



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 + **March 2017**

A Word from St. Benedict's Rule

HUMILITY'S SEVENTH STEP

The life of a monk ought to be a continuous Lent. Since few, however, have the strength for this, we urge the entire community during these days of Lent to keep its manner of life most pure and to wash away in this holy season the negligences of other times. This we can do in a fitting manner by refusing to indulge evil habits and by devoting ourselves to prayer with tears, to reading, to compunction of heart and self-denial. During these days, therefore, we will add to the usual measure of our service something by way of private prayer and abstinence from food or drink, so that each of us will have something above the assigned measure to offer God of his won will with the joy of the Holy Spirit (1Thess 1:16) In other words, let each one deny himself some food, drink, sleep, needless talking and idle jesting, and look forward to holy Easter with joy and spiritual longing.

Source: *The Rule of Benedict*, RB 49:1–7

Reflection

PRAYER IS THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

Prayer and converse with God is a supreme good: it is a partnership and union with God. As the eyes of the body are enlightened when they see light, so our spirit, when it is intent on God, is illumined by his infinite light. I do not mean the prayer of outward observance but prayer from the heart, not confined to fixed times or periods but continuous throughout the day and night.

Our spirit should be quick to reach out toward God, not only when it is engaged in meditation; at other times also, when it is carrying out its duties, caring for the needy, performing works of charity, giving generously in the service of others, our

spirit should long for God and call him to mind, so that these works may be seasoned with the salt of God's love, and so make a palatable offering to the Lord of the universe.

Throughout the whole of our lives

we may enjoy the benefit that comes from prayer if we devote a great deal of time to it.

Source: From a homily by Saint John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor of the Church (AD c. 349–407)



Source: Byzantine mosaic, AD c. 1000, Cathedral of the Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, Turkey

News from Sacred Heart Monastery

ELECTION OF A PRIORESS

In March, 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 our Oblates to pray several times a week so that the Holy Spirit may help us in our choice of our next prioress. Thank you for your prayers.

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 Borchert, marcia.borchert@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org	Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer

PRAYER FOR THE ELECTION OF 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.

LENTEN RETREAT

Sacred Heart Monastery is offering a Lenten retreat, "A Season for Transformation," on Saturday, March 4, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The retreat is presented by Sr. Jeanne Ranek, OSB.

How can I change my sinful patterns? Throughout the centuries, spiritual giants like Evagrius and John Cassian have offered guidance for the inner journey of transformation. Examples from St. Mary Magdalene are also included. To Register by March 1.

E-mail: BenedictinePeaceCtr@mtmc.edu

Phone: 605.668.6292.

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.

SAVE THE DATE

The 2017 oblate retreats at Sacred Heart Monastery will be held on April 7–9 and October 27–29, 2017. The sisters have set the topic for the 2017 oblate retreats. *See p. 5 for details!*

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 two Saturdays—March 4 and 18**. 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, March 26**.

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/.

SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTION

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017. The readings for Lent begin on the first Sunday of Lent, March 5, 2017. On the first Sunday of Lent, we begin Week I with Sunday Evening Prayer I on p. 37. The antiphons for Sundays in Lent are in red. At the Reading, turn to pp. 405–428. One week of texts is given for the Lenten Season. We continue in the Lenten prayers until Palm Sunday, April 9, 2017.

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 February reading covers chapters 64–66.

HASTINGS

The Hastings gathering will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2017, at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings.

- *Facilitator:* Susan Janda
- *Reflection:* Jim Hoffman
- *Prayer Leader:* Robin Stroot
- *Companion Leader:* Leland Ost diek, Oblate Handbook Lesson #5.

LINCOLN

The Lincoln gathering will be held on Sunday, March 12, 2017, at 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the Sheridan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Oblate Bill Abbott will provide the reflection.

The March meeting will include prayer time for Sacred Heart Monastery as the sisters elect their new prioress in the week following our meeting.

The evening ends with Evening Prayer in the Ryan Memorial Chapel.

STEINAUER

The Steinauer gathering will be held on Monday, March 27, 2017, 7:00–9:00 p.m., in the Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer. This location is across the street from St. Anthony's Church.



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 cell groups across Nebraska except Lincoln's Pax Christi Cell will read the same text. March's discussions focus on Chapter 6, "The Practice of Beginning Again," pp. 97–108.

Cell Details: 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, 4:30–5:30 p.m., in the home of Joan Hopkins, 1611 W. Charles St., Grand Island.
- This Month: Monday, March 27.

Hastings Cell Group

Saint Scholastica Cell

- Leader: Lee Ostdiek
- Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Library at St. Cecelia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings.
- This Month: Saturday, March 25.

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, March 26.

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 **Sheridan Room B** (the room where you pick up your name tags at the chapter gathering) for *lectio divina* and conversation on a topic or the reading. Following this, members may gather in the cafeteria for fellowship.
- This Month: Saturdays, March 4 and 18.

Pax Christi Cell

- Leader: Lorene Ludy
- Meetings: Monthly on the third Tuesday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Mary Lu Long's house, 1615 Brent Blvd., Lincoln.
- This Month: March 21.

Preferring Christ Cell

Please Note: The Preferring Christ Cell will be temporarily merging with the Beginners' Cell because of the extended absence of Charlotte Liggett, Preferring Christ's leader. Please keep Charlotte and her mother in your prayers as her mother nears the end of life.

