

# Oblates of Saint Benedict

Saint Martin's Abbey

February 2010

Volume 99



## I was thinking... by Br. Edmund Ebbers O.S.B.

The other day at Morning prayers Psalm 92: 13-16 spoke to me,

"The just man shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow. They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bear fruit even in old age; vigorous and sturdy shall they be, declaring how just is the Lord, my Rock, in whom there is no wrong."

The psalmist describes what a just man looks like. Planted in the right conditions any tree will flourish and take quite a beating from the wind and rain. The palm trees host strong and sturdy great branches and the wood of a cedar tree is great for construction. As these trees age, they bear more fruit.

The question comes to mind as to if we are planted in the right court, are we living in the court of our God? As time goes on, are we bearing more fruit or have we allowed ourselves to become barren, tasteless, or bitter? Matthew 7:16 tells us that "by their fruits shall you know them".

How shall you be known? Are you one who babbles endlessly missing the hearts and ears of those around you? Here at the Abbey our homilies are mostly short, about five minutes. In some parishes, I am told the homilies may go on for 30 minutes or more. In college speech class, so many years ago, I had learned that you lose your audience after ten minutes. Perhaps that is why St. Benedict tells us not to speak in a flood of words but with few to edify the hearers. In our practice of Lectio Divina we are taught that it is not the quantity but quality of words we seek. As we enter in to Lent, which comes early this year, February 17, let us look to tending our own garden of the heart by feeding our soul with fewer words and more deeds to maximize our harvest with the Lord.

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### Oblate Sunday March 7th

11:00 AM— Mass in the Abbey Church

Lunch in the student cafeteria and time to socialize with other Oblates.

Conference at 1:30 PM— Oblate Patricia McClure will report on the 2nd Oblate World Congress.

There will be oblations and investitures after the conference.



## Abbot's Reflection... by Abbot Neal Roth, O.S.B.

As I sit down to write this article, it is still early December. By the time you read the latest oblate newsletter, the Christmas decorations will have long been put away for another year and we will be near or in the Lenten season of the Church year.

Recently the monks received a copy of Abbot Jerome Kodell's little book titled: *Don't Trust The Abbot-Musings from the Monastery* (Liturgical Press). I have not read the book yet but the title caught my attention. Just how useful do the monks (and oblates) find the abbot? I am not sure I can adequately answer that. However, here are a few thoughts.

First, the abbot is just one of the monks elected to lead and to teach among other things. Hopefully, he is spiritual and loves the Lord and the monastic life. His Christian journey is not very different from the journey of the monk or oblate. A younger monk might feel the abbot is the last word, the BOSS! A senior monk will likely see the abbot differently. This is so because he has most likely known the man before he assumed the office of abbot. The longer relationship with the abbot makes the senior monk more tolerant and understanding, and less impressed with the abbot as boss, and maybe more impressed with the abbot's Christian journey and personal example. The way I viewed the monastic life as a novice (December 31, 1957-January 1, 1959) is today very different from my initial perception of the monastic life. I think that is fairly normal for the monastic.

The abbot must be a teacher with the job of teaching the monks about the Rule, the gospel life, and about fraternal charity in the community. These are attributes we all need to work on. Our monastic communal life daily offers us many opportunities to learn and practice charity and gospel values. So too in the life of the oblate are the opportunities to do the same. One does not need to be a black robed monk to reflect charity and gospel values. Both monk and oblate must attempt with "all they have" to follow Christ and the pattern he laid out in the gospel.

### *THE BOSS*

In the abbot's relationship with the monks, he will experience some affection, some deep friendships, and he will likely, at some point, be the object of someone's unhappiness or even anger. It goes with the territory. Spouses have their disagreements. Children can disappoint parents. It does not mean there is nothing to the relationship. It simply means that there is work to do on the relationship. Benedict wants the monks to have a sincere and even humble relationship with the abbot. And, it goes without saying that the relationship ought not to be artificial and insincere in any way. That would fall far short of the mark! Honesty is of the utmost importance.

