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THE SAINT VINCENT OBLATE NEWS

Saint Vincent Archabbey

300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650-2690



November, 2013 – January 2014

724-805-2291

Volume 66, Number 4

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THE HARDSHIPS AND JOYS OF TRAVEL: SEEKING TO MAKE ALL OF OUR JOURNEYS PILGRIMAGES

Dear Oblates, Oblate novices, and Friends,

Many people probably associate the word “monk” with someone generally confined to a monastery and not leaving it very often. This impression is supported by certain passages of St. Benedict’s *Rule*. In Chapter 66, St. Benedict recommends that a monastery should include “all necessities” within its grounds so that “there will be no need for the monks to roam outside, because that is not at all good for their souls” (66:7). Nonetheless, monks under St. Benedict did travel, undoubtedly for good reasons, since he makes provision for “brothers sent on a journey” (50:4) in Chapters 50, 51, 55, and 67. What can Oblates (and monks) of today learn from the practical wisdom offered in such passages?

Motivation for considering the topic of travel

What motivated me to consider the topic of travel in the *Rule* was a long journey which I decided to make, although I was not officially “sent” by my abbot or another superior. I was invited to participate in a Mass for the first profession of vows of a Dominican sister in Ann Arbor, Michigan, whose parents have been my friends for 40 years. My relationship with them over the years led me to conclude that God was indeed “sending” me on a journey, provided that the details could be worked out. Despite my natural dislike for long-distance travel, my heart seemed to leap with “Yes” when I received an invitation months before the August 2 ceremony. When I finally made the journey after some rather detailed preparations, I realized that there were many lessons to be learned from this unique adventure. Some of them were: the importance of communal support, the necessity of communal and private prayer (especially in situations falling outside one’s normal routine), the blessing of maintaining contact with family and friends from the past, and, most importantly, the Christian attitude of regarding every journey (and every phase of every journey) as a part of God’s plan, as a response to a call from God, and, therefore, as a pilgrimage, that is, a journey with the goal of spiritual growth. St. Benedict may never have envisioned such a trip as mine in his day, and yet the wisdom of the *Rule* surely has something significant to say about travel in our modern age.

Negative view of wandering in RB 1

The first passage in which St. Benedict mentions travel is *RB* 1: 10-11, in which he criticizes gyrovagues for “drifting from region to region” (1:10); these wandering monks are “always on the move,” “never settle down, and are slaves to their own wills and gross appetites” (1:11). These unauthentic monks lack both obedience and stability. St. Benedict’s warning

against the disposition of the gyrovagues is certainly relevant today, when it is so easy for many people to jump into a vehicle and travel wherever they please. Travel, whether across town or around the world, can become an escape from working on stable, loving relationships in community and family. It can be a way to evade the demands and blessings of mutual obedience. We might all examine ourselves as to whether we sometimes “roam about” without good reason and go on trips largely to get around undesirable tasks or difficult personal relationships. In considering any particular journey, we might ponder the questions: “Am I truly being sent by God? Am I intending to bring Christ with me and to convey His love to those whom I visit or encounter on the journey? Do I have the consent or approval of others in my family or community so that I am sure that I am departing in a spirit of obedience?”

Praying and eating on a journey

The next passage mentioning travel, namely Chapter 50, reminds monks sent on a journey to pray the Liturgy of the Hours “as best they can” and not to neglect “their measure of service” (50:4). Going on a trip is no excuse for neglecting prayer. A vacation trip, for Catholics, is no excuse for missing Sunday Mass (although traffic tie-ups and other unavoidable circumstances may sometimes overturn one’s plans to attend Mass). While Oblates are not bound by the Church to pray the Office, going on a journey might, in fact, provide special opportunities to pray the Hours. If one is in a bus, train, or airplane, one might be able to pray with even more attention than at home. Even in a car, praying the Office, a rosary, or other prayers might be very possible. On the middle day of our trip to Michigan, another monk and I were occupied with our visit with Dominican sisters from 9:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M., and there was no opportunity to pray Midday Prayer within that time frame. Fortunately, as I drove my confrere to the airport, he took out his electronic gadget, which had the Office on it, and we prayed Midday Prayer as best we could. Being the driver, I could not say most of the words of the psalms, but my confrere did it for me, and the whole experience was a great blessing. Regarding the other hours, our quarters in a rectory included a large sitting room, where we were able comfortably to pray Vespers the first evening and then Morning Prayer before we ventured out to the profession Mass.

Chapter 51 prescribes that a monk traveling only for a day should “not presume to eat outside, even if he receives a pressing invitation, unless perhaps the abbot has ordered it” (51:1-2). This restriction promotes the primacy of community life over individualism as well as obedience. Travel can present one with various temptations associated with the eating of food

at odds with one's usual diet and outside one's normal times. Although "eating out" can be a blessing on certain occasions, even for monks, one must be careful not to make a habit of it. It could very well be an escape from one's routine fare at home or from dealing with unexciting relationships in family and community. The community meal was very important for St. Benedict, and so it should be for us!

Clothes worn on a journey

In *RB* 55: 13-14, St. Benedict legislates for the clothes worn by "brothers going on a journey" (55:13). Perhaps he did not want his monks to be embarrassed with the poor, possibly worn clothing that they wore in the monastery. In any case, he called his monks to wear "underclothing" from a special wardrobe, as well as better-than-usual cowls and tunics. For us today planning and packing clothes for a journey can be quite a chore. For me, it's one more reason not to travel unless one has to! The provision may also remind us of St. Benedict's loving concern for details and of our need to maintain an attitude of care and simplicity when we are traveling. "Traveling lightly" can be a virtue, not only because it renders our baggage less burdensome but also because it can teach us to grow in joyful trust in the Lord, who will indeed provide for what we lack – or think we lack.

On visiting monks who travel to the monastery

Chapter 61 speaks of receiving "visiting monks" from other monasteries; so even in St. Benedict's day there must have been a real need, on occasion, for a monk to travel to another community. Perhaps he had to conduct some business, to have a place to stay overnight amid a longer trip, or to consider a transfer of vows. St. Benedict addresses the issues of criticisms or observations made by the visitors and of their possible request to transfer stability. For monks today, this chapter hints at the importance of maintaining an intentional Christ-centered environment during our travels. If at all possible, it is best to stay overnight at another monastery, or at least in a religious house or rectory. For Oblates, too, it is important to find places to stay that will, if at all possible, nurture one's faith, or at least not detract from it. (Monastic guesthouses would be ideal!) Before my own trip last August, I was given various possible options for overnight accommodations. In the end I was glad to be able to find a rectory in Ann Arbor with a pastor and parochial vicar who were graciously welcoming. It turned out (although I did not see the inside until the last of three days) that the church was inspiringly beautiful!

Avoiding unnecessary travel

Chapter 66 describes the porter of the monastery as "a sensible old man who knows how to take a message and deliver a reply, and whose age keeps him from roaming about" (66:1). The porter's physical stability is something praiseworthy in St. Benedict's mind. Near the end of the chapter he urges that the monastery provide for practically all of the monks' needs so that "there will be no need for the monks to roam outside" (66:7). Thus "roaming" is to be avoided by monks; it is "not at all good for their souls" (66:7). "Roaming" probably does not refer to legitimate travel to obtain supplies or to minister to people in response to God's call. The distinction is important

for us today. Many of us who follow the *Rule* do need to travel, sometimes often, to visit family and friends, to minister to people, to see doctors, or to purchase necessities. However, we ought to avoid the internal and external roaming that can threaten our focus on Christ and the stability that is rooted in the routines of daily life at home, which can at times be boring. Setting our minds and hearts on entertainment outside the home, for example, can weaken the bonds that keep families together. Oblates and monks must all guard our hearts against attachments to anything that would distance us from the love of God or from the families and communities to whom we are committed.

