



# 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 + February 2014

## Living with *The Rule of St. Benedict*

### PREPARING OUR HEARTS

From *The Rule* of our Holy Father Benedict: "The fourth step of humility is that in this obedience under difficult, unfavorable, or even unjust conditions, his heart quietly embraces suffering and endures it without weakening or seeking escape. For Scripture has it: *Anyone who perseveres to the end will be saved* (Matt. 10:22), and again, *Be brave of heart and rely on the Lord* (Ps. 26(27):14). Another passage shows how the faithful must endure everything, even contradiction, for the Lord's sake, saying in the person of those who suffer, *For your sake we are put to death continually; we are regarded as sheep marked for slaughter* (Rom. 8:36; Ps. 43(44):22). ... In truth, those who are patient amid hardships and unjust treatment are fulfilling the Lord's command: *When struck on one cheek, they turn the other; when deprived of their coat, they offer their cloak also; when pressed into service for one mile, they go two* (Matt. 5:39-41). With the Apostle Paul, they bear with *false brothers, endure persecution, and bless those who curse them* (2 Cor. 11:26; 1 Cor. 4:12)."

—RB 7:25-38, 42-43.

### Reflection

#### ST. PLACID AND ST. MAURUS

Placid and Maurus were two favored disciples of Saint Benedict. Stories involving Maurus and Placid are preserved in *The Dialogues*, a

metaphorical biography of Saint Benedict written by Pope Gregory the Great, himself a Benedictine.

Once while blessed Benedict was in his room, one of his monks, the boy Placid, went down to get some water. In letting the bucket fill too rapidly, he lost his balance

and was pulled into the lake, where the current quickly seized him and carried him about a stone's throw from the shore. Though inside the monastery at the time, the man of God was instantly aware of what had happened and instantly called out to Maurus: "Hurry, Brother Maurus! The boy who just went down for water has fallen into the lake, and the current is carrying him away!" What followed was remarkable indeed, and unheard of since the time of Peter the apostle! Maurus asked for the blessing and on receiving it hurried out to fulfill his abbot's command. He kept on running even over the water until he reached the place where Placid was drifting along



Stained glass window of Sts. Maurus and Placid from Sacred Heart Monastery Chapel, Yankton, South Dakota.

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
Hastings	Juliene Bryan, juliene.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Family Room, St. Michael's Church, Hastings
	Carol Barry, carol.barry@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
	Steve Blum, steve.blum@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Sheridan Room (Sunday)
Lincoln	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
Omaha	Rod Dolton, rod.dolton@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	New Cassel Retirement Ctr. Lecture Hall, Omaha
Steinauer	Marcia Borchert, marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer

helplessly. Pulling him up by the hair, Maurus rushed back to shore, still under the impression that he was on dry ground that he came to himself and looking back realized that he had been running on the surface of the water. Overcome with fear and amazement at a deed he would never have thought possible, he returned to his abbot and told him what had taken place.

The holy man would not take any personal credit for the deed but attributed it to the obedience of his disciple. Maurus on the contrary claimed that it was due entirely to his abbot's command. He could not have been responsible for the miracle himself, he said, since he had not even known he was performing it. While they were carrying on this friendly contest of humility, the question was settled by the boy who had been rescued. "When I was being drawn out of the water," he told them, "I saw the abbot's cloak over my head; he is the only one I thought was bringing me to shore."

The story's emphasis isn't about the miracle, but Maurus' humble obedience in following the will of Abbot Benedict and God. Benedict's Rule teaches that:

The first degree of humility is obedience without delay. This is the virtue of those who hold nothing dearer to them than Christ; who, because of the holy service they have professed, and the fear of hell, and the glory of life everlasting, as soon as anything has been ordered by the Superior, receive it as a divine command and cannot suffer any delay in executing it. Of these the Lord says, "As soon as he heard, he obeyed Me." And again to teachers He says, "He who hears you, hears Me ...."

But this very obedience will be acceptable to God and pleasing to all only if what is commanded is done without hesitation, delay, lukewarmness, grumbling, or objection. For the obedience given to Superiors is given to God, since He Himself has said, "He who hears you, hears Me." And the disciples should offer their obedience with good will, for "God loves a cheerful giver ..." (RB 5).

