



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 + **September 2017**

A Word from St. Benedict's Rule

Brothers, now that we have asked the Lord who will dwell in his tent, we have heard the instruction for dwelling in it, but only if we fulfill the obligations of those who live there. We must, then, prepare our hearts and bodies for the battle of holy obedience to his instructions. What is not possible to us by nature, let us ask the Lord to supply by the help of his grace. If we wish to reach eternal life, even as we avoid the torments of hell, then—while there is still time, while we are in this body and have time to accomplish all these things by the light of life—we must run and do now what will profit us forever.

Source: *The Rule of Benedict*, RB Prol. 8–13

News from the North Association of American Benedictine Oblate Directors

Several members and Oblates of the Sacred Heart Monastery community attended the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors (NAABOD) conference at St Scholastica Monastery, Duluth, MN from July 14-19. The theme was: "Benedictine Values & Practices: Tools for Living, Tools for Life" Those attending were: Oblate Director Sr Patricia Heirigs, Associate Directors Sr Phyllis Hunhoff and Sr Barbara McTague; Lead Dean Carol Olson and Oblates Lylaine and Bill Abbott. The NAABOD provides assistance to and ongoing formation for directors of Oblates. It provides a forum for discerning needs and issues associated with this formation activity and guidelines for leadership and the oblate way of life. There were 3 keynote presentations: Theresa Schumacher, OSB, from St. Benedict Monastery, St. Joseph, MN; Rene McGraw, OSB –St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, MN, and Mary Reuter, OSB–St.

Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, MN. The attendees also had ample opportunities to share our experiences with other Oblate groups and learn from them as well. We will be sharing information from these speakers in various forms over the next year; stay tuned!

Sr Phyllis Hunhoff and Carol Olson gave a presentation to new Oblate Directors on how to structure Oblate Chapter Gatherings, advertise for the Oblate Chapter, and use of the Oblate Handbook. It was well-received and generated good discussions during the presentation.

The group also voted to send \$1000 to the Benedictine sisters in Norcia, Italy who are still recovering after the serious earthquakes last fall.

The group voted to support 3rd world attendees for the World Benedictine Oblate's Congress in November--we are sending \$1000 for this cause. 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. There is still time if you would like to help defray the cost (around \$2000) he would be most grateful for any assistance. We are currently about halfway towards our goal. Donations may be sent to Nebraska Benedictine Oblates 2843 S 42 St

CHAPTERS	DEANS	LOCATIONS
Hastings	<i>Julienne Bryan, julienne.bryan@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org</i>	<i>St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 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>

Lincoln, NE 68506. Note that checks made out to the Nebraska Oblates of Sacred Heart Monastery would qualify to be tax deductible.

Also, The Sophia Spirituality Center in Atchison, KS is hosting the 11th annual Monastic Institute for Benedictine Oblates on July 12-15, 2018. The topic is: "To Be Alive: Living The Rule from Day to Day", the keynote speaker is Judith Valente. For more information, contact: Sister Mary Elizabeth Schweiger at maryliz@mountosb.org



From left to right: Sr Celine Schock, Immaculata Monastery in Norfolk, NE, incoming Vice President; Fr Mark Stengel, Subiaco Abbey Monastery, Subiaco, AR, outgoing Vice President; Sr Bonita Gacnik, Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, SD, outgoing President, and Sr Priscilla Cohen, Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, AL, incoming President.

Sacred Heart Monastery News

Fall Oblate Retreat-October 27-29, 2017 "Five steps to a vibrant Christian Life" Presenter is: Fr. Thomas A. Hillenbrand, O.S.B. The retreat is available to both women and men Oblates. The retreat costs \$120 Scholarships are available. Please Register by October 20, 2017 to S. Patricia Heirigs by visiting our website at <http://yanktonbenedictines.org/oblate> or (605) 668-6017 or (605) 668-6000

Sacred Heart Monastery

Come for a Personal Retreat at the Monastery: The Benedictine Peace Center is designed for silent personal retreats in monastic space, where you can be alone and/or join the Benedictine Sisters at prayer and meals. Your personal retreat can be any length and you may request a spiritual director. First night is \$50 with added nights \$40. For further options, go to Yankton Benedictines -

Retreat Center or contact Sr. Jeanne Ranek: jeanne.ranek@mtmc.edu or 605-668-6024

Come for a Monastic over-night visit: Suggested arrival at 4 pm. Vespers at 5pm followed by supper with tour of monastery. Morning Prayer, Mass and breakfast with further optional opportunities for overviews of Benedictine history, Lectio, Divine Office, etc. until 11:30 am. Lunch and departure. Small donation if possible. At least two weeks advance notice and openings as available in the guest department. Contact Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff: phyllis.hunhoff@mtmc.edu or 605-668-6257

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. Please consider adding this prayer office to your spiritual life.