In my years of living under an abbot, I do not think I was ever fearful of the abbot, but I certainly made sure I was respectful and sincere. No abbot ever yelled at me or kicked me out of his office. Certainly, the monk and abbot should never operate under fear. The spouse or parent should never make family members fearful. Without the ingredient of peace and freedom, charity, genuine affection, and concern, no relationship can really grow in a positive way. The lack of love and sincerity in any relationship clearly violates what Christ has revealed to us in the gospel. With courage, we need to understand this and truly labor to make a Christ-like model in our community and family lives. It is worth our very best efforts!

## In The Beginning... by Fr. Gerard Kirsch, O.S.B.

Early in 1953, **Father James Piotrkowski (1897-1974)**, prior (second in command) of the monastery and for many years the monk responsible for maintaining the water supply, was working hard at installing an auxiliary pump. This pump, to be used in the event of electric power shut-offs, was a gas-driven affair, and would be maintained simply in a stand-by condition. Father James's background was one of great artisanship in machine work, and he was ingenious in devising ways and means to solve problems with a minimum of expenditure. Until his death in 1974, he remained involved in the water supply and his memory remains deeply cherished by those who knew him.

Also the sawmill acquired at this time, an adjunct in the form of a planer. Once **Br. Jerome Keppers (1880-1960)** completed the necessary overhaul work, it was hoped that Saint Martin's would be able to surface all lumber used in the various projects at the abbey. Br. Jerome was an uncle of **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903-1971)**. The sawmill was no longer in use when Fr. Gerard entered the community in 1965; but he vividly recalls having a secret birthday party for one of his fellow novices in 1965 down at the sawmill a surprise, it turned out, that virtually everyone in the community knew about!

In British Columbia, Father Eugene Medved was elected first abbot of Westminster Abbey and blessed on March 19, 1953, the solemnity of Saint Joseph. Abbot Raphael Heider and several others from the abbey attended the blessing. In February, Father Benedict Schweizer, serving in the parish of Lillooet, B.C., in Kamloops diocese for the past several years, visited the abbey. Not long thereafter, he left the community permanently to serve the people of Kamloops diocese.

Beginning at noon on March 20 and ending at midnight on March 21-22, the feast of Saint Benedict, a plenary indulgence could be obtained for each visit to a Benedictine church or chapel. The necessary conditions were confession and communion and the praying of six Our Fathers, six Hail Marys and six Glory Be to the Fathers for the intention of the Holy Father at each visit. A number of such visits could be made. It was only necessary to step outside the church and one could return at once to make another visit. Fr. Gerard remembers taking advantage of such a privilege with his fellow novices in 1965-66, and we took it quite seriously. Subsequent liturgical reforms eliminated this particular privilege, but plenary indulgences remain available today to a very limited degree!

### Let us pray for:



Fr. Terance who is very ill with cancer and in residence at Mother Joseph Care Center

Michael Wilson who is battling poor health

The people of Haiti

Sister-in-Law of Oblate Fr. Jim Lee who recently passed.

## To Die and Still Live

By Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

**“She had many more decades to live.  
Whether she lived them or not was her call.”  
Annie Dillard, *The Maytrees***

Today the sun tickles my eyes  
with feathery rays of light.  
I giggle with the joy as the first time  
that I almost stopped breathing  
when a friend found out that  
I could be subdued by tickling  
my ribs and making me cry “stop!”  
Or the first time I saw snow  
and stood with my mouth open  
catching the white flakes on my tongue.  
But this morning the snow is far away,  
yet Mount Rainier does look closer today,  
a hand touch away, as if I could once again  
open my mouth and play with wonder.  
When did I make the decision to live and not die?  
Or was it die and keep living.  
Maybe when my first love  
walked in the opposite direction  
and I stood there feeling that  
my life had walked away, that  
I couldn't go on and sat around  
waiting for her to come back,  
and she didn't, and after waiting  
for a month or so, I realized  
I could wait, or just go on with my life,  
and I did, something had died,  
but something, hope, faith,