*The commentary comes from the Sacred Heart Monastery's Web site:*

[www.yanktonbenedictines.org](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org)

## Worship

### MORNING PRAYER

Oblates gather every Friday morning at 7:30 in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5401 South St., Lincoln, Nebraska, to pray Morning Prayer. Everyone is welcome.

### FEAST OF ST. WALBURGA (A.D. 710–779)

At 5:30 pm. on Tuesday, February 25, 2014, those who can attend will gather in the Ryan Memorial Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, Lincoln, for Vespers to celebrate the feast of St. Walburga. Walburga was an Abbess and the sister of Sts. Wullibald and Winibald. She was born in Devonshire, England and died in Heidenheim, Germany. Her father left her, at eleven years of age, in the care of the abbess of Wimborne when he left England to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She was educated at Wimborne, where she spent twenty-six years as a member of the community. She travelled to Germany in mid life to assist St. Boniface as a missionary. She became abbess of Heidenheim, a double monastery, upon the death of its founder, Willibald, her brother. Because of her education, she was able to write an account of his life and travels in Palestine. She is often called the first female author of both England and Germany.

The Lincoln Chapter offers Vespers monthly, marking the lives of memorable Benedictines. Here are the occasions for Vespers for the next several months:

- Mar. 21 (Fri.)—Death of Fr. Benedict
- Apr. 21 (Mon.)—Anselm (Day after Easter)
- May 15 (Thurs.)—Pachomius.

## Insight for Living

### HUMILITY WHEN FACED WITH OPPOSITION

Whoever is a true disciple, whoever is a child of God, is kind and obliging; he is a comfort to all and burdensome to none; he never asks much of anyone, but rejoices when he can do much for another. He easily finds an excuse for his neighbor, should he make a mistake; and if someone begins a dispute with him concerning temporal and spiritual matters, then he always supposes the other to be right. If he is wronged, then he always thinks, "Haven't I also done something which makes it my fault?"

... One is removed from all vainglory, from exalting oneself above others, from insisting on

being in the right. If one is spoken or written against or opposed, then one is the first among the readers and hearers to help the slanderers and prosecutors to the point by which they appear more innocent and equitable, thinks that the accusations were perhaps not without foundation. Indeed, one thinks, before another thought arises, by what means did I give occasion for that? "Dear Father, do forgive the fault that is mine in that book, in that slander, in that persecution." This is always the first thought of a heart that has received grace.

*Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf  
(1700–1760) from a lecture delivered  
in the Moravian chapel in London in 1746*

### Chapter Gatherings

#### HASTINGS CHAPTER

The general meeting will be Saturday, February 8, 2014, 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the Family Room at St. Michael's Church.

Read Chapters 11 and 12 of *Conversation with Saint Benedict: the Rule in Today's World* by Terrence G. Kardong: "The Cell Phone and the Monk" and "Table Reading," pp. 89–105.

- Facilitator: Leland Ost diek
- Companion Leader: Juliene Bryan (Novice Lesson #6)
- Prayer Leader: Jeanette Nordhues
- Reflection: Greg Burke.

Jim Hoffman made his final Oblation and received his Certificate of Oblation and Oblate pin during Morning Prayer at our January Chapter Meeting.

#### HASTINGS' ST. SCHOLASTICA CELL

Hastings Cell gathering (St. Scholastica Cell): Saturday, February 22, 9:30 a.m., in the Library at St. Michael's Church.

Read Chapter 8, "Discipline," pp. 111–119, from *Cherish Christ Above All* by Demetrius Dumm, OSB.

- Facilitator: Robin Stroot.

#### HASTINGS' BROTHER LAWRENCE CELL

Grand Island Cell gathering (Brother Lawrence Cell): Monday, February 24, 2014, 4:30–5:30 p.m., First Christian Church 2400 W. 14th St., Grand Island. The assignment is the same as for the St. Scholastica Cell.

- Facilitator: Gerry Kuhn.

#### LINCOLN CHAPTER

General gatherings will be held on Sunday, February 9, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. and Monday, February 10, 2014, at the same time. Read Chapter 5 (pp. 40–47), "The Idolatry of Security," and Chapter 8 (pp. 64–71), "Food and Drink," from *Conversation with St. Benedict: the Rule in Today's World*, by Terrence G. Kardong.

The reflection will focus on St. Scholastica, the sister of St. Benedict. Her feast day is February 10.

