



Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

Living by the Spirit of The Rule of St. Benedict + Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery
www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org + info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org + August 2013

Greetings

ASKING WITH HUMILITY

From the *Rule* of our Holy Father Benedict:
“Whenever we want to ask some favor of a powerful man, we do it humbly and respectfully, for fear of presumption. How much more important, then, to lay our petitions before the Lord God of all things with the utmost humility and sincere devotion”—RB 20:1–2.

Feast of the Transfiguration

LINCOLN CHAPTER GATHERS FOR EVENING PRAYER

The Church marks the Transfiguration of our Lord on August 6. To give God thanks for his Son and to contemplate the mystery of the revelation of his divine nature, we will gather for Evening Prayer. Here are the details:

Evening Prayer
Tuesday, August 6, 5:30 p.m.
Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
5401 South St.
Lincoln, Nebraska.

Retreat: The Gift of Faith

KATHLEEN NORRIS, OBLATE AND AUTHOR, VISITS SCHUYLER

Fr. Thomas Leitner, OSB, announced an event of interest all who are interested in the monastic life. Here in Schuyler, at St. Benedict Center, the monks will have the joy to welcome the well-known author and Benedictine Oblate Kathleen Norris from Hawaii. The retreat with Kathleen is a Friday to Saturday retreat; the parts of the retreat stand in themselves, however. It is possible to attend only Saturday or only Friday night.

On October 4–5, 2013, award-winning poet, writer, and best-selling author Kathleen Norris will

come to St. Benedict Center, four miles north of Schuyler, and speak on the topic of “The Gift of Faith.” On Friday, October 4, 2013, at 7:30 p.m., she will give an evening presentation, followed by discussion and sharing. On Saturday, October 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., she will present a one-day retreat.

The spiritual world is not separated from the chaos and the beauty of daily life. Kathleen Norris’s presentations on the gift of faith in her life will be at once intimate and historical, rich in poetry and meditations, brimming with exasperation and reverence, deeply grounded in both nature and spirit, sometimes funny, often provocative and always important. Norris, a Benedictine Oblate of Assumption Abbey in Richardton, North Dakota, is the award-winning poet, writer, and author of the *New York Times*’s bestsellers: *The Cloister Walk*; *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*; *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*; and *The Virgin of Bennington*. Her latest book is a theological memoir titled *Acedia and me: A Marriage, Monks and a Writer’s Life* (Riverhead 2008).

For information on registration and costs contact:

St. Benedict Center
402.352.8819
www.StBenedictCenter.com.

Chapter Gatherings

NEW BOOK FOR NEXT YEAR!

The book we will use for general meetings next year is *Conversations with Saint Benedict—The Rule in Today’s World* by Terrence G. Kardong, OSB. It is available through Amazon.com, or through your local bookstore.

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
Hastings	Juliene Bryan, juliene.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Family Room, St. Michael’s Church, Hastings
	Carol Barry, carol.barry@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
	Steve Liechti, steve.liechti@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Sheridan Room (Sunday)
Lincoln	Carol Olson, carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Nemaha Room (Monday)
	Jim Rea, jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	5401 South St.
	Mary Schroer, mary.schroer@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Lincoln
Omaha	Rod Dolton, rod.dolton@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	New Cassel Retirement Ctr. Lecture Hall, Omaha
Steinauer	Marcia Borchert, marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer

Retreat: Humility

CHAPTER SEVEN OF THE RULE AND THOMAS MERTON

On Saturday, July 20, Carol Barry, Oblate Dean, offered a retreat focusing Chapter Seven of the Rule of Benedict: Humility and incorporating recordings of some of Thomas Merton's 1962 lectures to the novices of Gethsemane Monastery.

Participants had the chance to enjoy the peaceful environment of Serenity House in Bennet.



Participants gathered to reflect on the Rule.

Chapter News: Benedictine Oblate Orientation

LINCOLN

Benedictine Oblate Orientation: To be held at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital at 7 p.m., Sunday, August 25, in the Sheridan Rooms A and B and Monday, August 26, in Sheridan C Room. You may attend either session. For additional information, call Jim Rea, Lincoln Oblate Dean at 402.423.8694, or view our Web site for more information:

www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org.

STEINAUER

Benedictine Oblate Orientation: To be held at the Convent House Bed and Breakfast Banquet Room, 311 Hickory, Steinauer, at 7:00 p.m., Monday August 26. Contact Marcia Borchers, Dean, Steinauer Chapter:

db92140@windstream.net.

HASTINGS

Benedictine Oblate Orientation: To be held at St. Michael Church, Family Room, 715 Creighton Ave, Hastings, at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, August 24. Contact Juliene Bryan, Dean, Hastings Chapter:

wjbryan@gtmc.net.

