



# 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 + **May 2013**

## Greetings

### HUMILITY IN ALL THINGS

From the *Rule* of our Holy Father Benedict: “Whenever we want to ask some favor of a powerful person, we do it humbly and respectfully, for fear of presumption. How much more important, then, to lay our petitions before the Lord God of all things with the utmost humility and sincere devotion” (RB 20:1-2).

## Coming this Month

### CHAPTER GATHERINGS

**Hastings Chapter:** Saturday, May 11, 2013, 9:30–11:30 a.m. Chapter 7 of *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derske: “A Stimulating Training School for the Lord,” pp. 85–93. The facilitator is Sharon Connor; the companion leader is Robin Stroot; the reflection is by Susan Janda; and the prayer leader is Leland Ostdiek. The meeting is held in the Family Room of St. Michael’s Church.

Hastings Cell: Saturday, May 25, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. From *Cherish Christ Above All*, by Demetrius Dumm, OSB, Chapter 5, “Christ, In Whom We Love Others,” pp. 59–70. The facilitator is Juliene Bryan. The meeting is held in the library at St. Michael’s Church.

Grand Island Cell: Monday, May 27, 2013, 4:30–5:30 p.m. at First Christian Church, 2400 W. 14th St., Grand Island. From *Cherish Christ Above All*, by Demetrius Dumm, OSB, Chapter 5, “Christ, In Whom We Love Others,” pp. 59–70. The facilitator is Scott Taylor.

**Lincoln Chapter:** Sunday, May 19, 2013, and Monday, May 20, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. *Note that*

*these gatherings are one week later than usual, due to Mothers’ Day.* Chapter 6 of *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derske: “Benedictine Hospitality,” pp. 74–84. Jim Rea will give a reflection. The Sunday meeting will be in the Sheridan Room at Madonna, while the Monday meeting will be in the Nemaha Room.

Cell meetings: From *Cherish Christ Above All* by Demetrius Dumm, OSB, Chapter 5, “Christ, in Whom We Are Loved,” pp. 59–70.

Since the May 19 meeting coincides with the Solemnity of Pentecost, you are invited to wear **red** to the meeting!

**Omaha Chapter:** Tuesday, May 14, 2013, 7:00–9:00 p.m. General meeting assignment is from *A Blessed Life* by Wil Derske, Chapter 7, “A Stimulating Training School for the Lord,” pp. 85–93. The facilitator is Kathy Burke and the new oblate leaders are Philip Kelley and Sr. Marlene.

Cell meeting is Tuesday, May 28, 2013, 7:00–9:00 p.m. *Cherish Christ Above All* by Demetrius Dumm, OSB, Chapter 5, pp. 59–70. The facilitator will be Anne Rapczynski. Meetings are held at New Cassel Retirement Center, lecture hall (first floor).

**Steinauer Chapter:** Monday, May 27, 2013, at the banquet room at Convent B&B across from St. Michael’s Church from 7:00–9:00 p.m. The assignment is to be announced. The reflection will be offered by Rod Dolton, Omaha Dean.

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

**Reflection****THE ROSARY: OUR ANCESTORS' DESIRE  
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LITURGY OF HOURS**

A number of years ago—probably in 2004—as Joyce and I were near the end of rearing our five children with our youngest twins just graduating from high school, I visited a local Catholic Christian book store and happened upon a little pink book titled *The History and Devotion of the Rosary* by Richard Gribble, CSC. The book immediately caught my attention, for the Rosary was actually the devotional prayer for which we assembled weekly on Sunday afternoon, more or less through the entire period of raising the children, beginning in 1976. Discovering the little book also came during the period when I was just beginning to grasp the incredible benefit and blessings afforded us as a family throughout all those years, and which I attributed to the intercession of the Mother of God, in keeping with ancient Catholic Christian thinking. I purchased the book, and as I read, a most beautiful story of the work of the Holy Spirit began to unfold.

For at least 400 years up to the beginning of the twentieth century, devout Catholic legend supported by a number of popes had it that the Rosary, essentially in today's form, was given to Saint Dominic in 1214 during an apparition of the Blessed Virgin. This beautiful legend that began by the hand of Alanus de Rupe in the mid-fifteenth century and devoutly held as fact, was not really investigated until the eighteenth through twentieth centuries. Without disputing the possibility of a mystical apparition given the Mystical Body of Christ on earth, and also given the enormous outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a result of the Rosary's recitation over the centuries, historians began to discover, however, what to me personally is a profound evolution of its development, beginning with the prayer life of the earliest Irish monasteries (all following the Rule of St. Benedict) and peasants.