Praying for the absent brothers

Chapter 67 reminds us once again that even in St. Benedict's day, when travel was so difficult and so dangerous (especially with the collapse of central authority in Italy), monks were sometimes "sent on a journey." St. Benedict considered it very important that before their departure they "ask the abbot and community to pray for them" (67:1) and that "absent brothers should always be remembered at the closing prayer of the Work of God" (67:2). Here at St. Vincent we remember our "absent brothers" each day at the end of Vespers. Also, although there is no specific rule, many of us have a custom of asking the abbot, the prior, or some other monk-priest for a blessing before we depart on a long journey. In *RB* 67, St. Benedict also indicates the spiritually dangerous nature of the "world" in which one travels. When monks return from a journey, they must prostrate themselves in choir to request prayers for faults involving "seeing some evil thing or hearing some idle talk" on the way. Furthermore, a monk returning from a trip is not to tell others about "what he saw or heard outside the monastery, because that causes the greatest harm" (67:5). These precepts still have some value today, although we monks at St. Vincent (and of most or all monasteries) no longer follow them literally. Entering the secular world outside our homes (and today that would include the world of Internet) poses great dangers. The lure of advertisements on the road, the atmosphere of frenzy on some highways, and the glamour of things for sale in stores are definite fodder for temptations. One needs to be fortified against these dangers. Likewise, it would seem to be prudent not to speak of the "glamour" of the world to others in community or family. We can be deceived into thinking that the sensational, or perhaps even the wicked, when mentioned casually, is something favorable or acceptably humorous without realization of its perversity. On the other hand, travel sometimes offers opportunities to see and hear the wonders of God's love. These incidences of grace should be related to others whenever opportunities arise, not to make an impression but to give glory to God and to offer spiritual edification and encouragement to the hearers.

Traveling in good company

One dimension not specifically mentioned in the *Rule* is the custom of vowed religious not to travel alone if at all possible. The purpose of going about in two's or three's was not just safety but also Christian fellowship. On various trips of mine I have found fraternal companionship of inestimable value. During my journey last August, I could not but be immensely

grateful to confreres who went out of their way to travel with me so that I would be able to make the trip safely. The great benefit of having others in the car was not just freedom from excessive fatigue but the opportunity to pray the Divine Office together and to have edifying conversation. Furthermore, in the course of three days, “we” got lost four times, once in the dark. (One time I was alone and lost, but it was only for a few miles after I had made an obvious wrong turn.) On these occasions I realized how much it meant that we were lost together; thus we shared one another’s frustrations and supported one another in maintaining hope and in finding our way to the right path. On the one occasion when I was alone, I felt the urgency of finding my way to visit elderly cousins who were waiting for me and undoubtedly praying for me.

Summary of lessons on travel in the Rule for us all

In sum, monastic journeys were regarded by St. Benedict as exceptional, especially because of the vow of stability. Monks were on occasion sent out on journeys, but they needed special safeguards against temptations to their vowed lifestyle.

For Oblates living in the world, much can be gleaned from St. Benedict’s provisions for travel. Some lay people are very confined because of poor health or imprisonment. The severe limitations on travel that they experience daily can be a channel of blessing instead of frustration, since God has provided them with an opportunity to live in great stability akin to that of cloistered monks. At the other extreme, some people (and even some monks) are compelled to travel often because of their employment or the need to visit far-flung family members. Whether they enjoy the travel or not is not the main

issue; rather in the course of their journeys they can welcome the grace of inner stability. Through wise, disciplined choices, they can make time for the Office and *lectio divina*; they can render their lack of external stability an offering of love; they can remain rooted in Christ in a way that radiates love to others around them. Most Oblates and monks fall between the two extremes. Those who travel occasionally and who have options as to travel or not need to discern prudently whether a given trip is necessary or beneficial. In our over-active age, it may be best to stay at home as much as possible to nurture inner stability and relationships with one’s family. When travel is chosen, it can be regarded as a real pilgrimage. Whether or not one has other human companions, one can always welcome Christ to be one’s most-faithful companion; one can implore Him and His angels to guide the journey; one can struggle against worldly distractions as much as possible. Then by God’s grace every journey can become a pilgrimage on which we “run on the path of God’s commandments” (Prol: 49) on the narrow “road that leads to salvation” (Prol: 48). Then our earthly goings and comings can be transformed into a participation in our lifelong spiritual journey to the fullness of joy and peace in our ultimate destiny, the Kingdom of heaven.

In the peace of Christ and St. Benedict,

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

A MESSAGE FROM ARCHABBOT DOUGLAS

November, 2013

Dear Oblates and Friends of Saint Vincent,

A blessed Thanksgiving to you and your families!

We know from experience that life is filled with many blessings and mostly with mixed blessings. There are the moments of success and accomplishment as well as the moments of crisis and difficulty. Jesus himself experienced mixed blessings in his life – the triumphs of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday as well as the agony of Holy Thursday and the passion and death of Good Friday. Thanksgiving provides us with the opportunity to be grateful and mindful that whether we are experiencing the good times or the difficult times of life, the good news is that God is always with us. The heavenly Father was just as present to His Son on Good Friday as He was on Easter Sunday.

Like Jesus, let us pray that we, too, may have the grace to trust in the goodness of our heavenly Father both in the good moments as well as in the difficult moments of life. May we find hope and strength in the promise of our Lord, “Behold, I am with you always!”

May God’s blessings be with you in great abundance.

Sincerely in Christ,

Archabbot Douglas

P.S.: Fr. Donald and Br. Joachim join Archabbot Douglas and the monastic community in wishing all Oblates, Oblate

novices, and other readers of this newsletter a joyful Advent and a grace-filled Christmas Season.

OBLATE DAY: SEPTEMBER 22, 2013

Over 60 people, Oblates and family members and other guests, came to the Archabbey for our 26th annual Oblate Day. Archabbot Douglas celebrated Mass at 10:30 A.M. for the group and offered the Mass in particular for deceased Oblate Nadeem Feroze of Pakistan. After Midday Prayer, lunch, and some free time for a tour, shopping, or prayer, Oblation ceremonies were held in the basilica at 1:45, during which Fr. Donald received the following:

Oblates: **Michele (Mary) Bloch** of Natrona Heights, PA
Craig A. (Joseph) Gilbert of Delmont, PA
Terri Helfer of Renfrew, PA
Lora Anne (Egbert) Jacob of Greensburg, PA
Andrei (Michael) Sergueev of Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada

Oblate novices: **Blaze Bingham** of Newark, OH
Carol J. Haile of Reading, PA
Gabriel S. Pellathy of Latrobe, PA
Elizabeth "Betty" Wass of Greensburg, PA .

Gabriel is a retired professor of political science at St. Vincent College and continues to teach one course each semester. Blaze is the brother of Oblate Xavier Bingham.