kept me breathing and walking,  
opening my mouth to catch snowflakes,  
my eyes to feel the sun  
play with my irises  
creating a rainbow after a storm  
that tinted my life  
and made me understand  
that each day brings new tints  
that I would miss if I didn't go on.  
That day I got out of bed,  
let my feet hit the floor,  
washed my face,  
opened the door,  
and walked into the rest of my life,  
uncertain, a bit wobbly,  
but sure that in the decades ahead  
I would fall in and out of love  
and it would hurt each time,  
but I still had the strength to go on.  
It was a choice.  
I have made it over and over again,  
“I die yet I live,” it sounds scriptural,  
a resurrection cry,  
no matter how long I live  
it will happen again,  
and each time  
it is my call.

**Upcoming Sundays**

May 2nd 2010 Oblate Loretta Matulich talks on prayer & work

July 11th 2010 picnic and talk by Br. Peter Tynon, O.S.B.

August 7th 2010 Oblate retreat

September 5th 2010 Bshp. Joseph Tyson will talk about Conversion of Life.

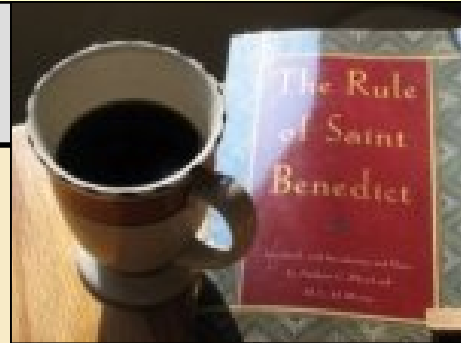
Investitures and Oblations

December 5th 2010 possible talk by Br. Vincent Francis, O.S.B

## New Year Thought

By Oblate Bill Lagreid

Chapter Seven of the Rule. The Value of Humility



It is the time of year when resolutions are made and new beginnings planned for our personal, public, and commercial lives. It is a time of hope and optimism. Soon fresh growth and color will be appearing from our flowerbeds, trees, and lawns and the air becomes less chilled. It is the end of winter and the beginning of spring in the Northwest when the day light starts earlier and lasts longer. It is the season of hope in the baseball world and in our own lives.

The complainers are out there, on the radio, television, the Internet, and newspapers making a living off the imperfections and shortcomings of the human race. However, we have control over how much we let their voices influence our outlook on life and if we look for the good things in the world we will find them, because they are a part of who we are as Christians

Who among us have not encountered people who generally respond with “Yeah but...” and see the negative side of life? It is not that the world is perfect, we are human after all, and our follies seem to repeat themselves from the beginning of time. In the past ten years, alone we can find the reports of the military and civilian casualties of war, terrorist attacks, and disasters of floods, hurricanes, traffic accidents, political rhetoric, and moral misconduct of prominent persons.

There is much good in the world. We might have to search but we can find examples of people helping others through difficult times, quiet acts of heroism and charity, ground breaking medical breakthroughs and awesome miracles. Now is a good time to start looking for and being the bearers of this kind of attitude. We are Oblates and followers of Christ and should be the ones focused on the spreading the good news, the wonders of nature and the good deeds of people around us. A new year, a new focus: one that hints and heralds the change of the season, that brings the hope of spring in our own lives and those around us.



## What's on the Book Shelf?

*C.S. Lewis and Human Suffering - Light among the Shadows.* By Marie A. Conn.

*Spe Salvi: On Christian Hope - Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI.* By Benedict XVI.

*God Loves You and There's Nothing You Can Do About It - Saying Yes to the Holy Spirit.* By David Mangan.

*I Believe in God - A Reflection on the Apostles' Creed.* By Thomas P. Rausch, S.J..

