



# Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

June 2003

(There will be no newsletter for the months of July and August.)

## CELEBRATE PENTECOST SUNDAY AND POTLUCK GATHERING FOR ALL OBLATE CHAPTERS, Sunday June 8 at 6 p.m.

*"When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together."* (Acts 2:1) *"As community, we are the meeting place of human and divine because we are the Body of Christ in the world."* (Handbook: Living in Community) Bring your family, your favorite dish and your office books and enjoy the evening in the North Commons of Madonna, 5541 Glade St., Lincoln, NE. Coffee, Tea, water and paper products will be provided.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- **STEINAUER CHAPTER:** Banquet Hall, across from St. Anthony's Church, Monday, June 2, 2003, 7-9 p.m. Preferring Christ, Chapters 36, 37, 38 & 39.
- **HASTINGS CHAPTER:** St. Michael's Church, Family Room or as designated, Saturday, June 14, 2003, 9:30 a.m., Lectio: Contemplative Availability and Personal Rule of Life.
- **OMAHA CHAPTER:** All Saints Episcopal Church, 9302 Blondo, Omaha, NE 68134, Tuesday, May 27, 2003, 7:30 p.m.: Formation Handbook: Read Guidelines, Guiding Philosophy & Initial Formation, Lessons on Holiness and St. Benedict and the Preface of the Rule.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- **Thursday, June 19, 2003:** Book Club Organizational Meeting. For the summer we will be forming an oblate "book club." We'll read books about Benedictine spirituality. The first book will be *Benedict in the World: Portraits of Monastic Oblates* by Linda Kulzer (Editor), Roberta Bondi (Editor). If you are interested in joining this group, an organizational meeting will be held June at the home of Teresa Harms. Her address is 3401 Nemaha Circle in Lincoln. We will discuss meeting frequency, location, reading pace, how groups will be facilitated, etc. If you are interested but unable to attend the meeting, please call Teresa and she will make sure you receive any materials that are developed (402-488-3807) or email: [thandalbo@yahoo.com](mailto:thandalbo@yahoo.com).
- **Saturday, July 12, 4-7 p.m.:** Oblate Service Project. We will form a one-time team to prepare and serve a meal at Matt Talbot Kitchen. Generally around 100 meals are served each evening to Lincoln's working poor and homeless. If you are interested in participating in the project please contact Marcia Straatmeyer. She can be reached at 402-466-2432 (home) or 402-466-1957 (work) or email: [mstraat@neb.rr.com](mailto:mstraat@neb.rr.com)
- **Friday, July 11, 2003:** SOLEMNITY OF THE FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT. Morning and Evening Prayer 7:30

a.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the Madonna Chapel using our office books.

- **Saturday, July 19, 2003** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m, ONE DAY RETREAT, "Honoring My Gifts – The People, Places & Poetry In My Life" in the North Commons/Sheridan Rooms at Madonna. NOTE: Bring a journal, your memories, and a favorite poem.
- **Saturday, August 16, 2003**, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., PRESENTATION ON SPIRITUAL DIRECTION in the Madonna Flanagan Room by Nancy Koley of the Knowles Mercy Center in Omaha.

## SIGN UPS:

- Call/email Sister Phyllis (402-488-6731 or [phunhoff@ix.netcom.com](mailto:phunhoff@ix.netcom.com)) if you need the book, *Seeking God* by Esther de Waal. This is the text that will be used for our Lincoln Cell Groups this fall. The cost is about \$8.
- Call/email Sister Phyllis (402-488-6731 or [phunhoff@ix.netcom.com](mailto:phunhoff@ix.netcom.com)) if you would like to have me order this small paperback, *Praying the Psalms* by Thomas Merton (\$4). Some of you have expressed interest in learning more about the importance of the psalms.
- If you would like to go on a Celtic Pilgrimage/Sacred Journey to Scotland and England with Esther de Waal, September 9 – 20, 2003, call 913-367-3866 or go to website <http://www.celticpilgrimage.org>.

**THE LABYRINTH:** Located at the Crestwood Christian Church, 8000 A Street, Lincoln and built from 700 inlaid bricks in a wooded setting, this "Community Labyrinth" is open to everyone. Labyrinth walking is an ancient prayer, meditation and spiritual reflection tool that is thousands of years old and spans the world's religions. For further information contact Rev. Duncan Miller at 488-5372 or [duncanmil@cs.com](mailto:duncanmil@cs.com).

## THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT AND MANAGEMENT:

Within the last year I (Sister Phyllis) have found three books on the Rule and management. Here are the titles if you are interested.

*The Rule of Benedict for Beginners*, Spirituality for Daily Life by Will Derkse, touches on Benedictine Leadership, stimulating people toward growth.

*St. Benedict's Rule for Business Success* by Quentin R. Skrabec, says the Rule's succinct brilliance offers entrepreneurs and managers timeless, culturally correct insights into organizations and employees.