After confessions in the basilica, there was a social in the Parish Assembly Room. Then at 3:45 Fr. Jacques Daley, O.S.B., gave a presentation on humility, with references to the *Rule* and the teaching of St. Thérèse. The key to the spiritual life, he said, is to accept God's will and to do it with love. Thus we learn to look at other people, even those whom we don't especially like, through the eyes of Christ. We learn to say, as Blessed Mother Teresa said, "Do what You will with me without consulting me!" God's will for us includes working on our attachments, about which we learn when we lose our peace. God uses all things to draw us into intimacy with Christ. We grow in this intimacy by falling in love with Christ and learning to love what He gives us.

Then the Oblates joined the monastic community for Vespers. The day's events ended with supper and the singing of the Benedictine "Ultima."

EIGHTH FALL OBLATE DAY OF RECOLLECTION AT THE ARCHABBEY - October 12, 2013

Some 40 people, mostly Oblates, attended this annual event, with conferences in St. Gregory Chapel. Fr. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B., the retreat master, delivered conferences based on the verses *RB* 19: 1-2 ("We believe that the divine presence is everywhere But beyond the least doubt we should believe this to be especially true when we celebrate the divine office.") and included reflections on the importance of liturgy, on being attentive at liturgy, and on being attentive to God's presence in everyday life.

During ceremonies at 1:30 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel, Fr. Donald received the following:

Oblates: **Rev. Thomas M. (Boniface Henry) Lutz** of Highland, NY
Raphael H. (Martin de Porres) Walton of Pittsburgh, PA

Oblate novices: **Janice M. Heagy** of Pittsburgh, PA
Patricia L. "Pat" Hicks of Decatur, GA .

Father Lutz is the pastor of St. Augustine Church in Highland and a priest of the New York Archdiocese. Raphael belongs to the Pittsburgh Deanery. Janice has long been attending Oblate events in Pittsburgh and Latrobe. Pat is the wife of Oblate David Hicks.

Most of the retreatants joined the monastic community for Vespers and then stayed for supper, which ended with the singing of the Benedictine "Ultima."

OBLATE DAY AND DAY OF RECOLLECTION FOR 2014: Oblate Day for 2014 has been scheduled for Sunday, September 28, 2014, since facilities will be available on that day. The October day of recollection for 2014 has been scheduled for Saturday, October 11, 2014.

RETREAT SCHEDULE FOR 2014: The retreats at St. Vincent for summer, 2014, have been scheduled. The retreat on Benedictine spirituality is to be held on May 16-18, 2014, and the silent retreat is to be offered on May 23-25, 2014. The first retreat will be directed by Fr. Warren. The silent retreat will be directed by Fr. Wulfstan

DEANERY REPRESENTATIVES' ASSEMBLY IN 2014: JULY 11-13

Because of the limits of space on other weekends, the 2014 Assembly of Deanery Representatives is scheduled for Friday, July 11, to Sunday, July 13. These dates will hopefully allow some representatives to attend the Mass for Solemn Vows of Benedictine monks on July 11. All deaneries are encouraged to consider sending up to two representatives to this event of fellowship and of sharing about important issues related to our Benedictine ideals. More details will follow in forthcoming newsletters.

BASILICA GIFT SHOP OFFERS 10% DISCOUNT TO OBLATES

Oblates who purchase items in the Basilica Gift Shop may receive a discount of 10% on all purchases, according to a policy continued by the store's current manager, Br. André Melli, O.S.B.

MEETINGS OF OBLATE BOARD OF ADVISORS, August 16 and October 18, 2013

Members of the Board assembled for their 44th and 45th regular meetings at 6:30 P.M. on August 16 and October 18 in Brownfield 203. The meeting on August 16, attended by eight members besides Fr. Donald, involved discussion of the bibliography of Benedictine books (version two), the Assembly of Deanery Representatives for 2014, the forthcoming book of reflections on the *Rule*, the availability of an attorney to speak to Latrobe Oblates about living wills, and developments in Morgantown, Somerset, and McMurray.

The meeting on October 18, attended by about ten members and one spouse, considered a number of issues: the bibliography of Benedictine books, the collection in memory of Nadeem Feroze for his parish in Pakistan, the slow progress on the book of reflections on the *Rule*, a revision of the mentoring booklet, the organization of photographs of Oblate events, the publication of a revision of the formation booklet, and the need for reports from some Oblate deaneries. The next meeting, barring inclement weather, has been scheduled for January 10, 2014.

MENTORS NEEDED!

A number of people who are Oblate novices or inquirers have requested Oblate mentors. We are grateful for the many Oblates who responded to Mary Ann Kaufman's e-mail message and offered to serve as mentors. There are still five or six people requesting mentors who have not been matched. If you are a full Oblate and think that you could serve as a mentor for someone new to the program, please contact the Oblate Office. **To those of you who are mentors: Would it be helpful for you to have a list of other mentors for mutual support and guidance?**

CURATOR OF OBLATE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION NEEDED: The Oblate Office, with the help of the Oblate Board of Advisors, has been collecting photos of Oblate events over the years. Oblates Joyce Collins, Richard Gummo, and Deborah Johnston have all worked on this project. What we need now is someone with computer proficiency who could keep files of these photographs on computer. **Please let the Oblate Office know if you are able and willing to perform such a service.** Rick Gummo, who has been in charge of the photos most recently, would be very willing to help the new person.

TRYING TO GET EWTN INTO HOSPITALS

It has come to the attention of the Board of Advisors that some hospitals in the Pittsburgh and Latrobe/Greensburg areas do not carry E.W.T.N. on their televisions, and many Catholic patients would like to be able to view E.W.T.N. Oblate Mary Ann Kaufman has been conducting a survey of hospitals in Western Pennsylvania, with the result that five do have access to E.T.W.N. (through Verizon) and eleven do not (through Comcast). Mary Ann is now seeking feedback from E.W.T.N., and some results are expected by the time of the February newsletter.

SAINT BENEDICT EDUCATION FOUNDATION: LOTTERY TICKETS AVAILABLE

Fr. Benoit Alloggia, O.S.B., president of the foundation, has asked that Oblates participate in the raising of money for its mission to assist Benedictine monks and nuns studying at Sant' Anselmo, the international Benedictine university in Rome. The funds raised are directed to students from Benedictine communities that are experiencing financial hardship. As a new method of raising money, the foundation is selling lottery tickets at \$5.00 each, with the winners to be determined by the number drawn next July 11 and with the cash prize being \$5,000. Those who are interested may contact Fr. Benoit at 724-805-2607 or benoitloggia@yahoo.com, or you may consult the foundation's website: www.stbenedictfoundation.org. Also, those who would prefer to bypass the lottery and make a direct donation are most welcome to do so.

THE OBLATE DIRECTORY: ONGOING WORK BEING DONE

Although a new printed version of the *Directory* is not expected to be issued until 2015, Oblate Mary Ann Kaufman continues to work on updating the *Directory* and may issue an occasional e-mail revision. If you have moved or wish to have your name and information added, please contact Mary Ann at 412-302-8501 or 305makaufman@gmail.com.

