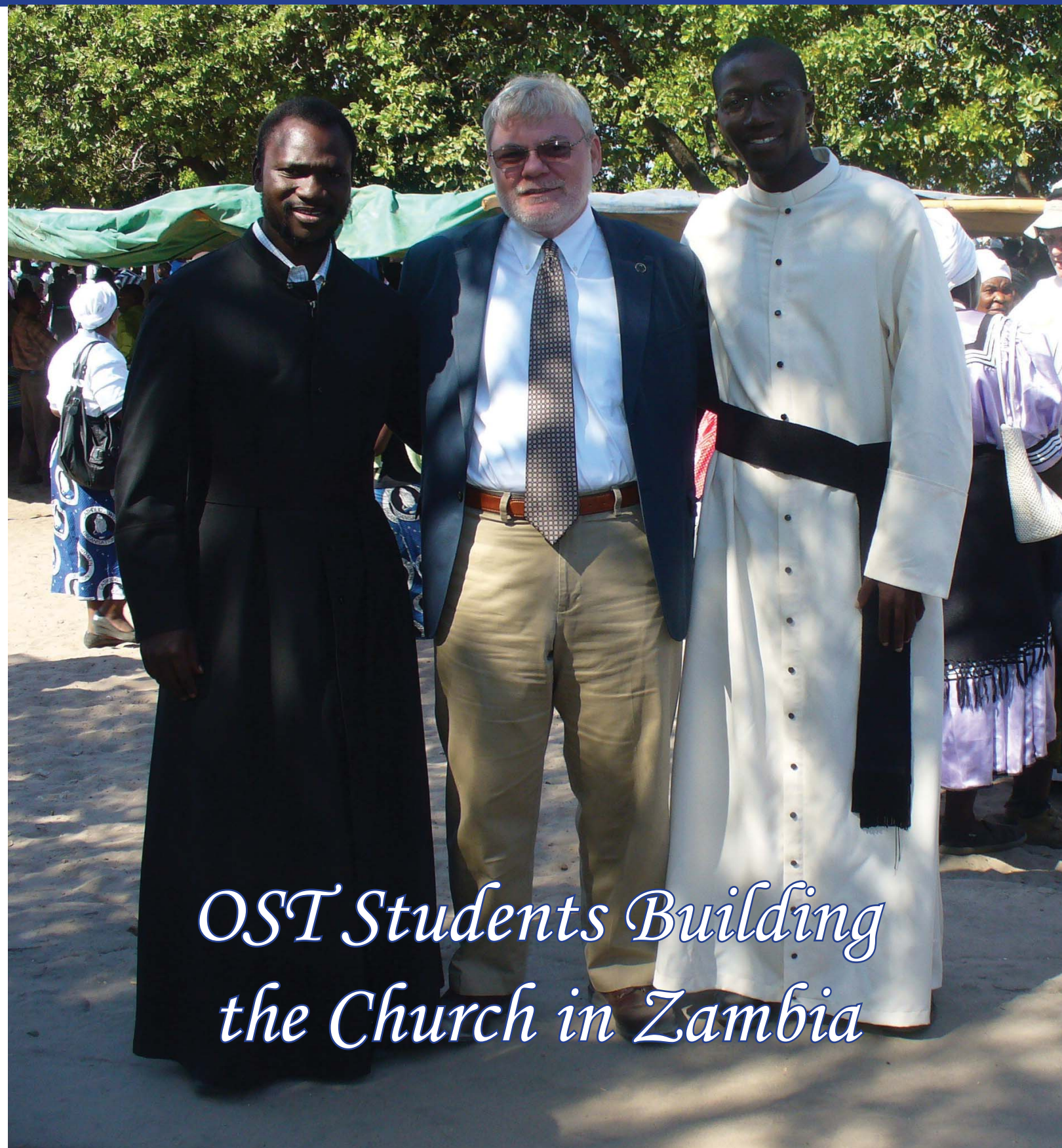




OST NEWS

OBLATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Fall 2011 Volume 15 No. 1



*OST Students Building
the Church in Zambia*

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Cover Photo: *Sydney Musonda, OMI, Scott Woodward and Emmanuel Mulenga, OMI at the ordination of Bishop Evans Chinyemba, OMI outside the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes in Mongu, Zambia*

OST NEWS

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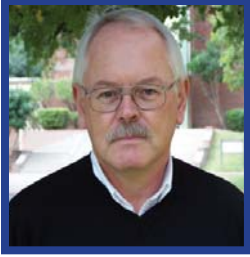
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Oblate School of Theology, founded and sponsored by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is a Catholic graduate and professional school which provides education for the church's mission and ministry in the world.

