



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 +Summer 2021

A WORD FROM ST. BENEDICT'S RULE

Prologue – Brothers and sisters, we’ve asked the Lord who can live with him, and he has shown us how we can. Life with God is possible – but only in the way that God has shown us. We must get ready then – heart, mind, and spirit – for the great struggle of learning to listen to God’s word. For what we cannot do in our own strength, let’s ask the Master for the help of his grace. If we want to find the life that’s really life (and not simply a way of postponing death), then let’s run on while there’s still time to accomplish these things by the light of life. Let’s start to do now those things that will benefit us forever.

This is why we want to establish a school for the Lord’s service. In drawing up its code of conduct, we hope to avoid anything harsh or burdensome. Even so, the good of everyone involved may compel us to establish some rules that seem strict. Know that it’s not for the sake of the rules, but rather it is to help heal our brokenness and to safeguard our love. Don’t be overwhelmed by fear and run away from the way that leads to salvation. It’s bound to be hard at first, but as we move on in this way of life and in faith, we will run on the road of God’s good words – our hearts overflowing with delight. We’ll know what it means to live in the way of love, even if there are no words to describe it.

Source - The Rule of Saint Benedict: A Contemporary Paraphrase by Jonathan Wilson-Hargrove

SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTIONS

Right after Pentecost, which was Sunday, May 23, 2021, we entered into Ordinary Time. On Memorial Day, May 31, 2021 we started with Psalm Week 1. Sunday, June 6, 2021 we arrived at the 10th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, starting in Psalm week 2. We will remain in Ordinary Time for the remainder of the year until Advent. One resource you might like to check for the Liturgy of the Hours for the current day can be found at universalis.com. Navigate to the link for “Yearly Calendar.”

PEACE CENTER AT SACRED HEART MONASTERY IS OFFERING THE FOLLOWING STUDY

The Exodus is a foundational event of the Old Testament giving meaning to everything else we find in it. In Part 1 of this study we explore the first 15 chapters of this book. In them we learn how God calls Moses to intercede for his people in slavery. Following the plagues he led them through the sea into the Sinai desert where they are formed as a people of God. What is the significance of these chapters for Christians today? What are we invited to learn from them for our life’s journey? Each of the five sessions, held online on Wednesday mornings, will include study, reflection, discussions, YouTubes and prayer using materials from The Little Rock Scripture Study. S. Doris Oberembt will be your facilitator. For more information and to register

CONTACT

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please contact S. Doris at 605-668-6022 or doberembt@yanktonbenedictines.org. Pre-registration is required so books may be ordered.

PSALM OF LAMENT

During the Nebraska Benedictine Oblate May chapter meeting, Steve Blum, led us in developing a Psalm of Lament. Our Psalm of Lament focused on the past year when so many have suffered physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of COVID. The Psalm of Lament written via Chat on Zoom during our meeting is as follows:

*Dear Lord, loving Creator God,
O Divine Presence, God of grace and comfort.
How long until our lives get back to normal?
We are so tired of this isolation; how long must we
wait?
We are exhausted by the constant death count,
Weighed down by the relentless news of death.
Why have you isolated us from our families,
friends, and church homes?
We are terrified of losing our loved ones.
What would you have us learn by watching others
suffer?
We feel so helpless!
But we know You are here,
You are with us and present to bear our sorrows.
Your faithfulness never ceases.
You have always shown yourself to be merciful.
You have never let us down.
And so, we trust in your mercy.
For your constant love, we are grateful.
Mothering God, in kindness you bless us and love
us.
You are all-powerful and compassionate and we
thank you for your presence in our lives.
We know in You, all shall be well.*

If you would like to write your own Psalm of Lament, here are the steps that will guide you.

STEP 1: INTIMATE ADDRESS. Begin by naming God in a particular intimate way. How do you begin your prayers, or refer to God in your prayers? **Examples:** LORD, my God (Psalm 7); O

LORD, our Sovereign (Psalm 8); O LORD, God of my salvation (Psalm 88).

STEP 2: COMPLAINT. Tell God how this pandemic (or any other tragedy/suffering) has troubled your life, your mind, etc. and the difficulties that have been created by it. **BE REAL, BE RAW, BE HONEST. Examples:** How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day long? (Psalm 13); Attend to me, and answer me; I am troubled in my complaint. I am distraught by the noise of the enemy, because of the clamor of the wicked. For they bring trouble upon me, and in anger they cherish enmity against me (Psalm 55).

