



OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE, ANGLO-IRISH PROVINCE

# Refounding Mission

## *Letter from Provincial*

Dear Brother Oblate,

I take this opportunity of wishing you every blessing in the New Year. I hope you managed some time for yourself after all the excitement and celebrations of Christmas and can face the coming year with new life and hope. Many thanks for your prayers and concern for my brother Paddy, who had surgery before Christmas. Thank God all the signs for his recovery so far, are good. He is at home and in good form.

Fr. General has written a New Year message to the Congregation in Documentation OMI (Jan 2007), entitled *Oblate Mission Today*, which is available on the Oblate web site ([www.omiworld.org](http://www.omiworld.org)). I find it to be inspirational and very relevant to our own Province at this time as we look to the future. He invites us to reflect on our mission as Oblates and asks are we doing our job? We continue to be involved in this process following on from the Immense Hope Project, the last Chapter and our own Congress.

The Provincial Leadership team named three priorities to help focus our efforts and channel our energies. These are:

Refounding Mission  
Partners in Mission  
Personnel for Mission

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All recognise that we have much to do and many big decisions to make as a Province if we are to remain faithful to the mission we have received and the charism of Eugene de Mazenod. We need all the help we can get, from each member of the Province, our Partners in Mission and outside professional support and advice. For this reason we have engaged the services of Prospectus, an independent consultancy to assist us in the next stage of our process. They have arranged for meetings to take place in the different regions of the Province over the coming weeks, to continue a process of consultation and discernment regarding our future. It will also be an opportunity of meeting and consulting with the lay people who work with us as Partners in Mission.

I ask you to make every effort to attend these meetings but also to become involved in the process of reflecting on our mission and discerning our future together, as we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus. Please bring these intentions before the Lord in your prayers that the Lord will be with us and send his Spirit to lead us, guide us and inspire us as we move forward together in hope.

Yours sincerely in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate.

Willie Fitzpatrick OMI  
Province Leader

# Refounding Mission

## Regional Consultation Sessions



*Let us remember three things:  
God loves us  
We must move forward  
God is with us*



Date	Region	Councillor	Convenor
18 Jan 07	Dublin	Willie Fitzpatrick	Paul Byrne
25 Jan 07	Dublin Parishes	Mick O'Connor	Michael Moore
31 Jan 07	Anglesey	Lorcan O'Reilly	Ted McSherry
1 Feb 07	Birmingham	Ollie Barry	Ken Thorson
2 Feb 07	Merseyside	Ollie Barry	Ned Quinn
7 Feb 07	London & South	Ray Warren	Ray Warren
8 Feb 07	Edinburgh	Leo Philomin	Tony Clancy

### Timetable:

2.30—5.30	Oblates only
5.30—7.00	Oblates and lay meal together
7.00—10.00	Oblates and lay session

The session in Dublin on 18th January will run from 11am to 1pm (Oblate only session), and 7pm to 10pm (Oblate and lay session).

## Objectives of Strategy Process

Our Province is undertaking a strategic development process to help refound the mission and set out a programme for mission development over the next five years.

The types of issues to be addressed in the strategic plan include:

- our role and focus as we go forward;
- criteria for mission;
- consultation processes;
- communications;
- what we need to do in order bring to life the vision to refound the Province's mission.

# Refounding Mission

## The Steering Group



Willie Fitzpatrick	Provincial
Leo Philomin	Special project to secularity, Birmingham
Ollie Barry	Director of Retreat Centre in Crewe
Moyra Healy	Consultant, Early school leavers, Birmingham
Judith King	Facilitator; has worked with us on Immense Hope, team and Provincial Congress.
Ted McSherry	Parish priest in Anglesey
Ken Thorson	Special project to secularity, Birmingham
Louis McDermott	Parish priest, Southampton

The steering group is made up of Oblates and lay people, all of whom took part in the Oblate Congress last June. At their first meeting they prayed that the process would be successful. They also spoke honestly about their concerns regarding the process and agreed on the need to move forward in a positive and hopeful frame of mind. It was clearly stated that the reasons for this change relate to the renewal of our mission much more than to the practical constraints we face because of falling numbers.

*Where do we want to be?  
How shall we get there?  
How shall we know we  
have arrived?*

## The Communications team is:

Ted Mc Sherry      Tom McCabe      Angela Malone      Moyra Healy

## Requirements and implications

These include:

- reaching consensus about what we hope will be achieved through this process;
- developing alternatives to what we have today;
- use of personnel;
- commitment to enlightened and relevant engagement with the women and men of our time;
- ongoing formation for Oblates and lay partners;
- financial resources to support this direction;
- leadership, administrative structures and succession planning for valuable initiatives.

## Our Hopes

It is our hope that the plan which emerges from this process will bring energy and focus to the mission, clarify a vision for the future and identify areas that we will have to commit ourselves to as well as those from which we will have to move away.

We hope too that the process will contribute to a communal sense of our shared mission.

Throughout the process we hope to involve our lay partners in consultations and decision-making regarding the future.



# Refounding Mission



## Timeline to completion

The initial kick-off meeting took place on Monday 11th December. Consultation will take place during the last three weeks in January and the first two weeks in February. It is anticipated that the final strategy will be completed by the middle of April 2007.

## Consultation process

It is very important to the Steering group that every Oblate in the Province is included in the strategy process. An independent consultancy company, Prospectus, will lead the consultation. Information will be circulated to all participants prior to the sessions. Your views and suggestions will be welcome at any stage.



## Key Stages

The strategy development process has been divided into six steps.

The first step involved the Steering Group meeting with Prospectus on Monday 11th December to kick off the project and gather initial thoughts on what it means to "Refound the Mission".

Step 2: 'Focus Groups', made up of Oblates and lay people and facilitated by Prospectus, will review the current situation in the different regions of the Province. Output and findings from the consultation will be fed back to the Steering Group by means of a workshop.

Step 3, 4 and 5 of the process will together involve 4 workshops between Prospectus and the Steering Group to develop the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Action Plan, Implementation Plan and Evaluation Framework for the Anglo-Irish Province for the period 2007 – 2012.

The final step of the process will involve Prospectus presenting the final Strategy to the Province.



Visit the Oblate website at:  
[www.oblatesai.org](http://www.oblatesai.org)