OBLATE FORMATION BOOKLET BEING REPRINTED BY SOTINA PUBLISHERS

The supply of the *Oblate Formation Booklet* in the Oblate Office (which all Oblates and Oblate novices should have) is running low. Joseph Reidhead of Sotina Publishing Co., who published *Lessons from Saint Benedict*, agreed to reprint the booklet, which will be slightly modified and updated. The cost of printing each book will be about \$4.50 to \$5.25. This printing will be a large expense for the Oblate budget. If you can donate specifically for this purpose, please send contributions to the Oblate Office, with an indication that they are for the new edition of the formation booklet. Note that Oblate novices receive, without charge, the booklet along with a copy of the *Holy Rule* at the time of investiture. Donations are not requested at that time, but with so many free copies given out, donations would certainly be helpful.

THE DOROTHY DAY CANONIZATION SUPPORT NETWORK

Fr. Donald recently received a letter from David Mueller, the coordinator of the above group, a grassroots organization which began in February, 2011. All Oblate groups are invited to support the cause of Dorothy Day, who was an Oblate affiliated with St. Procopius Abbey in Lisle, IL. Oblates are asked to pray once a month for those asking for Dorothy Day's intercession. The network's web address is www.DorothyDaySaint.org, and David's e-mail address is rememberdorothy@gmail.com.

NEW BOOK OF REFLECTIONS BY OBLATES AND MONKS

As mentioned in the last two newsletters, a book of reflections on the *Rule* of St. Benedict as traditionally divided into 122 sections is being prepared by the Oblate Office. We offer thanks to all of you who have submitted their entries in a timely fashion. There seem to be a few people who have not submitted the reflections that they promised to write. **Please send them to the Oblate Office by U.S. mail or by e-mail by November 30. Also, we would like a brief biographical sketch of each contributor.** For example, "_____ has been an Oblate since 19___. He currently works as ____." **Please also submit these by November 30.** Thank you.

LIST OF BENEDICTINE BOOKS AVAILABLE

Oblate Lawrence Cuda of the Oblate Ongoing Formation Committee has, with great effort, assembled a rather inclusive list of books on St. Benedict and Benedictine spirituality. As of August 20, the list consisted of 747 books. If you would like a digital copy, please contact Lawrence at Lawrence.cuda@comcast.net. If you would like a printed copy, please contact the Oblate Office. It was hoped that by some time in November the list would be available on the Oblate website.

SOME ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE OBLATE OFFICE

- (1) pamphlet "God's Love for You" with subtle evangelization – free
- (2) booklet *St. Benedict for Busy Parents* – \$.40 each
- (3) booklet of Oblates' reflections on verses of the *Rule* – free or with donation for postage
- (4) booklet of deanery histories – free or with donation for postage
- (5) book *Lessons from St. Benedict* by Fr. Donald - \$12.00 each, only by personal pick-up (Otherwise order from Sacred Winds Press at www.sacredwindspress.com.); also, *Study Guide for* - \$10.50 each by personal pick-up

OBLATE LIBRARY: FEEL FREE TO USE IT WELL!

Members of the Oblate community are always welcome to borrow books from the Oblate Library, either by mail or by personal visits to the Oblate Office (or by attendance at Oblate meetings in Latrobe). Those who would like a list of books in the library are welcome to write to Fr. Donald. If you have any library books that you have had for six months or more, please return them to the Oblate Office as soon as possible.

NEW BENEDICTINE ADDITIONS TO OBLATE LIBRARY

- Baur, Dom Benedict, O.S.B., *Silence with God* (tr. by Elisabeth Corathiel-Noonan) (Princeton, NJ: Scepter Publishers, 1997)
- Kline, Abbot Francis, O.C.S.O., *Four Ways of Holiness for the Universal Church Drawn from the Monastic Tradition* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2007; distributed by Liturgical Press)
- Marmion, Bl. Columba, O.S.B., *Union with God: Letters of Spiritual Direction* (tr. by Mother Mary St. Thomas) (Bethesda, MD: Zaccheus Press, 2006)

BENEDICTINE OBLATE PROGRAM ON RADIO WEDO, 810 AM

This program, hosted by Oblate John James of North Huntingdon, is broadcast from 8:45 A.M. to 9:00 A.M., Monday through Friday.

REPORT FROM NAABOD MEETING, July 12-17, 2013

Our Oblate representatives for the 2013 meeting of the North American Association of Oblate Directors were Mary Catherine and Robert Hoover of the Carrolltown Deanery. Fr. Paschal Morlino, moderator of the Baltimore Deanery and Vice-President of NAABOD, also attended. Mary Catherine has written up a four-page report, which is available from the Oblate Office. There is also a D.V.D. of the presentations. **Furthermore, Mary Catherine and Bob will give a presentation at the monthly meeting in Latrobe at 6:45 P.M. on Sunday, November 17.**

THIRD WORLD CONGRESS OF OBLATES, OCTOBER 4-10, 2013

Our four representatives, Oblates Joyce Collins, Paul Fling, Mary Lynn Nicklas, and Kay Volo, have returned from the Congress, and we have one report so far. If anyone would like to have copies of the reports or the schedule, please contact the Oblate Office. Fr. Paschal Morlino also attended the Congress and has brought back some materials.

OBLATE GROUP IN CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA

Oblate Cathy Mayled reported by e-mail on August 25 and November 5. Meetings continued during July and August. Six

people attended each meeting, at which there were ongoing discussions of the book *Songs of the Heart*. The topics discussed during those months were "Sabbath" and "Tradition." The meetings ended with the praying of Compline.

Five people attended each meeting on September 26 and October 24. After opening prayers the groups discussed the topics "Gratitude" and "Humility." They were searching for a new book to study.

OBLATE GROUP IN PHILADELPHIA, PA

Fr. Vincent de Paul Crosby, O.S.B., reported on September 20. The "Philadelphia Ecumenical Oblate group" met on September 1 at St. Mary's (Episcopalian) Church at Cathedral Village in Philadelphia. The twenty people present began the session with Morning Prayer from the Roman rite, and then Fr. Vincent de Paul spoke about the place of work in Benedictine spirituality since it was Labor Day weekend. The group spent some time sharing their own thoughts on the subject. The meeting closed with Noon Prayer from the Anglican rite. Then they gathered for lunch. The next meeting will be in December.

OBLATE GROUP IN MORGANTOWN, WV

Secretary Pauline Lanciotti wrote on September 19 and 23 and on October 16. Eight people joined Fr. John Peck, O.S.B., moderator, for the meeting on September 18, which began with a special welcome to an e-mail inquirer who was attending for the first time. Then the group proceeded to Evening Prayer, during which Fr. John invested

Sarah M. Goodall of Morgantown, WV,

as an Oblate novice. (Two others were also to be invested, but a health emergency in their family prevented them from attending the meeting.) Then the group discussed hospitality in the *Rule*, with a reading of *RB* 53. Fr. John gave a presentation similar to the one he gave in Latrobe on September 15. Among the topics discussed were Christ's challenge of the worldview of His day (with identities based on local groups only), His radical preference for the poor, His invitation of other people into His "space," the need to nurture hospitality in our hearts, the close connection of hospitality with stability in Christ, and the need, at times, for prudent fear in dealing with others.

At the meeting on October 16 ten people joined Fr. John, who began by leading Evening Prayer, during which he invested

Michelle Farley of Morgantown, WV, and

Richard Farley of Morgantown, WV,

as Oblate novices. Richard and Michelle are husband and wife. Then Fr. John read a brief biography of St. Hedwig, a German Benedictine saint, since it was her feast day, and led a discussion *RB* 34, on "Distribution of Good according to Need." Themes relevant to Oblates, it was pointed, would be self-forgetfulness, being generous with what God has given us, and continuing to give and show compassion even if others take advantage of us. Then the group shared various perspectives on the same chapter, including application for parents and children and for employers and employees. After Fr. John closed with a prayer, the group enjoyed cake and light refreshments in honor of his birthday the next day.

