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THE SAINT VINCENT OBLATE NEWS
Saint Vincent Archabbey
300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650-2690



August - October, 2014

724-805-2291

Volume 67, Number 3

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Please note registration forms for Oblate Day and for the October day of recollection on the colored flier.

**DO WE “DESIRE TRUE AND ETERNAL LIFE” (RB Prol: 17)?
THEN WE MUST ADVANCE IN SMALL STEPS HERE AND NOW**

Dear Oblates, Oblate novices, and Friends,

We Christians tend to focus attention on eternal life during certain times of the liturgical year: during the Easter Season, at the time of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, and at the beginning of Advent. At Easter, of course, we nurture the hope of participating in the Resurrection of Christ in future glory. On November 1 and 2, we consider our eternal destiny in terms of those who have passed through death and reflect on our communion with them, whether they have attained fulfillment in Heaven or are still being purified in Purgatory. Early in Advent we are given Scripture readings that point to the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ; we are thus warned to be vigilant now so as to be prepared always for the end times as well for our individual deaths.

Calling to mind eternal life right now

Other celebrations during the Church year also remind us of our eternal destiny. As I begin to write this reflection, it is the memorial of St. Mary Magdalene, and I had the occasion to preach on the part of the St. John’s Gospel prescribed for that day. Mary Magdalene may have been the very first person to see the risen Christ. Despite her great love for Him, she was told not to cling to Him but rather to witness to His other disciples (Jn 20:17). Thus she was asked to do something very practical (and evangelical) in response to the greatest event in human history. In any case, this feast on July 22 gives us another reminder of the centrality of the Resurrection in our lives of faith, and it challenges us to see earthly life in the perspective of eternal life. Some two weeks later, we celebrate the Transfiguration of Our Lord, which gives us encouragement, amid the crosses of this life, to seek after our share in Christ’s glory. We who share in Christ’s humanity will likewise be transformed if we persevere in listening to Him. Nine days after that, we mark the Solemnity of the Assumption, which celebrates our Blessed Mother’s unique privilege of being raised up body and soul to Heaven and so to be glorified with Christ, her Son, before any other human being. Mary thus points the way for the rest of us. All of us are meant to share, each in his own way and his own time, in the fullness her joy and to aspire to attain our true dignity in communion with the Blessed Trinity. Furthermore, we are graced to have the Blessed Mother’s intercession for us that we may keep moving toward the fulfillment that she already possesses. Not only these three feasts but all the commemorations of saints stir up our hearts’ desires for the eternal glory that God has prepared for us.

Eternal life in the Holy Rule

The *Holy Rule* is replete with references to the goal of eternal life with Christ. Near the beginning of the Prologue, which is a rousing call to live out our baptismal promises, St. Benedict warns us not to become “worthless servants” who “[refuse] to follow Him [Christ] to glory” (Prol: 7). Each disciple is summoned by God to be a “workman” in the spiritual domain who “yearns for life and desires to see good days” (Prol: 15), presumably both in eternity and on this earth. The disciple is commanded to listen to the Lord’s voice and to respond through the persistent practice of virtue. Then, more and more, he or she will “see how the Lord in his love shows us the way of life” (Prol: 20). The monk or Oblate will more and more “wish to reach eternal life” (Prol: 42) and will bear with the difficulties on “the road that leads to salvation” (Prol: 48). Those who “wish to dwell in the tent” of the kingdom that God has prepared are urged to clothe themselves “with faith and the performance of good works” (Prol: 21), to “run” to their eternal dwelling “by doing good deeds” (Prol: 22), and eventually to “run on the path of God’s commandments” (Prol: 49; Ps 119:32). Preparing for eternity is a high-priority project!

Other references to eternal life spring up in the *Rule* in places that we might not expect to see such a theme. Amid exhortations to the abbot to be a good shepherd by word and example, St. Benedict reminds him that he will be accountable to Christ at the Last Judgment (2: 9 and 2:39). Four of the “tools of good works” (RB 4) refer specifically to the monks’ eternal destiny via the realities of judgment day, hell, everlasting life, and death (4: 44-47). The end of the chapter also encourages the monk to look forward to “what the eye has not seen nor the ear heard,” which is what “God has prepared for those who love him” (2 Cor 2:9; RB 4:77). The hope for that very appealing goal gives one energy to “toil faithfully” in the “workshop” that is the monastery itself (4:78). A major lesson that one must learn in aspiring to eternal life is “unhesitating obedience,” which is carried out “because of the holy service they [the monks] have professed, or because of dread of hell and for the glory of everlasting life” (5:3). The first step of humility also speaks to the monk about the importance of keeping “the fear of God always before his eyes” (7:10), since “all who despise God will burn in hell for their sins, and all who fear God have everlasting life awaiting them” (7:11). The fourth step of humility also mentions the presumably eternal “reward from God” (7:39) for those who suffer out of

love for Christ. Because of their confidence in Christ's love and their expectation of eternal life, they "continue joyfully" (7:39) amid their trials.

Eternal life is also mentioned in Chapters 64, 71, and 72. The abbot is to remember that if he keeps the *Rule* well and ministers faithfully to his flock, he will receive the Lord's reward given to faithful servants (64: 21-22). Chapter 71 tells us that "we go to God" (71:2), presumably in a way that includes heavenly reward, by means of mutual obedience. Chapter 72 challenges all disciples to live in the good zeal that is shown in the practice of patience and of loving concern for others in such a way that will open the way for Christ to "bring us all together to everlasting life" (72:12).

Our culture's tendency to forget eternal life

We live in a culture that seems not to take eternal life, at least as taught by the Gospel, seriously. Even among those who believe in everlasting existence, with or without God, there is a tendency to think that entrance into Heaven is automatic and the path a rather easy one. All too often homilies at funeral Masses degenerate into mere biographies or eulogies that assume that the deceased is surely in heavenly glory. What we all need are true homilies, which address the Scriptural readings and open up the profound mysteries of death and resurrection for those who are gathered. The lack of focus on the Paschal mystery shortchanges both the congregation and the deceased. The person who has died may be in Purgatory and very much need the prayers of family and friends. (As Fr. Benedict Groeschel would often say in regard to himself, when I die, I want all the prayers I can get to help me through Purgatory!) The congregation, like all of us Christians, needs to be reminded of the true Christian meaning of death, of the "four last things," of the saving effects of Christ's Death and Resurrection, and of the importance of preparing for their own deaths.

Struggle and trials as the way to eternal life

The Church, the Scriptures, and the *Holy Rule* all teach that the road to eternal salvation is fraught with challenges. Our Lord Himself warns that the "gate that leads to life" is narrow and that the road is rough (Mt 7:14). St. Benedict likewise refers to the narrowness of "the road that leads to salvation" (*RB* Prol: 48). The novice who enters the monastery must be eager "for trials" (55:7) and "should be clearly told all the hardships and difficulties that will lead him to God" (55:8) In the Prologue, as shown above, St. Benedict particularly admonishes the God-seeker to live an exemplary moral life if he desires "true and eternal life" (Prol: 17). Feeling good about eternity is not at all sufficient! Those who aim for heavenly glory (and should not we all?) must watch their speech, perform good deeds, nurture peace in their hearts, foil the devil often, and give credit to God for all the good they do. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us, "The affirmations of Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church on the subject of hell are a call to the responsibility incumbent upon man to make use of his

freedom in view of his eternal destiny. They are at the same time *an urgent call to conversion...*" (#1036). To attain eternal life with God, we must make choices in accord with God's natural moral law and with the Gospel's demand to love and forgive. Our contemporary age has, in many ways, forgotten the natural law established by God at creation. The *Catechism* states that this law "provides the solid foundation on which man can build the structure of moral rules to guide his choices. It also provides the indispensable moral foundation for building the human community ..." (#1959). Thus no Christian can seriously lay claim to eternal salvation if he or she espouses or encourages abortion, euthanasia, contraception, same-sex marriages, or any kind of sexual relationship outside of marriage. These prohibitions are part of God's "standard package" of morality that was accepted in principle by all Christians until recent decades. Likewise no one can hope for eternal glory if he or she consistently withholds forgiveness, oppresses vulnerable people, or fails to practice justice. (In line with this reality, entry into our Oblate Program or continuation in our Oblate Program is impossible if one does not basically accept such moral teachings.)

