**4.
St Eugene calls together companions**

**Intention:** To be aware that team work is much more effective than working alone. ‘If you want to go fast, go alone! But if you want to go far, let’s work together’ – African wisdom. To emphasize our common values and the values of each one.

**Virtues to pray for:**

Team work, harmony, joy and peace

**Hymn**

**Prayer**

**Scripture:** Luke 10:1-2

*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, ‘The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest’.*

**Oblate Text**

*Faced with an overwhelming task, Saint Eugene gathered a few priests around him, men who shared his impassioned zeal for the most abandoned. “Live together as brothers”, he urged them; “Strive to imitate the virtues and example of our Saviour Jesus Christ principally through preaching the Word of God to the poor”. At his persuasion, they committed themselves permanently to the preaching of missions, binding themselves by religious vows. Soon afterwards he decided to receive Brothers as true sons of the family. Thus began the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary.* (CC & RR: Forward, p. 15-16)

Between 1815 and 1816, an agreement arose between the first group of missionaries. Together they decided to follow Jesus with the same enthusiasm and the same radical determination of the Apostles, to continue, like them, to announce the Gospel. “All depends on how we begin – Eugene wrote to Tempier in his first letter –. We need *perfect unanimity* of sentiments, the *same* goodwill, the *same* disinterestedness, the *same* devotedness – that sums it up.” (October 9, 1815)

In his *Mémoire justificatif* Saint Eugene wrote: “I needed dedicated companions whose way of thinking would coincide with that of the Lord who was my inspiration.” (Rambert, I, p. 164) At the centre there was an inspiration from the Lord, communicated to him and then entrusted by Eugene to his companions, so that the hearts and minds of everyone should be united in the same ideal, the same mission. The way to realize this was to found a specific community with a few people living together, in joy and reciprocal love: “Happiness awaits us in this holy Society which will have but *one heart and soul*.” (To Tempier, October 9, 1815) From the first letter to Tempier we find the dyad “one heart, one soul” becoming a constant refrain.

We can understand this initial agreement as a mutual *con-sent* (= *same feelings*), an *ac-cordance*, an *accord* (= to bring together “hearts” and minds, to combine the strings of an instrument or several instruments, or voices, to create the same, but stronger tone.)

It was an alliance, a covenant between people to achieve a common goal: to live and work in a certain way. In this agreement the most important parties were the people who come together for a common end rather than the means to achieve that end, the relationship, the commitment.

*Do I feel called to re-experience the original commitment, together with the other members of my community, to take the decision to establish an apostolic community?*

*We are called to stand at the foot of the crucifix with Tempier and listen to St. Eugene's invitation to give our life for the Church and evangelization of the poor. If I were to reply to Eugene’s letter, what would I write?*

**Personal Commitment**

To go “two by two” implies that there is agreement on the way to go, on the objectives to be met. Before taking up any ministry, or leaving for any mission, I should want to share my project with others, and ask for their prayers and their support.

**Prayer Intentions**

*“I am in complete agreement with your views… I feel this desire in me, or if I do not have it, I want to have it very much… So, count on me completely”*. (Tempier to de Mazenod, October 27, 1815)

That every member of our community enter completely into the “charismatic vision” of St. Eugene, so that each of us can count completely on the collaboration of the others in living out our apostolic vocation.

That by our life, our ministry and our community, we may attract new members to the Congregation, to be able to continue the mission which the Lord has given us – to go two by two to preach the Kingdom.

**Final prayer**

O Father, help us to feel among ourselves

the presence of Christ, your Son,

promised to those who gather in his name,

and in the Spirit of Truth and Love,

may we all experience

an abundance of light, mercy and peace.

Through Christ our Lord.

