



# Oblate Newsletter

SACRED HEART MONASTERY  
Yankton, South Dakota

MARCH 2023

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Dear Oblates,

We are already in the season of Lent. It seems like we just finished the Christmas season and already we have had Ash Wednesday. If you have not done so already, **take time to read Chapter 49 in the Holy Rule on "The Observance of Lent."** Read it slowly, reflect, and continue your journey. Pope Francis said, *"Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like him."*

During March, we Sisters will have our **discernment/election of our new prioress** from March 15-19. So the Monastery monthly Oblate meeting will be on Sunday, March 26, at 1:00 pm in Room 215. We have started our new book, *"Strangers to the City,"* by Michael Casey, a Cistercian monk from Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia. The book reflects on the beliefs and values of the Rule of St. Benedict.

**March has several feast days for Saints that we celebrate.** The feast of St. Patrick comes on March 17, right in the middle of our election process. St. Joseph's feast is on March 19, while St. Benedict's is on March 21. St. Benedict's feast is a remembrance of his death anniversary so we celebrate more festively on July 11.

Our annual **Oblation Ceremony** for novices, final oblation, and renewal of oblation will be on Sunday, April 16, at 1:00 pm. The ceremony will be during our mid-day prayer in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel. If you are becoming a Novice or making Final Oblation, please come at 12:45 pm, so we can have a short practice.

**Remember, our March Monastery Oblate Meeting is a week later on March 26, at 1:00 pm in Room 215.**

As you journey through Lent this year, may the Spirit of Benedict be with you!

God's Blessings,

*Sister Patricia Heirigs*

*This group of nine deer have been regular visitors to the monastery. Can you spot them all?*



# Upcoming Opportunities

## March 5-11 - Mount Marty Spring Break

Many international students stay on campus during this time.

## March 8-14

### National Catholic Sisters Week

Events are planned during that time.

## March 11 - Monastery Desert Day

## March 15-19 Election of the Prioress

We spend much time in prayer and discernment during these days. Our next prioress is elected for a term of six years. This prioress will guide us through our transformation process. We ask for your prayers during this time.



### Prioresses of SHM (photo taken in 2017)

**Front:** Ss. Jacqueline Ernster (deceased),  
Aiden Bourke, Wilma Lyle (deceased)

**Back:** Ss. Penny Bingham, Jennifer Kehrwald,  
Maribeth Wentzlaff, Kathryn Easley

## June 14 - Benedictine Lecture Series

Please mark your calendar now for June 14, 2023, when the **Abbot Primate Gregory Polan** will visit Sacred Heart Monastery. The Abbot Primate represents all the Benedictine women and men in the world and resides in Rome. Abbot Gregory is a monk of Conception Abbey, Missouri. He will arrive here in the afternoon of June 14, and join us for prayer and dinner. Then in the evening, Abbot Gregory will have a lecture for the Sisters, MMU faculty and staff, and the Yankton public. You are all invited to attend. **Please register by June 9.**

Learn more and register!



## Mount Marty Chapter News

Dear MMU Oblates,

As we come to the midpoint of the first week of Lent, I want to share the following with you (it's a little different way to look at fasting); I suggest you consider which parts make you grateful and which parts are a call for change in your heart.

### Pope Francis' Advice for Lent

Fast from *hurting words* and say *kind words*.

Fast from *sadness* and be filled with *gratitude*.

Fast from *anger* and be filled with *patience*.

Fast from *pessimism* and be filled with *hope*.

Fast from *worries* and *trust in God*.

Fast from *complaints* and *contemplate simplicity*.

Fast from *pressures* and be *prayerful*.

Fast from *bitterness* and fill your heart with *joy*.

Fast from *selfishness* and be *compassionate* to others.

Fast from *grudges* and be *reconciled*.

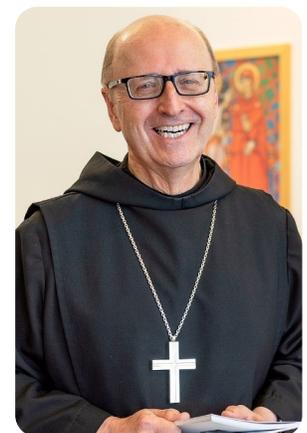
Fast from *words* and be silent so you can *listen*.

### MARCH MEETINGS

- **Sunday group** will meet on Sunday, Mar. 12 @ 3:00pm in the Monastery, Room 215.
- **Thursday group** will meet on Mar. 23 @ 4:00pm (place TBA).
- **Friday group** will meet on Mar. 24 @ 3:00pm in the Board Room in SLC.

