



Oblate Newsletter

SACRED HEART MONASTERY
Yankton, South Dakota

NOVEMBER 2023

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Dear Oblates,

"Fall is proof that change can be beautiful." Father Kramper quoted this saying at Mass on Tuesday of last week. The colors on the trees are exceptionally beautiful in all their glory this fall. I hope you have had some time to enjoy all the beauties in nature before the snow came. However, the snow has a beauty of its own.

During the past month from September 30 to October 29, the **16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops** met in Rome. It was an unprecedented experience, for the first, at Pope Francis' invitation, men and women were invited, in virtue of their baptism to take part in the discussions and in the voting process of the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

The main themes throughout the Synod were communion, participation, and mission. Those present proposed a larger role for the laity in the Church. Reflecting how the nature or culture of the Church can be more synodal—a wiser listening to the Holy Spirit speaking through all peoples.

Pope Francis said on October 17, 2015, *"The world in which we live, and which we are called to love and serve, even with its contractions, demands that the Church strengthen cooperation in all areas of her mission. God expects this path of synodality precisely of the Church of the third millennium."*

The Synod will meet again in the fall of 2024 to continue the theme begun this year. Continue to pray for the success of it.

Before the next newsletter we will celebrate **Thanksgiving**, a time to be grateful for all our blessings; **Advent**, a special time to prepare for the birth of our Savior, and the beautiful feast of **Christmas**. May the spirit of Benedict be with you!

God's Blessings, *Sister Patricia Heirigs*



Sunday, November 19, 2023

Yankton Monastery Oblate group will meet at **1:00 p.m. in Room 215**. We will finish chapter 2 and begin chapter 3 of *"Strangers to the City,"* by Michael Casey.

The people who are just beginning to become Oblates will meet **in Room 215 at 2:30 p.m.** **S. Mary Jo Polak** will speak about the Liturgy of the Hours and **S. Marietta Kerkvliet** will tell us about the psalms.

Message for MMU Oblates

Greetings on this chilly fall day! It's November and the special season for giving thanks. This is the month when we remember our loved ones who have died with love, gratitude, and prayer.

We express our gratitude in the words of Joyce Rupp, "we are grateful for the treasure of loved ones whose hearts of openness and acceptance have encouraged us to be who we are. We are grateful for their faithfulness...for being there when we were most in need and for delighting with us in our good days and our joyful seasons."

A great prayer for this time is **Psalm 136**. Note how the author has recognized God's faithfulness in the many and varied events of the people's lives. Then, reflect on how God's enduring love is written between the lines of your life as well. Ponder these moments:

- The happy, joyous, freeing events.
- The painful experiences of struggle.
- The "in-between" grey moments.
- The energizing, surprising discoveries.
- The ongoing search for inner truth.
- The enduring friendships. (also from Joyce Rupp, MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?)

November Meetings

Wed, Nov 14 @ 4pm

Sun, Nov 19 @ 3pm

Fri, Dec 8 @ 3pm

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving and may your time with family and friends be blessed!

Benedictine Blessings! *Sister Rosemarie Maly*

Upcoming Opportunities

November 30, 2023 | Online Advent Retreat

The Benedictine Peace Center will host an online Advent Retreat on **Thursday, November 30**, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. The theme is "Longing for God." Cost is \$30 and registration must be completed by November 28. Visit [YanktonBenedictines.org/advent](https://www.yanktonbenedictines.org/advent)

December 3 | Nativity Open House

The sisters will be hosting an open house at the monastery for the public to view the wide variety of Nativity sets the sisters have collected over the years. It has been nearly 20 years since the sisters displayed their sets for public viewing. The open house is free to the public and will be shown in the Chapter Room at the monastery.

December 9 | MMU Vespers Concert

4:00 pm and 7:00 pm in Bishop Marty Chapel



As the deer longs for running streams...
my soul longs for You, My God!