The institution prepares persons for pastoral ministry through academic study and supervised practice. Through degree and certificate programs, the School strives to educate and form candidates for priestly ministry as well as lay ministries. The School offers opportunities for professional continuing education and personal spiritual renewal to those serving in church and society.

Oblate School of Theology models and fosters collaboration in ministry. It accomplishes its mission in cooperation with formation communities and other ecclesial and societal institutions.

The pastoral orientation of the School requires practical and reflective engagement with the multi-cultural, global reality of church and society. Drawing upon Oblate School of Theology's location and historical dedication to the Mexican-American presence in the Southwest, the learning, teaching, and research of the School pay particular attention to the diverse and rich Hispanic reality of the Americas.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Theology and Ministry

In his little fictional masterpiece *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis writes up a series of interviews between people in heaven and people on earth. He sets the scene on a great plain separating heaven from earth. Saints from heaven (“solid people”) come to the great plain and meet people from earth who have just died (“ghosts”) and try to persuade them to come to heaven.

Among the people who have just died are an artist and a theologian. Each meets a saint from heaven, but neither can be persuaded to go there. Why? In both cases, the desire to speak about beauty and truth is stronger than the desire to meet them in their ultimate form. For the artist, going to heaven would mean giving up painting, for there is no need for paintings when one is living face to face with ultimate Beauty. For the theologian, going to heaven would mean that he no longer would be able to research, write and teach about God and truth since, in the full presence of Truth, there is no need for treatises about it.

Neither of the two wants simply to live in the presence of Beauty and Truth. Both want to continue struggling to represent them, and so we end up with a curious situation: an artist in hell painting beauty and a theologian in hell writing treatises on God. Sadly, it would seem, this can be an occupational hazard. As Lewis puts it, “Every poet and musician and artist, but for Grace, is drawn away from love of the thing he tells, to love of the telling till, down in deep hell, they cannot be interested in God at all but only in what they say about Him.”

There is an important lesson here, not just for artists and theologians, but especially for those of us preparing for and doing ministry. The danger is to be drawn away from what God and ministry are ultimately about to an interest only in speaking correctly and approvingly about God and being affirmed for being wonderful priests and ministers.

But there is a difference, a huge one, between being in relationship with God and merely speaking wisely about God; between celebrating beauty and being obsessed with creating it; between letting the truth consecrate us as opposed to simply ministering in its name. True religion and true ministry are the former; theology and ministry run the occupational hazard of being the latter. It is easy to let a means become an end, to turn an icon into an idol, to be drawn away from love of the thing to the love of telling about the thing.

One person who can help mentor us here is Henri Nouwen. Although he was both an artist and a theologian, he properly understood the value of each. In an essay written late in his life, he asks himself this question: “How should I live out this next decade?” and he gives this answer:

“I know that I have to move from speaking about Jesus to letting him speak within me, from thinking about Jesus to letting him think within me, from acting for and with Jesus to letting him act through me. I know that the only way for me to see the world is to see it through his eyes. Everything has to become very simple, very unified, very focused. It is no longer a question of being up-to-date or well-informed. ... With unmistakable clarity I have heard a voice saying, Give me everything, and I will give you everything.”

Nouwen was entering the last decade of his life when he wrote this, though of course he did not know this. Obviously, though, as this passage makes clear, he was maturing in both his faith and his understanding of ministry. He is now less interested in talking about God than in relating personally to God. Many of us who are in ministry, I suspect, lack the courage to ask ourselves this question with real honesty: Which am I more interested in, talking about God or cultivating a truly vital relationship with God? The danger is always to be like the theologian and the artist that C.S. Lewis caricatures in *The Great Divorce*, more interested in theology and ministry than in the realities to which these point us.