I am praying with and for you during Lent -- that it may be a blessed and grace-filled time for each of you, for all of us.

Peace in the spirit of St. Benedict,  
*Sister Rosemarie Maly*



# Monastery Happenings



The Mount Marty University **Board of Trustees** met on February 9-10 in the Board Room at the University.

Sacred Heart Monastery had its **mission formation program for all the employees** on February 14, in the Monastery Chapter Room. The presentations were given by Sisters Maribeth Wentzlaff, Sharon Ann Haas, Penny Bingham, and Mary Jo Polak.



The Sisters had a **Chapter Meeting** from February 24-26, on our transformation process and preparation for election of prioress.

The faculty, staff, and students of Mount Marty University joined the Sisters for **Mass on Ash Wednesday**. It was great to see the Chapel nearly full and to hear the youthful voices singing.



*Sister Bonita Gacnik*

The Yankton parishes of St. Benedict's and Sacred Heart in cooperation with Sacred Heart Monastery all came together to join in **Lenten Vespers** on Sunday, March 5 at Sacred Heart Church. Sisters Patricia Ann Toscano and Mary Jo Polak, along with Father Thi Phan, planned Vespers and was attended by nearly half of our monastic community.

Sister Jeanne Ranek gave a presentation on **"Spiritual Discernment in the Health Care Workplace,"** for the Avera Leaders in Ministry at the Broom Tree Retreat Center on February 10.

The Benedictine Peace Center has a **Spiritual Enrichment Program** that meets monthly on Saturdays. On February 11, Sister Mary Jo Polak facilitated the program on Thomas Merton's reflections on racism. Sister Penny Bingham will lead the March session.

The Lenten Retreat, **"Come to the Water,"** was attended by 42 participants on Zoom, Saturday, February 18. The sessions centered on the various images of water and the importance of water both in our physical and spiritual life.

Joan Heimes was hired to be the new **Activities Director** for the Care Center Sisters. She enjoys getting to know the Sisters and entertaining them with new activities.



*Sister Paulette Larsen*

The Sisters had a party on **Mardi Gras** evening. A talent show was performed by several Sisters. A game of "What's in the Bag?" was played and door prizes were awarded. The Sisters in the small living groups shared some of their Lenten practices. All enjoyed a great evening of fun and treats.

The Sacred Heart Monastery Community-Sponsored Event, **"Benedictine Wisdom for Today,"** was postponed from Saturday, January 28, to Saturday, March 4. The Yankton area public was invited to learn about our Benedictine spirituality on Zoom.

# Prayer Requests



- For continued healing of the Sisters healing from surgery.
- For Sister Madonna Schmitt.
- For Sister Jeanne Weber's brother Bob, awaiting a heart transplant.
- Sister Clarice Schmidt of Watertown, SD.
- For those suffering from cancer and Covid.
- For all who have asked for prayers.
- For peace in Ukraine.
- For all Oblates and their families.

## In Memory

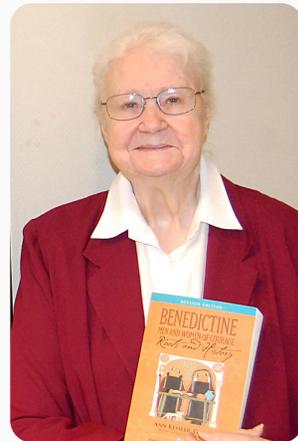
**Sister Ann Kessler, OSB** died a few days after her 95th birthday on February 1. Her nephew, Tom Kessler, and his wife, Laura, were present with her during her final week. Many of her former students, friends, and relatives paid tribute to her at the Wake and Funeral. Sister Ann will long be remembered for her many years of teaching at Mount Marty University.

**Sister Joan Reichelt, Presentation Sister of Aberdeen, SD**

**Sister Rose Palm, OSB of Watertown, SD**

**Earthquake victims**

**Victims of the War in Ukraine**



### CONTACTS

#### Yankton

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#### Mount Marty University

S. Rosemarie Maly  
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#### Online

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#### Sioux Falls

S. Barbara McTague  
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Sacred Heart Monastery  
1005 West 8th Street  
Yankton, SD

First Wed. of month 7:00-8:00 pm  
Platinum Valley Apartments  
6315 South Conie Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD

