



# Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

*Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery*

May 2006

## ASSIGNMENTS

### LINCOLN CHAPTER

Sun., May 21, 2006 7-9 p.m. North Commons

Mon., May 22, 2006, 7-9 p.m. Flanagan Room

NOTE: DATE IS WEEK LATER BECAUSE OF MOTHER'S DAY

Study: World Congress Presentation Pilgrims in Dialogue by Sr. Iona Misquitta, OSB, India. If you do not have a copy, please let Sister Phyllis know.

### HASTINGS CHAPTER, St. Michael's Church, Family Room

Sat., May 20, 2006, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Finish: Preferring Christ, Chap 67-73 & An Afterword, pp. 164-175

New members: Formation Handbook (6th meeting assignment- have Rule of Life prepared)

### STEINAUER CHAPTER, Banquet Hall, across from St. Anthony's Church

Monday, May 8, 2006, 7-9 p.m. Text: Path of Life, Ch. 122, Making Life a Unity.

### OMAHA CHAPTER: All Saints Episcopal Church, 9302 Blondo

Tuesday, May 9, 2006, 7-9 p.m.

Finish: Preferring Christ, Chapters 66-72, pgs. 161-172

New members: Formation Handbook assignment

**POTLUCK:** Plan for our Sunday, June 11 Pot Luck Gathering at Madonna (Sheridan Rooms) at 5:30 p.m.. We will celebrate community!

**CELL STUDY 2006-2007:** At our May meeting you will be receiving packets for your Cell Study groups beginning this fall. Please be prepared to pick up your copy. It will contain four presentations from the World Congress along with the opening address from the Abbot Primate and an agenda dividing the presentations. Because of a generous donor, there will be no cost for these packets.

**CHAPTER TRIDUUM STUDY 2006** It was Easter Sunday morning, 1944 (or thereabouts) and my mother, two sisters and I had on our Easter hats. Setting in the other room were the Easter baskets with the colored eggs and candy. It was another joyous, memorable day. Little did I truly understand the significance of those last few days!

Today I look back on these last few days and the beauty of the Triduum experienced at our Monastery. What a privilege for me to share in the outstanding liturgy, the silence and the celebrations of our monastic community. You too have now experienced the Triduum in your respective churches. As I read through the Oblate responses to our Triduum study at the last Chapter meetings, it is so amazing to me to find the unity among our Oblate Christian churches. Almost all of you have the specific services on each day of the Triduum. A few Oblates would be going to other churches to find some they would be missing. Another significant response was that almost universally the Oblates would be attending all of the services available to them.

So now we have walked in Jesus' path, sharing our own and others sufferings and have finally brought forth the Alleluia in all its varied melodies. To note: On Holy Saturday afternoon at 4 p.m., a vital Sister Laurina breathed her last in our monastery care center – her own resurrection after a severe stroke just one week ago.

Our Triduum study also revealed: as with many of you, we color eggs, have hot cross buns on Good Friday, an agape meal, thorned branches on our tables which turn to flowers, a Saturday night vigil and an early Easter sunrise service. Beyond that, most notable traditions are the family dinners and Easter egg hunts. New clothes, Easter hats, Easter baskets/candy, sending Easter cards and blessing the Easter foods (breads, baskets, etc.) on Easter Sunday are found in your homes and churches. Yes, we had the lamb cakes at the monastery. They will be on display for a bit of time – some say until they get dry enough to eat (Ha!).

Terrance Kardong, OSB. says, "Benedict is convinced that the Easter feast is the central core of Christian life."

Let us continue to celebrate Jesus' resurrection as we progress through this Easter season. Sister Phyllis

**THE EASTER SEASON:** (begins on Easter Sunday and ends with Evening Prayer on Pentecost Sunday, 6-4-06): If we think of the universe as a seed, then the risen life of Jesus is the plant that sprouts from the heart of that seed. Christ's mysterious life has been present from the beginning of the world. It is a life that overcomes all limits; death, illness, and prisons can have no power over it. On Easter Sunday, when Jesus rose from the dead, his powerful risen life burst from its seed casing, and the world, once closed, limited, and dead, began to sprout and bloom with his miraculous new life. In these Fifty Days leading up to Pentecost, we meditate on all the accounts of people who met the risen Jesus. With Mary Magdalene, we can recognize the voice of the risen Jesus when he calls our name. With Saint Thomas the Apostle, we can lift our eyes to the risen Jesus and pray, "My Lord and my God." And when the risen Jesus asks if we love him, we can answer with Saint Peter, "Yes, Lord, you know we love you." As we await the celebration of Pentecost, we can open our eyes and our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit, who brings Christ's life to the whole Church and helps us to breathe with the risen life of Jesus every time we offer ourselves to him. (The Year of Grace 2006 LTP)

### **CENTERING PRAYER INTRODUCTORY RETREAT**

(Submitted by Oblate Jim Potter):  
Saturday, June 10, 2006, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Doors open at 8 a.m.)

A few months ago a story in Newsweek was entitled "Spirituality in America." The special report began with a brief note about the teaching of Centering Prayer as developed by Fathers Thomas Keating and William Meninger in the 1970's. This way of praying has since attracted tens of thousands of people because, as Keating sums up, there are "hungry people looking for a deeper relationship with God."

Centering Prayer is a way to open our hearts and minds in silence to God's presence and loving action. It helps us to be more consciously aware of the Divine Mystery around and within us in all of life. That awareness has a profound effect on how we feel about ourselves and how we relate to others.

Donald Bredthauer will lead the retreat at Saint Paul. Don is a retired United Methodist pastor and a Certified Spiritual Director in Omaha. He regularly leads retreats and classes on the practice of Centering Prayer for which he has been a facilitator since 1995. The fee is \$24 and

includes the book *Open Mind Open Heart* by Fr. Thomas Keating. If you already have the book, the fee is \$10. Please contact Sherry Melecki (477-6951 or [smelecki@saintpaulumc.org](mailto:smelecki@saintpaulumc.org)) to register.

**BOOK REVIEW** (Submitted by Oblate Marcia Straatmeyer): Author Laura Swan, OSB, states that her intent in the book *Engaging Benedict: What the Rule Can Teach Us Today* is "to engage readers in their own reflective process." Rather than commenting on the entire Rule, she chooses sections that are likely to puzzle or anger those of us living in the current culture. She considers, among other topics, obedience and humility, and her thoughts on fasting in the section on Lenten Considerations are particularly challenging.

Laura Swan mentions that she began her Benedictine journey as an oblate; she now serves as prioress of Saint Placid Priory, Lacey Washington. Each section of the book concludes with questions that show Swan's engagement with the Rule and ask the reader to delve more deeply into how to live out Benedict's proposed way to Christ in her/his own life. The book also contains a basic and quite useful glossary and a bibliography of books that have influenced Swan's thinking

### **OBLATE NOTES:**

- Many of us were able to attend either the Visitation time or the services for Oblate Martha Hunzeker at the Grace Lutheran Church. Father Rutten said at a memorial Mass for her, "We are still Oblates in heaven." She loved having us in her presence even to her last days. We come together as Oblates and that is so special. May she rest in peace and enjoy her own resurrection.



Sister Phyllis Hunhoff, OSB,  
Associate Director ♦  
Associated 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) ♦  
website:  
[http://www.geocities.com/lincoln\\_oblates](http://www.geocities.com/lincoln_oblates)