Though repetitious prayer and the consequent need of the early communities to count their common prayers goes all the way back to the desert fathers, the particular type of prayer counting that evolved over the centuries into the form of today's Rosary is attributed to

the Irish, even beginning with St. Patrick himself, with his recitation of the 150 Psalms of the Lord according to Father Gribble. When the recitation of the Psalms became fixed by the monks over time, it became common to divide their recitation into groups of fifty, known as the *Na tri coicat* (three fifties).... St. Columba is credited with bringing the use of the "fifties" to the European continent.... (This) had spread to northern Italy by the ninth century (p. 18).

And this is where the work of the Holy Spirit really gets beautiful, in my opinion. Father Gribble states the motivation:

The 150 psalms of the Hebrew Scriptures have comprised since earliest of Christian times, the most important part of the canonical hours... a practice in which only the intellectually elite could participate. Since the majority of people were illiterate ... something had to be done to allow the people to participate in the prayer of the Church. Memorization ... was too difficult ... the idea of a series of popular prayers was devised ... to allow participation by all people (p. 19).

The rest is history: "Paternoster" cords knotted to count the prayers became common. "By the year 1000 the three 'fifties' of Our Fathers known as the 'Little Psalter' was in widespread use." Devotion to Mary grew and during the middle ages, the "Marian Psalter" came into common use. The Rosary in conclusion, is really the result of an upwelling of pious yearning by monks, nuns, and peasants over the centuries to participate in the Prayer of the Church. How incredible, how wonderful, how holy, holy, holy the work of God! May is the month of Mary!

—Reflection by Rod Dolton, Omaha Dean

**REFLECTIONS NEEDED**

We would like to access your wisdom in our monthly newsletter reflections! Please consider writing a reflection (or book review) of 400–500 words and submit it to be included in the newsletter next year. It need not be a seasonal subject, just something you would like to share with the other Oblates.

## Prayer Requests

### MONASTERY AND CHAPTER GATHER PETITIONS

If you would like to send your prayer requests to the monastery, the Web address for Sacred Heart Monastery's prayer requests is: [www.yanktonbenedictines.org/PrayerRequest.php](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org/PrayerRequest.php).

You can also continue to send requests to Marcia Straatmeyer at [mstraat@neb.rr.com](mailto:mstraat@neb.rr.com) or by using the Prayer Request on the chapter's Web site: [www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/](http://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/).

## Retreat: "Awaken Christ Within"

### SATURDAY RETREAT: SECOND CENTERING PRAYER RETREAT

The Centering Prayer retreat in January was such a success that many participants requested an encore! The second Centering Prayer retreat will be held on May 25, 2013, 12:30–3:30 p.m. Retreatants will meet at Serenity House in Bennet, Nebraska. The leader is Steve Liechti.

To quote Fr. Thomas Keating, Founder of Contemplative Outreach:

The coming of Christ into our conscious lives is the ripe fruit of the Christmas-Epiphany Mystery. It presupposes a presence of Christ that is already within us, waiting to be awakened .... It invites us to take possession of what is already ours.

The topic will be an introduction to Contemplative Silence. We will learn steps to creating a silence that allows us to move inward towards the Christ Presence. We will have time for discussion and a walk on the spacious grounds.

RSVP to:  
[steve.liechti@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:steve.liechti@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org).

Steve will provide you with directions to Serenity House, an easy drive from Lincoln.

## Retreat: Humility

### CHAPTER SEVEN OF THE RULE AND THOMAS MERTON

We will have a Saturday retreat on July 20, 2013, at Serenity House in Bennet, presented by Carol Barry. The theme will be on Chapter 7 of the *Rule of Benedict*: Humility. As part of our retreat, we will have the opportunity to listen to CD recordings of some of Thomas Merton's 1962 lectures to the novices of Gethsemane Monastery. Watch for more details on times and how to sign up for the retreat.

