



# Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery

April 2008

## **ASSIGNMENTS ARE THE SAME FOR ALL CHAPTERS: NOTE HOLY RULE CHAPTERS TO READ --**

Wisdom from the Tradition, Chapter VII & VIII, pp. 71-90; RB 69-70; Psalm 15

**Lincoln Chapter:** Sunday, North Commons Cafeteria and Monday in the Sheridan Rooms A & B. Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital  
Sunday, April 13, 2008 or Monday, 14, 2008:

**Steinauer Chapter:** Banquet Room, across from St. Anthony's Church, Monday, April 7, 2008, 7-9p.m.

**Hastings Chapter:** St. Michael's Church, Family Room, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., Saturday, April 12, 2008

**Omaha Chapter:** NOTE MEETING PLACE! We will meet at All Saints Episcopal Church, Omaha, NE in April and May since New Cassel is redoing their parking lots. Read the sign on the East door of the church for the meeting room. April meeting date is Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at 7 p.m.

## **IMPORTANT FOR MAY 2008 CHAPTER**

**MEETINGS:** In April all Chapters will have completed the book, Wisdom from the Tradition so we will resume the books from last year. Lincoln and Steinauer Chapters will continue Strangers to the City by Michael Casey. I will have new books available at the April meeting for those who do not have one (\$13). We will continue this book into the fall. Hastings and Omaha Chapters will finish the book The Path of Life by Cyprian Smith, OSB. Assignments will come in the next newsletter. If you do not have these books, I will appreciate a note from you. New members/Oblate Novices in Steinauer and Hastings will not need them until September.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BENEDICTINE**

**MEDAL:** Oblate Ron Sedlacek, who has learned the wording and markings on the medal over the past years will give us a presentation on the medal at our Sunday, April 13th Lincoln Chapter meeting. All are welcome to come.

**SHALL WE START A BLOG?** There are 4-5 Oblates who have the interest and expertise to start a Blog.

1. Please respond to me if you are interested and or would like to help set it up. Are any of you interested in being part of a Oblate blog community where issues of Benedictine spirituality can be discussed? If so, then  
2. What ideas do you have about the format and purpose of the blog? In other words, what would be most helpful for you if you were to use this internet tool on a weekly basis? For example: A portion of the Rule could be presented with someone offering a personal reflection. Oblates could respond to this and read each other's thoughts. A new reflection could be posted every week or two weeks, depending on the energy level of the one organizing/coordinating the project. I'm sure our very creative Oblate community could come up with other ideas. It would surely be an opportunity for our Oblates who are far, far away to join us. Let me hear from you!  
Sister Phyllis

**READY FOR SPRING?** Then join the "Springtime in the Garden" effort which will be starting fairly soon at 5441 Glade Street. Thank you to those who have already responded. Just let me know at 488-6731 or [phunhoff74@windstream.net](mailto:phunhoff74@windstream.net).

**AMERICAN BENEDICTINE ACADEMY:** The 2008 convention of the ABA will be held at Sacred Heart Monastery/Mount Marty College in Yankton, SD, August 7-10. It will have as its theme, "Monastic Spirituality: Expanding Merton's Vision." It promises to be an inspiring gathering with noted speakers on such topics as: "Merton and the Benedictine Rule: Obedience"; "Mystical Union in the Global Community: Thomas Merton's Radical Interiority"; "Eco Monasticism: Thomas Merton's Vision and Challenge" and "Sharing the Experience of the Divine Light – Thomas Merton's Path to Interreligious Understanding." Contact Sr. Bonita Gacnik, OSB [bgacnik@mtmc.edu](mailto:bgacnik@mtmc.edu).

