



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 + November 2016

A Word from St. Benedict's Rule

ESTEEMING SILENCE

Let us follow the Prophet's counsel: *I said, I have resolved to keep watch over my ways that I may never sin with my tongue. I have put a guard on my mouth. I was silent and was humbled, and I refrained even from good words (Ps 38(39);2-3).* Here the Prophet indicates that there are times when good words are to be left unsaid out of esteem for silence. For all the more reason, then, should evil speech be curbed so that punishment for sin may be avoided. Indeed, so important is silence that permission to speak should seldom be granted even to mature disciples, no matter how good or holy or constructive their talk, because it is written: *In a flood of words you will not avoid sin (Prov 10:19);* and elsewhere, *The tongue holds the key to life and death (Prov 18:21).* Speaking and teaching are the master's task; the disciple is to be silent and listen.

Source: *The Rule of Benedict*, RB 6:1-6

Reflection

KNOWING THE GLORY OF GOD

The initial stages of learning about religious devotion are naturally related to the flesh. For in our first encounter with religion we come into contact with the letter and not the spirit. But as we get nearer to the spirit and refine the materiality of words with the more subtle forms of contemplation we come to dwell—so far as this is possible for man—purely in the pure Christ, so that we can say with St Paul, *“Though we have known Christ according to the flesh, now we no longer know Him in this manner” (Cor 5:16).* That is to say, we no longer know Him according to the flesh because, through the intellect's naked encounter with the Logos stripped of the veils covering Him,

we have advanced from knowing Him according to the flesh to knowing His *“glory as of the only-begotten Son of the Father” (John 1:14).*

From *The Philokalia, A Century of Spiritual Texts*, St. Maximos the Confessor, #61, Second Century.

Sacred Heart Monastery News

GLEANINGS FROM THE SEPTEMBER OBLATES' NEWSLETTER

Even though the summer was very hot and humid, we have had enough rain to refresh the earth and keep the grass green and still produce plenty of tomatoes. The early garden was not good, as some of the vegetables didn't even come up, but the fruit trees were abundant with apricots, peaches, plums, and apples. God has blessed us with fruitful gifts for which we are most grateful.

Once again we had beautiful celebrations for this year's Jubilarians. Those Sisters who celebrated their Golden Jubilees on July 23, 2016, were Sisters Jennifer Kehrwald, Joyce Streff, Kathryn Easley, Marietta Kerkvliet, and Margo Tschetter. Many of their families and friends joined us in the beautiful liturgies and the meal that followed the Mass. On August 5, 2016, in a private ceremony here at the Monastery, Sister Madonna Schmitt marked 70 years and Sisters Bernadette McGowen, Louise Marie Goettertz, and Matthew Wehri celebrated 60 years. What a beautiful witness of love and fidelity to monastic life that all these Sisters share with us.

In March 2017, we Sisters will be electing a new Prioress as Sister Penny will complete her six-year term as our spiritual leader. This is a very important and holy election as the Sister elected will be the one who guides us for the next six years. Enclosed with this newsletter is a special prayer that we are asking all of our Oblates to pray several times a week so that the Holy Spirit may help us in

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
Hastings	Julienne Bryan, julienne.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Family Room, St. Michael's Church, Hastings
	Carol Barry, majorcarolb@yahoo.com	Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
	Steve Blum, steve.blum@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Sheridan Room
Lincoln	Carol Olson, carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	5401 South St.
	Jim Rea, jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Lincoln
	Mary Schroer, mary.schroer@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	
Steinauer	Marcia Borchner, marcia.borchner@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer

our choice of our next prioress. Thank you for your prayers.

Prayer for the Election of a Prioress

God of all Faithfulness, we ask you to enlighten the minds and hearts of all the Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery as they prepare to elect the next prioress. May they select a member of the community who is best able to lead the monastery into the future in the Benedictine way of life according to Your will. This we ask in Christ's name and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

MONASTERY NEWSLETTERS

To view the full Oblate Newsletter and for online copies of the Yankton Benedictines Newsletter go to the Sacred Heart Monastery Web site and select "Recent News"—Newsletter.

Web site: www.yanktonbenedictines.org.

Oblation Ceremony

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Oblation Ceremony will be held on Sunday, November 13, 2016, at 2:00 p.m.

Let us join those who have heard God's call to share in the Benedictine way of life by making their final oblations and welcome those who are making their initial oblations. The oblation ceremony will be held in the James E. Ryan Chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln. We will celebrate Vespers, first oblations for new members, final oblations for novice oblates, and renewal of oblations for current members. A reception will follow in the North Commons.

Friends and family are invited to attend. Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff, Sr. Penny Bingham, and Sr. Patricia Heirigs will be coming from Sacred Heart Monastery for the ceremony. Those making initial and final oblations will meet at 12:45 p.m. in the Chapel for orientation to the ceremony and to meet the sisters. To all who are joining us as novices this year, and those making their final oblations as oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery, we say, "Welcome!"