Ways to make our journey to eternal salvation

How, then, can we more zealously live out our call to "run in the path of God's commandments" (*RB* Prol: 49) and thus eventually "deserve to share in His [Christ's] kingdom" (Prol: 50)? Although massive conversions and major observable advances are possible, the road to glory is generally traveled in small, arduous steps and amid toil and struggles. As a basic foundation, one must believe rightly and strive to act rightly. As stated above, we cannot expect eternal reward if we fail to embrace the moral law or the demands of the Gospel, which amount to following Christ in sacrificial love. It is a day-to-day battle to resist sin and to develop virtue. The "tools for good works" (*RB* 4) may provide a helpful examination of conscience for our sincerity in pursuing eternal life with Christ. If we want to receive a "reward" on judgment day (4:76), we need to face the details of daily life in a Christ-centered way. We need to practice the great commandment of love (4:1-2) and the Ten Commandments (4:3-7, 63); we are to respect all people (4: 6-9), practice self-denial out of love for Christ (4: 10-13, 35-38), engage in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (4: 14-19), and watch over the way we speak (4: 25, 27-28, 32, 39-40, 51-54). In sum, we are to cleanse our hearts and minds of all that would keep us from following Christ and to engage in all those disciplines that form us in attitudes of humility, obedience, listening, and self-giving love. We shall indeed fail many times, but then we must urgently remember "never [to] lose hope in God's mercy" (4:74) and to continue to use the tools "without ceasing day and night" (4:76).

Relevance of Psalm 73 to the embracing of eternal life

In my normal sequence of practicing *lectio divina*, I recently arrived at Psalm 73, which contains marvelous hints of life everlasting amid discouragement over the prosperity of wicked people in this life. It also encompasses the theme of faithfulness to God's covenant as the way to glory. The psalmist is tempted to stumble along the way when he sees "how the wicked prosper" (Ps 73:3) and how they tend to draw others "to follow them and drink in all their words" (Ps 73:10). Since the wicked seem to succeed in defying God and His law, the disheartened psalmist begins to think, "How useless to keep my heart pure and wash my hands in innocence" (Ps 73:13) since he has been receiving no apparent benefit for his faithfulness. Then, at last, God reveals Himself to the struggling believer so that he "pierced the mysteries of God and understood what becomes of the wicked" (Ps 73:17). He sees now that the way of the evildoers will ultimately lead them to doom whereas his effort to keep God's covenant will, in the end, lead him to glory. Therefore, he can pray, "I was always in your presence; you were holding me by my right hand" (Ps 73:23) through all the trials. The psalmist ends in a chorus of joyful praise as he utters, "Apart from you I want nothing on earth. My body and my heart faint for joy; God is my possession for ever. ... To be near God is my happiness" (73:25-26, 28). After the testing of his faith, he gains renewed confidence in God and prays, "You will guide me by your counsel and so you will lead me to glory" (Ps 73:24). Thus even at an age when the

Jewish people had little understanding of eternal life in God's presence, there were glimmers of the truth that dogged adherence to God's law would somehow lead to a share in God's wonderful glory.

Conclusion: Our struggle on the way to glory

What, then, is the way to eternal glory? It is the following of Christ amid the day-to-day battles to overcome vice and to practice virtue for the love of Christ. It is in the plodding efforts to be faithful to God's commandments, to make enough time for prayer, and to extend Christ's love to others, especially those who are poor and those whom we don't particularly like. It is in the unexciting process of recognizing God's grace in unexpected places and, as a result, of learning to live in praise and thanksgiving. He is always working to bring about goodness in us and around us (cf. *RB* Prol: 29-32, 4:42). When we take the small daily steps that open us to God's guidance, that lead us to ever deeper conversion, and that free us to become totally Christ-centered, then we can be assured that "what the eye has not seen nor the ear heard" (4:77) will some day be ours. Therefore, amid all the struggles and trials, let us rejoice and be glad in the promise of eternal glory!

In the peace of Christ and Saint Benedict,

Fr. Donald S. Raila, O.S.B.,
Director of Oblates

P.S.: The above essay was written well before the unexpected death of our Br. Nathan on July 30. That sad event reminds us all the more to be mindful of the need daily to prepare for death and eternal life.

A MESSAGE FROM ARCHABBOT DOUGLAS

August 7, 2014

Dear Oblates and Friends of Saint Vincent,

The recent passing of our confrere Brother Nathan Cochran was sudden and unexpected. At age 57, he appeared to be in good health and enjoying life here in our community. In the Bible, our Lord reminds us that we know neither the day nor the hour when we will be called by our heavenly Father. Death, of course, is one of the big mysteries that we confront in this life. However, we have the consolation of our Lord, who tells us that He is with us at every moment: "Behold, I am with you always."

As we encounter the challenges of daily life, it is God's ever-abiding presence that gives us the strength to move forward. St. Paul reminds us that we walk by faith and not by sight. It is our faith that sustains us. Our hope is renewed because we believe that Christ is present with us always.

God's blessings!

Faithfully in Christ,

+Douglas R. Nowicki, Archabbot

OBLATE DAY 2014 - September 28, 2014

All Oblates, Oblate novices, and their guests are welcome to attend Oblate Day on Sunday, September 28, from 9:00 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. The guest speaker will be Fr. Maximilian Maxwell, O.S.B., Director of Vocations and associate Director of Campus Ministry. See the registration form on the insert, and send in a completed form before Mon., Sept. 22 if you plan to attend. Note that Mass will be offered in Mary, Mother of Wisdom Chapel at 10:30 A.M. by Fr. Prior Earl Henry. Those who would like overnight accommodations should notify Fr. Donald in advance since guest rooms are limited. **(Actually, as of August 6, all guest rooms but one have been taken for that weekend. Those desiring accommodations near the Archabbey can contact the Bishop Connare Center at 724-834-7350.)** Be sure to indicate if you plan to be received as an Oblate novice or Oblate; if so, a completed application form is required. Please also try to register on time; it becomes very difficult for the person receiving registrations when large numbers contact her at the last minute.

OBLATE DAY OF RECOLLECTION - October 11, 2014

A day of recollection for Oblates, Oblate novices, and other interested persons will be held at the Archabbey on Saturday, October 11, from 8:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. Checking-in will be on the first floor of Leander Hall from 8:30 to 9:00 A.M. The day will include conferences by Fr. Jeremiah Lange, O.S.B.; an opportunity for confession; Midday Prayer and Evening Prayer with the monastic community; and lunch and supper. The cost will be \$34.00 (or \$27.00 without supper); one may send a check with the registration form or pay on arrival. Those who cannot pay the full price can request a discount. Please send the registration form [see the flier] to Nancy Premoshis by Mon., Oct. 7.

RETREATS, May 16-18 and May 23-25

Some 45 people, mostly Oblates and Oblate novices, attended this year's regular retreat on Benedictine spirituality, entitled "Dipping into Benedictine Spirituality – Plunging into Baptism" and directed by Fr. Warren, O.S.B. At ceremonies in St. Gregory Chapel on May 17 at 3:20, Fr. Donald received the following:

Oblate: **Barbara H. (Bertha of Artois) Kane** of Silver Spring, MD
Oblate novices: **Mary Ellen Dayeen** of Monaca, PA
Mary Ann Evangelista of Virginia Beach, VA
Gisela Iglesias of Latrobe, PA
William T. Iglesias, Jr., of Latrobe, PA.

Also, all the Oblates present renewed their Oblation. Barbara regularly attends meetings of the Latrobe Deanery, and Mary Ann attends meetings of the Virginia Beach Deanery. Bill and Gisela, a married couple, are in the process of moving from Bronx, NY, to Latrobe.