In the end, theology and ministry are not ends in themselves. They are at the service of truth, beauty, community, God, and Christ. But they can easily be mistaken as ends in themselves, and that is one of the major occupational hazards of ministry. The “solid people” have forever been trying to teach that to us, the “ghosts.”

Ronald Rolheiser, omi

Ronald Rolheiser OMI
President, Oblate School of Theology



(l to r) Dr. Scott Woodward, Fr. Freeborn Kibombwe, OMI, Fr. Barnabas Simatinde, OMI, Fr. Godfrey Mpundu, OMI, Fr. Vincent Sakala, OMI and Fr. Bill Morell, OMI at Centre House in Lusaka

OST Grads Building Church in Zambia

Oblate School of Theology alumni have been instrumental in the rapid growth of the Oblate mission in Zambia, as Dr. Scott Woodward, academic dean, discovered during a late May visit on his way to attend a conference of Oblate institutions of higher education in Cedara, South Africa.

“I was deeply impressed to see that they’ve accomplished in less than a generation what usually takes two generations,” Dr. Woodward said. “In 1985, the pastors and other leaders were all missionaries from the United States. Today, less than a generation later, the church in Zambia is all Zambian. And OST graduates have been very instrumental in this transformation.”

Father Vincent Sakala, OMI, M.A. Theol., ‘03, is pastor and Father Barnabas Simatende, M.Div. ‘08, is associate pastor at the thriving Mary Immaculate Parish in Lusaka, Zambia’s capital. “They’ve attracted a lot of people, and they’ve just recently begun building a new church because the parish has outgrown its existing church in less than 10 years,” Dr. Woodward said.

“Besides their work in the church itself, they are very active in immigration, education and employment issues. Lusaka is a huge city of three million people with 60 percent unemployment. Many people come into the city from the bush looking for jobs, and they come to Mary Immaculate for assistance. The parish helps them enroll in schools and refers them to various places that can provide what they need.”

He said that Father Simatende is quite active in youth ministry, and the youth love and admire him. Father Freeborn Kibombwe, OMI, M.Div., ‘99, set up Oblate Radio

Liseli, (“light” in the Lozi language) in Mongu, which for years was the only radio station in the Western district of Zambia.

“It offers catechetical programming and prayer, as well as news, music, weather information and local events. The station began broadcasting the weather forecasts, helping the people know when to plant crops and take advantage of rain. The average crop production improved significantly,” Dr. Woodward said.



Dr. Scott Woodward visits the on-air booth of Oblate Radio Liseli in Mongu, Zambia with (from left) Fr. J.C. Kane, OMI, Fr. Joe Phiri, OMI, and Radio Liseli on-air personalities

Father Kibombwe was installed as the Zambia Delegation Superior of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Zambia during Dr. Woodward’s visit. The dean also attended the ordination of the first Zambian Bishop of Mongu, the Most Rev. Evans Chinyemba, OMI. He succeeded Bishop Paul Duffy, OMI, who died at the Oblate Madonna Residence in San Antonio Aug. 23.

Father Godfrey Imulu, OMI, and Father Joe Phiri, OMI, a 2010 Ministry to Ministers alumnus, also work at the radio station. “They’ve built a new pre-novitiate building, and Father Freeborn and Father Godfrey have been very

active organizing, raising money and doing everything else involved.”

Father Phiri has been a leader in many building projects, including parishes, schools and other buildings. He is undergoing training in Baltimore in order to bring clinical pastoral education formation back to Zambia.

“The best thing was that all the OST alumni said how happy they were that somebody from OST had traveled all the way to Zambia to see what they’re doing. It was a great experience to see how they’re a part of the life of the people,” Dr. Woodward said.



International Priest Internship: OST's Response to U.S. Church Needs

Oblate School of Theology helps familiarize international priests ministering in the United States with the church and culture of this country. The presence of international (foreign-born) priests is becoming increasingly important in the U.S. Catholic community as the ratio of clergy to faithful declines nationally. In 1950, the ratio was one priest for every 661 Catholics; in 2011, the ratio is approximately one priest for every 1,600 Catholics.