As the Prologue from the *Rule of Benedict* tells us: "First of all, every time you begin a good work, you must pray to him most earnestly to bring it to perfection" (RB Prol. 4).

Benedict reminds us that we are all beginners (RB 73). We look forward to joining with you in

community as we advance in our spiritual journey, using the *Rule of Benedict* as our guide.

For those unable to attend the Oblation Ceremony, a Renewal of Oblation Certificate will be attached to the December Newsletter with instructions to scan or mail it back.

Liturgical calendars for 2017 will be available at the Oblation ceremony for a \$1.00 donation.

Chapter Opportunities

SPIRITUAL BOOK EXCHANGE

We will offer a book exchange table at the Oblation Ceremony this year. Bring your spiritual books that you no longer need. We will have a space to display them for others to take home. We will donate to a prison ministry any books that do not find new homes.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIVINE OFFICE

Have you been using *Shorter Christian Prayer*, but still sometimes feel unsure if you are using it effectively? This session offers an opportunity to get a refresher course. A special session will be held on Saturday, November 5, 2016, at 9:30 a.m. in the Nemaha Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Lead Dean Carol Olson will provide information about the Liturgy of the Hours as well as how to use *Shorter Christian Prayer*, our chapter's book for the Divine Office. Please plan to come to this session if you are unfamiliar with how to use *Shorter Christian Prayer*.

THE OBLATE HANDBOOK IS NOW ONLINE!

The Handbook can be downloaded as a PDF file from the NBO website. Thanks to Oblate David Frye for his work in getting the Handbook online. It can be found under the "Companions" tab.

Paper Handbooks can still be purchased for \$12.00 (plus \$4.00 if shipped) by contacting a dean.

Web site: www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org

Worship Notes

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYING THE DIVINE OFFICE

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.

Some Lincoln oblates begin their gatherings in the Ryan Memorial Chapel with Morning Prayer.

Everyone is invited to pray with them. This month, **Morning Prayer** will be held at **8:00 a.m. on one Saturday—November 12**. Please consider adding this prayer office to your spiritual life.

Also, Lincoln oblates gather in the Ryan Memorial Chapel for Evening Prayer on the fourth Sunday each month at 7:00 p.m. This month, they will pray **Evening Prayer on 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 20 and 27**.

MONASTERY AND CHAPTER GATHER PETITIONS

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

Chapter Gatherings

READINGS

The readings for 2016–2017 come from *Preferring Christ: A Devotional Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict* by Norvene Vest. No reading is set for November because of the Oblation Ceremony on Nov. 13.

LINCOLN

The chapter will not hold its evening gathering in November.

HASTINGS

The Hastings Gathering will be held on Saturday, November 12, 2016, at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the conference room at the Parish Health Ministry Building of St. Cecelia's Church.

- Topic: *Lectio Divina*
- Facilitator: Juliene Bryan
- Reflection: Tana Skarniak
- Prayer Leader: Jeanette Nordhues

STEINAUER

The chapter will not hold its evening gathering in November.

Cell Groups

CELL GROUP READINGS: 2016–2017

Text: *The Soul of a Pilgrim: Eight Practices for the Journey Within*, Christine Valters Painter, OblSB, Sorin Books, 2015. The cell groups will discuss this book from the fall of 2016 through the spring of 2017. All of the cell groups across Nebraska except Lincoln's Pax Christi Cell will read the same text. November's discussions focus on Chapter 2. "The Practice of Crossing the Threshold," pp. 33–47. Lincoln's Pax Christi Cell will discuss Chapter 3, pp. 49–61.

Schedule: www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/cells

Cell Group Gatherings

Oblates are encouraged to further their oblate experience by joining a cell group. Following are the available cell groups for 2016–2017. Listings include meeting dates, times, and locations.

Grand Island Cell Group

Brother Lawrence Cell

- Leader: Jeanette Nordhues
- Meetings: The fourth Monday of the month beginning at 4:30 p.m. at First Christian Church, 2400 W 14th St., Grand Island.
- This Month: Monday, November 21.

Hastings Cell Group

Saint Scholastica Cell

- Leader: Lee Ostdiek
- Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the conference room, Parish Health Ministry Building, St. Cecelia's Church, Hastings.
- This Month: Saturday, November 19.

Lincoln Cell Groups

Beginners' Cell

- Leader: Marti Fritzen
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 7:00 p.m., beginning with Vespers in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Then the group goes to the Platte Room for its gathering.
- 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.
- This Month: Sunday, November 20.

Hildegard von Bingen Cell

- Leader: David Frye
- Meetings: Every other Saturday, beginning at 8:00 a.m. with Morning Prayer in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Following a time for quiet reflection, the cell then gathers in a room for *lectio divina* and conversation on a topic or the reading. Following this, members may gather in the cafeteria for fellowship.
- This Month: Saturday, November 12.

Pax Christi Cell

- Leader: Lorene Ludy
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Monday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Mary Lu Long's house, 1615 Brent Blvd., Lincoln.
- This Month: Monday, November 28.
- Discussion: Pax Christi cell group is a month ahead of the others in discussion of the book. The reading assignment is Chapter 3.