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/.

Introduction to the Divine Office

A special session will be held on Saturday, November 4, 2017 9:30–11:30 a.m., room to be announced, at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, in the Nemaha Room. We will demonstrate how to use the Shorter Christian Prayer book, our chapters' book for the Divine Office. Please plan to come to this session if you are unfamiliar with how to use the Shorter Christian Prayer book. 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.

New Book Selection for Chapter Meetings

The oblate directors and deans had originally selected book *Sacred Rhythms: The Monastic Way Every Day* by Br. Francis de Sales Wagner, OSB. However, the publisher, Abbey Press, closed on June 1, making the book expensive and difficult to obtain. In light of this problem we have decided to select another book for 2017-2018. We will be studying from *Seven Sacred Pauses: Living Mindfully Through the Hours of the Day* by Sr. Macrina Wiederkehr. Some of you may be familiar with Sr. Macrina's work as she is a prolific and well-regarded spiritual writer. We will begin study of *Seven Sacred Pauses* with the September Chapter meetings.

Attached is a breakdown of the assignments for next year:

Seven Sacred Pauses: Living Mindfully Through the Hours of the Day by Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB

Each chapter includes a series of chants which are at the back of the book; see assignments for page numbers. The chants accompany a CD recording of these chants, available separately.

September 2017: Introduction and Living Mindfully

October 2017: Chapter 1: The Night Watch; chants, p. 182-183

November—no reading due to Oblation Ceremony

December 2017: Chapter 2: The Awakening Hour; chants, p. 183-185

January 2018: Chapter 3: The Blessing Hour; chants, p. 185-186

February 2018: Chapter 4: The Hour of Illumination; chants, p. 187-188

March 2018: Chapter 5: The Wisdom Hour; chants, p. 188-189

April 2018: Chapter 6: The Twilight Hour; chants, p. 190-191

May 2018: Chapter 7: The Great Silence; chants, p. 192-193, and Litany of the Hours, p. 177-179.

Please note: this is the only time the full reading schedule will be published in the newsletter. The schedule is also published on the website: nebraskabenedictineoblates.org

Chapter News

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The annual oblation ceremony will be held on Sunday, November 12, 2017 at 2:30 pm. Note, this is a change from the 2:00 pm starting time we've had in the past. More information will follow at a later date.

Chapter Gatherings

Lincoln

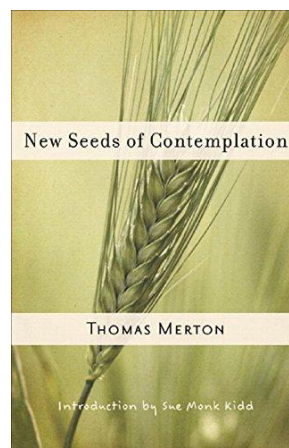
The Chapter Gathering will be held on Sunday, September 10, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Sheridan Room at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital.

Hastings

The Hastings Gathering will be held on Saturday, September 9, 2017 at 9:30-11:30 am, at St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N. Kansas, Hastings, NE. Facilitator-Julienne Bryan.

Steinauer

The Steinauer meeting will be held on September 25, 2017 7:00-9:00 pm in the Banquet Room, Convent House B&B, Steinauer.



NEW CELL GROUP BOOK

For the next several years, the cell groups will be studying from the book *New Seeds of Contemplation* by Thomas Merton. This is one of Thomas Merton's most

widely read and best-loved books. Christians and non-Christians alike have joined in praising it as a notable successor in the meditative tradition of St. John of the Cross, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and the medieval mystics, while others have compared Merton's reflections with those of Thoreau. This book seeks to awaken the dormant inner depths of the spirit so long neglected by Western humanity and to nurture a deeply contemplative and mystical dimension in our lives.

Cell Group Readings: 2017–2019

Text: *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Thomas Merton, A New Direction paperback, ISBN 978-0-8112-1724-8.