Some 20 people, including 13 Oblates, made the silent retreat from May 31 to June 2. Fr. Wulfstan, O.S.B., preached conferences on "The Mystery of Jesus' Parables." Also, the Oblates present renewed their Oblation.

ON THE BROCHURE FOR SUMMER RETREATS: Let us know if you wish to receive mailings!

Oblates are no longer automatically on the Retreat Program's mailing list. If you wish to be on the retreat mailing list and receive the annual retreat brochure, please contact the Oblate Office or the Retreat Office. Br. Hugh, the Director of Retreats, can be phoned at 724-805-2139.

PRAYER CHAIN IN LATROBE AREA CONTINUES; NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

The prayer chain for Oblates in the Latrobe/Greensburg/Ligonier/Jeanette areas which began on July 21, 2009, has continued faithfully each Tuesday evening at 6:30 P.M. The process begins with requests made to the Oblate Office. Those interested in submitting prayer requests may phone the Oblate Office at 724-805-2291. **Those in the Latrobe area interested in joining the prayer chain may contact Oblate Anthony Sunseri at 724-832-8068.** Those interested in the e-mail prayer chain may contact Maryann Cherubini at macherubini@comcast.net.

JULY 11 – COMMEMORATION OF FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT

Oblates and their guests, some 70 people, participated in the Archabbey's celebration of the Feast of St. Benedict, Patriarch of Western Monasticism. Some of the Oblates arrived on July 10 and thus were able to witness the first profession at Evening Prayer of Br. Ignatius Camello, Br. Mark Liatti, and Br. Matthew Hershey. At the concelebrated Mass at 10:00 on July 11, Archabbot Douglas, the principal celebrant and homilist, received the solemn profession of vows of Br. Canice McMullen, Br. Joachim Morgan, and Fr. Killian Loch.

At 2:00 in St. Gregory Chapel, Br. Matthew Lambert, O.S.B., who professed solemn vows last year, gave a well-researched presentation on the meaning of the Benedictine vows, especially as an integrated whole, based on the Rule.

During Oblation ceremonies at 2:40 in St. Gregory Chapel, Fr. Donald invested the following:

Oblate novices: **Janelle Giunta** of Apollo, PA
Lillian B. Kauffman of McMurray, PA
Joseph M.C. Matlak of Pittsburgh, PA
Gregory J. Null of Pittsburgh, PA
Michael R. Palcsey of Ben Avon, PA

Oblates: **Rebecca (Faustina) Baker** of Somerset, PA
Barbara (Rose) Franz of Canonsburg, PA
Jana L. (Anastasia) Gruber of Eighty Four, PA
Michael G. (Joseph) Gruber of Eighty Four, PA *(continued)*

Rev. Kevin L. (Simeon) Mackey of Leechburg, PA
Paula F. (David Joseph) Palombo of McMurray, PA
Geraldine “Gerry” (Teresa) Petro of McMurray, PA
Eleanor “Ellie” (Mary) Puskarich of McMurray, PA .

Michael and Jana Gruber are husband and wife. Rev. Mackey is pastor of Hebron Evangelical Lutheran Church in Leechburg. Joseph Matlak is a subdeacon and seminarian for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma, OH. Janelle Giunta and Michael Palcese are recent graduates of St. Vincent College.

After the investitures the following Oblate jubilarians were honored: James G. Patrick – 50 years, Frederick R. Nene – 50 years, Mary Ann (Monica) Blngeman – 26 years (she could not be present for her 25th last year), Paul A. (Benedict) Palombo – 20 years, Paul (Joseph) Leonard – 20 years, Kevin D. (Benedict) Brown – 5 years, Rev. Richard Karenbauer – 5 years, Deborah (Humbeline) Johnston – 5 years, Grace (Juliana) Kolander-Shaw – 5 years. Also other jubilarians who contacted the Oblate Office were honored *in absentia* by being sent a certificate in the mail. Some Oblates joined the monastic community and other guests for Vespers at 5:00, and some stayed for supper in Placid Dining Room B.

SECOND ASSEMBLY OF DEANERY REPRESENTATIVES – meeting on Saturday, July 13

Representatives of eight deaneries gathered together on July 11-13 to hear two reflections on the New Evangelization and to discuss issues of common concern. The deaneries represented were Annville, Butler, Carrolltown, Latrobe, Morgantown, Pittsburgh, State College, and Williamsport. Besides Fr. Donald and the speakers, eighteen people, including one observer, attended. At 7:00 P.M. on July 11, Fr. Donald gave a brief overview of the sessions to come and led the group in the praying of Compline. At 9:30 A.M. on July 12, Fr. Shawn Matthew Anderson gave a presentation on the first three chapters of *Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)* by Pope Francis. At 12:30 P.M. Oblate Deborah Johnston gave a tour of the Basilica Crypt to those who were interested. At 1:30 P.M. Fr. Andrew gave a presentation on the last two chapters of the same apostolic exhortation. Both speakers applied the document to Oblates and Oblate deaneries. At 3:30 P.M. the group met with Fr. Donald to summarize what had been gleaned from the earlier sessions. Finally, the group participated in a holy hour with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:00 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel. Before Benediction the group prayed Compline. **Minutes of the proceedings were taken and typed up by Oblate Pauline Lanciotti and are available from the Oblate Office.**

OBLATE BOARD OF ADVISORS – meeting on June 13

The Oblate Board of Advisors met at the Archabbey on Friday, June 13. The topics discussed were: the forthcoming Assembly of Deanery Representatives, the compilation of a list of suggestions for those mentoring inmates, the matching of Oblates with juniors attending the Junior Monks’ Summer School at the Archabbey from June 14 to 28, the availability of the revised *Oblate Formation Booklet*, and the possible need for new members of the Board of Advisors. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Friday, August 8, at 6:30 P.M. in Brownfield 203.

N.A.A.B.O.D. CONFERENCE AT SUBIACO ABBEY, JULY 10-15, 2015

The 2015 meeting of the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors will take place at Subiaco Abbey in Subiaco Arkansas. Two Oblates affiliated with the Archabbey have already agreed to attend as our representatives.

OBLATE FORMATION BOOKLET HAS BEEN REPRINTED BY SOTINA PUBLISHING CO.

The *Oblate Formation Booklet* has been slightly revised from the 2002 edition, and Sotina Publishing Co., which published *Lessons from Saint Benedict*, has reprinted the book. The old *Oblate Formation Booklet* is still generally valid, and there are still many copies available; these will continue to be given out to Oblate novices until they run out. However, if anyone would like copies of the revised version, they can be picked up at the Oblate Office. The suggested donation is \$6.00 per copy, but those who already donated need not pay. **This is a reminder, too, that all Oblate novices and Oblates should have a copy of the *Oblate Formation Booklet* and review it regularly.**

NEW BOOK OF REFLECTIONS ON THE RULE BY OBLATES AND MONKS WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE

The book *The Rule in Bits and Pieces*, which monks of the Archabbey and Oblates affiliated with the Archabbey have been working on for over a year, is almost ready for publication. Joseph Reidhead of Sacred Winds Press says that he plans to release the book for publication in mid-September. Pre-publication orders may be made by contacting the website www.sacredwindspress.com . The prices are \$19.95 for the paperback version and \$31.95 for the hardback version. Those who contributed essays to the book will get a 10% discount; in ordering, they should use the “coupon code” contributor.