## Celebration

### NEBRASKA CHAPTER POTLUCK AND CELEBRATION OF THE LINCOLN CHAPTER'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On June 9, 2013, everyone in the Nebraska Chapter is invited to celebrate the end of another year of oblate gatherings and the twentieth anniversary of the Lincoln Chapter of Benedictine Oblates in Nebraska. We will meet at 4:30 p.m. in the Chapel at Madonna in Lincoln. We will begin the celebration with Vespers and anniversary events in the Chapel. We will then move to the Sheridan Room for our annual potluck. Paper products, drinks, and desert will be provided. Please bring a salad, vegetable, or meat dish. There will be a basket available if you would like to make a goodwill offering to offset the cost of the get-together. Sr. Phyllis will be joining us for the festivities!

### ATTENTION ALL LINCOLN CHAPTER OBLATES

Do you have a story to share with others about your experience in the Lincoln Chapter of the Benedictine Oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, South Dakota?

In honor of our twentieth anniversary celebration of the Lincoln Chapter on June 9, the Oblate Deans would like to have members share remembrances of their Oblate journeys in a display during our celebration. Please e-mail them to Jim Rea or Carol Olson (addresses below) no later than May 31, 2013.

Electronic forms are preferred, but handwritten submissions will be accepted.  
[carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org)  
[jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org)

## Message from Sister Phyllis

### NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF OBLATE DIRECTORS

We need your help! This July will be the National meeting of the Oblate Directors in Bismarck, North Dakota. We may send two oblates from our monastery. This chance does not come very often. This is a very good educational opportunity and for oblates to become acquainted with other oblates throughout North America. We have two of our oblates who would be able to go if we had some financial support for them. Would you be able to help? We have \$300 now and will need another

\$600. If you can, please make a check to *Benedictine Oblates* and send it to:

Carol Barry  
2843 South 42nd St.  
Lincoln, NE 68506.

That is a tax-deductible gift if you choose.  
THANK YOU AND MANY BLESSINGS!

### World Congress of Oblates

#### EVENT OPPORTUNITY

The Congress will again be meeting in Rome October 4–10, 2013. Its last meeting was in 2009. Each member monastery is allowed to send one oblate. We do not have the cost of registration at this time. You will need to cover this cost as well as your travel expenses. This is an exceptional opportunity for an oblate, so if you are interested, please contact Sr. Phyllis, [phyllis.hunhoff@mtmc.edu](mailto:phyllis.hunhoff@mtmc.edu), 605.668.6000. To learn more, see Oblates Carol Olson and Marti Fritzen who attended the first Congress in Rome in 2005. Also see: [www.benedictine-oblates.org](http://www.benedictine-oblates.org).

### Deans' Retreat

#### MONASTERY'S DEANS GATHER



Sr. Phyllis, Sr. Penny, Sr. Joelle  
at the Deans' Retreat.

The eight Nebraska Deans met April 12–13 at Sacred Heart Monastery for a retreat to meet, compare notes, and plan for upcoming events. We studied and discussed a beautiful book on the Liturgy of the Hours.

The Nebraska Oblates are affiliated with Sacred Heart Monastery, and all oblates are welcome to visit the Monastery and experience the prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours with the Sisters of Sacred Heart. Sisters Phyllis and Joelle invite us to visit, and we will have opportunities for weekend retreats and overnights there this coming year. Of course, anyone can visit on his or

her own; just let Sister Phyllis know ahead of time.



The Chapel at Sacred Heart Monastery,  
decorated for Easter.

### Web Site Notes

#### ARCHIVE OF CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS

Each month's newsletter is archived on our Web site at:

[www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/news/](http://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/news/).

If you dig around a bit on that page, you might notice the archive has a few gaps in it. A special thanks to Gay DeMars, Hastings Oblate, for helping us to fill in some of those gaps. We still need several newsletters:

- June and October (2008),
- January and June (2007)
- November (2006)
- January through September (2005)
- Anything from 2004 or earlier.

If you have any of these older issues, please e-mail [info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org) so we can round out the offerings in the archive.

#### LIKING THE WEB SITE ON FACEBOOK

Thanks to an alert suggestion from Sr. Phyllis, the Web site now has Facebook "like" and "send" buttons on each page. You can easily help spread the word about our chapter by using this feature.