These numbers reflect two realities: the declining total number of priests (9.5 percent annually) and a concurrently growing Catholic population (8 to 12 percent annually). In 1965, there were 45.6 million Catholics in the US; by 2010, we numbered more than 66 million. Simultaneously, the number of priests dropped by nearly one-third, from 58,632 in 1965 to 40,666 in 2009. Meanwhile, the median age of priests in the United States is 64, meaning nearly half of all active priests are at or past normal retirement age.

International priests increasingly fill the gap. In 36 U.S. dioceses, international priests account for at least half of the total clergy. Their presence is especially important for new immigrants, 42 percent of whom are Catholic. OST's International Priest Internship is a missionary outreach program that since 2003 has sought to facilitate and improve trans-cultural dialogue and understanding between these newly arrived priests and the communities and dioceses they will serve.

In 1999, eight percent of all priests in the United States and 11 percent of the nation's diocesan priests were foreign born. By 2009, the proportion of international priests had doubled to 15 percent of all priests, and 22 percent of diocesan priests.

In the past, the largest group of international priests was Irish-born. Today, the largest group of international priests is from India, nearly 1,000 in all. In addition to older Irish priests, more than 500 priests from the Philippines, Nigeria and Mexico also serve in the United States.

The 17 participants in the 2011-12 IPI program represent a microcosm of the larger U.S. reality. They include 13 born in India and the others from Ghana, Tanzania, Nigeria and the Philippines. They serve dioceses in Texas, Oklahoma, Ohio, Illinois, Florida and Kansas.

Through the OST internship, these young priests have quickly bonded, building camaraderie with each other, overcoming linguistic and cultural differences, and helping one another in their initial steps as missionaries in the United States. They spend two weeks on the OST campus in the summer attending classes and return for two weeks the following spring for evaluation of what they have learned and experienced. Mentoring at a local diocesan level is crucial for successful acculturation of international priests. The IPI program strives to develop methodologies to enable this process, which includes both laity and clergy, at parish and diocesan levels.

The IPI program is an exciting and dynamic phase in their priestly life as they progressively become acquainted with U.S. religiosity, social values and norms, and blend these new realities with the richness of their culture of origin. For more information, contact Father Vincent Louwagie, OMI, at vincelouwagie@gmail.com.



Theology and the Arts

Thought-provoking lectures by best-selling spiritual author Kathleen Norris and Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, during Oblate School of Theology's 2011 Summer Institute reflected on difficulties theology faces in communicating with the modern world.

The Institute brought 130 participants to the Oblate Renewal Center June 20-22 to hear Norris, Rolheiser and Mary Jo Leddy give major addresses. A host of locally based artists also gave their perspectives on how art and theology intersect in today's world.

Norris said Christians are in danger of losing their ability to communicate in "incarnational language" – a language that resonates with the senses and "tells it like it is." Norris read numerous poems illustrating how deftly and succinctly secular poets have captured deep spiritual insights. She also recited numerous advertising slogans that appropriate religious imagery to market merchandise and noted that few Christians seem to express objections to this. Norris also cited authors George Orwell, C.S. Lewis and Thomas Merton, all of whom wrote extensively and incisively on the corruption of language.

"Our capacity for devotion is being badly corrupted," Norris said. "We're in effect abandoning Christianity and forsaking our role as the Body of Christ.

We need our incarnational language to help us find that unifying spirit that helps us get past all that would divide us."

In another lecture, Norris spoke of *acedia* – the condition of "not caring to the extent that you don't care that you can't care" – as a condition that can manifest itself in either inertia or hyperactivity. Artists, poets and other freelancers often experience this, but in today's world, she said, more and more people are being forced to become freelancers and thus become susceptible to it.

Companies are regarding full-time employees more as liabilities than as assets, and thus, "despite the fact that we enjoy considerable material comfort in America, we still suffer from persistent anxiety, restlessness and rancor."

Father Rolheiser asserted that theology must find new sources to help it stimulate the metaphorical, romantic, aesthetic and linguistic imaginations. Theology

is always inadequate since nothing that can be said about God is adequate. "The arts are more adept at inflaming the imagination than philosophy, psychology and anthropology at their best." Thomas Merton's famous 1948 best-seller *The Seven Storey Mountain* and the 1944 film *Going My Way* exemplify art's power to inflame the romantic imagination.

