan OMI) I was born on September 1, 1988 in the south of Vietnam.

There are seven members in my family: my mother, two older brothers, one older sister and two younger brothers. My father died when I was 16.

In 2012, I came to know two Oblates in Vietnam, because my youth group needed a spiritual director for some activities. After a period of discernment, I joined a vocation programme in the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. On May 21, 2016, I made my first vows and became an Oblate. In 2018 I began preparing to come to Australia. At the moment I am studying English.

Brother Josh Nash A Tale of Two Cities

This is a tale of two cities. Not very far from one another. On the surface they appear so different; but underneath very much the same. They are London and Lourdes.



For the past three months I have been stationed at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. This pastoral experience has been a part of my formation and preparation to become a priest with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Throughout the summer, I worked with the YOUCAT team on a youth evangelisation project within the Shrine. We worked day in day out engaging young people and families in their faith through catechesis activities. It was a great opportunity to encounter people of all walks of life and to have deep conversations with them about their journey of faith. But with summer slowly fading, the shrine is emptying of pilgrims and so I have moved to a new mission and now find myself in the hustle and bustle of London, braving the cold and rainy days, and immersed in a whirlwind of pastoral activity in the Oblate parish of Sacred Heart, Kilburn.

My time in Lourdes almost feels like a distant dream. Sun-soaked summer days, where the brilliant blue skies kiss the steeples of the churches that dot the skyline of this little French town, seem to be fading away. Lourdes is known as the place where heaven touches earth. Due to the apparitions of the Virgin Mary to St Bernadette, a shrine has been built to honour that holy place. The peaceful silence of the grotto, with its cold, smooth stone surface and the miraculous flowing waters, provides for its pilgrims an escape from their hectic world. The Pyrenean mountains encircle the sacred shrine and almost block out the outside world, providing a safe place for people to come and pray.

In stark contrast, London's grey, dreary days epitomise the feelings of despair, loneliness and exhaustion that mark the fast-paced and dog-eat-dog world of this great city. The unattractive council flats of West Kilburn, and even our brick-hall-cum-church, blend into the monotonous tones of this city that resound with futureless nihilism. This overcrowded city screams of desperation as loud as the underground train screeches along its metallic tracks. People collide against each other, day after day, as they scrounge enough scraps of their being to continue on another day. Although London might sound like a nightmare, and Lourdes like a dream, they really are not that much different.

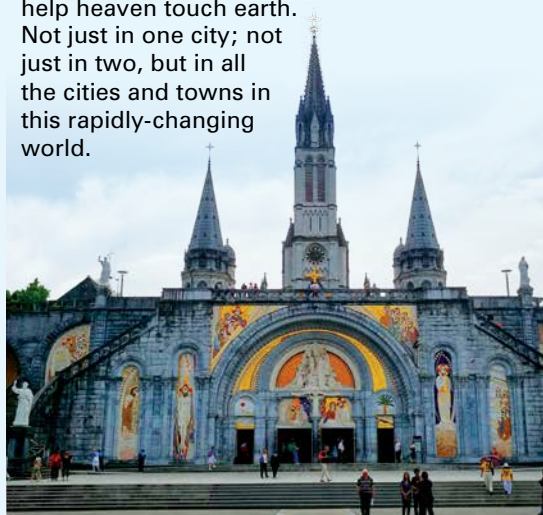
Lourdes is a place of encounter. The Virgin Mary, like any good mother, has made Lourdes a home. It is a place where you can feel comfortable and safe. No matter where you come from in the world, you can feel at home in Lourdes. In this place, I met so many people and I encountered them on many different levels; the conversations

that lasted hours, the discussions that continued into the night and the relationships that were built from either short or sometimes ongoing encounters. This was the blessing of Lourdes. It showed me, that on some deep level, we are all the same. We are all searching for God.

London is a striking contrast to Lourdes. You could live next door to someone and never see them or know their name. Millions of people brush past each other each day and never know where they are going. You can stand on the Tube with hundreds of other commuters and never look anyone in the eye. Even within this fast-paced, faceless and grim landscape, people are still searching. In fact, they yearn for peace, for quiet, for rest. They yearn to feel connected, to feel wanted and to feel loved. They yearn for God.

