



Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery

September 2006

ASSIGNMENTS

Lincoln Chapter:

Sunday, September 10, 2006 and Monday, September 11, 2006:

Sunday Chapter meetings: North Commons 7-9 p.m.,
Monday Chapter meetings: Flanagan Room 7-9 p.m.,
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5441 Glade St.
Since you will only be getting your new text at this meeting, you will have an article to study entitled, "An Understanding of Discernment" by Johnette Putnam, OSB. This will come via email for you and a hard copy will be sent to those without email. Our new text, *Strangers to the City* by Michael Casey (\$13) is not an easy book to read. It helps to read it slowly with Lectio. It contains quotes from the Holy Rule and Scripture which are being added to the assignments.

Steinauer Chapter: Banquet Room, across from St. Anthony's Church

Tuesday, August 28, 2006, 7-9 p.m. (NOTE ONE WEEK EARLIER)

Since Sept. 4 is Labor Day, we will move the first meeting to ONE WEEK EARLIER. This will also be our orientation time. We are expecting two new members. You will also receive your new text, *Strangers to the City* (\$13) by Michael Casey. Our new text is not an easy book to read. It helps to read it slowly with Lectio. It has quotes from the Holy Rule and Scripture which are being added to the assignments.

Hastings Chapter: St. Michael's Church, Family Room, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Saturday September 9, 2006: This will also be our orientation for new members. You will receive your new text: *Path of Life*, Cyprian Smith.

Omaha Chapter: All Saints Episcopal Church, 9302 Blondo, Omaha NE 68134, Rite 13, Classroom.
Tuesday, August 29 2006, 7-9 p.m.: Orientation for new member/s. Oblates and Oblate Novices welcome but not required. Tuesday, September 12, 2006, General Assembly: Since you will only be getting your new text at this meeting, you will have an article to study entitled "An Understanding of Discernment" by Johnette Putnam, OSB. This will come on-line and a hard copy will be sent to those without email.

FOR ALL OBLATES: This year let us take special effort to practice Lectio Divina as we prepare/study for our assignments, whether it is for our General Assembly meetings, Cells or in the Companion groups. It should be time spent alone, quietly pondering what this lesson means to me and what God is asking of me – doing it at various times during each week. It is the power of the Spirit working in us – Christ within us, opening our hearts, changing our lives. Take a few notes/do some journaling so you can remember your "God experience" for faith sharing at the gatherings. Faith sharing is the realization of our lectio. We use Lectio for scripture and for spiritual classics/articles.

FOR ALL CELLS: This year we will be studying four presentations from the World Congress. You should each have the folder packets containing the opening address from the Abbot Primate, an agenda dividing the presentations and the presentations. They will be available at all of the General Assembly meetings in September.

OBLATE NOTE:

- Oblate Lou Ann Green sends this web page for Sr. Margaret Funk
http://www.humilitymatters.com/school_lectio.html
- Oblate Dixie Tripe, along with students and faculty of St. Cecilia High School in Hastings made a pilgrimage to France in late May. A nice article in the Southern Nebraska Register says it included visits to historical and religious sites in Paris, Lisieux, Omaha Beach, Mont St. Michel, Avignon and Lourdes.
- Oblate Colleen Baade was awarded a travel grant from the American Musicological Society to continue her research on nuns' musical activity in 17th and 18th-century Spain. She spent two weeks in May working in an archive in the city of Toledo. She also took advantage of the opportunity to renew ties with friends belonging to Madrid's Community of St. Egidio, a Church lay association dedicated to daily prayer, communicating the Gospel, solidarity with the poor, ecumenism and dialogue as a way of peace (see www.santegidio.org).

- Oblate Philip Ross received a Fulbright Scholarship to teach English in Costa Rica for 2 months sometime this year.

MONASTIC NEW OMNIBUS: Paraclete Press, an ecumenical community has created www.oblatebooks.com and www.chantresources.com.

LINCOLN OBLATE CELL GROUPS: Oblates who have not been in a CELL group will want to decide which CELL will be best for you. (Oblate Novices/new members will be in the Companion Groups.) Also if you have been in a CELL and for some reason wish to/need to change, then also decide on a CELL. Please review the following and let Sister Phyllis or the CELL leaders know of your wishes.

- **SAINTS PLACID AND MAURUS CELL:** Pat Shafer
Meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the home of Roger & Carolee Brink, 3045 Calvert, at 7:30 p.m.
- **GRATIA DEI (GOD'S GRACE-RB PROL:31) CELL:** Brigid Amos
Meets the Saturday morning after the monthly meeting at 9 a.m. in the Lancaster Room at Madonna Rehab Hospital.
- **PAX CHRISTI CELL:** Carol Olson
Meets the first Monday at 7 p.m. at Madonna in the York Room
- **BEGINNER'S CELL (RB 73:8) CELL:** Marcia Straatmeyer
Meets the 4th Sunday of the month at 7 p.m. at Madonna in the Lancaster Room.

UNL VESPERS: We will begin Vespers again at UNL on September 5 at 5 p.m. in the Newman Center Chapel. We welcome back all those who have been saying Vespers and if anyone would like to join us, just let Sister Phyllis know.

DISCIPLES AND CATHOLICS DISCUSS UNITY IN ROME MEETING (from Rev. Duncan Miller, Oblate): Disciples and Catholics continued to break down barriers between the two churches during a recent meeting in Rome, Italy. The International Commission for Dialogue between Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church held its third meeting June 25-29. The focus of the meeting was "Unity in Christ: Baptism, Faith, and the Eucharistic Koinonia." The gathering gave participants an opportunity to exchange ideas on how best to form stronger ties among Catholics and Disciples. The theme of the next session for the commission, scheduled to take place in June 2007, will be "The Relation between Word and Sacrament in the Eucharist." To read more, go to: www.disciples.org/dns/Releases2006/0684.html.

OBLATION AS VOCATION: When a person decides to become a Benedictine Oblate, it is usually not done on the spur of the moment. It might be helpful to look at what happens to appreciate more fully the action of God in our lives and to renew our response to God's call to oblation with joy and enthusiasm.

A group of Benedictine monks and nuns, studying the principles of monastic life, recognized that there is no single pattern in the development of a vocation. However, they discovered that, along with the diversity, all vocational experiences have four features in common.

First, God's love reaches out and chooses the individual. A vocation is not our idea- it is God's. At a particular time and place, this possibility occurred to us – through reading, meeting an oblate, visit to monastery or the internet.

A second feature common to vocational experiences is a sense of assurance that God will be faithful to those who endeavor to answer God's call. When we first heard the call, it may have seemed like this was something for other people – people who were holier, more committed or more religious than we are.

Third, this call from God invites a decision based on faith and obedience. The oblate vocation involves personal dedication to the Benedictine ideal as embodied in the Rule of St. Benedict. It is our way of being a disciple of Jesus, and we embrace it because this is the particular pattern of Christian life to which God is calling us. St. Benedict reminds us that this is a "narrow road" (RB 5:10) and realizing this might lead us to a frequent rededication of ourselves to the oblate way of life.

The final common element is an openness to personal growth and transformation. It is a call to gradually understand and follow St. Benedict's admonition, "Your way of acting should be different from the world's way" (RB 4:8). This call to live does not require us to scorn ordinary life or separate ourselves from society. It means attempting to seek God in the people and events of our daily life (RB 58:7).

Oblation is indeed a vocation, being called by God in love and assured by God that following this call in faith and obedience will lead us to personal growth and transformation. (By Fr. Bernard Head, Oblate, Newsletter for Oblates, St. Meinrad Archabbey)

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