The aesthetic imagination is about experiencing the pure pleasure of beauty, which opens the human soul up to greater depth and ultimately to the transcendent, the priest said. "The Last Supper almost certainly didn't look the way it's depicted in the painting," but "it's such a powerful image that virtually everybody who has seen it will envision the event as Da Vinci portrayed it." Father Rolheiser said good novelists are better at articulating moral complexities everyday realities than psychologists. They speak of faith and doubt, hope and despair, moral

and sexual complexity, loneliness and dying. He said Christians impoverish Scripture when they interpret passages literally that are intended metaphorically. The imagery of the temple veil being torn away when Jesus died is a metaphorical illustration that with Jesus' Crucifixion, "people finally could see into the center of God and see what unconditional love



(l to r) Mary Jo Leddy, Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI and Kathleen Norris

is." Mary Jo Leddy, director of the Romero House in Toronto, Ontario, a home for political refugees seeking protection from persecution, said that in a rapidly changing world of globalization, people need to be located in specific times and places.

She said classic literature always situates stories in specific times and places, which makes them more meaningful and popular with people in every time and place. Catholics and Protestants have been developing theologies that are informed by experiences in specific times and places.

Other presenters and the various topics they reflected on in their lectures included Ginger Geyer, porcelain; the Rev. Michael Marsh, icons; Tina Karagulian, creativity; Florence Weinberg, bringing the Word during the colonization of the American Southwest; and Father Leo Perez, OMI, youth ministry and the arts.



Pipe Organ Installation Nearly Complete



The 26-rank Schantz pipe organ purchased for Oblate School of Theology's Immaculate Conception Memorial Chapel was expected to be inaugurated in early November once its installation is finally completed.

Thanks to the alertness of San Antonio organist Susan Kvasnicka, OST officials learned the used organ, built in 1967 for the Baptist Temple in Houston, was for sale. The School negotiated a sale price of only \$12,000 – a small fraction of what it would have cost new. However, \$140,000 was required to disassemble the instrument, remove it from the Houston church, refinish the console and provide it with up-to-date circuitry, replace all its leather components, transport the organ to Oblate and rebuild it in the chapel.

Inauguration of the organ will realize a longtime dream of Father David Tarlizzo, OMI. Many years ago, Father Tar, as he was called, often voiced his desire to acquire a quality pipe organ to enhance liturgies in the memorial chapel.

Kvasnicka, who also arranged for organs to be acquired in 2009 for the Chapel of the Incarnate Word and in 2010 for Assumption Seminary's chapel, learned from an organ builder that the Schantz organ in Houston was available. "I immediately thought of OST," she said. "It has this beautiful chapel and an organ chamber space, and it sounded like a good bargain. So I thought it would be a good candidate, and I arranged for the builder to visit Oblate and see the space for himself."

During the assembly of the Chapel of the Incarnate Word organ, Kvasnicka had discovered that the heavy, seven-foot cardboard cartons in which the pipes had been shipped were stacked and ready to be trashed. Seeing a golden opportunity, she obtained permission to take the cartons and store them for re-use. Kvasnicka and a friend hauled the cartons to her garage in a pickup truck and stored them for a year. When OST bought the Schantz organ last May and the builder was about to remove it from the Baptist Temple in Houston, "I took the cartons to Houston in a U-Haul truck, and I brought the pipes back to Oblate in them," Kvasnicka said. The OST community is deeply grateful to Kvasnicka for doing so much to enable the School to realize this lifelong dream.

Oblate 285: Singing Along With John Angotti



(l to r) Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, Lorraine Barnes and John Angotti

The Oblate 285 Benefit Sept. 7 celebrated the far-reaching work of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate who serve in nearly 70 countries across the world. Colorful banners depicting the six continents on which the Oblates minister hung from the heights of the Oblate Renewal Center, while the tables were decorated with the flags of every nation in which the Oblates work.

