



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 + **December 2014**

A Word from the Rule

ENTERING THE COMMUNITY

"When he is to be received, he comes before the whole community in the oratory and promises stability, fidelity to monastic life, and obedience. This is done in the presence of God and his saints to impress on the novice that if he ever acts otherwise, he will surely be condemned by the one he mocks. He states his promise in a document drawn up in the name of the saints whose relics are there, and of the abbot, who is present. The novice writes out this document himself, or if he is illiterate, then he asks someone else to write it for him, but himself puts his mark to it and with his own hands lays it on the altar. After he has put it there, novice himself begins the verse: *Receive me, Lord, as you have promised, and I shall live; do not disappoint me in my hope* (Ps 118(119):116)."

Source: RB 58:17-23

Worship

NEW NOVICES AND OBLATES ENTER THE NEBRASKA CHAPTER

The Oblation Ceremony was held on Sunday, November 23, 2014, in the James C. Ryan Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln. The Chapel was filled with oblates, those making their Initial and Final Oblations, and family and friends. It was a moving service of prayer, followed by a reception in the Sheridan Room.

Oblates unable to attend the Oblation ceremony will be able to sign Renewal Certificates, while Novices will be able to sign their Initial Enrollment Certificates, at their Chapter meetings. The Deans will contact individuals to share options for making their Final Oblations.

A number of individuals had made plans to make their Initial Oblations as novice oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery:

Lincoln Chapter

John Clyne
Christy Roehrichs
Jessica C. Stoner
Boots Wailes
Donna Woudenburg.

Omaha Chapter

Kimberly Graeve
Pamela S. Debban.

Oblate Novices who had made plans to make their Final Oblation as oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery included:

Lincoln Chapter

Marianne Guenther

Omaha Chapter

Gina Love-Aguilar

Hastings Chapter

Tanna Skarniak.

Please watch the Web site and next month's newsletter for pictures of the day.

Web: www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/albums/

MORNING PRAYER

Oblates gather every Friday morning at 7:30 in the Ryan Memorial Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5401 South St., Lincoln, Nebraska, to pray Morning Prayer. Everyone is welcome.

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 Blum, steve.blum@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

EVENING PRAYER

Those interested are invited to meet for vespers on the fourth Sunday of the month at 7 p.m. in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation. Currently, two cell groups meet on that day and join each other in the Chapel at Madonna for Vespers before splitting up for their cell gatherings. If anyone would like to come for group Vespers at that time, please join us!

MONASTERY AND CHAPTER GATHER PETITIONS

If you would like to send your prayer requests to the monastery, please use Sacred Heart Monastery's prayer request form/

On the Web:

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.

On the Web: www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/.

THE GREAT "O ANTIPHONS"

The "O Antiphons" refer to the seven Magnificat antiphons recited during Vespers. They cover the special part of Advent's preparation, known as the Octave before Christmas, December 17–23. Each highlights a title for the Messiah and refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah.

The "O Antiphons" date back to the fourth century. The Latin versions of each of the titles of the Messiah are: *Sapientia* (Wisdom), *Adonai* (Lord), *Radix* (Root), *Clavis* (Key), *Oriens* (Dawn), *Rex* (King), and *Emmanuel* (Emmanuel). The first letters of each of the titles, starting with the last and working back to the first, spell **EROCRAS** or "ero cras"—"I will be (there) tomorrow."

The hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" arises from the seven "O Antiphons." When you sing it, you join yourself to a vast throng of Christians, stretching back across centuries and spanning the whole of the earth, who prayed as all Christians do—"Come, Lord Jesus!" (See Rev. 22:20).

The "O Antiphons" may be substituted for the Advent antiphons in *Shorter Christian Prayer* for December 17–23. The following outline provides a guide for using the "O Antiphons" in your prayer of the Divine Office for the Octave before Christmas.

O Antiphons or the Magnificat Antiphons

- 17 *O Sapientia*: "O Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet

tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation."

- 18 *O Adonai*: "O sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain: come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free."
- 19 *O Radix Jesse*: "O Flower of Jesse's stem, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid."
- 20 *O Clavis David*: "O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel controlling at your will the gate of Heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom."
- 21 *O Oriens*: "O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death."
- 22 *O Rex Gentium*: "O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man, come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust."
- 23 *O Emmanuel*: "O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Savior of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God."
- 24 Christmas Vigil.

SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTIONS

The new Liturgical Year begins on the First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2014. We begin Week I in *Shorter Christian Prayer* on p. 37. The antiphons for Advent are shown in red for Sunday Evening Prayer I, Sunday Morning Prayer, and Sunday Evening Prayer II. At the Reading, for Sundays and weekdays through December 23, turn to pp. 356–378. From December 17 to 23, use the antiphons indicated in red for those dates.

On December 24 for Morning Prayer, turn to p. 378 and follow the instructions, using the Psalms and canticle from Wednesday, Week IV, on p. 294.

The prayers for Christmas Day begin on p. 380 with Evening Prayer I (Christmas Eve night).

During the Christmas Season, for weekdays after Christmas, see pp. 392–395. Continue following the prayers for the Christmas Season until the Feast of the Epiphany.

