



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 + **May 2017**

A Word from St. Benedict's Rule

THE ASSIGNMENT OF BURDENSOME TASKS

A brother may be assigned a burdensome task or something he cannot do. If so, he should, with complete gentleness and obedience, accept the order given him. Should he see, however, that the weight of the burden is altogether too much for his strength, then he should choose the appropriate moment and explain patiently to his superior the reasons why he cannot perform the task. This he ought to do without pride, obstinacy or refusal. If after the explanation the superior is still determined to hold to his original order, then the junior must recognize that this is best for him. Trusting in God's help, he must in love obey.

Source: *The Rule of Benedict*, RB 68

Reflection by Sister Phyllis Hunhoff

ABOUT THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

Monastic living has always held an interesting mystique about it. Today more than ever, monasteries are regaining their special historic identity created by the great St. Benedict of Nursia (480-540). It has been a great privilege for me to have assisted many men and women of all faiths to our monastery's associate program, the Benedictine Oblates. Seeing them cherish the many values such as prayer with the Liturgy of the Hours, Lectio for scripture and Labora, seeing God in all our daily work, makes me most grateful for my own Benedictine life. These past several years, I have had the opportunity to look seriously at Vocation Ministry. Whereas our monastery, like most religious communities, has some concern about our future, I have found richness in our monastery and the hope for our future in our own individual Sisters. As we looked at new approaches for a greater awareness of Sacred Heart Monastery,

such as upgrading our website, increasing our annual retreats, linking to national organizations and utilizing social media, we needed to involve many of our Sisters. What a treasury of gold! They have taken on these new directions with great aplomb.



St. Benedict of Nursia

We see some of our most influential and excited members of our monastery in their sixties and seventies. As an active, older adult, who formerly would have been considered in retirement, I am now able and joyfully share in this ongoing and exciting vocation ministry. And, as the aging demographics change, we are now welcoming mature, well-educated women in their thirties, forties, and fifties. These women come with an excitement for our consecrated life and hope for the future. They welcome seeking God in prayer and service to the church through our Benedictine monastic life. We are here, dedicated to something bigger than ourselves, experiencing a deep hospitality for the whole world and extending our love of God to visitors, strangers and those in most need. We are welcoming women who dare to dream as I and my other Sisters have done.

Sister Phyllis Hunhoff established the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery

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

News from Sacred Heart Monastery

Sr. MARIBETH WENTZLAFF ELECTED Prioress of SHM

The joyous event of this Lenten season was the election of Sister Maribeth Wentzlaff as Prioress of Sacred Heart Monastery on March 19, 2017. She will continue as director of Campus Ministry and Mission Director of Mount Marty College until her installation on June 3, 2017, as the fourteenth prioress of Sacred Heart Monastery. Thank you for your many prayers during our discernment and election process. We ask for your continued prayers for Sister Maribeth. Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life. May the new life and new joy of Easter live on in you!

God's Blessings,
Sister Patricia Heirigs

SOURCE: April 2017 issue of the Sacred Heart Oblate Newsletter, <http://yanktonbenedictines.org/oblates/>.

SHM WELCOMES OBLATES TO SPRING RETREAT

The spring oblate retreat was held at Sacred Heart Monastery on April 7–9, 2017. The Retreat, “Five Steps to a Vibrant Christian Life,” was presented by Fr. Tom Hillenbrand, OSB, of Christ the King Priory in Schuyler, Nebraska. The retreat will be repeated October 27–29, 2017.



Spring Oblate Retreat Attendees: (Back Row) Jim Rea, Rod Dolton, Dale Schroeder, David Frye, Mary Shada, Steve Blum, and Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff. (Front Row) Sr. Patricia Heirigs, Fr. Tom Hillenbrand, Carol Barry, and Shirley Cruickshank.

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.

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—May 13 and 27**. 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, because of Memorial Day, they will pray Evening Prayer at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 7.*

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

We continue in Easter Season until Pentecost, June 4, 2017. Continue to follow the Easter Season Readings and Antiphons. Prayers for Ascension Thursday, May 25, are on pp. 487–488. Pentecost is on June 4, 2017. Turn to pp. 489–498 for Evening Prayer I through Evening Prayer II for Pentecost.

We are in Ordinary Time from Pentecost until Advent. On Monday, June 5, 2017, the Monday after Pentecost, we start with Week I, p. 54.

Chapter News

ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER: MARK YOUR CALENDAR

On Sunday, June 11, 2017, all oblates of the Nebraska Chapters are invited to celebrate the end of another year of oblate gatherings. We will meet at 4:30 p.m. in the Chapel at Madonna in Lincoln.