OBLATE LIBRARY

Oblates and Oblate novices are always welcome to borrow books from the Oblate Library in person or by mail. You may contact Fr. Donald for a list of books that are in the library. If you borrow a book when you are personally present, please make sure to sign a card, and please do not keep books out for more than six months. Note that most issues of the *American Benedictine Review* from the late 1960’s are available in the library.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following recommended books are in the Oblate Library:

- Archbishop Anthony Bloom, *Meditations: A Spiritual Journey through the Parables* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1971)
- Fr. Oscar Lukefahr, C.M., *The Search for Happiness: Four Levels of Emotional and Spiritual Growth* (Liguori, MO: Liguori/Triumph, 2002)

NEW (OR NEWLY DISCOVERED) BOOKS ON BENEDICTINE LIFE OR SPIRITUALITY

- Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., *Seventy-Four Tools for Good Living: Reflections on the Fourth Chapter of Benedict's Rule* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)
- Fr. Anselm Grün, O.S.B., *A Time of Fulfillment: Spiritual Reflections for Advent and Christmas* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)
- Sister Margaret Malone, S.G.S., *Living in the House of God: Monastic Essays* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)
- Sister Irene Nowell, O.S.B., *Pleading, Cursing, Praising: Conversing with God through the Psalms* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)
- Kate Ritger, *Benedictine Living: Reflections for Prayer and Meditation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)
- Judith Valente (Oblate), *Atchison Blue: A Search for Silence, a Spiritual Home, and a Living Faith* (Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2013)
- Abbot Primate Notker Wolf, O.S.B., & Sister Enrica Rosanna (Salesian), *The Art of Leadership* (trans. by Gerlinde Buchinger-Schmid) (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013)
- Abbot Timothy Wright, O.S.B., *No Peace without Prayer: Encouraging Muslims and Christians to Pray Together: A Benedictine Approach* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014)

OBLATE LOGO CLOTHING & APPAREL ITEMS FOR PURCHASE

Oblate Bill Gibson of Wheeling, WV, has been coordinating this project and has given us an updated report about procedures. Oblates are welcome to shop online by going to web site <http://www.stbenedict.qbstores.com>. Following instructions, they are asked on this "St. Vincent Oblate Logo Store" to provide basic information to create a personal account and to make purchases. Purchases are paid for online via credit card. If anyone would like more information about this, he or she may ask for a flier from the Oblate Office or may contact Bill Gibson at 1981 Highland Lane, Wheeling, WV 26003-5418; phone: 304-281-1281; e-mail: wmgibson@comcast.net (with the subject line "SVA Oblate Store").

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION FOR VOCATIONS

Eucharistic adoration is being held every Sunday from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel. Oblates are encouraged to attend and pray for vocations to the religious life and the priesthood.

Also, there is Eucharistic adoration every Friday in St. Gregory Chapel from 8:15 A.M. to 3:45 P.M., with the Divine Mercy Chaplet prayed at 3:00 and Benediction at 3:30 P.M. As part of an effort to make sure that there are people praying in the chapel at every hour or half-hour, if you would like to be on a list of regular adorers or of substitutes, please phone the Oblate Office at 724-805-2291.

OBLATE MEETINGS IN LATROBE

Oblates from all locations are welcome to the monthly meetings of the Latrobe Deanery of Oblates at 6:45 P.M. in Brownfield Room 202 on Sundays. The next four meetings will be on August 17, September 21, October 19, and November 16. Also, presentations on Benedictine spirituality are given in the same room at 3:00 P.M. on the same days. The presentations in August, September, and October are to be given by Fr. Robert Keffer, Br. Thomas Sanders, and Fr. William Beaver. Those wishing to pray Vespers with the monks at 5:00 and then to have supper in the guest refectory should phone Fr. Donald (724-805-2291) a day or so in advance.

MENTORING PROGRAM AND PRAYER-PARTNER PROGRAM

The Mentoring Program for guiding inquirers and Oblate novices in Benedictine spirituality is in need of volunteers to serve as mentors. If you would like to mentor in this way or if you are an inquirer or an Oblate novice who would like to have an Oblate mentor, please contact Mary Ann Kaufman at 412-302-8501 or 305makaufman@gmail.com. Those who offer to be mentors receive a booklet of guidelines. Also, if you would like to have another Oblate or Oblate novice as a prayer-partner, please contact Oblate John Hudock, who is now in charge of the Prayer-Partner Program, at 724-834-1718 or jshudock@verizon.net. If you would like to have a monk as a prayer-partner, please contact Fr. Donald or Br. Joachim at the Oblate Office. **Also, if you are a mentor and would like guidance and support from other mentors, please contact the Oblate Office.**

THANKS TO OBLATES/OBLATE NOVICES WHO PRAYED FOR MONKS AT THE 2014 JUNIOR MONKS' SUMMER SCHOOL

We are grateful to the 75 or more Oblates and Oblate novices who offered to pray for the 36-or-so junior monks who attended the Junior Monks' Summer School at the Archabbey, June 14-28. In some cases there was additional communication, and in at least one case the Oblate was able to meet the monk for whom he was praying – in choir.

OBLATE GROUP IN CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA

Oblate Cathy Mayled reported by e-mail on May 28 and June 30. On May 22, six members met for Mass and then a meeting, during which the group read and discussed *RB Prol*: 29-50. The meeting ended with the praying of Compline.

Six people attended the session on June 26, which began with Mass and continued with a discussion of Chapter 1 of the *Holy Rule* based on the commentary *Preferring Christ*. There was a new pastor of St. Gregory Church beginning June 25, namely Fr. John Redmond.

TENTATIVE PLANS FOR A NEW OBLATE GROUP IN TORONTO, CANADA

Oblate novice Kenneth Lavin reported in an e-mail message of July 2 that Fr. Anselmo Park, O.S.B., a Benedictine monk from Korea who is studying in Toronto, "has graciously agreed to help with [the] initiative" of starting an Oblate deanery in Toronto and "to provide his clerical advice, assistance, and leadership." Any of our Oblates, Oblate novices, or inquirers who live in the Toronto area are welcome to contact Ken by e-mail at ken.lavin@rogers.com or by phone at 416-690-0649.

OBLATE GROUP IN MORGANTOWN, WV

Oblate Pauline Lanciotti reported by e-mail on May 22 and July 16. Eight people, including two inquirers, joined Fr. John Peck, moderator, for the meeting on May 21. During Evening Prayer, Fr. John invested

Robert J. Cooke, Jr., of Star City, WV,

as an Oblate novice. The rest of the meeting was devoted to a reading of *RB 20* ("Reverence in Prayer") and a lesson on *lectio divina*. In his teaching on *lectio*, Fr. John mentioned St. Benedict's concern for the development of the whole person. Likewise, *lectio* is a balanced approach to reading the Scriptures prayerfully and entering into dialogue with the Lord as it incorporates body, heart, and spirit. Fr. John then gave suggestions for preparations for a session of *lectio* and summarized the four dimensions of *lectio*. He recommended at least 10 minutes for a session of *lectio* but said that 30 minutes would be optimal. The group will have no regular meetings until September, although a social meeting at a local restaurant was planned for July 17.

ECUMENICAL OBLATE GROUP IN PHILADELPHIA, PA

Fr. Vincent de Paul Crosby, O.S.B., reported on August 4. There were meetings on Saturdays in June and August at 10:00 A.M. at Saint Mary's (Episcopalian) Church, 630 E. Cathedral Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19128. On June 17 the meeting began with Morning Prayer according to the Roman Rite. The topic for reflection was "How to remain centered in times of transition." Fr. Vincent de Paul had sent out some reading material prior to the meeting. The topic was considered timely because the rector of St. Mary's Church, Fr. Thomas McClellan, was about to retire after 36 years as rector. After a brief presentation there was a profitable sharing of thoughts. The meeting ended with Noon Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. The group then enjoyed lunch together.

On August 2 the meeting began with Morning Prayer according to the Roman Rite. The topic for reflection was "The Virtue of Simplicity," based on some reading material that Fr. Vincent de Paul had sent out prior to the meeting. He first spoke briefly about the place of simplicity in monastic. The group then engaged in a profitable faith-reflection that brought in insights from the Gospel and the *Rule*. The meeting ended with Noon Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer followed by lunch.