The School's second largest annual fundraiser grossed nearly \$50,000 for the Building on Faith Campaign – more than \$20,000 of which resulted from the live auction for the 2012 Dinner with the President. More than 150 friends of the Oblate School of Theology community enjoyed an inspired evening of entertainment by Catholic composer, singer, songwriter and music missionary John Angotti.

The evening featured an international buffet and an array of hors d'oeuvres prepared by gourmet chef Jenny Mattingsley and her Renewal Center culinary team, with delicacies from many countries in which the Oblates serve.

Angotti was invited by Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, a personal friend. His mixture of hymns and contemporary pop music captured the audience early, as they enthusiastically accepted his invitation to sing along with his powerful renditions of "How Great Thou Art," Elton John's "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me" and Billy Joel's "The Piano Man."

Between songs, Angotti shared his personal stories about being one of four adopted children of a first generation Italian-American couple. The singer told of finally meeting his birth mother, who was 16 when he was born and had given him up for adoption. He quoted her as saying, "I loved you so much and had every intention of keeping you, but I knew I couldn't give you everything you would need." But Angotti said that God proved his love by giving him two loving adoptive parents with strong faith, an appreciation for music and a deep reservoir of love. "I'm able to do what I do today because of the witness of my parents," he added.



Alumni Event a Tribute to Lillian Younker, Msgr. José López



Earlier this year, the Oblate School of Theology community mourned the deaths of two stellar members of our faculty over the years. Former Academic Dean Lillian Younker died Jan. 5 at the age of 84 and Monsignor José A. López, assistant professor of pastoral counseling May 28 at age 66.

The School's annual alumni gathering October 10 was a tribute to the two for their major contributions to the School's mission and to the theological education of many OST alumni. Father Ken Hannon, OMI, paid tribute to Younker, while Father Norman Ermis praised the contributions of Monsignor López. Sally Gomez-Jung spoke of the legacies of both Younker and López.

Lillian Younker was the first woman appointed academic dean at Oblate and one of the first in any U.S. Catholic theology school. She arrived at OST in 1982 at a time when a woman's appointment to such a position – especially a laywoman's – was almost unheard of in a Catholic theology school. She was associate academic dean for six years and interim dean two years before succeeding Father Robert E. Lampert as academic dean in 1990. She retired from the post in 1994.

Younker is credited with starting the School's formation process for lay students in the 1980s. She began what are known today as the pastoral formation seminars. She also worked with Father Pat Guidon, OMI, the School president, to make graduation ceremonies the formal events they are today, with caps and gowns and formal academic processions.

However, her most enduring legacy will be her leadership in building on the School's forward-looking recognition of the importance of women's roles in the Catholic Church. "Lillian opened the doors for us at Oblate to understand that in order for the church to accomplish its mission and to be a credible sign in the world, the gifts of all people must be recognized," said Gomez-Jung, whom Younker hired to direct the Theological Field Education program in 1993.

Monsignor López taught at OST from 1981 until his death. He taught homiletics in his early years at the School and also taught marriage and family counseling for many years. He also served on the formation team at Assumption Seminary. Working with Sally Gomez-Jung in the Theological Field Education program, Father López played a significant role in the formation of many seminarians from dioceses across Texas and many other states. Many new priests invited him to preach at their first Masses because he'd made such an impact on them as seminarians.

Meanwhile, the monsignor traveled throughout the sprawling archdiocese to assist parish priests in hearing confessions and usually had the longest lines. "Father Joe would say Mass and preach maybe a couple of years, but he would be remembered – sometimes more than those assigned there permanently," said Father Jeff Pehl, the seminary rector.

Father Bob Wright, OMI, said that Monsignor López, as a faculty member of both OST and Assumption, was very good unofficial liaison between the two institutions. "He was always patient and unflustered, and he was widely respected, He is irreplaceable. It'll be hard to cover all the gaps that his death leaves," Father Wright said.



Faculty, Staff and Alumni

FACULTY

Dr. Scott Woodward, interim academic dean for the past year, has been named academic dean for the 2011-2012 academic year. He visited the Oblate mission in Zambia during June.