## Abbey Church Events 2009-2010

Saturday April 24th at 8 pm Tanya Gabrielian (Piano) will perform.

Events are not ticketed but a free will offering is suggested.



*From The Hill ... By Boniface O. Lazzari, O.S.B.*

Though it seems as though the red and white poinsettias have just recently vanished from the Abbey church, the last Vestiges of Christmas past, Lent is upon us. We've entered into a new liturgical season, at the end of which the vanished poinsettias will be replaced with lilies, hydrangeas, and azaleas. In between, the physical church will become stark and flowerless. This is a season for pondering our own mortality and an opportunity to discover what we might do to become better people. As we ponder, we might give some thought to an anonymous quote this writer received from a friend in recent months: "be kinder than necessary today, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle."

As dictated by tradition, the monastic Christmas celebrations included Midnight Mass and a special Christmas Evening Prayer. It also included a festive dinner, followed by a community Christmas party. We had a Kris Kringle gift exchange, organized by **FATHER EDWARD RECECONI**, and were entertained by the Devine Trio once more. The trio includes this writer, **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE**, and **BROTHER NOLASCO MWALONGO**. This Christmas, **BROTHER NOLASCO** was joined by his compatriot **FATHER HUGO LUNGO**, and they were persuaded to sing a popular song in Swahili.

Have a fruitful Lent, and remember to be "kinder than necessary."

In the early months of the New Year, several members of the community were engaged in travels. **FATHER KILIAN MALVEY** traveled to Cottonwood, Idaho, to act as chaplain for the Benedictine Sisters there, while their regular chaplain was away...**BROTHER AELRED WOODWARD** traveled to southern California to visit his brother, Tom. **FATHER GEORGE SEIDEL** to central California to visit his brother and family. This writer traveled to northern California to spend a few days with his mother... **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** also traveled to Oceanside California, to the Prince of Peace Abbey, where he attended an annual Abbots' workshop. In mid- February, **ABBOT NEAL** traveled to the Philippines as part of the celebration of his golden anniversary of monastic vows.

**FATHER PAUL WECKERT** continues his work as Abbey vocation director. Some of his activities in this area this year have include a "come and see" in Bellingham which was sponsored by the Archdiocese; a talk to Korean youths; and a retreat for Korean young adults. Two young men from Bellingham "came to see", and were hosted by **FATHER PAUL** and the monastic community. The junior monks, **BROTHERS VINCENT FRANCIS, NICOLAUS WILSON, and MARK BONNEVILLE** are oft times actively involved with guests exploring their vocations.

In late January, **BROTHER LUKE** spoke on Benedictine stability to our university students. Other monastic speakers on that same series of talks have included **FATHER EDWARD** and **BROTHER VINCENT**... also in late January, **ABBOT NEAL, PRIOR ALFRED HULSCHER** and **SUBPRIOR CLEMENT PANGRATZ** and the monastic community hosted our university president Roy Heynderickx and his wife Kathleen at a reception and dinner in the refectory. It marked the first anniversary of the arrival of Dr. and Mrs. Heynderickx to Saint Martin's. **BROTHER THEODORE VAVREK** has been experiencing some health issues, and is spending some time at the C & R section of Panorama city these days. **BROTHER THEODORE** was a long time sacristan of the Abbey and worked in the college library, having had some training as a library technician. **BROTHER THEODORE**. Has a long-standing interest in iconography and in the Byzantine rite of the Catholic Church.

