



Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery

November 2010

A HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL

There will be no General Assembly Chapter meetings in November except Steinauer Chapter; however the Cells will be meeting.

STEINAUER CHAPTER: Banquet Room, across from St. Anthony's Church:
Monday, November 29, 2011, Psalm 50: 1-23 God Scolds the People. Covenant references; significant words. Psalm 84:1-12 Prayer of a Pilgrim. Happy, celebratory, great love of Temple - why? Reflection-facilitator: Alan; Lead Prayer: Marjorie; Companion: Marcia

OBLATION CEREMONY: Let us join those who have heard God's call to share in the Benedictine Way of Life – making their Initial Oblation. And let us Congratulate those who are making their Final Oblation – a witness to a major commitment in their lives

Sunday, November: 14, 2010: 2 p.m. in the Madonna Chapel with Vespers, First Oblation for new members, Final Oblation for Novice Oblates and Renewal of Oblation. Reception will follow in North Commons; Family & Friends are invited to attend. The Liturgical Calendar will be on the table outside the chapel for you.

QUESTION #2 of our October Faith Sharing was "How would you write a few words on the subject of Benedictine Spirituality as others have done in Chapter 4 of our text?" Oblate Pat Shafer challenged the group and took time for those present to do just that. Pat's response, "I believe that everyone will find something that rings true to their experience among the responses. What a wonderful group of people with whom to share our journey!"

1. I have always been drawn to faith groups and I believe strongly in the power of prayer. While visiting a church in Lincoln, I read in the bulletin about an information session on Benedictine oblates. My novice year was the beginning of a deeper spiritual journey. It has given my prayer life more structure and depth. I had heard God calling my name but I didn't know where He was calling me. I have an idea that it was Spiritual Direction as I am

now within a program to become a Spiritual Director. I am learning how to listen more closely, follow and allow the love of the Lord to pour out of my words and actions. I still struggle with my thoughts. Everything I do I try to do for His glory. *Bobbie Edwardson*

2. The knowledge in print forms those words and works that are the essence of an oblate. We do this by living example of sharing and following the Rule. It will be a journey of spirituality and caring. I first started the journey in 1997 or 1998 but due to an injury I could not attend further meetings. A void developed. Returning now, with the new material, things appear clearer. I have just started reading the books and am looking forward to further chapters and discussions. *Inquirer Ruth White*

3. After reading the book, *Dakota* by Kathleen Norris, both my husband and I became curious about the oblates and came to an introductory session. We have remained for several years now (2002). I cannot say that I have been faithful about following the Rule but find the fellowship and teaching, sharing and study - keeps drawing us back to the meetings. I would like very much to attend a retreat but our current situation does not allow it. I think being an oblate is one of the forces that help me in dealing with difficulties. Thank you Lord! *Kathy Robson*

4. I seek to worship God in many ways – through prayer, contemplation, lectio, bible study and quiet. Being an oblate encourages me to be quiet, to reflect, to have discipline of reading certain scripture and then think about them. I seek community in discussions. It stretches me at times, makes me think in different ways as I read different books and discuss them. It is another way to do bible study. *Susan Kehrl Moore*

5. I feel truly blessed to be an oblate. It helps me with my daily life as I start each day with the Divine Office. Hopefully, I will become a better person by living each day by the Rule of St. Benedict to the best of my ability. *Shirley Wenzel*

6. I sometimes wonder why I am still an oblate because I generally think that I am not very good at it. I want to pray the office every day but have trouble actually doing it. When meetings approach I often find myself feeling

put upon – (I say to myself) I'd rather stay home and watch TV. Besides I have so much to do to be ready for Monday and another week of work. But then I go to the meeting and listen to my fellow oblates talk about their faith, say Vespers together and feel the peace that praying the liturgy always brings. Then I remember why I am still an Oblate, even if I'm not very good at it. Maybe, I think, I'll get better. *Colleen Baade*

7. Being an oblate has informed my understanding of my faith and how to practice the Christian life in the world. The key to this understanding has been learning that I cannot just "do church" and be a Christian. I must make Christ the center of my life. Unfortunately, that is not an easy path. Being an oblate has given me guideposts to the path and companions for the journey. I am very grateful for the willingness of the Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery to sponsor an oblate program. *Pat Shafer*

FACEBOOK: We are looking for you on Facebook responding to our discussions. Also, pictures will be coming. Bring your digital cameras to the Chapter meetings and to the Cell meetings. If you are not familiar with all the names, feel free to send them to me prior to sending them to Jim Rea.

NEW BOOKS: You may want to take special note of the available books as we have acquired a number of new books and a number that are again available – just sign your name along with the date.

OBLATE NOTES:

- Hi everyone! We are settling in Malaysia! After sleeping about 12 hours the first night we felt much better Monday. We heard that the relative humidity is about 84%. The realtor took us to see a number of places and we've settled on a place that we think will work nicely for us. So our new address is: Blok A-12B-05, Casa Tiara Service Apartment, Persiaran Kemajuan, 47500 Subang Jaya, Selangor D. E. Malaysia. Jim's visa is still in process so we can't open a bank account yet, so are scrambling a bit to come up with the deposits (the equivalent of 3 ½ months rent). There is still lots of craziness to go through. We've experienced torrential rains the last two afternoon/evening. Amazing! We're working on getting cell phones. It will be a couple of weeks before the Internet is set up in our apartment, so we may be schlepping our computers to Starbucks to send email. Best wishes. Jim and Deb.
- Ireland was wonderful – all of it! Yes, Maureen O'Connor Worden may be a bit biased but my German friend agreed. New address: 3618 Parkwood Place, Lacrosse, Wisconsin 54601.

THANKSGIVING – A FORGOTTEN

SPIRITUAL HOLIDAY: Somewhere between Halloween and Christmas is a Thursday holiday that is slowly becoming more miniscule in the minds of millions of Americans – Thanksgiving. We've forgotten the reason for celebrating that first Thanksgiving: gratitude for survival! Pilgrims hosted the first feast to celebrate life with their Indian friends and give thanks to God for His provision in difficult circumstances. November is an especially good time to make gratitude a spiritual discipline. Maybe we could encourage ourselves and others toward gratitude this year. Just as many enlist the help of an advent wreath to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth in December; we could also focus on thanks-giving this November. Here are a few thoughts to enrich this holiday:

- Go on a quiet, meditative walk through your house/yard. Stop and say prayers of thanks for all the good experiences you have had in each area.
- Create a living prayer of thanksgiving by providing a service to a neighbor, doing a chore, or running an errand.
- Seeing Christ in another, say "thank you" to someone today who least expects it from you.
- During a moment of silence today, reflect on the blessings you receive from the community where you live.
- On Thanksgiving day, compose a special grace before your meal. Give thanks for the food, the fellowship of the company around the table, and the presence of the Spirit among you. Select an evening time to say Vespers with those around you (A Thanksgiving Vespers is available from Sister Phyllis).

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