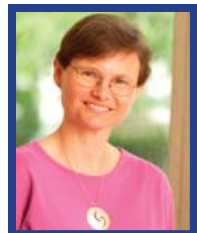


Father Dale Schlitt, OMI, will arrive at OST in January to help in the dean's office.

Father Robert E. Lampert, former academic dean, has returned from retirement and will teach Sister Maria Cimperman's courses in Introduction to Theology this year. Father Lampert is a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He taught a summer course at OST from 1978-88 and was academic dean from 1979-88 and from 1992-98.



Sister Linda Gibler, OP, associate academic dean, spoke three times at OST in January on the integrity of creation. One lecture was on "The Integrity of Creation and the Catholic Priest," given to the International Priest Internship class; the second, on "Ecology and Creation," to the Inter-Community Pre-Novitiate Program; and the third, on "Integrity of Creation as God's Call to Justice," to the Lay Ministry Institute Contemporary Issues Forum. In February, she participated in an online panel discussion, "Science and Religion in Fruitful Partnership" with Ted Davis, Michael Morwood and Jim Burklo. The discussion was part of a teleseries titled "The Advent of Evolutionary Christianity: Conversations at the Leading Edge of Faith." Sister Gibler also presented a program, "Living a Spirituality of Hope in a Broken Planet," with Jim Conlon during a Day



of Prayer at the Dominican Spirituality Center in Houston and spoke on "Our God- Drenched Universe" during an adult retreat at the HEB Foundation Camp in Leakey, Texas. In April, she spoke on "Spiritual Ecology" to the Ministry to Ministers Sabbatical Program at OST; on "Why Should I Care; What Will I Do?" during a continuing education event sponsored by the Congregation of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament at the Villa de Matel in Houston; and on "Stories of Simple Things" as a First Friday reflection with the Missionaries of the Holy Family in San Antonio.

Sister Maria Cimperman, OSU, assistant professor of moral theology, presented "An Introduction to the Vowed Life: Witness in Contexts, Community and Commitment" to the Inter-Community Novitiate gathering in the St. Louis area in February. She offered a day-long reflection, "From Paralysis to Analysis: Toward a Socially Conscious Spirituality" for the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pa., in April. She began a one-year leave of absence in May.



Father Robert Wright, OMI, organized a panel on "The Catholic Church in El Paso during Two Mexican Revolutions: 1810s and 1910s" on March 4 in El Paso at the annual conference of the Texas State Historical Association. He also gave a presentation on "Revolutionary Changes in the Catholic Church Among Those of Mexican Descent in Texas: From the 1880s to the Present" at the 8th Annual Center for Mexican American Studies and Research Conference, Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, April 14, 2011.



Father Joseph LaBelle, OMI, gave

a presentation in January on spiritual discernment in an Oblate context to the Southwest Area Missionary Oblates in San Antonio. He also gave a continuing education lecture Sept. 8 on "St. Eugene de Mazenod: The Young Man and the Enduring Mission" in OST's Yvo Tymen Hall. St. Eugene, an early 19th-century French bishop, founded the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1816 in Aix, France.

Father John Markey, OP, taught a course, "The Legacy of Vatican II," at the University of the Incarnate Word during June, and a second course in ecclesiology at St. Mary's University during July.



Sally Gomez-Jung has been granted a sabbatical year for the calendar year 2012. During her absence, Bonnie Abadie will direct the Theological Field Education program.



STAFF

Maria M. Garcia, former acting director of the Donald E. O'Shaughnessy Library at OST, graduated from North Texas State University May 13 with a Master of Information Science degree. Maria has been named director of the library.

ALUMNI

Father Jeff Pehl, M.Div. '95, was installed in August as rector of Assumption Seminary. He replaced Father Arturo Cepeda, who was named auxiliary bishop of Detroit April 5 and was ordained to the episcopacy May 5.

Neomi De Anda, M.A. Theology, '05, successfully defended her dissertation on Sor (Sister) María Anna Águeda (1695-1756), a Dominican nun from Puebla, Mexico, March 25 at Loyola University of Chicago.



Building Construction Continues on Schedule

Construction of OST's new guest residence is winding down, with only a few alterations remaining and a late October occupancy expected.