# News from Nebraska

## FRIDAY LAUDS

February 17 marked the day the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates began saying **Liturgy of the Hours** in person again. On Friday mornings at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital (Lincoln) chapel, we gather for morning prayers. For almost three years, while enduring the COVID pandemic, Oblates “gathered” via Zoom for Friday Lauds. Gratefully, Oblates and others were able to participate virtually and the spiritual practice remained strong. Now, Oblates can participate in person or via Zoom as a **hybrid model for Friday Lauds** has been created. If you are interested in participating in person, arrive at the Madonna chapel by 7:30 am Friday mornings and bring your *Shorter Christian Prayer* book. Oblates say Lauds and then gather for breakfast in the hospital cafeteria if desired. This is a good time to get to know other Oblates and share stories and experiences. If you are interested in participating virtually, please contact Dean Carol Barry via email and she will share the Zoom link with you. Carol can be reached at [Majorcarolb@yahoo.com](mailto:Majorcarolb@yahoo.com)



## STEVE BLUM PRESENTING LECTIO/VISIO DIVINA DURING LENT

Each Tuesday evening, 6:30-7:30 pm from February 28 through March 28, Steve Blum, Nebraska Benedictine Oblate, will provide **Lectio/Visio Divina via Zoom**. This is open, at no cost, to anyone interested in using this method to draw closer to God and adopt a spiritual practice during Lent. These Zoom presentations are sponsored and offered through St. Benedict Center in Schuyler. If interested in participating, **you must register using the following link:** <https://christthekingpriory.com/retreats-schedule/2023-zoom-retreat-for-lent-lectio-and-visio-divina-steven-blum-phd>



Scan with phone or tablet camera for quick access.



The Sisters at Sacred Heart Monastery (SHM) hold **Desert Days**, when they engage in silence and prayer. We are invited to join them from our own homes in praying for our world, friends and family, or other requests/praises during the same days. The upcoming **SHM Desert Days** are: March 11, April 22, and May 20.

## CHAPTER BOOK READINGS

*Ancient Paths: Discover Christian Formation the Benedictine Way*

March - Ch. 11 (pp. 182-197)

April - Ch. 12 and Afterward (pp. 198-208)

## 30-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In June 2023 we will celebrate the **30th year of Nebraska Benedictine Oblates**. For 30 years men and women of all faiths seeking the Benedictine Way of Life have gathered for prayer, study, and fellowship. The first Oblate meeting was held in 1993 and we will mark this special occasion with a reception in June of 2023. Please watch upcoming newsletters and emails for further details as we celebrate together the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates associated with Sacred Heart Monastery.

# News from Nebraska

## SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTIONS

On the **first Sunday of Lent**, February 26, we began Week I with Sunday Evening Prayer I on page 37. The antiphons for Sundays in Lent are in red. At the Reading turn to pages 405-428. One week of text is given for the Lenten season. We repeat these daily prayers every week of Lent.

We continue in the Lenten prayers until **Palm Sunday**, April 2. At the Reading, turn to page 429.

The **Easter Triduum** begins on Holy Thursday, April 6 so turn to page 436.

On **Easter Sunday**, April 9, we start Week I. During the Easter Season, we turn at the Reading to pp. 464-486. We remain in the Easter season until **Pentecost Sunday**, May 28, when we return to Ordinary time.

One resource you might like to check for the **Liturgy of the Hours for the current day** can be found at [universalis.com](http://universalis.com).

Two Nebraska Benedictine Oblates recently passed away.

**George Rood**, (12-10-2022),  
father of NBO Mary Lu Long,

**Robert O'Gara** (2-7-2023)  
*We send prayers for peace and  
comfort to their families.*



## CELL BOOK READINGS:

*Transformed by God's Word: Discovering the  
Power of Lectio and Visio Divina*

**March** - The Proclamation of God's Kingdom

**April** - The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ

**May** - The Last Supper

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Chapter Meetings for Lincoln and Omaha Oblates

**March 12 - 7:00 pm**

**April 16 - 7:00 pm**

*All meetings will be at Madonna in the Lau room  
with virtual capabilities provided. There will be  
signage at the front desk. Please note the April  
meeting is delayed one week due to Easter.*

### Spiritual Pauses held for the benefit of Nebraska Benedictine Oblates

March 18: Visio Divina with  
Illuminations & Icons

*at Madonna in Lau room, in-person and virtual  
Spiritual Pause is provided by  
Charlene Gondring and Charlotte Liggett.*

All Spiritual Pauses will be held at 9:30 am on  
Saturday morning. Zoom links will be sent via  
email prior to the Pauses.

### 30-year Anniversary Celebration

June 11 - 2:00 pm at Madonna  
Reception in Donlan Room with short  
presentations and Vespers

## CONTACTS

### Hastings

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St. Cecilia's Guadalupe Center  
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### Lincoln

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### Steinauer

Marcia Borchert  
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Banquet Room  
Convent House B&B  
Steinauer, NE