Come on Saturday  
By Oblate Carmen

Abbey Church  
Ringing bells  
Midday Prayer  
Monastic dining

Winter grey  
Twines and knots  
Cords stacked in neat little rows  
Rosary beads

Spring Yellow  
Pulling weeds  
Digging graves  
Cemetery green

Myrtle tree blooms  
Neon pink  
Abbey churchyard  
Sweet smell of Daphne

Summer Blue  
Roses and peonies  
Cleaning roofs  
Bees, Hummingbirds, lavender

Autumn, orange reds  
Planting bulbs  
Hauling wood  
Eagle on pine tree



### Rosary Work.

Saturdays, 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.  
Meet in the Guest dining room of Old Main.  
February 13th  
March 6th  
April 10th  
May 8th  
June 5th  
July 10th  
August 14th  
September 11th  
October 9th  
November 13th  
December 11th

### Lambert Lodge: 1pm to 3:30pm.

Br. Edmund plans to go out earlier in the morning. If you need directions please contact him in advance.  
April 24th 2010  
October 2nd 2010

### Gardening:

Saturdays 1:00pm to 3:30pm when rosary making isn't in session and the weather permits. If you join us for noon prayer, we will feed you before we go out to work. We have tools, gloves and a lot of soil. We are short on warm able bodies

## “Benedictine Contribution to Inter-religious Dialogue.”

By Br. Luke Devine, O.S.B.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has been committed to dialogue with other religions. In 1964, Pope Paul VI established an organization in the Curia that took the name Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (PCID) in 1988. Proclaimed at Vatican II in 1965, *Nostra Aetate* is the Declaration of the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions that has brought about historically unprecedented cooperation and dialogue between religions.

Benedictines from the less famous to Bede Griffiths and Thomas Merton have continued in this effort. Today, Benedictines and Trappist monks and nuns continue fostering inter-religious dialogue with our counterparts in other religions through the organization called Monastic Inter-religious Dialogue (MID). MID has the strongest relations with Asian religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, religions that place heavy emphasis on monasticism. MID evolved out of another organization, the Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM) due to the realization that many Benedictine and Cistercians monasteries outside of the United States had already developed relationships with representatives of Asian religions and monasteries. The MID website ([www.monasticdialogue.com](http://www.monasticdialogue.com)) contains a wealth of information, including Bulletin archives dating back to 1977.

### *I am honored*

Certainly, there is a variety of difficulties with inter-religious dialogue. We live in a time and place when and where inter-religious dialogue can offer profound insights and is a necessary aspect of the Church's mission. There is a real fear that such a dialogue opposes the Truth of Christ's salvific role for all humanity. As has been the case on numerous occasions in the past, the Church has sought to strike a balance between extremes. Regarding religions, one extreme is to consider it impossible for any non-Christian or non-Catholic to receive salvation; the other extreme is a relativistic pluralism that considers all religions equal paths toward salvation. Inter-religious dialogue rejects both of these two extremes. *Nostra Aetate* proclaims in a section referring to Hinduism and Buddhism the following, “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.”

On the other hand, inter-religious dialogue does not demand a compromise in one's faith in Christ. In fact, dialogue demands that participants point out differences as much as similarities between religions. The PCID's pages on the Vatican's website states that inter-religious dialogue "includes witness to one's own faith as well as openness to that of the other. It is not a betrayal of mission of the Church, nor is it a new method of conversion to Christianity."

An example of this can be found in the book, *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Christ*. The Dalai Lama recounts a conversation he had with Fr. Bede Griffiths, where Griffiths honestly tells the Dalai Lama that the Buddhist notion of rebirth is in contradiction with the Christian belief of each person being in a unique relationship with God (59).

MID has helped to bring about a deeper appreciation for the contemplative tradition in Christianity. Over the course of the 20th century, a variety of gurus from Asian religions drew crowds of people, many from Christian backgrounds, into the mysticism and contemplative practices of Asian religions. MID has renewed awareness of this often-overlooked contemplative practices in Christianity. As absolutist forms of fundamentalism gain in popularity and influence, religious intolerance in the 21st century is alive and well. It is only through deep genuine understanding and relationships that we can hope to counteract misunderstandings, bigotry, and potential violence. To do this, MID hopes to raise awareness of the Catholic Church's commitment to inter-religious dialogue, a fact that is not widely known, even among Catholics. Confronted with the increasing religious diversity of today's world, Catholics cannot afford to be uninformed or have only a superficial understanding of the Church's teachings regarding other religions.

