

The Congregation of the Oblates of the Assumption was founded on May 24, 1865 at Rochebelle (Nîmes-France) by Venerable Emmanuel d'ALZON, with the assistance of Mother Emmanuel-Marie CORRENSON, with a view to working for Church unity, particularly the union of the Eastern Churches, and doing so in close collaboration with the Augustinians of the Assumption.

In 1868, the first Sisters left for Bulgaria. By means of education and medical assistance, these Oblates placed themselves at the service of the neediest and the most disadvantaged, whether they were Catholic, Orthodox, Greek, Armenian, or Jewish --- in Bulgaria, Turkey, and ex-Yugoslavia. Later, with communities in Jerusalem, Romania, and Russia ---- all of these countries where the Oblates and the Assumptionists work for Church unity and inter-religious dialogue came to be known as the « La Mission d'Orient » ("The Near Eastern Mission"). To this day we have communities who live and work within both rites, Eastern and Latin.



From the early days in France and Bulgaria, the mission developed and expanded in a spirit of creativity and availability, so that today we are found in 25 countries on four continents: Europe, Africa, South America, and Asia. The most recent foundations have been in China, Gabon and Kenya.

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Our mission has taken root in certain concrete ways: evangelization, ecumenism, ministry with the most disadvantaged whether through educational, social, or charitable work. In dialogue with Orthodox, Anglicans, and Protestants or with Islam, Buddhism, or Confucianism, we are making our way along the paths of the Kingdom. In doing so, we wish to respond with creative fidelity to the spiritual heritage of our founder, Fr. d'Alzon : « The love of Our Lord. That's where you need to begin and to end. Who would an Oblate be whose life was not Jesus Christ? »

The love of Christ, found at the heart of every Oblate, is a constant call to make room for him in our lives and in the world, to desire that all may know Him. In order to hasten the Kingdom in us and around us in this way, we commit ourselves especially to the service of unity, truth, and charity according the spirit of Saint Augustine. The love of Jesus Christ (particularly in the Eucharist), of the Virgin Mary, and of the Church goes to the heart of our spirituality. Action and the contemplation that flows from it are united in a unique goal: serving the extension of the Kingdom of God.



Some of the first Assumptionist and Oblate missionaries in Bulgaria



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MISSION D'ORIENT