OBLATE GROUP IN ROSHARON, TEXAS

Oblate novice William Tkacik reported on May 4, May 19, and June 21, and Oblate novice Robert Perry reported on July 22. The meeting in April began with Morning Prayer and continued with a lesson from the *Rule*. The meeting ended with the Divine Mercy chaplet. The meeting was brief since the chaplain needed to leave. The group was grateful to have received copies of *Shorter Christian Prayer* obtained through donations by Oblates.

The meeting on Saturday, May 17, began with Morning Prayer and continued with a study of silence and humility based on the *Rule*. There was an interesting discussion about how one can overlook faults, how one can control his temper, and how one can stop and listen to one's heart before speaking impulsively. All were asked to pray for monks and Oblates affiliated with the Archabbey, and then the group offered closing prayers.

The meeting on June 21 began with the Liturgy of the Hours. Then Oblate novice Steve Hall spoke about the importance of living in community by Benedictine values. After the group prayed the Oblate Prayer, William Tkacik shared about a grace-filled experience involving two baby doves. The meeting ended with a closing prayer. Eight Oblate novices were present.

The meeting on July 19 began with an opening prayer, mutual greetings, and the praying of Morning Prayer from *Shorter Christian Prayer*. Then Oblate novice Pete Salas led a brief discussion on readings from the *Rule* and from the Divine Office. The meeting was concluded with the format in the *Oblate Formation Booklet* and with a final prayer. Seven Oblate novices were in attendance.

NEWS FROM OBLATE DEANERIES

Albion, PA (St. Paul Deanery) -- *monthly meetings at chapel in Albion*

Deacon Ralph DeCecco, moderator, reported on July 22. Various difficulties kept the group from meeting for several months. On July 19 Deacon Ralph, his wife Janet, and seven others met to pray Mid-morning Prayer and to hear an excellent lesson on the topic "It is better to give than to receive" by Oblate John Simpson. After the presentation there was a long discussion on the subject, and all who attended had something to share. They also looked to the life of St. Benedict according to St. Gregory's *Life and Miracles* for some new insights. Next, the group did some *lectio* on the *Rule* and closed with the Litany of Humility.

Annville, PA (St. Placid Deanery) -- *meetings at 3 P.M. on 4th Sunday of each month, St. Paul the Apostle Church, Annville*

There was no report.

Baltimore, MD (St. Walburga Deanery) -- *meetings at 3:00-4:30 on 3rd Sun. of month, parish center, St. Benedict Church*

Secretary Jay Wells sent a report by e-mail on May 27. The meeting on May 25 drew seven people in addition to Fr. Paschal Morlino, moderator. He began the meeting with a summary of his recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Then, in preparation for Pentecost, he gave a short summary of Pope Francis' recent Wednesday address on the Holy Spirit and His gifts, with an emphasis on fortitude. Some who had attended the Oblate retreat at the Archabbey provided a brief summary of the retreat. Also mentioned was the forthcoming program for the New Evangelization (Discovering Christ) at St. Benedict Church, the status of a proposed Catholic radio station in Baltimore, and the tentative scheduling of a regional Oblate meeting at St. Anselm Abbey, Washington, DC, on October 18. The next meeting was scheduled for September 21. As usual, after the meeting Vespers was sung in the church at 5:00.

Butler, PA (St. Hildegard Deanery) -- *monthly meetings at St. Fidelis Parish Hall, generally the 3rd Thurs. of month*

Lay leader Ethel Galli wrote on May 23 and July 16. The meeting on April 24 began, as usual, with the praying of Evening Prayer. Then Ignatian spiritual leader Joan Pilat explained the use of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. Next Ethel led a study of *RB 7: 23-20*, with a discussion about God's gaze upon us and our call to respond by keeping our eyes fixed on Him and not giving in to our own desires. Then there was a study of *lectio divina*. Finally, the session ended with some fellowship. (continued)

The meeting on May 22, after Evening Prayer, involved a study of *RB* 7: 31-33, with a consideration of imitating Our Lord in His doing of the Father's will. There was some discussion about discerning the will of God for our lives. The group then turned to a discussion of Chapter 1 of *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derkse, a new book for the group. The evening concluded with refreshments and fellowship.

At the meeting on June 27, after the praying of Vespers, the group entered into a study of the third step of humility (*RB* 7:34) led by Ethel Galli. The verse calls lay people to obey secular superiors out of love for Christ except in case of sinful requests. The group then discussed Chapter 2 of Wil Derkse's book *A Blessed Life*, concerning silence, restraint of speech, and the courage to serve, all flowing from an attitude of humility.

Carrolltown, PA (Sacred Heart Deanery) -- monthly meetings in St. Benedict Church or meeting room,

There was no report.

Chincoteague, VA (Our Lady of Guadalupe Deanery) -- monthly meetings at St. Andrew Church.

Outgoing lay leader/secretary Mary Hoffken reported on July 21. Since Mary is moving to South Carolina and there seems to be no one else to keep deanery meetings going, the deanery is likely to be dissolved. We are grateful to Mary and to the late Fr. Paschal Kneip, O.S.B., for starting the deanery and for keeping it going for a number of years.

Cyber Deanery

Lay leader David Hicks reported by phone on July 1 and 12. Three new members were added to the deanery recently. There has been a fruitful discussion lately about the members' favorite breviaries.

Frackville, PA (St. Dismas Deanery) -- monthly meetings at chapel in Frackville, every Wed., 6:00-7:30

There was no report.

Johnstown, PA (St. John Gualbert Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd Monday of each month, 6:30 P.M., St. Benedict Church

Lay leader Carl Motter wrote on May 21 and June 18. The meeting on May 19 began with Evening Prayer, during which

Martin A. (Benedict) Vrabel, Sr., of Johnstown, PA,

made his final Oblation in the presence of Deacon Michael Russo, moderator, and the other Oblates who attended. The thirteen Oblates who were present renewed their Oblation. Then the group enjoyed some refreshments to celebrate Martin's Oblation.

(continued)

The meeting on June 16 began, as usual, with Evening Prayer. Then Deacon Michael led a discussion on *lectio divina*. He recommended beginning a session of *lectio* by clearing one's mind and then by engaging in slow meditative reading of Scripture, thinking about what one has read, and rereading the passage for a word or verse that seems to convey a message from God. It is a matter of a conversation with God through the vehicle of the Scriptures. The attendees then actually entered into a session of "group *lectio*." Also, the deanery welcomed a new member who had moved from the Baltimore area.

Latrobe, PA (St. Gregory the Great Deanery) -- meetings usually on 3rd Sunday of month, 6:45 P.M., Brownfield 202

At the meeting on May 18, attended by some 20 people, the group completed a discussion of Chapter 8 of Fr. Demetrius' book *Cherish Christ above All*. The topics discussed under the overall theme of discipline were humility, "amending faults and safeguarding love," several dangerous illusions, stability, punishment, "vocational romanticism," and divine order as opposed to human order. As usual, the meeting ended with the praying of Compline in the Archabbey Basilica at 8:15 P.M.

Some twelve people attended the meeting on June 22, during which the group discussed the beginning of Chapter 9, "Community Prayer," of Fr. Demetrius' book. The topics discussed included the purpose of praying the Liturgy of the Hours, the notion of prayer as hospitality to God, the value of praying the psalms, and the "David spirit" of the psalms. The group also discussed the means of obtaining copies of the next book for discussion, the commentary on the *Rule* by Dom Paul Delatte, O.S.B. They expressed a preference for obtaining copies through the St. Vincent Book Center as opposed to using amazon.com. Two inquirers attended.

Only nine people, including one inquirer, attended the meeting on July 20. The group entered into a discussion of only two sections of Chapter 9 of *Cherish Christ*, namely "The evil of murmuring" and "Scripture study and prayer." Comments from the presentation at 3:00 P.M. by Fr. Tom Hart, particularly on the Divine Office, proved to be very relevant to the exchange. Two conclusions seemed to be that we should enter into community prayer without murmuring about its (or other participants') shortcomings and without over-use of our intellects; the psalms are meant to transform our hearts as we pray them. At 8:00 the group went to the Archabbey Basilica, where Fr. Donald invested

Deborah Weaver of South Park, PA,

as an Oblate novice. Deborah has been attending meetings of the Pittsburgh Deanery. After the ceremony Compline was prayed.