- 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: March 26.

Omaha Cell Group

- Leader: Phil Kelley
- Meetings: Monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the New Cassel Retirement Center, 900 N. 90th St., Omaha. 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, March 28.

Area Retreat Offerings

OVERVIEW

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 Website 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.

ST. BENEDICT CENTER, SCHUYLER, NEBRASKA

Topic: Contemplative Prayer Retreat

Dates: Friday, March 10, 7:30 p.m., to Sunday, March 12, 1:00 p.m.

Leader: Fr. Thomas Leitner, OSB.

Registration: 402.352.2177

Web: www.stbenedictcenter.com.

SOPHIA SPIRITUALITY CENTER, ATCHISON, KANSAS

Topic: Lenten Retreat Day with Handel's *Messiah*

Date: 1:00–4:30 p.m., Sunday, March 12, 2017

Leader: Sr. Susan Barber, OSB.

Details: Prepare for Easter by reflecting on the Scriptures and texts from Handel's *Messiah*, parts two and three. Sr. Susan Barber will facilitate the retreat. Sr. Irene Nowell, OSB, will offer scriptural background for the texts and Sr. Micaela Randolph, OSB, will lead a *lectio* experience. The retreat will conclude with a viewing of the *Messiah* and an opportunity to follow it with the score.

Contact: Sophia Spirituality Center, 913.360.6173

Web: www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org.

Topic: Tenth Monastic Institute for Oblates: "Steps to Good Living"

Dates: July 20–23, 2017

Leader: Fr. Meinrad Miller, OSB.

Contact: Sophia Spirituality Center, 913.360.6173

Web: www.mountosb.org/ministries/scheduled-retreat-opportunities.

Benedictine Events

NAABOD CONFERENCE

The National Association of Benedictine Oblates (NAABOD) conference will focus on *Benedictine Values and Practices: Tools for Living, Tools for Life*, July 14–19, 2017, at St. Scholastica College, Duluth, Minnesota. Sacred Heart Monastery may invite two oblates to participate. If you are interested, contact Lead Dean Carol Olson.

INTERNATIONAL OBLATES' CONFERENCE

The Fourth International Congress of Benedictine Oblates will meet in Rome in November 2017. If you are interested in learning more about this event, please contact any of the deans.

Overview:

www.anselmianum.com/programmi/2017/congressus_oblati/english/welcome.php.

Deans' Visitation

STEINAUER CHAPTER WELCOMES THE CAROLS

Lead Dean Carol Olson and Lincoln dean Carol Barry traveled to Steinauer to join in the oblates' January gathering. They enjoyed visiting with the Chapter members and joining them in a discussion of the lesson. Following the meeting, Vespers were held in the beautiful chapel at Convent House B&B. Thank you all for your Benedictine hospitality!

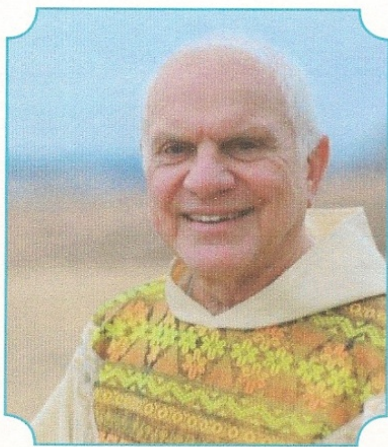


Steinauer Chapter: (Back row)—Deloris Lewis, Marcia Borchert, Don Borchert, and Eric Biehl. (Seated)—Kristin Blecha, Marjorie Wenzl (Absent: Vic Faessler).

— *Spring Oblate Retreat* —

“Five steps to a vibrant Christian Life”

Presenter is: *Fr. Thomas A. Hillenbrand, O.S.B.*



Born in Evansville, IN in 1939 Fr. Tom professed his vows to Benedictine Monastic Life on August 15, 1960 and was ordained a priest on May 27, 1965.

During his many years of monastic life and priesthood, he served the Blue Cloud Community at Marvin, SD as Novice Master, missionary at Resurrection Priory in Coban, Guatemala – a dependent house of Blue Cloud Abbey – and as Abbot. Preceding the assignment to Guatemala, he ministered as chaplain at Sacred Heart Monastery & Mount Marty College in Yankton, SD, and as pastor at St. Michael Indian Mission on the Ft. Totten Indian Reservation in North Dakota. After the closing of Blue Cloud Abbey in Marvin, SD, in 2012, Fr. Tom transferred his stability as a Benedictine monk to Christ the King Priory in Schuyler, NE in 2013.

**Starting Friday, April 7 at 5:00 p.m. —
Sunday, April 9, 2017 at noon**

This retreat will be offered again on

**Friday, October 27 at 5:00 p.m. —
Sunday, October 29, 2017 at noon**

The retreat is available to both women and men

| The retreat costs \$120 | Scholarships are available. |

Please Register by March 31, 2017 for the first opportunity listed above.

**To Register: Contact S. Patricia Heirigs by visiting our website at
<http://yanktonbenedictines.org/oblate> or
(605) 668-6017 or (605) 668-6000**



Yankton Benedictines
SACRED HEART MONASTERY
Yankton, South Dakota