When it comes down to it all, it doesn't matter what a place looks like on the surface. The reality of a place is not found in its buildings, but in its people. If Lourdes is the place where heaven touches earth, and London is a place on earth devoid of heaven, then how do the swarming crowds of London ever get to experience the peace of that quiet French shrine? Through us. These people we encounter are no different to you ... and me.

I have learnt that to be a missionary does not always mean having to go long distances; but to make the distances between us shorter. It is up to all of us, as missionary disciples, to reach out to our neighbours and to help create a sacred place where people can find peace, find joy, find connection and find meaning. This is the Church; not just a building, but a place and the people who gather in that place to create something special, to create that presence of Christ. More and more, many of our cities are becoming like London, rather than Lourdes. The pressures of this world can seem too much. It is right in the midst of that world where we need to act consciously with faith to break down walls, to build bridges, to connect to one another and in that encounter see the face of Jesus, who is in each and every one of us. It is in that way that we can help heaven touch earth. Not just in one city; not just in two, but in all the cities and towns in this rapidly-changing world.





A Month of Blessings

English Summer School, Hong Kong 2019, for students from the Oblates' three primary schools, proved to be an enriching experience for this newly retired teacher. My colleague, Mary, who had taken part the previous year and was returning for a second year, became a font of information about what I needed to take with me and what to expect.

I arrived in Hong Kong on Thursday, July 18, to a warm and friendly welcome that I soon learned reflected the wonderful hospitality I received throughout my time teaching in the Summer School. Other teachers in Hong Kong for the Summer School were Zuzanna and Karol from Poland, also on their second year – making me, very much, the newbie! On our first night, we were treated to a welcome dinner at a Korean restaurant, a happy change to our inflight fare. Each day after school, the teachers shared lunch with our hosts. Our conversations covered a wide range of topics and often included information about places to visit and directions on how to get to them. At the end of our time together, we were, once again, taken out to dinner to celebrate and be farewelled. I was overwhelmed by the generous hospitality I received.



One lunch time: Fr Roy, Lorraine, Fr Ronnie, Mary, Zuzanna, Karol and Fr Slawek.

The children in my classes were eager to extend their English-speaking skills and they tried valiantly to teach me some Cantonese. My classes consisted of 9 to 12-year-old students with a range of abilities and differing levels of English. I was delighted to see the growing confidence of all students as we worked together.

Week 3 and 4 classes at our final assembly.



Trying Aussie food from Possum Magic by Mem Fox and focussed on the straw tower challenge.

They were enthusiastic about learning games and were quick to develop favourites. Learning English through science experiments also proved to be popular with students, and I loved watching their faces as balloons “magically” inflated, as tumble bunnies turned somersaults, helicopters twirled from the balcony and energy transferred from their hands to a tiny marshmallow. They were full of questions about the how and why things worked.



Kitchen chemistry: How did that happen?

During my time in Hong Kong, the weather ranged from hot, humid days to a category 8 typhoon. I experienced Mass in Cantonese with amazing singing, the peace and serenity of the Chi Lin Nunnery, ferry rides across the harbour and to islands and a ride on a Flying Dumbo in Disneyland. Most of all, I was able to work with a terrific group of children who arrived in my classroom with big smiles and an eagerness to learn. Each day I counted my Blessings. I will, God willing, be back next year for a second year.

Lorraine Kuehn



Learning to play “Heads down, Thumbs Up”.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

A new challenge opening up. The Oblates have a significant presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 145 Oblates. This includes 34 students for the priesthood in training. They are asking us for help to cover the cost of training young men for the priesthood and also for special projects among the poorest of their people.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one the world’s top producers of coltan, a rare mineral used in the manufacture of many electronic devices, such as mobile phones. Fr Malayi OMI makes this appeal:

“Working conditions in the DRC’s coltan mines are dangerous and the workers, including young children, are often exploited. The exploitation of these mines is in the hands of the guerrillas. Our cell phones are stained with the blood of the ‘walking dead children’”.



Fr Malayi works with children who have escaped forced labour in the mines. Many of them are living on the streets when he finds them. Some 20,000 children live on the streets of Kinshasa, the capital of the DRC, alone.