STEP 3: PETITION. Make your desire and/or request known to God. The goal is to mobilize God into action. **Examples:** Hide not your face from me on the day when I am in straits. On the day I call, quickly answer me (Psalm 102); Rise up to help us (Psalm 44); To you, O LORD, I call. Hear the sound of my pleading when I cry out to you (Psalm 28).

STEP 4: WORDS OF REORIENTATION. Old testament scholar, Walter Brueggeman, calls Psalms of Lament "Psalms of Disorientation." In this part of the psalm, we re-orient. We find our orientation once again in God. We might recall how he has been faithful in the past. We might remember a promise he has made. **Examples:** Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matt 5:4). Jesus told his disciples, "...in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) But I trust in our unfailing love, my heart exalts in your rescue (Psalm 135).

STEP 5: WORDS OF PRAISE. Psalms of Lament often end praising God after the writer re-orient himself to recalling God's faithfulness and promises. Thus, rather than our complaining and negativity driving us away from God. A Psalm of Lament moves us closer to God. Perhaps we can

model our prayer life...and even our interactions with our friends in such a way!

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you, as a Nebraska Benedictine Oblate desire to have prayer for yourself, a family member, friend, co-worker, etc.; please email the person's name and specific prayer request to: timothy12@gmail.com Prayer requests can be made to this email address at any time as Tim and Ginny Adams will monitor the submissions and distribute the prayer requests to the NBO Prayer Community on a regular basis.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ZOOM Events – Until further notice all Nebraska Benedictine Oblate chapter meetings will be held via Zoom. Please watch for emails from Carol Olson who will be providing the link.

Potluck – 6/13/2021; 4:30 pm. As we did last year, we will meet again via Zoom for our potluck. Please plan on having your favorite picnic food. We will spend some time sharing our experiences of Benedictine spirituality with each other. From Sacred Heart the following sisters will join us: Prioress of Sacred Heart, Sr. Maribeth Wentzlaff, Oblate Director, Sr. Patricia Heirigs, and Associate Oblate Director, Sr. Phyllis Hunhoff. We also plan to have an Oblation Ceremony and Renewal of Oblation during our time together.

Hastings Oblate Orientation – 8/28/2021; 9:30 am. Orientation will be in person at St. Cecelia's Guadalupe Center; 217 Kansas Ave. Hastings, NE. If you know of someone interested in exploring Benedictine spirituality please forward their name and contact information to Juliene Bryan at wjbryan@gtmc.net or call 402-984-4674.

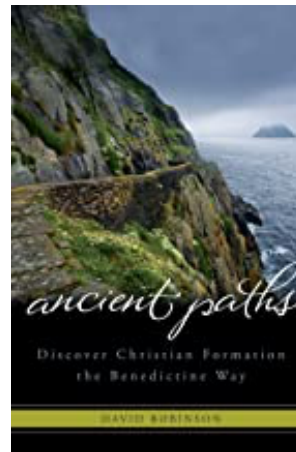
Lincoln Oblate Orientation – 8/22/2021; 7:00 pm. Orientation will occur via Zoom. If you know of someone interested in exploring Benedictine spirituality, please forward their name and contact information to Carol Olson at carol.olson@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org

Steinauer Oblate Orientation – 8/30/2021; 7:00 pm. Orientation will be in

person at Convent House Banquet Room. If you know of someone interested in exploring Benedictine spirituality please forward their name and contact information to Marcia Borcher at marcia.borcher@nebraskabenedictineoblates.org

September Chapter Meeting – 9/12/2021; 7:00 pm will be held via Zoom and we will have prayer, announcements, Lectio Divina, and discussions.

CHAPTER BOOK SELECTION



***Ancient Paths: Discover Christian Formation the Benedictine Way* by David Robinson**

The chapter book we will be starting this coming Oblate year is *Ancient Paths: Discover Christian Formation the Benedictine Way* by David Robinson. This book provides the classic path for growing a Christian community. This innovative guide to Christian formation offers an ancient-yet-contemporary approach to growth in Christ. The book is available as a paperback or an eBook. We will read the book over a two-year period.