Over the course of my spiritual journey leading to monasticism, I read a number of books on Buddhism. While in formation, I was fascinated to learn of the writings of Thomas Merton and Bede Griffiths and of the ongoing dialogue between Benedictines, Cistercians, and our contemplative, monastic counterparts in other religions. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to visit with Fr. James Wiseman of St. Anselm's Abbey in Washington, DC. Fr. James teaches courses in spirituality at the Catholic University of America and has been involved with MID for quite some time. He is also co-editor of The Gethsemani Encounter. Fr. James contacted me, to nominate me to the board of MID. Last fall, I was appointed to the board of MID. I am honored and I offer my gratitude to Abbot Neal for granting me permission to proceed and participate in this important monastic endeavor.

This prayer was written by Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930), the secretary of state for Pope Saint Pius X. It is said that he prayed this litany every day immediately before celebrating Mass.

From the desire of being esteemed,... *deliver me, Oh Jesus.*

From the desire of being loved,

From the desire of being extolled,

From the desire of being honored,

From the desire of being praised,

From the desire of being preferred to others,

From the desire of being approved,

From the fear of being humiliated, ... *deliver me, Oh Jesus.*

From the fear of being despised,

From the fear of suffering rebukes,

From the fear of being calumniated,

From the fear of being forgotten,

From the fear of being wronged,

From the fear of being suspected,

That others may be loved more than I, ... *Oh Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That others may be esteemed more than I,

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,

That others may be chosen and I set aside,

That others may be praised and I unnoticed,

That others may be preferred to me in everything,

That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,

*Oh Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*



2009 Monastic community downloadable at  
<http://www.stmartin.edu/Abbey/OurMonastery/07.Monks.htm>

## INVITATION reflection from the 2nd Oblate World Congress. By Oblate Patricia McClure

Laurence Freeman gave a talk at the Second Oblate World Conference entitled *The Contemplative Oblate Today*. You can find his talk in its entirety at <http://www.wccm.org/images/PDF/2009/TheContemplativeOblateToday.pdf>.

One question he asked was “What is a monk?” A question, he said that monks need to ask of themselves daily. In that spirit he asked, “Why did you become an Oblate?” That is a very deep question and I suspect it has many different answers to all who have become oblates and for those contemplating such an adventure.

I became an Oblate by invitation. I chose to accept that invitation because I fell in love with the community. I don’t just mean individuals, they certainly played a BIG role, but with the ideals, and day-to-day demonstrations of the community.

I arrived at St. Martins, a college back then, out of practicality. They offered the best financial aid deal in the state. It was September and I was wandering the campus, exploring my new found freedom. I heard the bells ringing for evening prayers and went to find the source.

There use to be benches under the bell tower and the bells use to be rung by hand. I was sitting on the bench outside of the church and a group of three monks were heading into the church. One, Father Patrick Dahlquist, turned and said, “What are you doing out here? The real action is inside.” **Invitation.** So being young and foolish I followed him in. I wouldn’t say that prayers that evening were exceptional in any way, it was just prayers. When it was finished, Father Patrick said, “See you in the morning, 6:20am.” **Invitation.** I thought, “oh what the heck, why not.” So I came daily, weekly, rarely missing. The rhythm of the life, rising early and starting with community prayer and ending the hectic college day with quiet prayer seemed to be an excellent fit for me.

*We have the potential to be so much more*

Of course the presence of a college student at St. Martins was not unusual but one at daily prayers was. Over the next four years others came and prayed, so I wasn’t always the lone secular. You really can’t ignore for long someone’s presence even if they are only praying. By October of my first year, the next invitation came, Father Neal Roth (Now Abbot) said, “you should be an Oblate.” So I looked into that. I bought myself a copy of the Rule and attended meetings and by November, I was a novice. I can think of no better way of instilling Benedictine ideals and spirit into someone than by witnessing and living them. I met two women, Oblate Margaret Mazeski and Oblate Jane Woolsen, who came regularly to the monastery for extended stays, both of these women, enriched my life with a flavor of how to live the Rule away from the monastery. Each one of them was so very different from the other but each shared a vivid view of the world. I was spoiled by being able to join the community daily in prayer and Mass. I was included into the lives of the monks in ways that challenged me more than the academic education I was receiving on the side.