The Sunday gathering is held in the Sheridan Room at Madonna, while the Monday gathering is held in the Nemaha Room.

Cell gatherings: Read Chapter 8, "Discipline," pp. 111–119, from *Cherish Christ Above All*, by Demetrius Dumm, OSB.

#### OMAHA CHAPTER

*General Meeting:* The general gathering will be Tuesday, February 10, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. at the New Cassel Retirement Center. The reading will cover Chapters Chapter 5 (pp. 40–47), "The Idolatry of Security," and Chapter 8 (pp. 64–71), "Food and Drink," from *Conversation with St. Benedict: the Rule in Today's World*, by Terrence G. Kardong.

The gathering will begin with a reflection from the "Initial Formation" tab of the *Oblate Handbook*.

The cell gathering will be held on Tuesday, February 24, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. at the New Cassel Retirement Center. The cell gathering's reading comes from Chapter 8, "Discipline," from *Cherish Christ Above All* by Demetrius Dumm, OSB, pp. 111–119.

#### STEINAUER CHAPTER

The general gathering will be held on Monday, February 24, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the Banquet Room across from St. Anthony's Church.

Read Chapters 7 and 8 of *Conversation with Saint Benedict: the Rule in Today's World* by Terrence G. Kardong—"Economics without Anxiety" and "Food and Drink," pp. 57–71.

### Nebraska Cell Groups

#### INTRODUCTION

Cell group readings for 2013–2014 come from *Cherish Christ Above All: The Bible in the Rule of Benedict*, Demetrius Dumm, OSB, Latrobe, Penn.: Saint Vincent Archabbey Publications, 2002.

The Nebraska Chapter has a variety of cell groups:

#### HASTINGS

##### Saint Scholastica Cell

- Leader: various individuals
- Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the library of St. Michael's Church, Hastings.

##### Brother Lawrence Cell

- Leader: various individuals
- Meets the fourth Monday of the month, 4:30–5:30 p.m. at First Christian Church, 2400 West 14th St., Grand Island, Nebraska.

#### LINCOLN

##### Pax Christi Cell

- Leader: Lorene Ludy
- Meetings: The fourth Monday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Mary Lu Long's house, 1615 Brent Blvd., Lincoln.

##### Beginners' Cell

- Leader: Marti Fritzen
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 7:00 p.m. in the Lancaster Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. The Rule of Benedict (RB 73:8) says that the rule is for beginners; we are all beginners and all are welcome to this cell.

##### Subiaco Cell

- Leader: Tim Fisher
- Meetings: Every other Saturday beginning at 8:00 a.m. with Morning Prayer in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Then this cell for men moves to a designated room for conversation. This month's meetings are February 8 and 22.

##### Preferring Christ Cell

- Leaders: Paul Blotkamp and Charlotte Liggett
- Meetings: The fourth Sunday of every month at Madonna. The assignments are from *Preferring Christ* by Norvene Vest.

#### OMAHA

##### Omaha Cell

- Leaders: Various individuals

- Meetings: Monthly on the second Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at New Castle Retirement Center.

#### General Announcements

##### SNOW POLICY

It seems timely to restate our snow policy.

1. Should we have three to four inches of snow, we will cancel the meeting without notice. The meeting will not be rescheduled. The next month's meeting will occur as scheduled with that month's assignment.
2. Should we have a snowstorm that seems hard to judge, an e-mail will be sent. For those without e-mail, please call someone with e-mail. In all cases, use your best judgment: Be Safe!

##### CHANGE OF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

When you update your e-mail address, please send a message to:

[info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org).

This will assure that you continue to receive notices about the release of newsletters and other important chapter messages.

##### 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 may also send petitions to Marcia Straatmeyer at [mstraat@neb.rr.com](mailto:mstraat@neb.rr.com) or by using the Prayer Request option on the chapter's Web site:

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

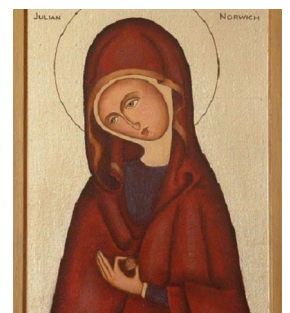
#### Retreats

##### OBlates' RETREAT AT SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Sister Joelle Bauer has announced that Sacred Heart Monastery will hold an oblates' retreat **May 16–18, 2014**. Mark your calendars now and watch for more details coming soon.