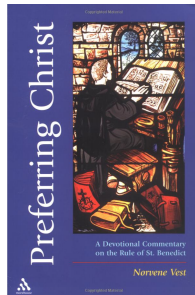
Chapter Gatherings

CHAPTER READINGS

Readings for the monthly chapter meetings come from Norvene Vest's *Preferring Christ*.

- **December:** Interlude I; Chapters 1–2
- **January:** Chapter 3 and Chapter 4:1–38
- **February:** Chapter 4:39–78
- **March:** Interlude II; Chapters 5–6
- **April:** Chapter 7:1–50
- **May:** Chapter 7:51–70.

On the Web: www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/gatherings/chapter-gathering/



HASTINGS CHAPTER

The general meeting will be Saturday, December 13, 2014, 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the Family Room at St. Michael's Church.

- Reading from *Preferring Christ*: Interlude I and chapters 1–2.
- Facilitator: Leland Ost diek
- Reflection: Kathy Schroder
- Prayer Leader: Tanna Skarniak

LINCOLN CHAPTER

General Gathering

General gatherings will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. and Monday, December 15, 2014, at the same time. Novice Phyllis Spence will make her Final Oblation as part of Vespers.

- Reading from *Preferring Christ*: Interlude I and chapters 1–2.

OMAHA CHAPTER

The Omaha Chapter will gather on Tuesday, December 9, 2014, 7:00–9:00 p.m. at the New Cassel Retirement Center.

- Reading from *Preferring Christ*: Interlude I and chapters 1–2.

STEINAUER CHAPTER

The general gathering will be held on Monday, December 29, 2014, from 7:00–9:00 p.m., in the Banquet Room at Covenant House across from St. Anthony's Church.

- Reading from *Preferring Christ*: Interlude I and Chapters 1–2.

Nebraska Cell Groups

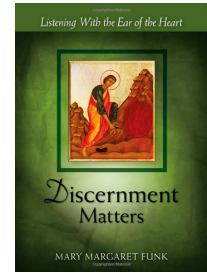
CELL GROUP READINGS FOR 2014

December

Chapter 1, Eight Afflictive Thoughts, cont.—things and anger: pp. 27–37

Web:

www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/cells/



CELL GROUPS

The Nebraska Chapter has a variety of cell groups.

HASTINGS

Saint Scholastica Cell

- Leader: various individuals
- Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the library of St. Michael's Church, Hastings.
- This Month: No meeting.
- Readings: Check the schedule online for next month's readings.

Brother Lawrence Cell

- Leader: various individuals
- Meets the fourth Monday of the month, 4:30–5:30 p.m. at First Christian Church, 2400 West 14th St., Grand Island, Nebraska.
- This Month: No meeting
- Reading this Month: Check the schedule online for next month's readings. Lincoln

Beginners' Cell

- Leader: Marti Fritzen
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 7:00 p.m., beginning with Vespers in the Ryan Memorial Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. The group then moves to the Platte Room for its discussion.
- This Month: December 28
- Reading this Month: *Discernment Matters*, pp. 27–37, Chapter 1: Eight Afflictive Thoughts—Third Affliction of the Body: Thoughts of Things and First Affliction of the Mind: Thoughts of Anger.

The Rule of Benedict (RB 73:8) says that the rule is for beginners; we are all beginners and all are welcome to this cell.

Pax Christi Cell

- Leader: Lorene Ludy
- Meetings: The fourth Monday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Mary Lu Long's house, 1615 Brent Blvd., Lincoln.
- This Month: December 22
- Reading this Month: *Discernment Matters*, pp. 27–37, Chapter 1: Eight Afflictive Thoughts—Third Affliction of the Body: Thoughts of Things and First Affliction of the Mind: Thoughts of Anger.

Preferring Christ Cell

- Leaders: Paul Blotkamp and Charlotte Liggett
- Meetings: The fourth Sunday of every month at Madonna, 7:00 p.m.
- This Month: December 28
- Reading this Month: *Discernment Matters*, pp. 27–37, Chapter 1: Eight Afflictive Thoughts—Third Affliction of the Body: Thoughts of Things and First Affliction of the Mind: Thoughts of Anger.

Subiaco Cell

- Leader: Tim Fisher
- Meetings: Every other Saturday beginning at 8:00 a.m. with Morning Prayer in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Then this cell for men moves to a designated room for conversation.
- This Month: December 13 and 27
- Readings this Month: *Discernment Matters*, pp. 27–37, Chapter 1: Eight Afflictive Thoughts—Third Affliction of the Body: Thoughts of Things and First Affliction of the Mind: Thoughts of Anger.

Hildegard von Bingen Cell

New Members Welcome

To give oblates another option for the fellowship and reflection that cell groups offer, the Lincoln Chapter has added a new cell group. It gathers every other Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m.

The plans for the group's December gatherings are sketched out below. David Frye will serve as the group's leader.

If you have questions or if you would like to become a member of the cell group, please contact him using either of these methods:

cell phone: 402.450.2072

e-mail: davidfrye@windstream.net.

GATHERINGS

Every other Saturday morning.