On a Sunday, during Mass, in November of 1977, I became an oblate of St. Martins. Oblate Sunday meant something a little different back then. I remember the simple welcoming of several community members after Mass and the feeling of being a part of their family. I had gotten to know monks in ways that didn’t always present them in the holiest of lights but always in the most human of circumstances, with room to grow and forgive. Each monk, whether they know it or not has expanded, enlightened, and tapped into my life. I believe that it is because of those relationships that I remain an Oblate today.

That is the lesson of Oblation, we are humans, foul and forgetful, but we have the potential to be so much more. St. Benedict tells us this is a rule for beginners and you will notice there isn’t a sequel. I think that says it all.



## Pax ... by Oblate J.J. Nugent

When I was a freshman at Saint Martin’s College in 1979, I wanted to wear a peace sign. I wanted to be reminded that there was something more than the intense strife we often engage in daily. I soon learned that the Saint Benedict medal prominently displays the word “Pax.” I immediately got a medal and have worn it or carried it with me for the last thirty years.

My understanding of the medal and the concept of peace has dramatically changed over the last three decades and I was often not living peacefully; however, the medal was always a reminder of how we can live. God has always drawn me back to him and rewarded me with peace in spite of myself.

So what is “peace”? Simply put.....peace is the splendor of order. Sin can be defined as the opposite of order. The Catholic catechism refers to sin as disordered. If I want to be at peace I must seek an orderly, on going relationship with God.

That’s what the Benedictine lifestyle can provide for Benedictine Monks and also Oblates. I don’t understand how we can be touched so profoundly by spending time with our loving creator and then forget about it the next day. Perhaps this foible is just in our nature. Our only recourse is to develop good habits of thought, action and prayer.

I recently became a Novice Oblate and it felt like I was coming home. Being an oblate provides an opportunity to for me to be with like minded seekers of peace through Christ.

### *Oblation Renewal Form*

Mail or bring to the Abbey on Oblate Sunday.

#### **RENEWAL of OBLATION**

I renew my oblation as an Oblate of St. Benedict for the community of St. Martin's Abbey and promise again to serve God and all people according to the Rule of St. Benedict.

Let us Pray:

God, most compassionate and loving, strengthen me in my commitment to follow you in the way of St. Benedict. Through my daily prayer and work may I be inspired to live in Christ and to bring His love to the world and His peace to all hearts. I make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(OBLATE) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**The Priory Spirituality Center in Lacey presents: Lenten Retreat for Oblates**

Saturday March 27, 2010 from 9:15AM-3:00PM.

The Challenge of Forgiveness and Reconciliation Today led by Phyllis Thompson, who is an Oblate of Annunciation Monastery in Bismarck, ND. She has been giving retreats, days of recollection, and workshops on the Rule and aspects of Benedictine spirituality since 1997. She has also published in these areas.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation are two endeavors that present challenges when it comes to both big and small issues in our lives and world. Of two talks, one looks at what forgiveness and reconciliation are in light of Scripture; the other looks at both in light of Benedict's Rule and focuses on how both are part of an experiential, a "lived out," spirituality central to relationship and community-building.

Bring a sack lunch, Bible and a Rule of Benedict. Cost is \$50. Register by prior Friday by calling 360-438-2595 or email Carolyn at [spiritualityctr@stplacid.org](mailto:spiritualityctr@stplacid.org) and send in \$25 or \$50 deposit to: The Priory Spirituality Center 500 College St NE Lacey WA 98516.