Lessons in Latrobe at 3:00 P.M. before Oblate Meetings

On May 18 Fr. Andrew gave a very lively presentation about "Holiness and Benedictine Spirituality" to a gathering of over 30 people. He emphasized that holiness is for all Christians and recommended two resources: *The Philokalia* and *Into Your Hands, Father* (by Fr. Wilfrid Stinissen). Then Fr. Andrew reflected on three stages of abandonment, which he called the "alpha and omega" of the spiritual life. The stages were the acceptance of God's will in all circumstances, the doing of God's will, and total cooperation with God as one becomes a "pliant tool" in His hands. True freedom is not "doing what I want to do" but rather the capacity to surrender to God. Referring next to St. Benedict's pattern for progress in holiness, Fr. Andrew quoted some passages from the *Rule* that give guidelines for becoming holy, such as Prol: 14-21, 4: 26-77, and 73: 8-9. Some essential elements of growth in holiness are embracing the Cross, beginning the journey each day, never losing hope in God's mercy, and learning lessons from humiliations. A piece of parting advice was to "thank God for humiliations because they help us to grow in humility." *(cont'd.)*

On June 22 Br. Canice gave a presentation on the Holy Eucharist, based on a seminary paper that he had written. (It was a grace-filled coincidence that the day was the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.) Br. Canice emphasized how the Eucharist fulfills the notion of “show-bread,” or “bread of the presence,” in Jewish spirituality before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. He asserted that the holy bread originated in the incident in Exodus 24 in which Moses and Aaron and 70 elders went up a mountain and “beheld God and ate and drank.” After the heavenly banquet God told Moses to build a golden table for the bread. This bread was kept permanently in the people’s midst (in the Holy of Holies), constituted a sign of the covenant between God and the Jewish people, and served as a perpetual offering and thus indicated that God was always with them. This bread was held up for the people to see during the three major Jewish feasts of the year, with the priest saying, “Behold God’s love for you!” In sum, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is deeply rooted in the Old Testament custom of the “bread of the presence.” For us, adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament can help us to know Christ’s loving presence in our midst and to return His love. **A 15-page transcript of Br. Canice’s presentation is available from the Oblate Office.**

On July 20 Fr. Thomas Hart spoke to a group of over 20 people about “Work in Benedictine Spirituality.” He referred to “work” in three contexts: The Work of God (the Divine Office), human labor, and “good works.” Regarding the Divine Office, Fr. Tom quoted a number of references to the Office in the *Rule* and emphasized that praying well is hard work and requires focused attention. He also referred to the importance of admitting mistakes, the benefits of keeping silence in the oratory (and in our churches today), the need for monks to be men of prayer, and the urgency of seeing the primary “work” of a monastery as prayer. Regarding labor, Fr. Tom again quoted various passages of the *Rule* and emphasized the importance of obedience in work (which may challenge us beyond our perceived limits), the need for humble awareness of our limitations, the work that goes into the preparation of meals (and our need really to be grateful for all the people involved), the spiritual value of fasting, the crucial role of the Sabbath and the challenge of leaving work behind, and the fact that manual labor does not detract from our dignity. Finally, Fr. Tom, reminded the group that the monastery is a workshop for spiritual growth and that we need good works to show our love for God and for others. We are saved by faith and by the good works that flow from faith. The work of trying to heal those with wayward tendencies is an especially significant work. **A 2-page quote, an examen by St. Ephraim the Syrian from Fr. Tom’s talk is available from the Oblate Office.**

Niagara Area, Ontario, Canada (St. Henry/St. Gertrude Deanery) -- meetings on last Sunday, meeting room, St. Thomas Aquinas Church, St. Catharines, Ont.

Lay leader Brian Chisholm reported by phone on August 7. Members have generally been unavailable for meetings for several months. On August 7 at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, a holy hour was held, and Oblates were urged to attend to pray for the many distressing situations in the world.

Pendleton, IN (St. Celestine Deanery) – monthly meetings in the chapel in Pendleton

Secretary Frederick Laux reported on June 5 and July 28. The meeting on May 29 drew two Oblates, one Oblate novice, and 14 inquirers. The session included a study of 1 Maccabees in relationship with the *Rule*, especially regarding trust in God and the “fear of the Lord.” It was noted that we are always being cared for by God, that nothing escapes His careful attention, and His love for us should lead us to nurture love for Him. The goal of St. Benedict’s steps of humility might be seen as “mutual mindfulness” between God and us. Also discussed was the need for repentance from sin, the call to turn back to God in humility, and the seeking of forgiveness after one has strayed.

The meeting on June 26 followed a Mass celebrated by Fr. Sean Pogue and was led by Deacon John Etter. In attendance were two Oblates, one Oblate novice, and seven inquirers. In addition to a continued study of 2 Maccabees, Fred gave a presentation entitled “The Shame of Not Praying Religiously the Office,” based on *RB* 18: 20-25. Fred used the passage from the *Rule* and 2 Mac 2:3 to conclude that St. Benedict is asking us today to be immersed in Scripture principally through the praying of the Office.

Pittsburgh, PA (St. Peter Deanery) -- meetings on 3rd Wed. or Thurs., St. Peter Church, North Side.

Oblate George Ponticello reported by e-mail on May 18, June 11, and July 27 and by phone on June 17. The meeting on April 30 was attended by Fr. Vincent, moderator, five Oblates, and two new Oblate novices. After Evening Prayer, the group discussed Chapter 13 of *Lessons from Saint Benedict*.

The meeting on June 16 drew eleven people, including Fr. Vincent and one inquirer. After Evening Prayer in the church, the group moved to the rectory to discuss Chapter 14 of *Lessons*. They planned a picnic for July 15.

The gathering on July 15 began with Evening Prayer in the church at 6:00. Then the group went to the park across the street from the rectory for a picnic. Eleven people came for a “wonderful smorgasbord” and beautiful weather. The next meeting was scheduled for August 21.

St. Marys, PA (St. Maurus Deanery) -- meetings on Thurs. before 1st Fri. of month, 7:00 P.M. at Queen of the World Church

Secretary Peggi Gabler wrote on July 23. The meeting on June 5, attended by four people, began after Benediction and Evening Prayer at Queen of the World Church. Since Fr. Thomas More, moderator, was reassigned to the Archabbey, Fr. Alfred Patterson, the moderator-to-be and new pastor of St. Mary’s Church, sat in on the meeting. There was a reading of *RB* 7: 51-54 and a listening to a recorded talk on hospitality by the late Fr. Demetrius.

The meeting on July 10 was attended by six people. After Benediction and Evening Prayer, the session opened with the Oblates’ prayer and continued with a reading of *RB* 32: 1-5 on the care of tools. The reading of the passage led to a discussion about the “old days” when material things were made with care, cherished, and handed down to the next generation – as opposed to the tendency to throw things away in our current culture. The meeting closed with the prayer of St. Benedict.

Saint Vincent College – monthly meetings during school year in Campus Ministry Conference Room

There were no meetings during the summer.

Savannah, GA (St. Katherine Drexel Deanery) -- special monthly events at Sunday Vespers at Benedictine Priory

There were no meetings during the summer.

Selingsgrove, PA (St. Anselm Deanery) – monthly meetings at 2 P.M. on 2nd Sundays at St. Pius X Church in Selingsgrove

Secretary/co-lay leader Pastor Doug Schader reported by phone on May 16. Eight people attended the meeting on April 13 and continued a discussion on *lectio divina*. The seven people who attended the meeting on May 4 continued the discussion on *lectio* and decided not to schedule meetings for June, July, or August. They also made preliminary plans for a retreat in October at the Haven Retreat Center, with the Oblates from Williamsport to be invited along with those from Selingsgrove.

