



Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Living by the Spirit of The Rule of St. Benedict + Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery
www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org + info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org + December 2012

Greetings

A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON TO ALL!

Happy Liturgical New Year! Sunday, December 2, is the First Sunday of Advent and the beginning of the liturgical year. Remember to change to Week One in your Divine Office prayer books. *Shorter Christian Prayer* explains the “Cycle of the Four-Week Psalter” on p. 15.

Coming this Month

CHAPTER GATHERINGS

Hastings Chapter: Chapter meeting Saturday, December 8, 2012, 9:30–11:30 a.m. The meeting will be held in the St. Michael’s Church Family Room. There is no reading assignment for the Chapter meeting. There will not be a cell meeting in December due to the Christmas holiday.

Lincoln Chapter: Chapter meetings Sunday, December 9, and Monday, December 10, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. The assignment is *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derske, Chapter 7, pp. 85–93. Oblate David Frye will present a reflection on Psalm 131 and *The Rule of Benedict*, Chapter 7—“Like a Weaned Child: Seeking Humility.” He also will introduce the chapter’s new Web site. The Sunday meeting will be in the Sheridan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, and the Monday meeting will be in the Lau Conference Room at Madonna. December’s cell meeting assignment comes from *Cherish Christ Above All* by Demetrius Dumm, O.S.B., Chapter 2, pp. 24–30.

Omaha Chapter: Chapter meeting, read *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derske, Chapter 3, pp. 30–40.

The facilitator will be Rod Dolton, with Vespers leader Chuck Luczynski. The meeting is at the New Cassel Retirement Center, Lecture Hall, 7:00–9:00 p.m. There will be no cell meeting in December due to the Christmas holiday.

Steinauer Chapter: The chapter will hold no meeting in December due to the Christmas holiday.

Welcome

OUR NEW NOVICES AND OBLATES

A number of individuals made their Initial Oblation to become Novices.

Lincoln Chapter: Mona Callies, Jonathon Paul Carney, Susanna Des Marais, Matthew Gibilisco, Donna Harrison, Amanda Hefner, Lynn Samsel, July Sholy, Dori Umphreys, and Shannon Van Gerpen.

Hastings Chapter: Greg Burk and Joanne Shottenkirk.

Several Oblate Novices made their Final Oblation.

Lincoln Chapter: LaSandra Brown, Chris Jacobsen, Larry Kunc, Lorene Ludy, and Donna Washburn.

Hastings Chapter: Susan Janda.

Those Oblates who were unable to attend the Oblation Ceremony will be able to sign Renewal Certificates or—for Novices—Initial Enrollment Certificates at the next Chapter meetings. The Deans will contact individuals preparing to make Final Oblation who were unable to attend the ceremony to share options for making their Final Oblations.

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
Hastings	<i>Juliene Bryan</i> , juliene.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>Family Room, St. Michael’s Church, Hastings</i>
	<i>Carol Barry</i> , carol.barry@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital</i>
	<i>Steve Liechti</i> , steve.liechti@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>Sheridan Room (Sunday)</i>
Lincoln	<i>Carol Olson</i> , carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>Lancaster Room (Monday)</i>
	<i>Jim Rea</i> , jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	5401 South St.
	<i>Mary Schroer</i> , mary.schroer@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Lincoln
Omaha	<i>Rod Dolton</i> , rod.dolton@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>New Cassel Retirement Ctr. Lecture Hall, Omaha</i>
Steinauer	<i>Marcia Borchert</i> , marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	<i>Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer</i>

Annual Gathering

OBLATION CEREMONY 2012

The Oblation Ceremony was held on Sunday, November 11, 2012. The James C. Ryan Memorial Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital was filled with Oblates, those making their Initial and Final Oblations, and family and friends. It was a moving service of prayer and song, followed by a reception in the Sheridan Room.



Sr. Joelle Bauer, Oblate Director, and Sr. Penny Bingham, Prioress, attended the Oblation Ceremony on November 11, 2012.

The Hastings Chapter honored Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff at the Oblation Ceremony reception with a special gift: a prayer shawl knitted by Oblate Robin Stroot and threaded through with various colors of embroidery threads chosen by each of the Oblates. The gift included a book of prayers with medallions crocheted by Oblate Sharon Connor.

Oblates Juliene Bryan, Robin Stroot, and Sharon Connor of the Hastings Chapter, with Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff, third from left.



A Reflection

MY REFRIGERATOR DOOR BY JULIENE BRYAN

What is one of my favorite things to contemplate? My refrigerator door. I have an ongoing collage of pictures of our grandchildren taped to my refrigerator door. On good days I can look at those pictures and feel so very, very blessed, but on other days I look at those pictures and begin this big “pity party” for myself. They live so far away, hundreds of miles away in Texas. I’m missing so much of their lives. I’m so lonely. And the big one: What would our lives been like if fifteen years ago our son, Rick,

would have survived his accident? So, especially during this holiday season, the big issue becomes, “How do we deal with grief, loss and pain?”