*Doing Business with Benedict*, by Dollard, Crosby and Wright says business can best flourish by being formed as communities based on respect, trust and support. Clear and imaginative leadership is key today.



## OBLATE NOTES:

- Welcome to Father Emil Belsky and members of the All Saints Episcopal Church in Omaha as they begin their Oblate formation.
- Anne Johnson, Oblate: Arrived safely in Baltimore and have taken a dry run to Columbia – Loyola. I have an interview next Tuesday. The trees are glorious - in full bloom but hot and humid. My best to all the Oblates! You are eternally in my prayers. Christ be with you always.
- Congratulations to Dr. Brigid Amos, Oblate, who received her doctorate from UNL. Brigid will be doing post-doctoral studies at UNL.
- Congratulations to Dr. Catherine Nguyen, Oblate, who has received her medical degree. She will be doing her residency in Minneapolis.
- Marcia Borchers, Oblate, Steinauer Chapter, appeared in a large picture in the Journal Star, front page of the Hometown Section, Sunday, March 11, 2003. She along with others has assisted in a major renovation of the Harold Lloyd home in Burchard, NE. Lloyd is a Hollywood giant and the genius of silent film.
- Please keep Wilma White, Oblate, in your prayers who is recovering from surgery. She is at Madonna.
- Please continue to pray for Roxy Root, Novice Oblate, Ashland Chapter who remains critically ill at Mayo's in Rochester.

**A TRANSFORMATIVE TOOL:** *The Benedictine way of life is alive, well and precisely relevant to shaping holy lives. That was the subtext underlying this year's annual conference of the Trinity Institute in New York, April 28-29. Addressing the conference theme, "Shaping Holy Lives," were the Most Rev. Rowan Williams, the new archbishop of Canterbury; Joan Chittister, the outspoken author and former Benedictine Prioress; Laurence Freeman of the Monastery of Christ the King, Cockfosters, London; and Kathleen Norris, poet and Benedictine Oblate. What follows is an excerpt by Laurence Freeman.*

Freeman suggested that the sense of measure and order that Benedict espoused was actually a transformative tool. If someone could be convinced to look at life with measure and order, and to do so over time, a transformation of perception could be achieved.

Trying to determine why the Rule of St. Benedict remains so influential, he examined its basic principles, such as "moderation, measure, good order, respect for those who are different from ourselves, compassion for the old, the young and the sick, generosity for the stranger who turns up after the guest-master has gone to bed, a balanced lifestyle, good time management, vertical and horizontal forms of authority, listening to every one, social equality, and justice."

He argued that the Rule was pertinent today, even when what it means to be holy has changed. "Time was when everyone agreed that the right aspiration of life was holiness, but what does holiness mean today, when holiness is often a neglected value in Christian Circles? It lives on, maybe in diminished forms.

"In the aspirations of some New Age spiritualities, we speak of wholeness," Freeman said. "None of us would mind being called whole persons. Wholeness is that which

has been fixed; what has been repaired, healed, made whole again.

The "eternal principles" of the Rule were easily translated into other ways of life, Freeman observed. He spoke of two oblates, from different countries and stages in life, whom he had received into the Benedictine order.

"One of them was a 24-year-old Italian engineering student. The other was an 84-year-old French-Canadian retired business man. When I asked them on different occasions what made them want to take this step, they gave surprisingly similar answers: simplicity of life, spiritual friendship, the need for a framework of values in their life, and the sense of being part of a community that is itself an expression of a living tradition."

(Submitted by Marti Fritzen, Oblate, Lincoln Chapter)

## PENTECOST

(P. de la Tour du Pin)

Love that hovered over the waters  
And rocked them with the first wind,  
Our souls sleep.

Seize them with a new rhythm  
That flows from Christ their source  
To overflow among men.

You are the voice that groans  
Amid the sorrows of our world,  
The name of the Father;  
But you are also  
The voice that brings his response:  
The love of God covers the earth.

You are the genesis of all ages,  
You are the wind that cries birth  
To the hidden soul;  
You engender us from within,  
You make the silence reverberate  
In the depth of every being.

Love descending today,  
Come stir up the secret waters  
Of our baptism,  
Which from the death of Jesus Christ  
Makes us rise up in his life:  
All is love in Love itself.  
(Fiche de chant K 72)

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Sister Phyllis Hunhoff, OSB, Associate Director  
Affiliated with the Benedictine Sisters of Sacred Heart  
Monastery, Yankton South Dakota  
5441 Glade Street  
Lincoln, NE 68506  
402-488-6731 (home) or 402-483-9524 (work)  
email: [Phunhoff@ix.netcom.com](mailto:Phunhoff@ix.netcom.com)  
[http://www.geocities.com/lincoln\\_oblates](http://www.geocities.com/lincoln_oblates)

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