



# Benedictine Oblates of Nebraska

*Living by the Spirit of The Rule of St. Benedict + Associated with Sacred Heart Monastery*  
[www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](http://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org) + [info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org](mailto:info@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org) + **December 2016**

## **A Word from St. Benedict's Rule**

### **MANIFESTING HUMILITY**

The twelfth step of humility is that a monk always manifests humility in his bearing no less than in his heart, so that it is evident at the Work of God, in the oratory, the monastery or the garden, on a journey or in the field, or anywhere else. Whether he sits, walks or stands, his head must be bowed and his eyes cast down. Judging himself always guilty on account of his sins, he should consider that he is already at the fearful judgment, and constantly say in his heart what the publican in the Gospel said with downcast eyes: *Lord, I am a sinner, not worthy to look up to heaven* (Luke 18:13). And with the Prophet: *I am bowed down and humbled in every way* (Ps 37[38]:7-9; Ps 118 [119]:107).

Source: *The Rule of Benedict*, RB 7:62-66

## **Oblations**

### **A WELCOME TO OUR NEW OBLATES AND NOVICES**

On Sunday, November 13, 2016, the Nebraska Oblate Chapters celebrated our annual Oblation Ceremony. Around fifty oblats and family members joined Srs. Penny Bingham, Patricia Heirigs, and Phyllis Hunhoff for the occasion, followed by a reception in the Sheridan Room.

**Special Note:** If you were unable to attend the ceremony, you can make your final oblation or renew your oblation at a chapter meeting. Please visit with a dean. Also, if you are making a renewal of your oblation, you may complete the attached Renewal of Oblation form and give it to a dean, mail it to the chapter, or return a copy of it by email.

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

**E-mail:** Carol Barry: [majorcarolb@yahoo.com](mailto:majorcarolb@yahoo.com).

**Pictures:** [www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/albums/](http://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/albums/).



**Initial Oblation:** Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff, Paula Sayker, Joan Hopkins, Michael Chaffee, Sr. Penny Bingham, and Sr. Patricia Heirigs.



**Final Oblation:** Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff, Eric Biehl, Mary Shada, Lilla Revesz, Lylaine Abbott, Bill Abbott, Sr. Penny Bingham, and Sr. Patricia Heirigs.

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
<b>Hastings</b>	<i>Julienne Bryan</i> , <a href="mailto:julienne.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">julienne.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a> <i>Carol Barry</i> , <a href="mailto:majorcarolb@yahoo.com">majorcarolb@yahoo.com</a> <i>Steve Blum</i> , <a href="mailto:steve.blum@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">steve.blum@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a>	<i>Family Room, St. Michael's Church, Hastings</i> <i>Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital</i> <i>Sheridan Room</i>
<b>Lincoln</b>	<i>Carol Olson</i> , <a href="mailto:carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a> <i>Jim Rea</i> , <a href="mailto:jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">jim.rea@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a> <i>Mary Schroer</i> , <a href="mailto:mary.schroer@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">mary.schroer@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a>	<i>5401 South St.</i> <i>Lincoln</i>
<b>Steinauer</b>	<i>Marcia Borchert</i> , <a href="mailto:marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org">marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</a>	<i>Banquet Room, Convent House B&amp;B, Steinauer</i>

### Initial Oblations

*Lincoln Chapter:* Michael Chaffee, Paula Sayker

*Hastings Chapter:* Joan Hopkins.

### Final Oblations

*Lincoln Chapter:* Bill Abbott, Lylaine Abbott, Lilla Revesz, Mary Shada.

*Steinauer Chapter:* Eric Biehl.

#### **Sr. PENNY BINGHAM'S REMARKS AT THE OBLATION CEREMONY**

As the Church year draws to a close, the readings focus on the end of time. So, Luke's gospel that we just heard (Lk 21: 5–19) reminded us that all things of this world are only temporary. They will all come to an end.

But the life of our souls—our spiritual life—will not end, but will go on into eternity, beyond our physical death.

Jesus offers us powerful assurance amid his description of the collapse of worldly things. He promises, "I myself will give you wisdom in speaking" and "By your perseverance you will secure your lives."

Today, as we solemnize the initial and final Oblation and the renewal of Oblation of our brothers and sisters here in Nebraska, it's a good time for us to remember the wonderful resources and values we share in living our Christian life, guided by the wisdom of Benedict, that help us secure our spiritual life.

One of our resources is *community*: we seek God together, with the witness and support of others. We don't do it alone.

*Prayer:* Daily we listen to God's Word, God's will—with the ear of our heart—as spoken in holy Scripture and in the people and events of the day. We respond to God's Word as we pray, both individually, and with others, as we have done today.

*Study:* We continue to read, to study, to learn about God and about this Benedictine way of living God's way.