OMAHA

Benedictine Oblate Orientation: To be held in the New Cassel Retirement Center, 1st Floor Lecture Hall, 900 North 90th Street, Omaha at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 10. Christian Oblates learn Lectio Divina contemplative reading, prayer, and Liturgy of Hours in the monastic tradition. No cost except occasional books. Contact Rod Dolton, Dean, Omaha Chapter:

402.896.3299

rdolton@cox.net.

Continental Gathering

DIRECTORS AND OBLATES TOGETHER

Oblates Steve Liechti and David Frye attended the recent gathering of the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors in Bismarck, North Dakota, at the University of Mary, July 12–17.

Through the generous contributions of chapter members, they received some financial support for their expenses.

The theme of the meeting was “Living the Benedictine Charism Faithfully in the World.” About seventy-five participants—including two dozen oblates and both men and women religious—heard informative and inspiring conferences by S. Thomas Welder, OSB, from the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery, Bismarck, North Dakota, Fr. Terrence Kardong, OSB, from Assumption Abbey, Richardton, North Dakota, and S. Colleen Maura McGrane, OSB, Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Clyde, Missouri.

The days followed the rhythms of the monastic life, interspersing times for table fellowship with corporate prayer and the conferences. Following each speaker, those gathered observed about ten minutes of silence for reflection.

On Sunday after Mass and lunch, the group made visits to three monasteries: Annunciation Monastery adjacent to the university; Sacred Heart Monastery in Richardton, South Dakota; and Assumption Abbey, also in Richardton.

It was enlightening to see how three communities have each developed distinct characters by adopting and adopting the same Rule to their communal lives.

The chapter deans plan to work insights from the conference into the chapter's gatherings throughout the year.

Several sisters from Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, were active in the conference. They included S. Joelle Bauer, S. Bonita Gacnik (conference convener), S. Phyllis Hunhoff, and S. Barbara McTague.



Oblate Steve Liechti, Ss. Joelle Bauer, Phyllis Hunhoff, Barbara McTague, and Bonita Gacnik, and Oblate David Frye.

Prayer Requests

MONASTERY AND CHAPTER GATHER PETITIONS

If you would like to send your prayer requests to the monastery, the Web address for Sacred Heart Monastery's prayer requests is:
www.yanktonbenedictines.org/PrayerRequest.php.

You may also send petitions to Marcia Straatmeyer at mstraat@neb.rr.com or by using the Prayer Request option on the chapter's Web site:
www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/.

Golden Jubilee at Fifty Years

OMAHA OBLATES JOINED IN CELEBRATION

Omaha oblats joined with the sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton on June 29 to celebrate S. Marlene Stetz's Golden Jubilee.

S. Marlene sent a note to the Omaha Chapter.

Dear oblats,

Thank you for the beautiful Benedictine Cross given in my honor. S. Penny said I could keep it for the apartment where I live here in Omaha. I shall treasure it and it will be a remembrance of my golden jubilee. I was happy that some of you were able to come for the Celebration in Yankton.

Peace to all of you.

Sister Marlene.

The monastery's prioress, S. Penny Bingham, OSB, also wrote a note:

Dear Rod [Dalton, Omaha Dean] and all the Benedictine Oblates of Omaha,
Thank you so much for being part of S. Marlene's jubilee celebration by your presence—and by the beautiful Benedictine crucifix you gave us in her honor. I have asked her to place it in her residence so that she and S. Carol Jean will enjoy your kindness shared. Thank you so much for sharing this Benedictine life with us. God's blessings for each of you—and our gratitude and prayers for you.
S. Penny & Sisters

Reflection

ON BENDED KNEE

Every time I enter the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital for our oblats' corporate prayer, I dip my fingers into the waters of the font. Then their moist touch inscribes on my forehead, heart, and shoulders the outline of Christ's cross. This reminds me of His victory over sin, death, and the devil and of His Father's act to pour out upon me at my baptism His Spirit of adoption. ... I know, too, that my Catholic and Episcopalian friends turn to face the Tabernacle when they enter the chapel and then offer their reverence to our Lord. But so far, I have not shared in that practice—and as I reflect on this, I am disturbed—because I have no good reasons not to offer that act of reverence.

My only reasons are the weak ones of habit and inertia. I suppose that tradition explains why Lutherans and other Protestants have not genuflected, as that devotional act's posture and gesture have smacked of acting "too Catholic," which many have seen as not a good thing. But the truth of the matter is this appeal to tradition—we've always not done it this way—is no better reason to not do something than are habit and inertia.

So instead, as I reflect upon what I am *not* doing, a more reasonable and faithful question almost asks itself: Why would one genuflect, offering bodily a sign that one acknowledges the risen Christ, present in the consecrated host, as one's Lord and Savior?

Read more on our Web site:

www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/2013/07/30/on-bended-knee/.