Somerset, PA (St. John Paul II Deanery) – meetings on 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 6:30 -8:15, chapel annex

Lay leader/secretary Steward Steckley wrote on May 3, June 8, and July 8. The meeting on April 8 was attended by nine Oblate novices, two inquirers, and moderator Father James Dugan. Oblate novice Jeffery Hahn gave a presentation on the ceremonies of Holy Week. There were several questions concerning the structure of the Church calendar and the way in which the Church determines the date of Easter.

The meeting on April 29 was attended by two Oblates, eleven Oblate novices, two inquirers, and Fr. Dugan. Oblate novice Jeff Houghton spoke about his spiritual journey, which ended in a conversion to Catholicism. Then there was a group discussion about remaining strong in faith in times of temptation and spiritual darkness.

The meeting on May 13 was attended by one Oblate, seven Oblate novices, one inquirer, and Fr. Dugan. After a prayer to Our Lady of Fatima, the group viewed a video on *lectio divina* by Br. (now Father) John Paul Heiser, O.S.B. Then Oblate novice Joseph Siebor gave a talk on the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Church. The meeting ended with the praying of Compline.

The meeting on May 27, attended by fifteen people, including five inquirers, began with a prayer by Oblate Jeff McCaughtry. Then inquirer Wendell Caldwell spoke about the life of St. Augustine and answered questions concerning his writings. Then, in the Chapel Annex, with the entire Oblate community present along with visiting Oblate Lora Jacob,

Robert “Bo” (Rupert) Fadden of Somerset, PA,

made his final Oblation before Fr. Dugan and the others who were present.

The meeting on June 10 was attended by three Oblates, six Oblate novices, four inquirers, and Fr. Dugan. After the opening prayer, Oblate Jeff McCaughtry spoke about evangelization and holiness, with quotes from the *Rule* and Pope St. John Paul's writings and with emphasis on the twelfth step of humility. The meeting closed with Compline.

(continued)

The meeting on June 24 was attended by Fr. Dugan and twelve others. After the opening prayer and a reading from the *Rule*, Steward spoke briefly about the Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist and then about the role of the Liturgy of the Hours in the life of the Church and about the proper way of praying from *Shorter Christian Prayer*. The meeting again closed with Compline.

Eleven others joined Fr. Dugan for the meeting on July 8. After an opening prayer and a reading of the proper section of the *Rule* for the day, Oblate Lora Jacobs gave a presentation about the lives of St. Scholastica and St. Walburga as well as about the oil of St. Walburga. Finally, three men made their final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Dugan and the others gathered there:

Michael (Joachim) Reichert of Somerset, PA

Edgardo (Gerard) Rodriguez of Somerset, PA

Steward (Samuel) Steckley, Jr., of Somerset, PA.

Southern Pines, NC (St. Ephrem the Syrian Deanery) – monthly meetings on 2nd Thurs. of month

Lay leader/secretary Laura Lowder reported by e-mail on June 20. On May 8, the four regular members gathered to pray the Divine Office and to discuss Chapter 4 of the *Holy Rule*. The group also talked about sending representatives to the July 12 meeting at the Archabbey, but it turned out not to be possible. They also considered having an event to celebrate their first five years as an Oblate deanery. They decided not to have a regular meeting during June because of the traffic likely to be caused by the U.S. Open Golf Tournament, which was to be held locally.

Two of the Oblates did meet on June 19 to pray the Divine Office and to talk about ways to support one's spiritual life.

State College, PA (St. Joseph Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd Monday of each month, Our Lady of Victory Church, Activity Center.

Secretary Kay Tittmann reported by e-mail on May 13 and July 7. The meeting on May 12, attended by seven Oblates, four Oblate novices, and two inquirers, began with a surprise birthday party for Fr. David Griffin, moderator. Then the group prayed Evening Prayer and discussed the final four chapters of the book *Lessons from Saint Benedict*. The topics discussed were ongoing conversion, overcoming anxieties, seeking inner silence, and confronting death by dying to self. The meeting closed with a prayer, the singing of the “Ultima,” and the voicing of prayer intentions. Some items sent by the daughter of a seriously ailing Oblate were shared by the group. They also made plans for the annual end-of-year Mass and breakfast in June. Fr. David and lay leader Ashley Leggett were to decide upon a book to discuss during the 2014-15 season of meetings.

On June 21 Fr. David and eighteen others, Oblates and their spouses and friends, gathered for an end-of-year Mass and social. The Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Victory Church, and Fr. David concelebrated and preached about the purpose of Oblates of St. Benedict, with emphasis on a question recently asked by Pope Francis of priests: “Are you still in love with Jesus?” Oblates, he explained, use the *Rule* of St. Benedict as a guide to persevere in loving Christ and to show that love to others. (One parishioner was motivated to inquire about the Oblates after Mass.) Then the group gathered for a buffet breakfast at a local restaurant.

Virginia Beach, VA (St. Scholastica Deanery) -- meetings on 1st Wed., 7 P.M., Computer Library, St. Gregory the Great School

Lay leader Delina Pauls wrote on June 19. Attendance at the meeting on June 4 was good despite the fact that several members were away on vacation. The meeting began with prayers for those of the deanery in special need. Because the Solemnity of Pentecost was approaching, Fr. Lee, moderator, spoke about seeking God and having zeal for obedience. God initiates the call to holiness, and we are summoned to give ourselves willingly to Him. Just as the Persons of the Most Holy Trinity are continually giving themselves to one another, so should we be continually receiving love and giving of ourselves in love. The group also discussed the possibility of visiting people in nursing homes as a group.

Williamsport, PA (Saints Martha, Mary, & Lazarus Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd Sunday of each month, 2 P.M., St. Anne Church

Lay leader/secretary Susan Wykoff reported on July 28. The meeting on May 18 drew four people. The group talked about Fr. Boniface's hope to expand radio station WAOB's broadcasting to the Williamsport area. Sue gave the others the website address of WAOB so that they could listen online. Sue was the only full Oblate present, and she passed out copies of the Renewal of Oblation and explained it. She also distributed pamphlets on the life and *Rule* of St. Benedict and pamphlets on the medal of St. Benedict. Then the group prayed the Office of Readings and watched a presentation by Fr. Killian on *conversatio morum*. There followed a discussion, which concluded with a praying of the Angelus. The members present also signed cards to send to ailing Oblates Ted Richardson and Mike Sobjak (and Mike's wife Sharon).

Four people attended the meeting on July 27, which opened with a praying of the Office of Readings. It was a special "mid-summer meeting" occurring by popular demand. Sue then read to the others an article about Archabbot Boniface Wimmer. There was a discussion about the qualities of stubbornness and perseverance and about when they were appropriate or not. Many good insights were shared. Next they viewed a presentation on holiness by Fr. Robert Keffer. The attendees agreed that the talk clarified the issue of the rhythms of Oblate life as related to monastic life, and they were eager to see the presentation again. The meeting closed with the Angelus. The next meeting was scheduled for October 12.

Various Locations

Last December 14, at a chapel in Nashville, Rev. Joseph McMahon invested

Ron Cauthern-Huhn of Nashville, TN,

as an Oblate novice. (There had been a delay in the delivery of the blue investiture card.)

On April 30, at St. Theresa Church in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Rev. John Jennings invested

Wayne Spencer of Douglas, New Brunswick, Canada,

as an Oblate novice.

On May 8 at the Archabbey Basilica, Fr. Donald invested

Patrick C. Kenny of Daphne, AL,

as an Oblate novice. Also present were Patrick's wife Therese and Oblate Fr. Peter Pilarski of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Patrick and Fr. Pilarski came to know one another years ago when Patrick was in the Coast Guard and Fr. Pilarski was a military chaplain.