OBLATE MEETINGS IN LATROBE: Oblates from all locations and their guests are invited to monthly meetings at the Archabbey. The forthcoming meetings will be on Sundays Nov. 17, Dec. 15, Jan. 19, and Feb. 16 at 6:45 P.M. in Brownfield Room 202. Those wishing to come early for Evening Prayer (at 5:00) and supper should phone Fr. Donald (724-805-2291) in advance.

CLASSES IN BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY AT ST. VINCENT

On the same days as Oblate meetings in Latrobe, classes in Benedictine spirituality are being held in Brownfield 202 from 3:00 to 4:25. They are taught by monks or Oblates. All are welcome to attend. The class on November 17, to be taught by Fr. Thomas Acklin, O.S.B., will address the topic "*Lectio Divina*," and the class on December 15, to be taught by Fr. Jean-Luc Zadroga, O.S.B., will be about "The Liturgy of the Hours."

ADORATION FOR VOCATIONS IN ST. GREGORY CHAPEL AND ON THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING

The Blessed Sacrament is generally exposed on Sundays from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel. Oblates are urged to use these times for Eucharistic adoration, if possible, especially on the Sundays of Oblate meetings, to pray for vocations and especially for vocations to the Archabbey. **On the Solemnity of Christ the King, November 24, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed after the 11:30 Mass in the basilica, and adoration in the basilica (not St. Gregory Chapel) will end with Solemn Vespers, starting at 5:00 and ending with Benediction. All are welcome.**

NEWS FROM OBLATE DEANERIES

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

Deacon Ralph DeCecco, moderator, reported on September 23. On September 21 Deacon Ralph, his wife Janet, and four others met for Midmorning Prayer and a reflection on *RB* 4:52-78 by Oblate John Simpson. A discussion followed. There was also some discussion about World Youth Day. Then Deacon Ralph led ceremonies, in which he invested

Jamie Rowles of Albion, PA,

as an Oblate novice and in which the four full Oblates present renewed their Oblation.

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

Secretary Mary Ann Bingeman reported on September 25 and October 27. Eight people attended the meeting on September 22 in

addition to moderator Fr. Job. After Vespers in the church, Fr. Job began a discussion about the Forty-Hours devotions, which he highly recommended. All were invited to attend forthcoming Forty Hours in Mechanicsburg and in Annville. Then there was some talk about the Rule regarding the practicalities of eating and drinking and the outlook on time. Then Fr. Job led a review of Chapters 6 and 7 of the *Rule*, with some discussion of silence as the absence of talking and of humility in terms of learning not to love our wills, becoming less self-centered, and going beyond ourselves. In the exchange about the second, third, and fourth steps of humility, Fr. Job mentioned that St. Thérèse exemplified humility in her life. The meeting ended with a prayer.

Fifteen people joined Fr. Job for the meeting on October 27, which began with Vespers in the church. Then Fr. Job reflected on the retreat for priests of the Harrisburg Diocese, which he had just attended. Among the speakers had been Fr. Thomas Hart, O.S.B., who had spoken about "joy in fasting." Next, there was some discussion about canon law regarding monastic enclosure and the traditions of various monasteries. The discussion then was directed toward *RB 7* and the steps of humility, with emphasis on stability, silence, and avoidance of self-righteousness. Finally, there was some consideration of "fasting and joy." The meeting ended with prayer.

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

Secretary Jay Wells sent reports by e-mail on August 19, September 23, and October 21. Thirteen people attended the meeting on August 18, which began with moderator Fr. Paschal's introduction of a guest speaker, Fr. Julian Stead, O.S.B., a noted monastic author. Fr. Julian offered some connections between the disposition and motto ("Peace and Obedience") of Blessed Pope John XXIII and Chapter 72 of the *Rule*. The peace gained by Blessed Pope John came from the Holy Spirit and through the loving and challenging work that the pope exercised on himself. Fr. Julian also contrasted the good zeal of love with the wicked zeal of grudges and disappointments, of which we need to let go. Next he spoke about the books that he had authored and the impact of the Focolare movement. In the remaining time Fr. Paschal led discussions on the first Assembly of Deanery Representatives last June, on the mission of St. Vincent Archabbey, and on the forthcoming World Congress of Oblates in Rome. As usual, the meeting ended with Vespers in the church at 5:00.

At the meeting on September 22, attended by sixteen people, Fr. Paschal introduced the book *Sacred Reading* by Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., and read from the first few pages. This book on *lectio divina* will be discussed at future meetings. Fr. Paschal also talked about the World Congress and the forthcoming pilgrimage in Rome titled "Footsteps of Benedict." The deanery was hoping to have a website completed soon, with the url <http://www.oblatesofsaintbenedict.net/>. Fr. Paschal also mentioned the possibility of a low-power radio station with a signal originating from St. Benedict Church and the housing project that is being contemplated for the empty lot behind the church. After the meeting the group went to the church to sing Vespers at 5:00.

Twelve people met with Fr. Paschal for the meeting on October 20. Fr. Paschal began by giving out copies of a paper delivered by Fr. Michael Casey at the World Congress; it was entitled "The Word Became Text and Dwelt among Us." He spoke briefly about the Congress and about his recent group-retreat in Rome ("In the Footsteps of Benedict") and said he would speak further about these in November, when other participants were expected to be present. Then he led a discussion on the book *Sacred Reading* up to page 11. An update was given on the website being built for the Baltimore Oblates. It will have 500 available e-mail accounts and the ability to accept prayer requests as well as to provide group information and important links. The group went to the church for Vespers 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 August 25. The meeting on July 25 was led by Ron Weleski. After the praying of Vespers, the group did a study of *RB 5:1-9* (on obedience) and then listened to a C.D. of Fr. Edward Mazich's presentation on the Holy Eucharist. The meeting ended with prayer and fellowship.

At the meeting on August 22, after Vespers, the group continued to study Chapter 5, verses 10-19, of the *Rule*, with practical recommendations for Oblates in daily life. Then some readings from the life of St. Catherine of Siena were distributed and discussed. Those present also considered a service project and decided to support the Butler Warming Center, a shelter for the homeless, at which John and Sharon Bopp are volunteers. The meeting closed with prayer and fellowship.

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

Lay leader/secretary Mary Catherine Hoover wrote on September 8. At the meeting on August 25, the group discussed *RB 62*, on the priests of the monastery. In the absence of Fr. Jude, moderator, who was performing a baptism, Deacon Br. Simeon Spitz, O.S.B., of St. Gregory's Abbey, who is doing his internship at St. Benedict Church, led the meeting. Only four people attended. The group considered going back to meeting on a weekday evening.

During September and October the Oblates joined other parishioners for viewings and discussions on the series on Catholicism by Fr. Robert Barron. Br. Simeon led the sessions

Charleston, SC -- monthly meetings at Pauline Books and Media on King St., second Saturday of each month

There was no report

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

Lay leader / secretary Mary Hoffken reported by e-mail on August 5. Three people attended the meeting on May 9, and the group watched the video on "Poverty and Simplicity" by Fr. Boniface. There were absences because of illness, and the attendees decided to meet next in September.