##### REFLECTIONS WITH JULIAN OF NORWICH—A LENTEN RETREAT

Sacred Heart Monastery is offering a retreat on Saturday, **March 29, 2014**, at 9:30 a.m. The retreat will



Julian of Norwich



invite us to enter the Lenten journey more deeply through presentations, silent time for prayer and reflection, and shared reflection on the images and insights from Julian of Norwich's *Showings*. A link to the registration brochure and Web site will be added soon to the SHM Facebook page.

#### **OBLATE INSTITUTE**

The Sophia Center of the Benedictine Sisters of Mount. St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kansas, has some retreat offerings that may be of interest to oblates. On **July 17-20, 2014**, they will hold their seventh annual Oblate Institute. Speaker Kathleen Norris's theme will be "Discovering the Desert: St. Benedict's Sources." You can check their 2014 retreat offerings on the Web:

[www.mountosb.org/ministries/scheduled-retreat-opportunities](http://www.mountosb.org/ministries/scheduled-retreat-opportunities).

#### **SPIRITUAL PAUSE RETREAT**

On Saturday, **February 22, 2014**, Lincoln Dean Carol Barry will offer a Spiritual Pause retreat on the 1962 lectures of Thomas Merton. This is a continuation of Thomas Merton's 1962 lectures on humility to novices of Gethsemane Monastery. We will listen to lectures on "Augustinian Humility," "Interpreting and Living the Rule," and "Disrespect of Others, Real or Imagined."

The retreat time is 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and will be held at Serenity Acres in Bennet. Serenity Acres is south off of Highway 2. Take the Bennet exit and then take the third right (Cottonwood Street) to 15101 Bennet Rd. on the left.

I am unable to access my NBO account;  
RSVP: [majorcarolb@yahoo.com](mailto:majorcarolb@yahoo.com).

#### **RETREAT ON CHAPTER 4 OF BENEDICT'S RULE**

The St. Benedict Center of Christ the King Priory in Schuyler, Nebraska, is offering a retreat **September 5-6, 2014**. The retreat begins on Friday at 7:30 p.m. and ends on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. The retreat is entitled "Tools of the Spiritual Craft," and will be presented by Fr. Michael Casey, OCSO, Ph.D. From the program description:

At the end of the Prologue of his Rule, Saint Benedict speaks about making progress in faith and good living. What he probably means is advancing in faith through good living. In his much-neglected fourth chapter *On the Implements of Good Works*, he lists seventy-four means by which we can

upgrade the quality of our life and our faith. In these days together, we will discuss some aspects of Benedict's program of practical good living in the light of contemporary experience.

Check the Web site for registration and costs. St. Benedict's Center has several retreats offered each month that you might you want to check out. On the Web: [www.stbenedictcenter.com](http://www.stbenedictcenter.com).

#### **Sacred Heart Monastery**

##### **FROM THE JANUARY OBLATES' NEWSLETTER**

Sister Joelle Bauer, Oblate Director, writes: When the Regional Oblate Directors and Oblates met at the National Oblate Directors meeting last summer, a topic discussed was the possibility of an Oblate Day for this region. The Benedictine Sisters in Norfolk volunteered to host a day for Oblates sometime in the summer of 2014. This day is in the process of being planned, probably in August. This will be a day for any Oblate from this region to attend. It will be an opportunity to meet other Oblates, listen to talks by Oblates, and have informal discussion.

More information on the date will be available later. Nebraska Oblates may be interested in this Oblate gathering.

#### **THEOLOGY INSTITUTE**

The next Theology Institute is **March 15, 2014**, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The speaker is Leslie J. Hoppe, OFM, an Old Testament scholar who teaches at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. His topic is religious fundamentalism in general and in various religions and countries, including the U.S. Since he has been leading study groups all over the Mideast for close to three decades, he has considerable insight about the dynamics, causes, and effects of religious fundamentalism, and often stresses that one can never categorize any individual or entire religion or ethnic group by a small minority of fundamentalists. This Institute is open to the public at no cost. For registration for planning purposes, please contact Sr. Marielle: [mfrigge@mtmc.edu](mailto:mfrigge@mtmc.edu) or 605.668.6000.

Check the SHM Web site for more information on events at the monastery:  
[www.yanktonbenedictines.org](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org).