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

5401 South Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

by 8:00 a.m.: Gather in Silence, Ryan Memorial Chapel

8:00 a.m.: Morning Prayer, Chapel

8:10 a.m.: Time for Silent Prayer, Chapel

8:20 a.m.: Gathering, Frontier Room

9:30 a.m.: Breakfast and Fellowship, Cafeteria.

GUIDELINES

- Participation is open to all oblates of the Lincoln Chapter and others who have received permission from the chapter's deans.
- By consensus, the cell may choose to skip a gathering.
- The cell's members respect the trust of others and hold the contents of cell conversations in confidence.

BOOKS

- Text: *Discernment Matters: Listening with the Ear of the Heart*, Mary Margaret Funk, OSB, Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2013.
- Sources: *The Rule of St. Benedict* and the Bible.

TOPICS

Dec. 13: **Discussion of *Discernment Matters***

- Chapter 1, Eight Afflictive Thoughts—food and sex: pp. 13–27
Leader for Morning Prayer: David Frye
Discussion Leader: Mary Schroer

Dec. 27: ***Lectio Divina***

and “Patterns and Practices of the Oblate Life”

“Through this love, all that he once performed with dread, he will now begin to observe without effort, as though naturally, from habit ...” (RB 7:68).

Group *Lectio Divina*

Reading: *RB* 7: 67–70

Leader: To be decided

- In this conversation, we will talk about the concrete ways that we have learned to live by the spirit of the Rule, sharing the small and large patterns and practices that help us to live the oblate life.

Retreats

ADVENT WISDOM

- St. Scholastica Center, Atchison Kansas
- Saturday, December 6, 2014, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

St. Benedict urges us to see Christ in all the people and events of our lives. Sister Judith Sutura, OSB, author of *Advent and Christmas Wisdom from St. Benedict*, will present a talk on preparing to welcome the coming of Christ every day this Advent. Contact Sr. Sutura to check availability and to register:

suthere@mountosb.org

Other Retreat Offerings:

www.mountosb.org/ministries/sophia-spirituality-center.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW

- Christ the King Priory, Schuyler Nebraska
- A special two-week opportunity to do Christmas shopping at the Center.
- Forty Different Crafters: November 30–December 14, 2014.
- Open Hours: Mon.–Fri. 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Sat.–Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- A great variety of crafts and gifts made by area artists will be on sale.
- Book and Gift Store will be open Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; Sat. 9:30–10:45 a.m., 1–4 p.m.; Sun. 1–3 p.m.
- There are also a variety of nativity scenes on display from the Holy Land, Africa, Asia, South and North America and Europe.

Details: www.missionmonks.org

Retreat Offerings: www.stbenedictcenter.com.

IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

- Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, South Dakota
- Saturday, December 6, 2014, 9 a.m. to noon.

Why do we let ourselves get so busy in the Advent and Christmas seasons? The Benedictine Peace Center at Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, invites you to slow down and come to “In the Fullness of Time,” an Advent Retreat presented by Sr. Mary Jo Polak, OSB, on Saturday, December 6, from 9 a.m. to noon. We will slow down and experience how God gifts us with special moments of time.

Costs and Registration: www.yanktonbenedictines.org.

PODCAST: THE RULE OF BENEDICT

Fr. Mauritius Wilde, OSB, Prior of Christ the King Abbey in Schuyler Nebraska, presents a podcast on the *Rule of Benedict*. It can be found on the Discerning Hearts Web site:

With host Kris McGregor, Fr. Mauritius provides commentary on various verses from chapters of the Rule.

Web: www.discerninghearts.com.

RECENT RETREAT AT SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Nebraska oblates met at Sacred Heart Monastery October 31–November 2, 2014, for a retreat. Sr. Mary Jo Polak presented on “Matters of the Heart in the Rule of St. Benedict.” Several area oblates were able to attend this retreat.

DEANS’ RETREAT

The eight deans of the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates met for a retreat at Sacred Heart Monastery October 17–19, 2014. Discussions covered *lectio divina*, spiritual direction, and topics related to administration.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

An Oblate Leadership Training session is set for January 31, 2015. It will be in the Flanagan Room at Madonna. Mary Reece, MS, PLMHP, will present training on Group Dynamics and Carol Olson will present on Group *Lectio Divina*. Lunch will be provided at noon and the training will be from 12:30–2:30pm. It is open to all Oblates but is especially for those Oblates who facilitate group discussion at the Chapter meetings as well as Oblate Cell Leaders. Please RSVP to Carol Olson by January 24, 2015.

Carol Olson: carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org.

General Announcements

SNOW POLICY

It seems timely to restate our snow policy.

1. Should we have three to four inches of snow, we will cancel the meeting without notice. The meeting will not be rescheduled. The next month’s meeting will occur as scheduled with that month’s assignment.
2. Should we have a snowstorm that seems hard to judge, an e-mail will be sent. For those without e-mail, please call someone with e-mail. In all cases, use your best judgment: Be Safe!

CHANGE OF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

When you update your e-mail address, please
send a message to:
info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org.

This will assure that you continue to receive
notices about the release of newsletters and other
important chapter messages.