Psalm 42



Monastery Happenings

September 7, 2023

S. Madonna Schmitt was honored at St. Benedict School's Mass with a (posthumous) Hall of Fame Award. S. Madonna taught music with Sacred Heart Schools for many years. S. Penny Bingham accepted the award in memory of S. Madonna.



September 12, 2023

Sister Joyce Streff offered a blessing of the memorial tree planted near the gazebo south of the MMU Field House. Avera@Home Staff tied to its branches over 100 ribbons in memory of Hospice patients who died this past year, including our Sisters Valerie Cheney, Dorothy Olinger, Ann Kessler, and Madonna Schmitt.

September 11-14, 2023

Sister Carmy Luke attended the Member Area Coordinators meeting for the **National Religious Vocation Conference** in Darien, IL. The National Convocation will be held in Minneapolis, MN, in November 2024, and our region, the Upper Midwest, is hosting the event.

September 14, 2023

The sisters led the way on the **McVay Family Sundial, Reflection Garden, and Labyrinth** at the dedication of the space. The sisters sponsored the Labyrinth in honor of Avera Sacred Heart Hospital's 125th Anniversary.



September 15, 2023

Sister Maribeth Wentzlaff attended the **Avera Physicians at Okoboji** and shared about our Benedictine culture. Sister Lucille of Aberdeen also shared about Presentation culture with the group.

September 22-26, 2023

Sister Mary Jo Polak traveled to Phoenix, AZ to direct a retreat for the **Oblates of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery**. As part of her journey, she visited the Grand Canyon.

September 25-29, 2023

Sisters Penny Bingham, Candyce Chrystal, Bonita Gacnik, and Denette Leifeld drove to St. Louis, MO, for the **RCRI (Resource Center for Religious Institutes)**. Over 500 people were in attendance to choose from a great variety of subjects; legal issues, government programs, finances, eldercare, future planning, climate changes, and spiritual development for the elderly.

October 2, 2023

Congratulations to **Sister Sharon Ann Haas** as she received the South Dakota Hall of Fame Award at the South Dakota Annual Nursing Convention held in Huron, SD.



On October 6, 2023

Mount Marty faculty and staff held their **Mission Formation Day** in the Monastery Chapter Room. The theme was the core values and the talks were given by the faculty and staff.

Monastery Happenings



October 10, 2023

Sisters Carmy Luke and Rosemarie Maly organized the **More Than S'Mores** event with the Sisters, MMU students, and staff. It was a great sight seeing the university students and sisters eat and play together on the south lawn of the monastery.

October 12, 2023

Mount Marty Board of Trustees had their regular meeting at the University. Then in the evening the University hosted the annual Scholarship Dinner at the beautiful setting in the Field House.

October 27, 2023

The Sisters observed a day of fasting and prayer for peace in the countries of Israel and Ukraine. An hour of Adoration was held in the evening offering a prayer for peace in devastating times.

Sister Maribeth Wentzlaff is taking over the leadership of the **Oblates in Sioux Falls, SD**. She is hoping that some of the Oblates will help in the leadership role.

Since **Sacred Heart Parish in Yankton** is remodeling their church, we have had several weddings in our Bishop Marty Memorial chapel this fall.

Prayer Requests

For peace in Israel and Ukraine.
For unity and peace in our government.
For all those who are homeless.
For all the petitions on our prayer board.
For the good health of our Sisters.
For all the Oblates and their families.



In Memory

S. Francis Schumacher - Watertown, SD
S. Charles Palm - Watertown, SD

S. Bernadette McGowen, 89 died on September 25, 2023. She was a champion for the poor and downtrodden. Her vocation included teaching on Native reservations and ministering to the homeless. S. Bernadette loved to sew and quilt.

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TBA

News from Nebraska

COMMUNITY LIVING:

At the September 13, 2023 meeting of Nebraska Benedictine Oblates, Sr. Mary Jo Polak from Sacred Heart Monastery provided the Reflection. Sr. Mary Jo shared with us passages from the Holy Rule related to **listening and community living**. At the conclusion of her comments, she shared three questions for all of us to consider as we seek to live according St. Benedict's Holy Rule.