The upper floor features three apartments for people staying on campus for extended periods. Each two-room apartment has an open living area with a sofa, a reclining chair, a reading area with a lamp and a kitchen area with cabinets, a dishwasher and garbage disposal, as well as a four-burner stove with a vent hood and a refrigerator with an ice maker.

The bedroom in each unit includes a queen size bed, a desk and two night stands with lamps, and a bathroom.

The guest house also includes seven one-room units consisting of a bedroom and a bathroom. The bedrooms are identical to those in the three apartments.

"The rooms have sprinklers for fire protection and beautiful, well-placed lighting fixtures," said Brother Paul Hoemeke, OMI, project director. "A washer and a dryer are available so occupants can wash clothes whenever needed. The first floor contains a spacious community room equipped with a large television set, a four-burner stove, a microwave oven and a refrigerator."

Meanwhile, construction on the conference center/education building to the east of the main building is on schedule, with completion expected around the end of January 2012, Brother Hoemeke said.

The brickwork is nearly complete, and work is moving quickly on inside walls, ceilings, paneling, heating and air conditioning and other systems. The building will feature a large conference room that can be divided into three smaller meeting rooms, the center one seating as many as 200 people and the two on either side 100 each. When opened up, the total space will accommodate 400 in various seating configurations.

The building also will feature three large classrooms seating 50 students each and two seminar rooms seating 20 students each. All classrooms will feature state-of-the-art electronic learning features. The student commons area will include a large lounge with a big-screen television, a coffee bar and snack and soft drink vending machines. A spacious outdoor court with a garden will allow students to enjoy good weather and the natural beauty of the environment.

The building will be centrally heated and air

conditioned and will have handicapped access features, including wheelchair ramps and electric doors.

"It's going to be quite beautiful. It's well-built, well-insulated and up to date," Brother Hoemeke said.

Sister Susan Pontz, SSCM, said the building will have the latest electronic learning equipment, a response to demographic changes in the student body. "More and more, students are asking for online courses; we need better quality (software) than what we have in the existing building to meet this need."

With the new video and audio equipment, students in distant venues can participate in classes conducted in the new classrooms. They can see and hear the professor or the guest lecturer and can be seen and heard from the classroom.

"We had one student living in Houston, for example, who had just one course left to complete her degree. In the new building, she could just sign in and do the course without having to do all that traveling back and forth. In the past, we've actually had students who

have made that trip each week to finish degree programs. With this new technology, they can log in from their home and be able to attend the class at a distance while their classmates are actually in the class. In the same way, a guest lecturer could Skype™ or access the online classroom, using the Blackboard Collaborate™, which we use. It's similar to web conferencing software. They can upload Power Point® and video, they can do podcasts, they can look at a website.

Everybody can be at home, they're all logged in, they can hear everything through their speakers and speak through their microphones."

Sister Pontz, who teaches a class on effective use of technology, said that she could invite someone in a distant country, such as Zambia, to "sit in" on a class and tell the students how he uses technology in his work, adding: "The whole world is available to us in the classroom. We can have so many more people come in and speak in their areas of expertise."

The new classrooms will have microphones hanging from the ceilings, and video can be streamed live or saved for later use. "Smartboards" will be available so that Power Points or professors' lecture notes can be saved and accessed rather than copying notes by hand as in the past. One classroom will feature high-definition video.



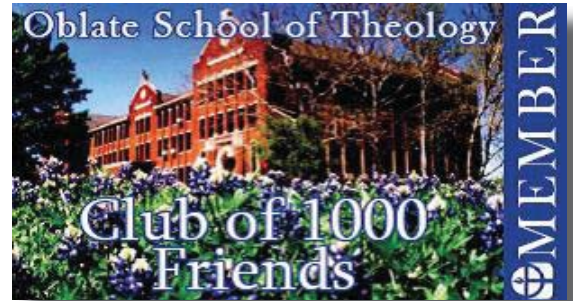


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Sr. Linda Gibler, OP

November 7, 2011

Oblate Open Golf Tournament

November 28, 2011

Sacred Waiting... Doorway to Advent
David Kaufmann

January 6-8, 2012

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Proceeds benefit Oblate School of Theology Tuition Assistance