In the midst of all the beautiful colored pictures of our grandchildren I have two other pictures. Black and white pictures I’ve clipped from the newspaper. One is of Travis Mills and his family, his wife and baby daughter. Travis is a multiple amputee. During his third tour to Afghanistan his vehicle triggered an IED explosion. His body armor saved his life, but the explosion took both his arms and legs. Maybe you’ve read about Travis. His goal is to learn to use his new artificial limbs and salute his fellow troops when they return home. The other picture is of little two-year-old Roy who was killed this past summer in Hastings when he ran out into the street in front of his home. It’s difficult to indulge myself in my “pity party” when I think of Roy’s family facing these coming holidays without their son.

The stories of Travis and little Roy help me fight the compulsion to feel sorry for myself. But the biggest heroes in my life are Jesus Christ and his mother, Mary. Recently I was reflecting on the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary: Christ’s Resurrection, His Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary’s Assumption, and her Heavenly Coronation. It was early morning and I was feeling disillusioned over our election results from November 6. I was supplementing my Rosary with reflections from a pamphlet entitled *Eucharistic Adoration Rosary* by Fr. Louis Cuardiola, C.P.M. All the Decades of the Rosary lead up to the Faith, Hope, and Charity of the Glorious Mysteries. Jesus and Mary, through their holiness, humility, purity, and unconditional acceptance of the will of God, are preeminent models for all of us to imitate. But I can’t do it alone and I don’t believe it is God’s plan for us to go it alone. That is why he has given us the Church and why he has provided wise and inspired leaders like Saint Benedict. As an Oblate of Saint Benedict, I am given a pathway to follow and a community to share my journey. This holiday season I am feeling blessed and thankful for the Holy Spirit’s prompting my heart

four years ago to attend that first Orientation Meeting of the Oblates of Saint Benedict, Hastings Chapter. In closing, I wish all of my fellow Oblates a Blessed Christmas and the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ to carry your burdens.

Invitation

RETREAT FOR OBLATES AT THE SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Sr. Joelle Bauer has scheduled an Oblate Retreat for February 22-24, 2013, at the Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, South Dakota. The theme and content will be "Living the Psalms." The theme will focus on three kinds of psalms, as well as some psalms used throughout the Rule. You will be invited to pray the psalms with the events of your lives. The retreat begins the evening of February 22 and ends the morning of Feb. 24. The cost is \$120 for a single room, including meals and conferences, and \$170 for a room with two people. The number of participants is limited. Reservations can be made by contacting:

Sr. Joelle Bauer
1005 W. 8th Street
Yankton, S.D. 57078
jbauer@mtmc.edu
605-668-6009.

There is voice mail for the telephone number. There is the possibility of a scholarship for a person who may have difficulty with the cost for the retreat.

Gratitude

THANK YOU, OBLATE TERESA HARMS!

For the last ten years, Teresa has formatted and released the monthly newsletter. This is one of those vital but unsung jobs that we all depend upon. We owe a big "Thank You" to Teresa for faithfully and efficiently doing this work for so many years!

Beginning with the December newsletter, Oblate David Frye will take over this task. He will alert e-mail recipients that the newsletter is available online at our new Web site:

www.nebraskabenedictines.org.

Those oblates who receive their newsletters by mail will continue to do so.

Introduction

NEBRASKA CHAPTER'S WEB SITE REFRESHMENT

The Nebraska Chapter has a newly deployed Web site to provide Oblates with a single place to find out about the Benediction Oblates of Nebraska. You can find the site at:

www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org.

Various sections of the site provide services and resources. Here is a brief summary of the main sections of the site.

News: Links to download issues of this newsletter. The newsletter for the coming month will be posted here at the end of the month just ending. The archive—with a few gaps we hope to fill in—goes back to 2008.

Reflections: This blog-like section will offer Oblates' meditations on the Benedictine life. If you would like to contribute a reflection, please contact one of the deans to find out more.

Companions: Here is a short introduction to resources for Oblate Novices.

Cells: Check this page for the current list of cells, meeting times and places, leaders, and the year's schedule of readings.

Gatherings: Under the heading of Chapter Meetings, you can go to a page for each of the four area chapters and find gathering times, places, and readings.

Deans: This section, with a page for each Dean, gives some background and online forms for sending messages to each dean. You can also use the new e-mail addresses on p. 1 of this newsletter.

Links: This page provides a number of tips on Web-based resources for the Benedictine life. If you have a solid link to share, send it to:
info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org.

Albums: Browse galleries of photographs showing events in the life of our chapters.

Contact: This page provides a secure way to send a message to the general Info e-mail address. If you use this form, the Web steward (David Frye) will re-route the message to the Dean or Deans best suited to respond to your query or message.

Living Web sites are always on the move. If you see something confusing, in error, or have an idea to contribute, use the Contact page.