•What is your experience of being listened to in a way that was healing?

•What does it feel like when someone is really listening to you?

•How do you use listening in your work?

Nebraska Benedictine Oblates appreciate Sr. Mary Jo providing the Reflection and offering her expertise on this timely topic.

REFLECTIONS BY OBLATES:

We are fortunate to learn from the wisdom of our fellow Oblates when we gather for Chapter Meetings. Please note the follow Reflections will be offered during the next few meetings:

November – “Respect for Persons” by Donna Washburn

December – “Stability” by Barbara Michaels

January – “Hospitality” by Charlotte Liggett

FINAL OBLATION:

At the September 13, 2023 meeting the Nebraska Benedictine Oblates were able to celebrate the **Final Oblation for David Weyhrauch**. David has been meeting with the Oblates for at least two years and sharing his musical talent We rejoice in the fact that he has now completed his Final Oblation.



SHORTER CHRISTIAN PRAYER INSTRUCTIONS

Advent marks the beginning of the Liturgical Year. Sunday, December 3 is the first Sunday of Advent. We begin with Evening Prayer 1 on Saturday night, Dec. 2, page 37. We are in Week I of the Shorter Christian Prayer. At the Reading turn to page 356. Follow the Psalter Week I-IV and at the Reading during weekdays turn to pages 362-378. These are repeated each week during Advent. Advent extends from December 3 through 24, 2023. Christmas Time extends from December 25 until January 9, 2024.

Liturgy of the Hours for each day of the year can be found at [Universalis.com](https://www.universalis.com). Navigate to the link for “Yearly Calendar.”

News from Nebraska

CHAPTER BOOK READINGS

November

Engaging Benedict: What the Rule can Teach us Today
Ch. 1B, pp. 18-24

December

No reading assignment from *Engaging Benedict: What the Rule can Teach us Today*

Suggested reading: Luke Ch. 1 & 2.

January

Engaging Benedict: What the Rule can Teach us Today
Ch. 2, pp. 25-36

O ANTIPHONS

The final eight days of Advent are accentuated by the "O" statements that lead to the eight days of the Christmas octave. They are called the **O Antiphons** because they each begin with the letter O and address Jesus with a traditional title primarily from the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah. The O Antiphons may be read at Evening Prayer, December 17- 23rd, before the Cantic of Mary. The O Antiphons end December 23 because evening prayer on December 24 is the beginning of the Christmas vigil. If you are interested in using the O Antiphons you can find them at this link - <https://www.usccb.org/prayers/o-antiphons-advent>

CELL BOOK READINGS:

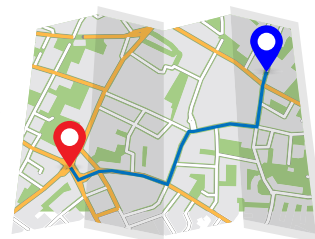
Transformed by God's Word: Discovering the Power of Lectio and Visio Divina by Stephen Binz

November - Here is the Man (pp. 141-148)

December - Carrying the Cross (pp. 149-156)

January - The Crucifixion and The Resurrection
(pp. 157-172)

MEETING LOCATION CHANGE



Chapter meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month (**Nov 12, Dec 10, and Jan 14, 2024**).

The location of the meetings will now be in the **Donlan Room at Lincoln's Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital**, (to the right of the main door).

A hybrid approach (meeting in-person and on Zoom), will continue. Please **watch for email notifications** Lead Dean Carol Olson.

The following **Spiritual Pauses** are being planned for the upcoming year. These will be held hybrid (in-person and Zoom) with room assignments at Madonna announced later.

Liturgy of the Hours - Nov. 4, 2023 at 9:30 am

Rule of Life - January 20, 2024 at 9:30

Visio Divina - March 16, 2024 at 9:30 am

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Steinauer

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