Cyber Deanery

Lay leader David Hicks reported by phone on August 22. The deanery recently welcomed its nineteenth member, a man from Spain. The members continued to discuss *Lessons from Saint Benedict*.

Frackville, PA (St. Dismas Deanery) – monthly meetings at chapel in Frackville, every Wed., 6:30-8:00

Oblate Richard Walter, secretary, reported on August 4, September 2, and November 3. At the meeting on June 5, attended by two Oblate novices and three inquirers, Tom Barrett led the group in viewing and discussing session 10 of Fr. Barron's series. There was some talk about the pain we are willing to undergo to attain eternal life. On June 12 six people joined Fr. William Seifert, moderator, and Tom Barrett for a discussion about prayer and ritual. Also, session 9 of the series was viewed. On June 19 Tom led a viewing and discussion of the movie *Arise from Darkness* by Fr. Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R. There was some exchange about doing good by carrying one's cross. On June 26 seven people joined Tom for a review of sessions 1 and 2 of the Fr. Barron series.

Seven also attended the session on July 3, during which Tom led the group in a discussion on the Feast of St. Thomas, on the meaning of July 4 and the relationship between our religious freedom and our faith, and on the importance of structure in life and in faith. At the meeting on July 10, a group of seven gave some witness about their Catholic faith and spoke about how one could become a better Catholic. Also, Tom talked about the R.C.I.A. program. On July 17 seven men met with Tom to discuss Chapter 38 of the *Rule*. On July 24 six attendees viewed session 5 of Fr. Barron's series, which concerns the beginnings of the Church and the vocations of Saints Peter and Paul. On July 31 six attendees joined Tom to view a movie entitled *The Way*, which concerns a father's loss of his son overseas.

At the meeting on August 7, attended by six people, Tom Barrett led the group in prayer, song, and a continuation of viewing *The Way*. On August 14 four people met with Tom, who led a discussion about the importance of good Bible study and about the readings for the forthcoming Sunday. On August 21 four attendees and Tom had an open discussion on being Catholic and on the reading for the day from *RB* 64. On August 28 Tom met with five other attendees to begin viewing a movie on Blessed Pope John Paul II.

On September 4 and 11, members joined Tom for a continued viewing of the movie, with emphasis on Blessed John Paul's reaching out to youth. On October 2 and 16 the group joined Tom for pray, song, and a viewing of the movie *Get Low*, which concerns forgiveness and making amends. On October 30 Fr. Seifert, moderator, led the group in prayer and the viewing of a D.V.D. on *lectio divina*. There was also some discussion about "ora et labora" and relationships with other people

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 August 15, September 19, and October 18. The meeting on August 12 began with Evening Prayer and continued with a discussion, led by moderator Deacon Michael Russo, about forthcoming events for St. Benedict Parish. Then the group enjoyed a picnic at the home of one of the Oblates.

The meeting on September 16 began with Evening Prayer before the tabernacle; for the sake of greater reverence, the group had decided to pray in the church instead of the meeting room. Then they discussed Chapter 20 of the *Rule*, on prayer. Prayer, they concluded, is a gift that must be received; we make good use of the gift when we give God our time and the offering of our whole selves.

The meeting on October 14 began with Evening Prayer and continued with a discussion on *RB* 72 led by Deacon Michael. The group emphasized striving to live in harmony, peace, and understanding, with the art of bringing happiness to others. They also reviewed the twelve steps of practicing and preserving humility, which includes honest admission of one's limitations.

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

About 12 people attended the meeting on August 18. The group completed discussing Chapter 3 of the book *Cherish Christ above All*, with topics of Christian obedience and monastic obedience. They also began to consider Chapter 4 regarding the precept of putting the love of Christ above everything else. After the discussion there was time for intercessory prayer, and the evening ended, as usual, with the praying of Compline in the basilica at 8:15 P.M.

On September 15 some 15 people gathered to discuss the beginning of Chapter 4 of the text, with reflections on "seeking God," putting our hopes in a world beyond this world, Christ as the way, Christ as revealing the Father's love, and the true freedom that comes from knowing the Father's love in Christ and from following Christ. Preparations for Oblate Day were also made. A final collection was taken for deceased Oblate Nadeem Feroze's parish in Pakistan, and Oblate Mary Ann Kaufman reminded the group that she would have pumpkin bread available on Oblate Day and at the meetings in October and November; the sale of the bread is to benefit Christian children in the Holy Land. (*continued*)

On October 20 some 20 people gathered to discuss the remainder of Chapter 4, with emphasis on coming to know the Father through Christ, obedience out love for Christ, dealing with temptations, and the meaning of celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom. Also, Oblate Mary Ann Kaufman offered pumpkin bread and cranberry bread at \$7.00 a loaf. Donations were also solicited for an inmate in Bellefonte, for the revision of the *Oblate Formation Booklet*, and for the St. Benedict Education Fund (via lottery tickets).

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

On August 18 Oblate Liz Hart of Mt. Pleasant gave a presentation on work in Benedictine spirituality. Some 15 people attended. First, Liz reflected on references to work in the *Rule*, including the Prologue and *RB* 4, 32, 43, 46, 48, and 50. She noted, in particular, that obedience is considered a "labor" and that the monastery is to be a "workshop" for spiritual growth. St. Benedict indicates that manual labor is dignified when it is done for the honor of God; people of high status in society are not better than manual laborers. At the same time, not everyone can be expected to do heavy manual labor, and all of us must beware of workaholism. The *Catechism* indicates that Christians are to see difficult situations as opportunities for God to do His work of salvation. Also, in our dependence on other people, we give them opportunities to do works of mercy. All work should be done with love. In sum, by offering all our work to God, we can allow God's goodness to shine through us; undesirable tasks can become something holy; we grow in our capacity to please the Father; we shall find grace to continue even in old age, if God desires; and in work we find the occasion to make expiation for our sins.

On September 15 Fr. John Peck, pastor of St. John University Parish in Morgantown, WV, gave a presentation on hospitality in Benedictine spirituality. Some 25 people attended. Fr. John emphasized that although all people (including Christians) need to belong to a group, Christians should reach out beyond those who are like them. Like the early Christians, we need to embrace the radical idea of seeing all people as God's people. In the New Testament when people encountered Christ, they were changed because of His great love. Christianity likewise has changed the way people regard one another. Monasticism, in particular, has changed the way cultures

have treated people, especially those who are vulnerable. The *Rule* insists that all people be welcomed as Christ. Hospitality begins in the heart, where we must be converted to see things differently. Monasteries, historically, became places of stability because of their prayer life, no matter what chaos was occurring on the outside. From our prayer lives, we can become places of stability and fearlessness where other people can find a place of rest. The practice of hospitality helps to overcome selfishness. It is a blessing to have a community where showing hospitality is a communal endeavor.