**THE MERTON INSTITUTE** for Contemplative Living: You can learn more about this by going to the website: [www.mertoninstitute.org](http://www.mertoninstitute.org). There is also an International Thomas Merton Society as well as a Nebraska Chapter which meets quarterly at St. Benedict Monastery,

usually the 2nd Saturday of the month from 1-3 p.m. Programs include discussing books, videos and audio tapes. Contact Kathleen Harris, President, 308-946-3639. On May 16 – 18, 2008, Fr. Patrick Collins, PhD will direct a retreat on “Thomas Merton Spirituality II” at St. Benedict’s Monastery, Schuyler. Contact: FrVolker@BenedictineMissionHouse.com or 402.352.2177 Ext. 303

**MONASTIC INSTITUTE FOR OBLATES:** “Living the Way of Benedict” will be held at the Sophia Center, Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, Kansas, July 17-20, 2008. Contact Sister Marcia Ziska, OSB at 913-360-6161 or mziska@mountosb.org. The total program fee is \$250. Sophia Center invites you to a time of reflection and inspiration designed especially for Benedictine Oblates. Pray, connect with other Oblates and gather wisdom to share with your world.

**NORVENE VEST** wrote a note telling me of their upcoming pilgrimage and would welcome any of our Oblates. Here is the information: **TURKEY AND GREECE PILGRIMAGE** including a 3-day cruise – 15 days - \$3749 from Los Angelus. Contact Norvene Vest at 520-399-2225 or norvene@composury.com.

**THE NORTH AMERICAN BENEDICTINE OBLATE DIRECTORS (NAABOD)** website and current newsletter is at [www.naabod.org](http://www.naabod.org).

#### **OBLATE NOTES:**

- Congratulations to Peter Pollard and Karina Lora who made their final Oblations on Sunday March 9!
- We welcomed Oblate Michael Flaherty from Des Moines, IA when he visited us at our Friday Newman Vespers and Saturday Morning Prayer and Cell.

**EASTER AND EASTER SEASON LITURGY OF THE HOURS:** If you need a little help during this change of season, please note that we begin Week I of the Psalter on Easter Sunday. Throughout this Easter Week, which is the Octave, it is considered a week of solemnity – so great is the feast – and you will find a week of special liturgy/texts on page 457 of the Shorter Christian Prayer book. The one volume and four volume books have much more to offer. These texts may be repeated throughout the season. There are also special hymns for the Easter season.

On March 31 we celebrate the Annunciation: Mary’s response to the angel Gabriel’s message reveals her openness to God’s word. This life nurtured in darkness bursts forth to be the Light of the world; this Life in Mary’s womb becomes the risen Lord. There is no special text for this day.

When Jesus ascends, he promises the Holy Spirit to help us continue his work of bringing others to him. There is special text for the solemnity of the Ascension for Thursday, May 1 in our book. Lincoln, Nebraska is one of the few diocese in the country that does not transfer this feast to the following Sunday. The following Sunday then uses the 7th Sunday of Easter. Most of your churches will probably celebrate this feast on the Sunday, May 4.

And then the Easter season is closed on the great feast of Pentecost, Sunday, May 11. A full text is provided, plus hymns, for our Saturday Evening I Vespers, Sunday Morning Prayer and Sunday Evening II Vespers. As the gospel shows us, the disciples experience the risen and ascended Christ and now they must share this good news with others. Being a Christian means that we, too, are responsible to continue the ministry and mission of Jesus in our world. The events of Pentecost are something to be wondered. How could so many people from all over the ancient world hear the message in their own language? Well, God speaks to each of us in a way that we can hear God’s word. God word comes to us in many ways: through the Eucharist, private prayer, in the silence of our hearts, through beauty and through nature. As we talked about it in this morning’s Cell, let us be present to God in our daily lives, no matter where we are, at work, at home or at leisure. For those of us who do not live in the monastery, we create for ourselves and live in our own virtual monastery.

Then the remainder of the Church’s year is called “ordinary time.” This does not mean that this time is not important, but rather that it is “ordered” by our ever-deepening appreciation of how the mystery of our faith must be lived in our everyday lives.

May your lives be inspired and enriched as you daily say the Liturgy of the Hours along with the seasonal Sunday liturgies. Sister Phyllis

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