Reading assignments for this next Oblate year (September, 2021 – April, 2022) are as follows:

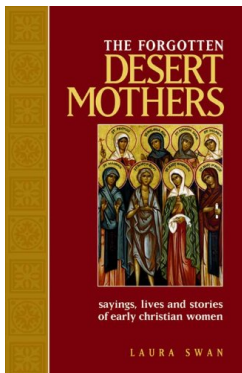
- September – Preface & Introduction (10 pages)
- October – Chapter 1 (pp. 3-17)
- November – Chapter 2A (pp. 18-28)
- December – Chapter 2B (pp. 29-40)
- January – Chapter 3 (pp. 41-55)
- February – Chapter 4 (pp. 56-75)

- March – Chapter 5 (pp. 76-91)
- April – Chapter 6 (pp. 92-108)

For all reading assignments for the Chapter, you may also use the following link

<https://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/gatherings/monthly-readings/>

CELL GROUP BOOK SELECTION



The Forgotten Desert Mothers: The Sayings, Lives, and Stories of Early Christian Women.

The cell book we will continue using this coming Oblate year is *The Forgotten Desert Mothers* by Laura Swan, O.S.B. This book is an introduction to the sayings, lives, stories, and spirituality of women in the postbiblical, early Christian movement. Reading assignments for our next Oblate year (September, 2021 – May, 2022) are as follows:

- September – Chapter 4; Matrona of Perge (pp. 94-105)
- October – Chapter 5; Deaconesses of the Early Church & Ordination Rite of Deacons (pp. 106-114 & 171-177)
- November – Chapter 5; Melania the Elder (pp. 114-126)
- December – Chapter 6; Mentors of the Monastic Way (pp.127-135)
- January – Chapter 6; Rome through end of chapter (pp. 135-149)
- February – Epilogue; The Gift of the Desert (pp. 151-169)
- March – *Oblate Handbook*; Monastic Tradition – Life of Anthony, Basil’s Rule, Evagrius Ponticus (pp. 40-42)
- April – *Oblate Handbook*; Monastic Tradition – John Cassian, the Place of

Monasticism in the Modern World (pp. 43-45)

- May – *Oblate Handbook*; Monastic Tradition – Contemplative Availability (pp. 58-62)

For all reading assignments for the Cell Groups you may also use the following link

<https://www.nebraskabenedictineoblates.org/cells/>

NEBRASKA BENEDICTINE OBLATES RAISE MONEY FOR REFUGEE RELIEF

Around one out of every 100 people on earth have been forced out of their homes by conflict or disaster. That’s nearly 80 million people. Refugees face overcrowded conditions in refugee camps with severe shortages of food and healthcare. Four Nebraska Oblates teamed up to participate in the 2021 Ration Challenge. The challenge, which occurs June 13-19 is to eat only the rations that a Syrian refugee would receive in a Jordanian refugee camp for one week. This includes rice, a small amount of lentils and chickpeas, a small amount of flour, oil, and one can of Kidney Beans and one can of Sardines. The week’s diet is primarily rice. The oblates on the “team” are Boots Wailes, Steve Blum, Carol Barry, and Mary Shada. The team (“Nebraska Benedictine Oblates”) has already raised enough money to feed 25 refugees for one year! On June 3, 2021 the international organizers of the Ration Challenge (Church World Services) have selected the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates to be spotlighted as the national team of the week, as the team has surpassed it’s goal of raising 5000.00 and is the fifth-highest fundraising team in the country! The team will be featured on the Ration Challenge Facebook page, along with a story about the team’s forming and fundraising efforts. Donations can be made at:

<https://www.rationchallengeusa.org/t/nebraskabenedictineoblates>

SACRED HEART MONASTERY

We are excited to share with you the following message from the Peace Center at Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, SD, “We are

currently accepting fully vaccinated retreatants at the Benedictine Peace Center on a very limited basis. You are welcome to contact us for reservations at 605-668-6292.”

<https://yanktonbeneditines.org/center/>

The Benedictine Peace Center offers the following to retreatants:

- A peaceful place to rest a while and renew your relationship with God
- Walk in nature on the bluffs overlooking the Missouri River
- Meet with a trained spiritual director who can listen and guide your retreat
- Join the monastic community for prayer and meals or cherish your solitude