



Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery

May 2010

ASSIGNMENTS:

Lincoln Chapter: Sheridan Rooms & North Commons Cafeteria on Sunday and Lancaster Room on Monday, Madonna Rehab Hosp: Sunday, May 16 and Monday May 17 (**One week later for Mother's Day**): Desiring Life by Norvene Vest, Chapter 6, Benedict and Ethics, pgs 146-161, Questions for Reflection #'s 3 & 4, pgs 170-171 (Choose one question)

Steinauer Chapter: Banquet Room, across from St. Anthony's Church,
Monday, May 3, 2010: Ps. 146 (Hymn/praise), Ps 39, Ps 91 (Confidence)
NOTE CHANGE OF MIDDLE PSALM TO 39!

Hastings Chapter: St. Michael's Church, Family Room, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 8, 2010: Desiring Life by Norvene Vest, Chapter 6, Benedict and Ethics, pgs 146-161, Questions for Reflection #'s 3 & 4, pgs 170-171 (Choose one question) Facilitator: Mary Anna Fertig Companion leader: Sister Phyllis
Cell meeting: Sunday, May 30, Cell leader: Lee Ostiek

Omaha Chapter: New Cassel Retirement Center, Lecture Hall, 900 N 90th Street, Omaha, NE, Tuesday, May 11, 2010: Desiring Life by Norvene Vest, Chapter 6, Benedict and Ethics, pgs 146-161, Questions for Reflection #'s 3 & 4, pgs 170-171 (Choose one question)

POT LUCK GATHERING WITH SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT – Put on your calendar for Sunday, June 13 at 5 pm. It is a wonderful way to get together and build our Benedictine Oblate community through a shared meal and entertainment by Sister Marietta. Hope to see you there.

NEW BOOK FOR FALL: We will be using The Oblate Life by Gervase Holdaway, OSB. We will be signing up again for the book at our May meetings - if you wish me to purchase it for you. It costs \$29.95 but I can get it for \$24.00. I will ask that you pay for it as you sign up. You may choose to get a used book on the web if you wish. If anyone feels they cannot afford the book, please see me and we will make some stipends available. It is likely that we will use this book for two years.
Thank you! *Sister Phyllis*

NEW BOOKS HAVE ARRIVED: for those who have signed and paid. I will be bringing to the May meeting.

CELLS FOR MAY – PSALM CHANGE: Since Psalm 88 has been used earlier this year; Sister Wilma recommends we replace it with Psalm 39. This is also a lament psalm – this time of a sick person. She says it is an unusual psalm, so suggests that everyone look at 1) the verbs which are very strong; the 2) the images of both God and of the poet himself, for example “phantom.”

THANK YOU to Steve Liechti for arranging our outing to Spring Creek Prairie. You will want to visit there for a lovely - out of doors – peaceful, reflective time.

OBLATE NEWS: Welcome back to Oblate Carol Roettmer Brewer who has returned to Lincoln to become the Director of Connectional Ministries for the Nebraska Conference of the United Methodist Church. We can expect to see her at the June potluck. She will be listed in the new directory.

“BENEDICTION SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE”: a Leadership Conference for working women will be held Saturday, September 25, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart Monastery. Keynote speaker, Norvene Vest, will deliver two sessions: **WORK AS THE SOUL'S FRIEND:** Insights from the Rule of St. Benedict for the Modern World of Work and **TENDER COMPETENCE:** Benedictine Qualities of Leadership for the Contemporary Workplace. The \$35 includes conference fee and noon lunch. Check payable to Sacred Heart Monastery. Send to Sister Bonita Gacnik, 1005 W. 8th Street, Yankton, SD 57078. See online registration form for more information and lodging http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org/NewsEvents_VestFlyer.html.

SACRED HEART MONASTERY,

CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT: A silent Christian contemplative retreat will be held Sunday, May 23 – Thursday, May 27 in the Benedictine Peace Center. This silent retreat includes 12 daily meditation periods of 20-25 minutes, instruction and guidance in the practice of sitting prayer, daily conference on the Christian contemplative path and Eucharistic celebration (optional). The \$250 includes single room/private bath and meals. Contact JoAnn Dickinson at joanne.dickinson@mtmc.edu or 605-668-6292.

SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

A few days ago a few of us had a discussion on what we might call “our spiritual language.” How do we talk **to** God? How do we talk **about** God? How do we know that God is truly speaking to us? Some of us are very comfortable with and can respond easily to these questions. Some of us may not have been gifted with such responses and/or we may not have taken the time to ponder how we speak to or about God – and how we hear God’s voice to us.

For myself, I can tell you that I am a confirmed believer in knowing the presence of God and the work that God accomplishes in my life. I am aware of God’s action in my life many times a day. Now it is another thing - which I am very complacent about - how I respond to God about these marvelous happenings. I do have this desire to find a way to speak to God which will be commensurate with God’s almighty greatness - how God is speaking to me – truly speaking!

It might be well for each of us to take some quiet moments - right NOW - and answer those questions. Then, it would be good to be able to share those responses with others of us. I believe we would learn much from each other because: 1. We each have our own spiritual language or 2. We do not use spiritual language as we talk intimately with God. Maybe our language is not always words. Maybe some of us speak to God through music or art or nature. Some of us may choose to read scripture or spiritual books. Do we recognize the value of these venues – the various ways that we can speak to God? We speak to God in various ways and God speaks to us in various ways.

Now, let us hear a little more about “spiritual language!” Awareness of our language is step number one. We should all want a special language for God which maximizes all we want to say to God or about God. Obviously, as with all important steps we take in our spiritual lives, it will take some time and effort to accomplish. It is a part of our spiritual journey and conversion of heart that should bring us joy, love and peace. Let us listen to what Paul says,

“When I came to you, my brothers and sisters, to preach God’s secret truth, I did not use big words and great learning. For while I was with you, I made up my mind to forget every thing except Jesus Christ and especially his death on the cross. So when I came to you, I was weak and trembled all over with fear, and my teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God’s Spirit. Your faith, then, does not rest on human wisdom but on God’s power.” (1 Cor 2:1-5)

Today, our Christianity has been diluted with all of society’s expectations – taking away our ability to be mindful of Christ’s presence and voice. Our language comes as we thoughtfully ponder His Living Word. We choose to speak of Christ Jesus knowing the enormous mystery that envelops us. Words come within our spirit but not apart from the Holy Spirit which will bring us the revelation of God’s Word. Then we experience a level of holiness that brings new life and energy to all that we do.

This spiritual language often comes through our inner self when we are in quiet communion with God where He also conveys His words to us. It is a challenge to be vulnerable to those moments when we let go of our own expectations, restlessness and indecisiveness and quietly become aware of what God may be saying and then trusting in that revelation as God’s word. Sister Phyllis



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