On May 24 in the Archabbey Basilica, Fr. Donald invested

Kurt Danga-Storm of Bethlehem, PA,

as an Oblate novice. Also present were Oblate Josef Orosz and Oblate novice Diane Zelenak.

On June 8 at the chapel in Waynesburg, PA, Rev. J. Francis Frazer invested

Timothy C. Lenhart of Waynesburg, PA,

as an Oblate novice.

On June 23 at St. Mark Church in Altoona, PA,

John T. (Raymond Bernard) Hall of Altoona, PA,

made his final Oblation before Rev. Ronald V. Osinski, pastor of St. Mark Church.

On July 1 in St. Gregory Chapel at the Archabbey, Fr. Donald invested

George R. "Jack" Dukes of Snellville, GA,

as an Oblate novice. Also present for the ceremony were Archabbot Douglas, Fr. Maximilian, and Oblate Michael McKay.

On July 6 at the chapel in Waynesburg, PA, Rev. J. Francis Frazer invested

Kenneth J. Miller of Waynesburg, PA,

as an Oblate novice.

SICK & INFIRM MONKS

The following monks of the Archabbey have been hospitalized or otherwise seriously ill or infirm over the past three months and could use the Oblates' prayers: Archabbot Douglas Nowicki (recovering from surgery on July 15), retired Archabbot Paul Maher, Fr. Jonathan Murmann, Fr. Jacques Daley, Fr. Thomas Acklin, Fr. Cristiano Brito, and Fr. Ananias Buccione.

DECEASED MONK

Br. Nathan Cochran, O.S.B., died suddenly on July 30 as a result of an abdominal aortic aneurysm. He was 57 years old. The funeral Mass was celebrated on August 2. Please pray for the repose of his soul.

SPECIAL NOTE

Oblate Devin Banks in Henning, Tennessee, is looking for friendly Oblates with whom he can talk and who may be able to visit him. His contact information is: Mr. Devin Banks, 345637, W.T.S.P. 12-A-02, P.O. Box 1150, Henning, TN 38041.

Notice for Oblate mentors: Some Oblate mentors have mentioned the desirability of having connections with other mentors, especially seasoned mentors, for mutual support and the offering of advice. If you are an Oblate mentor and are eager to receive advice or willing to give advice on mentoring, please contact Oblate Mary Ann Kaufman at 412-302-8501 or 305makaufman@gmail.com

Order Form for C.D.'s & D.V.D.'s of Presentations in Latrobe
(See past newsletters or phone Book Center for previous presentations.)

Fr. Robert Keffer's talk on holiness and Benedictine spirituality (January 20, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Alfred's talk on poverty & simplicity in Benedictine spirituality (February 17, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Br. Hugh's talk on *conversatio morum* (March 17, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Br. John Paul's talk on *lectio divina* in Benedictine spirituality (April 21, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Sebastian's talk on silence in Benedictine spirituality (May 19, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Chad's talk on St. Benedict & his *Rule* (June 23, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Sandra Monier's talk on the Eucharist in Benedictine spirituality (July 21, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Liz Hart's talk work in Benedictine spirituality (August 18, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. John Peck's talk on hospitality in Benedictine spirituality (September 15, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Wulfstan's talk on obedience in Benedictine spirituality (October 20, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Thomas Acklin's talk on *lectio divina* (November 17, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Jean-Luc's talk on the Liturgy of the Hours (December 15, 2013):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Br. Étienne's talk on *lectio divina* (February 16, 2014):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Killian's talk on *conversatio morum* (March 16, 2014):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Br. Canice's talk on the Holy Eucharist (June 22, 2014):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Thomas Hart's talk on work (July 20, 2014):
C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Please enclose \$6.00 per D.V.D. and \$3.50 per C.D. (Add 6% Pa. sales tax before shipping cost; then add \$4.95 for postage & handling per order.)

Enclosed is _____ for my order of _____ C.D.'s and _____ D.V.D.'s.

Name _____

Address _____

I will pick up my order _____ Please mail my order to me _____ (Remember to include tax & \$4.95 for postage per order.)

Please order from Saint Vincent Book Center over the phone at 724-805-2557 or online at www.stvincent.bkstr.com , or by mail (St. Vincent Book Center, 300 Fraser Purchase Rd., Latrobe, PA 15650-2690); or come in person to the Book Center. Please make out checks to ST. VINCENT ARCHABBEY. N.B.: Those who attend monthly meetings in Latrobe will still be able to order copies of recent presentations at a discounted price.

SCHEDULE FOR OBLATE DAY, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2014

- 9:00 A.M. - 10:20 - Registration & get-together, Faculty Dining Room (Placid A) (no registration during Mass)
- 10:30 A.M. - Mass for participants, Mary, Mother of Wisdom Chapel (college chapel in Carey Center)
- 11:40 A.M. - Midday Prayer, Placid Hall, Room A
- 11:55 A.M. - Lunch, Placid Hall, Room B
- 1:00 P.M. - Basilica Gift Shop open (also all morning)
- 1:45 P.M. - Oblation ceremonies, basilica
- 2:15 P.M. - Confessions, basilica
- 3:00 P.M. - Social with the monastic community, Assembly Room
- 3:45 P.M. - Presentation by Fr. Maximilian, O.S.B., Assembly Room
- 5:00 P.M. - Evening Prayer with the monastic community, basilica
- 5:35 P.M. - Supper, Placid Hall, Room B
- 6:45 P.M. - Departure.

Registration Form for Oblate Day, Sunday, September 28, 2014

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____

- I plan to attend Oblate Day on Sept. 28 at St. Vincent.
- (number of reservations) for lunch at \$5.50 each (money enclosed).
- (number of reservations) for supper at \$6.50 each (money enclosed).

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

(Please make checks payable to St. Vincent Archabbey.)

- I plan to be received as an Oblate (application required for those invested after 1/1/96);
I wish to take _____ as an Oblate name.

I wish to be received as an Oblate novice (application required).

I would like overnight accommodations for ___ Sept. 27, ___ Sept. 28. (Please contact Fr. Donald well in advance.)

[As of Aug. 6, all guest rooms but one room have been taken. To reserve a room at the Bishop Connare Center on Route 30, please phone 724-834-7350.]

Please send this form to Ms. Nancy Premoshis, 3021-2 Williamsburg Lane, Latrobe, PA 15650 (phone: 724-837-6647) by September 20.

Schedule for Oblate Day of Recollection, Saturday, October 11, 2014, Fr. Jeremiah Lange, O.S.B.

- 8:30 A.M. Registration, Leander Hall
- 9:00 A.M. First conference, St. Gregory Chapel
- 9:30-10:10 Confessions, Leander parlor and near-by office
- 10:15 A.M. Mass, St. Gregory Chapel
- 11:30 A.M. Midday Prayer, St. Gregory Chapel
- 11:45 A.M. Lunch, Placid Dining Room B
- 1:00 P.M. Second conference, St. Gregory Chapel
- 1:30 P.M. Oblation ceremonies, St. Gregory Chapel
- 3:30 P.M. Third conference, St. Gregory Chapel
- 5:00 P.M. Evening Prayer, St. Gregory Chapel
- 5:35 P.M. Supper, Placid Dining Room B

Registration Form for Oblate Day of Recollection, Saturday, October 11, 2014

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____

- I plan to attend Oblate day of recollection on Oct. 11 at St. Vincent.
- Enclosed is the fee of \$34.00 (or \$27.00 for only one meal).

(Please make checks payable to St. Vincent Archabbey; please make out separate checks for the day of recollection and Oblate Day if you are attending both. Thank you!)

I would like overnight accommodations for ___ Oct. 10, ___ Oct. 11 (Please contact Fr. Donald well in advance.)

[As of Aug. 6, all guest rooms seem to have been taken. To reserve a room at the Bishop Connare Center on Route 30, please phone 724-834-7350.]

Please send this form to Ms. Nancy Premoshis, 3021-2 Williamsburg Lane, Latrobe, PA 15650 (phone: 724-837-6647) by October 4.