The Oblates have started an educational centre in the city. Fr Malayi described the centre as “a home where they can learn a trade that ensures them a future away from the mines and to never return to the streets. We can’t solve all the problems, but we thank God for every one of the children we can rescue. It’s a true miracle that is made possible thanks to people of goodwill.”



Jaffna – Sri Lanka

These students from Iona College in Brisbane recently visited Aix-en-Provence in France and the island of Iona, reflecting on the missionary spirit of St Eugene de Mazenod and the early Monks of Iona. In the past three years 'the men of Iona College' have raised \$45,000 to establish an education fund to assist children deprived of education opportunities since the recent civil war.

Christmas cards

Thanks to the amazing generosity of our MAMI supporters, we have been able to send \$90,000 to the various projects of Fr Charlie Burrows and a further \$32,549 from the Christmas cards to projects for tools, chicken and ducks, and goats. In this, his 50th anniversary of his ordination, he still wanted more but expressed his thanks to all who assist him help the people he serves. A further \$75,000 was sent for other educational and medical projects undertaken by our Indonesian Oblates.



Vietnam

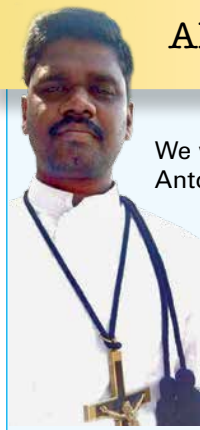
The students from Mazenod College Victoria continue to support the 'House of Hospitality' for poor students in Vietnam, among other projects, with a \$15,500 grant to cover its educational costs for the year.

China

Two new educational projects associated with the Oblate community in mainland China were funded to the extent of \$10,000, together with supporting the PIMs project.



AROUND THE PROVINCE



We welcome Fr Joe Antony to the Australian Province. "I am from St Eugene's Province India. I come from a small family of four members. I am the eldest son and my brother is two years younger than me. My parents are farmers and work their own land. They are healthy and keeping well.

I am 34 and made my final oblation on December 8, 2011. Thereafter, I was sent to West Bengal, India, as one of the pioneers to begin our Oblate Mission. From January 2012 until May 2017, I committed myself in the service of our Oblate charism in West Bengal. From 2017 to 2019, I worked in our Oblate parish in the archdiocese of Bangalore. Fr Superior General gave me an obedience for the Australian Province in January 2019." Fr. Joe has been appointed to **St John Vianney's Parish, Mulgrave, Victoria.**

National Oblate Youth Encounter – January 3–6, 2020

We ask each Oblate community to keep the National Oblate Youth Encounter in your prayers. Each community is asked to promote the event through the literature sent by the Oblate Youth Office in coming weeks, and it is anticipated that each ministry will be represented at the Encounter.

Important Dates

- **Australian Catholic Youth Festival, December 8–10, 2019, Perth**
- **National Oblate Youth Encounter, January 3–6, 2020, Melbourne**
- **AORC Youth Gathering, January 31–February 6, 2020, Hong Kong**

Since the July newsletter we have had MAMI APPEALS IN:

- Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale, NSW
- St David's, Tea Tree Gully, SA
- St Patrick's, Fremantle, WA,
- Mission Action Days in Iona College, Qld, and both Mazenod Colleges in WA and Vic.

A **BIG THANKS** to all for the success of these events.



CELEBRATIONS around the Province:

In **Fremantle**, the foundation parish of the Australian Province celebrated a Mass in the Basilica of St Patrick at which all the representatives of the missions of Australia, China and Indonesia were represented. The Archbishop of Perth, together with the other Bishops resident in the Archdiocese, attended, along with the Vicar-General of Perth. It was also a pleasure to have present the Provincial of the Anglo-Irish Province, the Province from which the Australian Province was founded, together with the Provincial of Indonesia, which the Australian Province helped establish. For Fremantle Parish, 2019 was also the 25th anniversary of the declaration of St Patrick's as a Basilica. What a wonderful joint celebration.

Fr Fini concluded by saying: "I pray that a fire for mission has been lit in the hearts of the participants, that as they return home, they will ignite a new fire for collaboration in mission. The shift must be towards a Church led by the people not maintained by clerics".