Preferring Christ Cell

- Leader: Charlotte Liggett
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 7:00 p.m., beginning with Vespers in the chapel at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital.
- This Month: Sunday, November 27.

Omaha Cell

- Leader: Phil Kelley
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the New Cassel Retirement Center. Members take turn serving as facilitators for the cell's gatherings. This cell will reflect on readings from *Preferring Christ: A Devotional Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict* by Norvene Vest.
- This Month: Tuesday, November 22.

General Announcements

SNOW AND CHAPTER GATHERINGS

It's that time of year again! If we should have three to four inches of snow, we will cancel the chapter meeting without notice. The meeting will not be rescheduled. The next month's meeting will occur as scheduled with that month's assignment. 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.

Area Retreat Offerings

INTRODUCTION

We are fortunate to have several monasteries in our area that provide retreat opportunities. We will continue to call your attention to retreats that may be of interest to our oblates. Please visit each monastery's Web site for more information on these and other opportunities for retreat offerings. For the convenience of the approximately 20 percent of our members who do not have Internet access, we have provided the address and phone number for each monastery.

SOPHIA CENTER, ATCHISON, KANSAS

Works of Mercy: Lessons from Dorothy Day, presented by Barbara McCracken, OSB.

Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2016, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Contact: Sophia Center, 751 S 8th, Atchison, KS 66002.

913.360.6173

www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org.

ST. BENEDICT CENTER, SCHUYLER, NEBRASKA

Nativity Scene Displays

8:00 a.m., Sunday, Nov. 27, 2016, through 7:00

p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18, 2016.

View a wonderful display of nativity scenes! Everyone is invited to make a pilgrimage to St. Benedict Center at the beginning of the Year of the Family, to view very beautiful nativity scenes from the Holy Land, from Africa, Asia, South and North America, and Europe and to pray for our families. There is no charge.

Contact: 1123 Road I, Schuyler NE 68661.

402.352.2177

www.stbenedictcenter.com.

E-Mail Note

ATTENTION AOL.COM USERS

Please check your e-mail configuration to assure that our chapter's general e-mail address, info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org, is included in your spam filter's whitelist. This setting will assure that messages from the chapter reach you and are not rejected outright by AOL.com. Recent general messages have been returned by many of the AOL.com users in our chapter's list. If you are unsure about how to configure your system, please consult AOL.com's Help section.

Prayer Service for Deceased Oblates

Many of you may not be aware that there is a prayer service available for deceased Benedictine oblates. It is a simple and beautiful service and can be offered at the funeral, the visitation, before the brief service performed for you. Please notify a dean and let your loved ones know of your choice. We recommend that you have your wishes for this service on file, if possible. Please complete the form below and return it to any dean or mail it to the chapter. The prayer service and contact form can also soon be found on the Web site.

Nebraska Benedictine Oblates
2843 S. 42nd St.
Lincoln, NE 68506.

I, _____ a Benedictine oblate of Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, South Dakota, wish to have the oblate prayer service performed at the time of my death.

Please contact (name and contact information)

_____.

Signature

Date

OBLATE PRAYER SERVICE

Sacred Heart Monastery
Nebraska Chapters

“You broke the Reign of Death, O Lord”

Body and Coffin or remains are sprinkled with Holy Water. A scapula of St. Benedict is placed on left shoulder or around remains. Copy of Oblation is placed on/in the coffin or given to family.

Leader: From the Rule of St. Benedict (RB 7)

“The fourth degree of humility is that when obedience to God’s will becomes difficult ... one’s heart quietly embraces suffering and endures it without weakening or seeking escape.” For scripture says: “Anyone who perseveres to the end will be saved (Matt 10:22),” and again, “Be brave of heart and rely on the Lord (Ps 26:14)”.

Antiphon: (All)

Lord, your love is eternal: do not forsake the work of your hands.

Psalms 138 (All)

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,

You have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple.
I thank you for your faithfulness and love
Which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called you answered;
You increased the strength of my soul.
All rulers on earth shall thank you
When they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the Lord:
“How great is the glory of the Lord.”
The Lord is high, yet looks on the lowly
And knows the haughty from afar.
Though I walk in the midst of affliction
You give me life and frustrate my foes.
You stretch out your hand and save me,
Your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
Discard not the work of your hands.
All honor to God, the Giver of Life,
To Christ, the Risen One,
And to the Spirit, Bond of Love,
Glory and praise forever. Amen

Antiphon: (All)

Lord, your love is eternal: do not forsake the work of your hands.

Leader: _____, an oblate of St. Benedict, a devoted Christian, was admitted into spiritual union and affiliation with the Benedictine community of Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, South Dakota, so she/he might share in the spiritual life, prayers and good works of this community.

Oblates proclaim and practice the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and divine love, by believing, hoping, and trusting in God and loving God and others in thought, word and deed.

On behalf of Sacred Heart Monastery, and all of our Oblates, we commend _____ into the hands of God.

All: May her/his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen