



St. Eugene de Mazenod
Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate

The Friends of St. Eugene

Friends of St. Eugene are people who wish to find out more about the life of St. Eugene and his gift to the church and how they can live out his vision in their own lives.

St. Eugene was the founder of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Since their foundation in 1816 the Oblates of Mary Immaculate have ministered to people on the margins of church and society.

St. Eugene encountered many challenges and difficulties within the lives and relationships of the members of his own family. It is for this reason that many people today regard St. Eugene as the patron saint of families experiencing difficulties.



Friends of St. Eugene



For more information about the Friends of St. Eugene please speak to your local Oblate Priest or contact:

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Your local contact is:

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We are all ministers of the mercy of God



Mission Statement of The Friends . . .

Friends of St. Eugene respond to the call to live the charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod in their daily lives, in their own unique way.

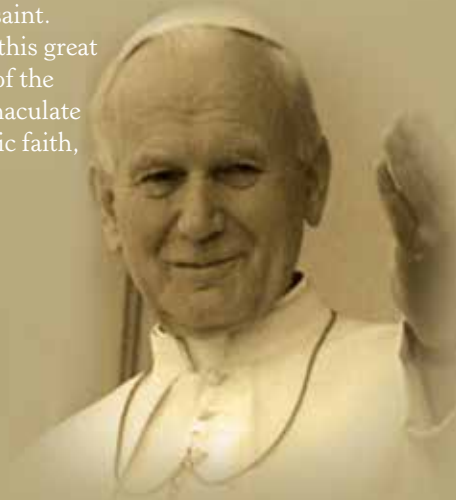
They support each other through Friendship, Prayer and Service to make a difference in their local area and so further the Reign of God.

At Eugene de Mazenod's canonisation in December 1995, St. John Paul II said of him:

"His influence is not limited to the age in which he lived but continues its effect on our time. . .

What Saint Eugene wanted to achieve was that, in Christ, each individual could become a fully complete person, an authentic Christian, a credible saint.

The Church gives us this great Bishop and Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate as an example of heroic faith, hope and charity".



Friends of St. Eugene

Friends of St. Eugene meet monthly usually in a local parish. Friends of St. Eugene are part of the Oblate family. Oblate priests and brothers are dedicated to spreading God's love in the world especially to the poor and most abandoned. The Friends of St. Eugene learn about the life and mission of St. Eugene and how they can continue his mission today in their own homes, parishes and work places.

Based on their Oblate commitments, Friends of St. Eugene usually undertake a project during Advent and Lent to help poor and marginalised people either locally or abroad. These projects are usually supported and achieved with the help of local parishes.

The Commitment made by a Friend of St. Eugene

- I seek to deepen my relationship with Christ by imitating the pattern of his life.
- I promise to live the day to day realities of my life as St. Eugene de Mazenod did, so that each event will be the occasion for a personal encounter with the Lord, who through us gives himself to others and through others gives himself to us.
- I will make every effort to act and make choices that bear witness to my belief in the dignity of each person and the compassion of God for all peoples.
- I will take time annually to renew my commitment to the Friends of St. Eugene.



Who is St. Eugene?

Eugene de Mazenod was born into an aristocratic family on August 1, 1782 at Aix-en-Provence on the eve of the French Revolution. He was just 8 years old when his family had to escape the impact of the French revolution. After years as a refugee, the 20 years old Eugene returned to Aix-en-Provence hoping to re-establish his family's fortunes by marrying into a wealthy family. But on Good Friday, 1807, Eugene encountered Christ's unconditional love for him and recognised the constant need of his Saviour. "I looked for happiness outside of God and for too long with resulting unhappiness". So, at 26 years old, Eugene entered the seminary at St. Sulpice in Paris. He had a clear ideal: "He would be the servant and priest of the poor".

However, in 1815, Eugene discerned that God was calling him to recruit companions to share his ideal, to live in community, and commit themselves through religious vows. In 1826, they became the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. They sought out the poorest people in southern France constantly reminding them of their human dignity and spreading the message of Jesus Christ: "to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free". (Isaiah 61:1)

Eugene encouraged his Oblates "to treat people as human beings, then as Christians and finally to help them become saints". In 1837, Eugene became Bishop of Marseille. During the years that followed he came to be known as "a Bishop with a heart as big as St. Paul's". Eugene died in 1861 and his final words were "practice well among yourselves charity, charity, charity, and outside, zeal for the salvation of souls".