Important Information

The MAMI OFFICE will close on **MONDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2019, and reopen MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020.**



Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate

Published by the Oblate Office of Mission, M.A.M.I. Centre, P.O. Box 384, Camberwell, Vic 3124
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Are you wondering what to give as a gift for Christmas this year?

Give someone *a gift of hope* this Christmas



At Christmas we celebrate the greatest gift of all, the birth of Jesus Christ.

In the true spirit of Christmas, your gift can be a gift to those less fortunate - a gift of love.

The concept is simple: make a recommended tax deductible donation to one of our programs and you will receive a Christmas Gift Card, which explains that you have purchased a gift card in place of a gift, and give it to a loved one.

An ideal meaningful gift for someone special this Christmas is a MAMI Gift Card: a gift that keeps on giving for the entire year and beyond.



Make a donation to one of these projects in the Missions supported by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Chickens \$10



Development \$15



Toolbox \$20



Education \$25



Goat \$30



Our Gift to You: Novena of Masses

Dear Father,

Kindly include the following intentions in the **Christmas Masses**.

(Optional)

Name:

Address:

Please forward this to:

MAMI Office
P.O. Box 384
Camberwell Vic 3124

How to order your MAMI Gift Card

1. Order online at www.oblates.com.au/christmas-cards
2. Complete the form on the reverse side of this brochure
3. Call us on (03) 9805 8888



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Three Novenas of Masses for you – Christmas 2019

These Novenas will begin on December 16th and end with Midnight Mass. In them we will remember the elderly, who have borne the heat of the day and the sun and as they reach the evening of life, suffer from a variety of illnesses and limitations, which often include loneliness and neglect.

We will remember the young that God will direct them during their tender and turbulent years to choose the good and avoid evil and evil influences: a wrong choice can have devastating effects that lead to wasted years and wasted talents. Dangerous drugs and alcohol are readily available and these have brought untold sadness to lots of young people and their families.

We will remember all the families who are part of our extended De Mazenod family. Parents need all the spiritual support we can give them to carry out their difficult vocation. Many families have old problems that keep on recurring year after year, others have new and unexpected ones as their children grow and demand independence. Nothing new under the sun – only the old problems happening to new people.

St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that in every Mass "Christ is hanging on the Cross pleading for us". Kindly let us have your intentions. They will be treated with complete and total confidentiality – they are sacred in the eyes of God and to us.

May the peace and love of this Christmas be your gift as you offer this gift for others.

If you wish to make a donation to MAMI apart from the Annual August appeal, your gift is always happily received. To assist our administration and avoid confusion you might like to use this donation slip. **Please note that if you tick to receive a tax deductible receipt, your gift can only be used for community development projects and not religious work of the missions.**

Name			
Address			
City	State	Postcode	
Phone			
Email			

I have enclosed a Cheque/Money Order made payable to MAMI for \$ _____

or debit my credit card: Mastercard Visa the amount of \$ _____

Once off payment Monthly payment

Card number

Credit card expiry date / CCV number (final 3 digits printed on card back)

Card holder's name (as appears on the card) _____

Card holder's signature _____ Date _____

I require a tax deductible receipt.

I would like further information on making a bequest in my will.

Comments/intention: _____

DONATE TO THE 2019 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Projects	Price	Quantity	Value
Chooks	\$10.00		
Developmental Projects	\$15.00		
Toolbox	\$20.00		
Education Fund	\$25.00		
Goats	\$30.00		

Postage and Handling **\$5.00**

Send to: **MAMI Office**
PO Box 384
Camberwell Vic 3124

Total \$ _____

or ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER
FOR **TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS**

CAN BE MADE TO:

**Oblate Missions Developing
Countries Fund (OMDC)
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BSB NO.: 083 347
ACCOUNT NO.: 45500 7380**

or ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER
FOR **THE RELIGIOUS WORK OF**

THE MISSION CAN BE MADE TO:

**Oblates of Mary Immaculate
(MAMI)
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK
BSB NO.: 083 347
ACCOUNT NO.: 45489 0669**

Please send an email to: mami@oblates.com.au which includes your name, postal address, EFT transfer details and Intention.



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