We will begin the celebration in the Sheridan Room with food and fellowship. We will then move to the Chapel for Vespers. Paper products and drinks will be provided. Please bring a salad, vegetable, dessert, or main dish to share. Family members are welcome! Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff and Sr. Patricia Heirigs will be joining us.

This year we will again offer a book exchange at the potluck! Bring your spiritual books that you no longer need. We will have a space to display them for others to take home.

NEW BOOKS FOR NEXT YEAR

As you have no doubt noticed, we will be finishing up both our Chapter and cell books in May. The selections for next year are under discussion with the deans, Sr. Patricia, and Sr. Phyllis. The final selections will be announced as soon as possible. If you have suggestions, please contact a dean or cell leader.

WORLD OBLATE CONGRESS

The Fourth International Congress of Benedictine Oblates will meet in Rome in November 2017. We are pleased to announce that one of our oblates, Jim Rea, will be attending! The last time we had representatives from the Nebraska Oblates was in 2005, when Carol Olson and Marti Fritzen attended the first World Oblate Congress. Carol and Marti found the experience deeply meaningful, and shared their insights with the Chapters' members. Jim will be representing all of us at this important meeting. If you would like to help defray the cost (around \$2000) he would be most grateful for any assistance. Please send your donations to the chapter:

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

Note that checks made out to the Nebraska Oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery would qualify to be tax deductible.

Here is a reflection by Carol Olson on her experience at the 2005 World Oblate Congress:

My perspective on being a Benedictine Oblate completely changed and was expanded after attending the Congress. Meeting other Oblates from the USA and from around the world,

participating in the Liturgy of the Hours several times per day, and listening to presentations on a particular theme broadened my view and helped me to see the value in community, both large and small. Listening to Oblates as they discussed the issues that were important to them and maintaining the connection to their monastery assisted me in understanding what we can do in Nebraska to stay connected to Sacred Heart in South Dakota. It was immensely valuable to make connections with other Oblates, and I still keep in touch with several from that initial meeting twelve years ago.

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 May reading covers chapters 71–73 and the Afterword.

HASTINGS

The Hastings gathering will be held on Saturday, May 13, 2017, 9:30–11:30 a.m., in the St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings.

- *Facilitator:* Kathy Schroder
- *Reflection:* Jeanette Nordhues
- *Prayer Leader:* Sharon Conner
- *Companion Leader:* Leland Ostdiek, "My Personal Rule of Life."

LINCOLN

The Lincoln gathering will be held on Sunday, May 21, 2017, 7:00–9:00 p.m., in the Sheridan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. **NOTE: This gathering is a week later than usual, moving to the third Sunday of May, due to Mother's Day.** We will be welcoming Brother James Dowd as speaker. Brother James is an Episcopal Benedictine monk currently living in Omaha.

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

STEINAUER

The Steinauer gathering will be held on Monday, May 22, 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. May's discussions focus on Chapter 8, "The Practice of Coming Home," and the Conclusion, pp. 125–140.

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, May 22.

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, May 20.
- **Note: the cell is meeting one week early due to the Memorial Day holiday.**

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, May 7, a change because of the Memorial Day weekend.**

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, May 13 and 27.
- Summer Reading and Discussion: *The Vinedresser's Notebook: Spiritual Lessons in Pruning, Waiting, Harvesting, and Abundance*, by Sister Judith Sutera, OSB, Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, Kansas.

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: May 23.**

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: Sunday, May 7, a change because of the Memorial Day weekend.**

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, May 23.

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 Photography

Dates: Saturday, May 6, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Leader: Rita Otis.

Details: This retreat is designed to nurture our ability to see deeply. With a camera, we take the energy of intimacy and make it manifest. That is contemplative photography.

Registration: 402.352.2177

Web: www.stbenedictcenter.com.

SOPHIA SPIRITUALITY CENTER, ATCHISON, KANSAS

Topic: *The Spirituality of Place*

Date: Tuesday, May 16, 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Leader: Sr. Therese Elias, OSB.

Topic: *Growing with God—A Gardener's and Plant-Lover's Retreat*

Date: Friday, May 5, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Leader: Sr. Thomasita Homan, OSB.

Details: Explore the relationship of place and spirituality. This retreat will give you space and time to pay attention to special places in your own life and memorable places in scripture. You will reflect on how to become more aware that place is the intersection of time and eternity.

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.

Web: www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org.