*Peace and hospitality:* We pursue peace daily—in every encounter; we strive to build a peaceful world where all are welcome.

*Goal of eternal life:* Preferring nothing to Christ, we yearn for everlasting life with God. Our concern is growing in our spiritual life, not so much on material success.

As Nebraska Oblates associated with Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, you share our efforts

to follow this wisdom of Benedict, as found in his Rule. We Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery are honored and happy to have you share this common quest. Let us continue to pray for one another, and to support one another, as together we seek God. May we persevere on this holy way of St. Benedict, so that we may secure our lives. And one day, may God bring us all together to everlasting life.

#### **Sacred Heart Monastery News**

##### **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](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org).

##### **SAVE THE DATE**

The 2017 oblate retreats will be held on April 7–9 and October 27–29, 2017. Details will follow!

#### **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—December 10**. 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, December 18**.

**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](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org/PrayerRequest.php).

You may also send petitions to Marcia Straatmeyer at [mstraat@neb.rr.com](mailto:mstraat@neb.rr.com) or by using the Prayer Request option on the chapter's Web site.

On the Web: [www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/](http://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/contact/).

**SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTION**

Advent marks the beginning of the liturgical year. Sunday, November 27, 2016, is the first Sunday of Advent. We begin with Evening Prayer I on Saturday night, *Shorter Christian Prayer*, p. 37. At the reading, turn to p. 356. Weekdays in Advent are on pp. 358–376, and are repeated each week during Advent.

On Sundays in Advent, note that the Advent Antiphons are shown in red in the Psalmody. There is a selection of Advent hymns listed on p. 578. If you would like, you can substitute the "O Antiphons" on December 17–23 for the Magnificat antiphon. For Morning Prayer on Christmas Eve Day, turn to p. 378. Christmas Day prayers start on Christmas Eve with Evening Prayer I on p. 380.

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.

We wish you a joyous season of preparation as we anticipate the birth of our Savior.

**THE GREAT "O ANTIPHONS"**

The "O Antiphons" refer to the seven Magnificat antiphons recited during Vespers. They cover the special period of Advent preparation known as the Octave before Christmas, Dec 17–23. Each one 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). Take the first letters of each of the titles, starting with the last and working back to the first to spell EROCRAS or "ero cras"—"I will be (there) tomorrow."

The song "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is created from the seven "O Antiphons." When you sing it, you are joining 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.

**O Antiphons****Magnificat Antiphons beginning December 17**

- 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.**

**Chapter Gatherings****READINGS**

The readings for 2016–2017 come from *Preferring Christ: A Devotional Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict* by Norvene Vest. The December reading is chapters 53–57.

**LINCOLN**

The Chapter Gathering will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sheridan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital.

**HASTINGS**

The Hastings Gathering will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2016, at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings.

- *Facilitator:* Leland Ost diek
- *Reflection:* Kathy Schroder
- *Prayer Leader:* Juliene Bryan
- *Companion Leader:* Robin Stroot, Oblate Handbook Lesson #3.

**STEINAUER**

The date of the Steinauer meeting will be announced. The meeting will be held 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer.

**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. December's discussions focus on Chapter 3, "The Practice of Crossing the Threshold," pp. 49–61.

Cell Details: [www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/cells](http://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, December 19. *This is one week earlier because of Christmas.*

**Hastings Cell Group*****Saint Scholastica Cell***

- Leader: Lee Ost diek
- Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. at St. Cecelia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings.
- This Month: Saturday, December 17. *This is one week earlier because of Christmas.*

**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, December 18. *This is one week earlier because of Christmas.*

***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 the Frontier 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, December 10. *No gathering on December 24 because of Christmas.*

***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: *No gathering in December.*

***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: *Gathering time to be announced.*

### ***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, December 27.

### ***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***

#### ***SACRED HEART MONASTERY HELD FALL RETREAT***

The oblate fall retreat was held at Sacred Heart Monastery on October 28–30, 2016. The retreat theme was "Ways of Praying" and included Sr. Marietta Kerkvliet, "Praying with the Psalms," Sr. Corinne Lemmer, "Praying with the Body," Sr. Doris Oberembt, "Prayer—Being with God," and Sr. Cynthia Binder, "Spirituality and Art."



**Retreatants:** Sr. Patricia Heirigs, Bill Abbott, Lylaine Abbott, Lorene Ludy, Mary Albrecht, Paula Sayker, Carol Olson, Marianne Guenther, Darla Weisbeck, and Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff.

# Renewal of Oblation

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

I renew my oblation as an Oblate of St. Benedict  
for the community of Sacred Heart Monastery,  
Yankton, South Dakota. I promise again to serve  
God and all people according to the Rule of St. Benedict  
through my daily prayer and work. May I be inspired to  
live in Christ and to bring His love to the world  
and His peace to all hearts.

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(oblate signatures)

November 13, 2016