On October 20 Fr. Wulfstan Clough, professor of English at St. Vincent College, gave a presentation on obedience in Benedictine spirituality. Many monks, he said, consider obedience to be the most difficult of the three vows. Fr. Wulfstan mentioned how countercultural the notion of obedience is today; people tend to think, "I don't have to conform to anything!". However, obedience is absolutely essential in Christian life, not so much as a robotic response to a command nor as a way to receive some reward but as a loving response to Christ, who first loved us. The *Rule* urges monks to obey because they cherish Christ above all. That is, obedience is rooted in something far beyond obedience itself. St. Benedict has a pastoral approach to obedience, with guidelines about forming a proper attitude toward obedience. Obedience is very much related to love and faith. We believe that Christ speaks through the superior; so we obey. Christian, monastic obedience is a selfless act of sacrifice, done out of love for God and for someone in need. It goes against the selfish fulfillment of one's own needs. Fr. Wulfstan also referred to some of his experiences of prison ministry to show obedience in difficult situations produces good fruits.

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

Lay leader Brian Chisholm reported by phone on August 28, September 7, and October 28. Because of age and illnesses, there were no meetings over the summer. However, the weekly holy hours have continued and been well-attended. St. Thomas Church was assigned a new pastor, and Brian hoped to approach him about serving as the moderator of the Oblate deanery. The group was also considering having a day of recollection at Immaculate Conception Church in Formosa, Ontario.

Brian and some of the other Oblates participated in holy hour for peace at the cathedral on September 7.

The pastor of St. Thomas Church, Fr. John Vickers, did agree to serve as moderator. The first meeting planned under his guidance was to take place at 2:30 on Sunday, November 3. It was thought that Sunday-afternoon meetings might be better than evening meetings as winter approaches.

Pittsburgh, PA (St. Peter Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd or 3rd Wed., Our Lady Queen of Peace Worship Site.

Oblate George Ponticello reported by phone on November 12. The meeting on October 7, attended by five people, involved a study of Chapter 8 of *Lessons from Saint Benedict*, on "bringing others joy." The meeting on November 11, attended by eight people, included a study of Chapter 9, on detachment. The group congratulated Raphael Walton on his final Oblation and Janice Heagy on her investiture, and they planned for a pre-Christmas party on December 9. All meetings begin with the praying of Evening Prayer.

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 August 7, September 12, and October 8. On August 1 the group met, as usual, for Evening Prayer and Benediction. Ten people attended. After the "Oblate prayer" and the reading of minutes from the last meeting, the attendees read and discussed *RB* 50:1-4. The necessity of prayer was discussed. Oblate Mary Lynn Nicklas expressed her eagerness as she prepared to travel the Third World Congress in October.

The meeting on September 5 was attended by ten people. After Evening Prayer and Benediction, Fr. Thomas More Sikora, moderator, invested

Lorraine Gerber of St. Marys, PA,

as an Oblate novice. Then the group prayed the prayer to St. Benedict and heard the minutes of the previous meeting. Fr. Thomas More spoke about St. Gregory the Great (whose feast had been on September 3) and the *Dialogues* that he wrote, including the life of St. Benedict. Then Fr. Thomas More gave a reflection on *RB* Prol: 33-38. The meeting closed with the Oblate prayer and a blessing.

(continued)

At the meeting on October 3, eight people joined Fr. Thomas More and Br. Michael Antonacci, O.S.B., who was doing a deacon internship at Sacred Heart Church. After a reading of the September minutes and a recitation of the Oblates' prayer, Fr. Thomas informed the group of the death of Fr. Sebastian and led a discussion on *RB* 44-48 and 36-37 (on the sick and the elderly). Fr. Thomas emphasized that although St. Benedict could be strict in discipline, he was also very compassionate, and today we need to be especially patient and loving with all the sick and aged. The meeting closed with a Benedictine prayer and Fr. Thomas' blessing. The last meeting of the year will be on November 14 at St. Mary's Church.

Saint Vincent College -- monthly meetings to begin in September, in Mary, Mother of Wisdom Chapel

Fr. Killian Loch, O.S.B., reported on November 6. There were two meetings this fall up to that date, both of which were advertised to invite inquirers to attend. Several students have expressed an interest in continuing to attend and to be invested as Oblate novices. Because of the inquirers, the meetings involved presentations on the life of St. Benedict, on the *Holy Rule* (an overview), and on the meaning of being an Oblate novice. One of the current Oblate novices had requested final Oblation, and the date for the ceremony was scheduled for November 14. Also, a number of Oblate novices and inquirers have been attending the monthly "Breakfast with Benedict" sessions, which are sponsored by Campus Ministry.

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

Moderator Fr. Ronald Gatman reported by e-mail on August 6. The Oblate Council had met in May and was planning to meet again on August 13, although the chair, Mike Williams, was recovering from open-heart surgery. The Oblate Council normally meets every month except June, July, and December. The following events were planned for the 2013-14 school year: Mass on September 22,

Evening Prayer with presentation on October 20, Mass of November 24, priory pre-Christmas party on December 20, Evening Prayer with presentation on January 26, Mass on February 23, Evening Prayer with presentation on March 23, and Oblate day of recollection (with Mass, confessions, quiet time, and presentations) on April 27.

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

Secretary/co-lay leader Pastor Doug Schader reported on August 14 and September 20. At the meeting on August 11, the six people attending reviewed information for a deanery retreat on November 2 at “Haven” in Richfield, PA. The retreat was to include silent time from 10:00 A.M. through Vespers and fellowship at the evening meal. They plan to pray Midmorning Prayer, Midday Prayer, Midafternoon Prayer, and Vespers, as well as Compline at 6:00 P.M., which will close the retreat. Then the group discussed a talk on the Liturgy of the Hours entitled “Making Holy the Day,” by Fr. Charles E. Miller, C.M. There were many insightful comments. The meeting concluded with praying of Vespers.

Six people attended the meeting on September 8, which opened with the Oblate prayer. Then the group reviewed final details for the retreat. Next, they continued a study of the Divine Office by listening to a C.D. from the Archabbey by Br. Canice. It was decided not to have a meeting in October. The meeting ended with the praying of Vespers.

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

Lay leader/secretary Jeffery McCaughtry wrote on August 28, September 25, and October 14 and 23. The meeting on August 13 was attended by one Oblate, seven Oblate novices, and nine inquirers in addition to Fr. James Dugan, moderator. After opening prayers Oblate novice Christian Gagnon gave a presentation on love, with reference to the first commandment, Christ’s command to us to love one another, and the importance of listening to others and being with others in time of need. There were also some readings from the Bible and the *Catechism* and a reference to charity as the “celestial cement” that holds our everyday lives together.

The meeting on August 27, attended by 19 people, began with the Liturgy of the Hours, the “Ultima,” and the welcoming of new inquirers. Then Jeff gave a brief synopsis of what an Oblate is, and inquirer Daniel Durán gave a presentation on forgiveness, with emphasis on the need to forgive oneself and with Scriptural references to God’s forgiveness. The meeting closed with Compline at 8:15 P.M.

The meeting on September 10 was also attended by 19 people in addition to Fr. Dugan. Oblate novice Steward Steckley gave a presentation on the Holy Eucharist, and Fr. Dugan added comments about transubstantiation. At the meeting on September 24, which Fr. Dugan and 17 other people attended, inquirer Craig Godfrey gave a presentation on prayer. Both meetings closed with Compline. Jeff himself has been teaching a class on apologetics with focus on St. Justin Martyr. Jeff also gave the Oblate novices a five-question quiz on September 10. Later he issued a six-question “Oblate novice quiz” on Chapters 4-7 of the *Rule*.

A friend of Jeff who works for the American Bible Society purchased 15 copies of *Shorter Christian Prayer* and donated them to the deanery. Jeff and the others at Somerset would like to express an official thank-you to the one who made this generous and helpful donation.

Fr. Dugan led the meeting on October 8, attended by 17 others. After the praying of a “Te Deum” and a “Glory Be,” Oblate novice Joseph Seibor presented a talk on “Virtues,” beginning with article 1803 in the *Catechism*. He showed how the *Holy Rule* sets practical standards of virtue and how it has advice for keeping temptations at bay. There were many questions posed and answered before the meeting closed with Compline. Eighteen people joined Fr. Dugan for the meeting on October 22. Among those attending were a Jewish guest and a Muslim guest, both of whom had been invited. After a praying of the Blessed John Paul II prayer for married couples and families, Oblate Lora Jacob of the Latrobe Deanery gave a presentation on the Holy Trinity, with references to the Old and New Testaments and the *Catechism*. Comments were made about the Nicene Creed and the importance of our baptismal profession of faith. The meeting ended with Compline.

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

There was no report, but lay leader Laura Lowder indicated that meetings were being held.

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

On July 13 at Our Lady Victory Church in State College,

Ellen (Rita) Mazzara of State College, PA,

made her final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B., and several Oblates.

Secretary Kay Tittmann wrote on September 10 and October 17. Five Oblates, four Oblate novices, and four inquirers attended the meeting on September 9, at which the group began a series of discussions based on *Lessons from Saint Benedict*. They covered the first three chapters, which concern living in God’s order, the freedom that comes from reaching out in love, and the challenge to regard time as God’s gift and to be good stewards of time. The meeting closed with a prayer, the singing of the Benedictine “Ultima,” and the voicing of several prayer intentions, for which an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be were offered.

The meeting on October 14, attended by twelve people in addition to moderator Fr. David Griffin, began with Evening Prayer. It continued with a discussion of four chapters from *Lessons from Saint Benedict*: Chapter 4, on dealing with our wounds; Chapter 5, on roadblocks in life; Chapter 6, on dryness in prayer as an opportunity for drawing closer to God; and Chapter 7, on faithfulness in doing little tasks with love. The meeting ended with prayer, the “Ultima,” the voicing of several prayer intentions, and congratulations offered to Randi Anderson for being invested over the summer and Ellen Mazzara for making final Oblation over the summer.

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 August 19. Dee's first letter began with the good news that nine inquirers attended the meeting on August 7, thanks to a notice in the parish bulletin and to encouragement by moderator Fr. Lee Yoakam, O.S.B. Some of them have completed application forms. At the meeting Fr. Lee spent quite some time explaining the purpose of the Oblates and the importance of prayer in Benedictine spirituality. Also, each attendee introduced himself or herself with a brief history of his or her connection with the Church.

At the meeting on October 2, Fr. Lee invested five Oblate novices:

Damian Finke of Virginia Beach, VA
Jerome Kebbell of Virginia Beach, VA
Cynthia Lucero of Virginia Beach, VA
Janet Maratea of Virginia Beach, VA
Amelia Tomlinson of Virginia Beach, VA.

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

Oblate Sue Wykoff reported on October 15 during a stay at St. Vincent. Six people attended the meeting on September 8. After praying the Office of Readings, the group viewed a D.V.D. of Fr. Edward Mazich's presentation on the Holy Eucharist and then discussed it. They also read a message of Pope Francis for the Angelus in Rome, prayed the Angelus, and discussed the calendar for the forthcoming season. Four people attended the meeting on October 13. After a praying of the Office of Readings, the group viewed and discussed a D.V.D. of Br. John Paul's presentation on *lectio divina*. They then prayed the Angelus and discussed the forthcoming retreat on November 2, to which the Selinsgrove Oblates had invited the Williamsport Oblates.

Various Locations

On August 1 in the chapel in Pendleton, IN, Rev. Sean Pogue invested as an Oblate novice

Daniel E. Bauer of Pendleton, IN.

On August 11 in the chapel in Waynesburg, PA, Rev. J. Francis Frazer, pastor of St. Thomas Church in Clarksville, invested as an Oblate novice

Stanley Shriner, Jr., of Waynesburg, PA.

On September 29 in the same chapel, Fr. Frazer received the final Oblation of

Darran A. (Alexander) Chick of Waynesburg, PA.

On August 24 Fr. Jaechan Anselmo Park, O.S.B., invested

Kenneth Lavin of Toronto, Ontario, Canada,

as an Oblate novice. Fr. Anselmo is a Benedictine monk from Waegwan Abbey in South Korea who happens to be studying in Toronto. The ceremony was part of a Mass and was held in Ken's home.

On August 30 in the chapel in Nashville, TN, Rev. Joseph McMahon, pastor of Christ the King Church in Nashville, invested as an Oblate novice

David A. Shepherd of Nashville, TN.

On October 9 at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Center Moriches, NY, Rev. Walter F. Kedjierski invested

Christopher Brennan of Mastic, NY,

as an Oblate novice.

On November 9 in the Archabbey Basilica, Fr. Donald invested as an Oblate novice

Cynthia J. Ruff of Toledo, OH.

Also present for the ceremony were Cynthia's mother, Br. Joachim, and Oblate novices Diane Zelenak and Gabriel Pellathy.

SICK & INFIRM MONKS

The following monks of the Archabbey have been hospitalized or otherwise especially ill during the past three months and could use our prayers: Fr. Demetrius Dumm, Fr. Bede Hasso, Fr. Jacques Daley, Fr. Francis Ehnat.

DECEASED MONK

Fr. Sebastian Samay, O.S.B., died suddenly on October 1 at the age of 87. Earlier this year he had offered a very profound reflection on silence to the Latrobe Oblates. Please pray for the repose of his soul.

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. Philip's talk on St. Benedict and his *Rule* (August 19, 2012)

C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Fr. Edward's talk on the Eucharist in Benedictine spirituality (September 16, 2012):

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Fr. Ananias' talk on hospitality in Benedictine spirituality (October 21, 2012):

C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

Br. Joachim's talk on work in Benedictine spirituality (December 16, 2012):

C.D. _____ (number) D.V.D. _____ (number)

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)

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.)

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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.

OBLATES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND CAMERATA CONCERTS

Oblates are welcome to attend concerts offered by the Saint Vincent Camerata in December. A program of three pieces By J.S. Bach is being offered at St. Vincent Basilica on Saturday, December 7, at 7:30 P.M. and at Sacred Heart Church in Pittsburgh on Sunday, December 8, at 4:00 P.M. The Camerata Scholars will offer an Advent *a cappella* program of choral music from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance at St. Stanislaus Church in Pittsburgh on Saturday, December 14 at 7:30 P.M.

A REMINDER: OBLATES SHOULD NOT USE INITIALS

Since Oblates of St. Benedict are a “pious association of the faithful” and not a canonical order of the Catholic Church, Oblates should not use such initials after their names as “O.S.B.Obl.,” despite the fact that some Oblates have developed this custom. Using such an appendage is contrary to Catholic tradition and practice.

COLLECTION OF CASSETTE TAPES AVAILABLE

Over the years the Oblate Office has accumulated a number of sets of cassette tapes of spiritual talks by such speakers as Fr. Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R. Since many people no longer have machines that will play these tapes, we have decided to give these sets of tapes. If you would like to have any of them, please come to the Oblate Office to pick them up. (We can also send them in the mail, but in that case we would appreciate a donation for postage.)