The cell groups will spend time with this book from the fall of 2017 through the spring of 2019. Here is the guide for readings and reflection.

2017	2018
September Introduction/Preface/Notes and Chapters 1–2	January Chapters 10–12
October Chapters 3–4	February Chapters 13–14
November Chapters 5–6	March Chapters 15–16
December Chapters 7–9	April Chapters 17–18
	May Chapters 19–20

Cell Gatherings

Cell Groups

Oblates are encouraged to further their oblate experience by joining a cell group. Following are the available cell groups, including meeting dates, time, and location.

Grand Island Cell Group: 2017–2018

BROTHER LAWRENCE CELL

Leader: Jeanette Nordhues

Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 4:30 in the home of Joan Hopkins, 1611 W. Charles St. Grand Island

Hastings Cell Group: 2017–2018

SAINT SCHOLASTICA CELL

Leader: Lee Ost diek

Meetings: The fourth Saturday of the month beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the library of St. Michael's Church, Hastings. The September meeting will be on Saturday, September 23, 2017, 9:30-10:30 am at the St. Cecilia's Health Ministry Building, 415 N Kansas Ave.

Lincoln Cell Groups: 2016–2017

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.

HILDEGARD VON BINGEN CELL

Leader: Carol Roettmer Brewer

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 members of this cell then gather in a room for *lectio divina* and conversation on a topic or the reading. Following this, members may gather in the cafeteria for breakfast and fellowship. Details: Find out [more](#).

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.

PREFERRING CHRIST CELL

Due to Charlotte Liggett's continued absence to care for her mother, the Preferring Christ cell will meet with the Beginners cell. The fourth Sunday of the month at 7:00 pm, meet in the Chapel for vespers prior to the meeting.

ST. GERTRUDE CELL-OMAHA

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.

Text: *News Seeds of Contemplation* by Thomas Merton. The cell groups will spend time with this book from the fall of 2017 through the spring of 2018. September assignment: Introduction, Preface, Notes, and Chapters 1 and 2

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 phone number and Web address for each monastery.

St. Benedict Center Schuyler Nebraska

Contact: 1123 Road I Schuyler NE 68661,
<http://www.stbenedictcenter.com>, (402)-352-2177

From Here to Hope: Our Mission of Mercy
Saturday, Oct 14, 2017.10am - 4pm presented
by Fr. Joseph Nassal, CPPS

Sophia Center Atchison Kansas

Contact: Sophia Center 751 S 8th Atchison, KS
66002, (913)360-6173,
<http://www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org>

Newsletter Volunteer Request

One of the many things that David Frye did for us was to take my WORD copy of the newsletter and put it into a template, add his artistic touches and turn it into a beautiful newsletter. While I'll continue to compose the new content for the newsletter, I'm asking for your help on the template part. Is there anyone more techo-savvy than I who would be willing to take on this task? We print newsletters monthly from September through June. Jim Rea releases the email version, and I send out the paper newsletters, so it's just a matter of completing the template. If you would like to contribute your talents and time to the oblates, please consider this task. You can contact me at MajorCarolB@yahoo.com, through our oblate email, or contact one of the deans. Thank you! Carol Barry Lincoln Dean

Newsletter Survey-Your input needed!

The oblate newsletter has followed the same format for years. In an effort to ensure it is interesting and useful for you, we need your input. Following are a list of the topic sections currently in the newsletter. Please let us know what topics you use and would like to have remain in the newsletter, and what topics you don't think are necessary. Are there other changes you'd like to see? You may email your comments and suggestions to nebraskabenedictineoblates.org, or to MajorCarolB@Yahoo.com, or write to 2843 S. 42 St. Lincoln NE 68506. The oblate newsletter is yours, please help us make it serve you better!

Newsletter Topics

Quotation from the Rule of Benedict

Reflection

News From Sacred Heart Monastery

Chapter assignments

Listing of cell groups and assignments

Shorter Christian Prayer book Instructions

Area Retreat Offerings

"Spiritual Pause" Mini-Retreats

Mark your Calendars: We have reserved the following dates at Serenity Acres in Bennett Nebraska-- October 15, 2017, January 18, 2018, and April 22, 2018. We're working on the topic for October. Most likely the January date will be a Rule of Life retreat. On April 22, there will be a retreat about St. Scholastica, presented by Carol Olson and Bill and Lylaine Abbott, based on one of the speakers they heard at NAABOD. Details to come.