

Have a Blessed Easter!

Alleluia!

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Oblates of Saint Benedict

Saint Martin's Abbey

VOLUME 100 MAY 2010

I was thinking... by Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.



In between newsletters, I am constantly considering what to write for the next one. A topic that came to mind after a conversation I had with an Oblate about the time between lunch and the conference on Oblate Sundays.

The time is set aside in part for me to be able to have time to take care of business with the Oblates and for us all to share a meal. I believed the time is important for Oblates too. We are a community after all and we need time to share with one another our personal journey and lives as Oblates. Some may let the time drift but the break between Mass and the conference is meant to give us the opportunity to come together as people not just faces.

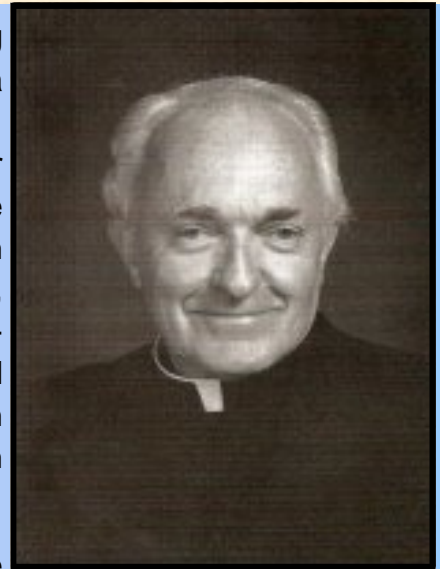
There is very much a hunger for sharing our journey to Christ with others. I hear about this from many folks joining the Oblate Program in recent years. Our personal journey is not just our own, our journey is connected with other people around us. It is in dialogue that we can influence the lives of others. We need to share, not whine and complain but listen and be open to who our fellow Oblates are and where they have come from and where they are going. We all have trials and burdens; the load is lightened when shared. Community time is for building a bridge of trust between one another. I believe this is important.

It might be that some of us have forgotten how to make friends or dialogue. A good way to start is to ask questions of the others, such as, how did you come about deciding to join the Oblate Program of St. Martin's? What does "Oblate" mean to you? What type of prayer life have you begun for yourself to support and build your relationship with God? From there as you get to know your fellow Oblates the conversations can progress to a deeper level with such questions as: Does your prayer life and the Holy Rule help you in making decisions with your family? Spouse? Work place? Church? Does the Program help you find answers to dilemmas? What sort of work or volunteer work do you do? Do you find yourself more engaged in the Church because of your commitment to be an Oblate?

We need to open up ourselves, like a door, so our light will shine upon others and their light shine upon us. Our spiritual growth is as important as physical growth. Nutrients for spiritual growth comes from our relationship with God, with one another, and through prayer.

ABBOT'S REFLECTION by Abbot Neal Roth, O.S.B.

Our Father Terence Wager passed to the Lord, after a long struggle with cancer, on February 22, 2010. Whenever a confrere dies, we monks also face death once again. I especially thought about death (on hearing about Father Terence's passing) since Father Terence and I were in the novitiate together. But, being Benedictine, we accept death in the monastic community with monastic peace - at least, that is what we try to do. Saint Benedict has a rather penetrating manner of pointing out the very essence of a lived Christian life, and that is that we will one day have a share in Christ's eternal life. Our whole life, as Christians, is a death to self, love of God, love of neighbor.



**EVERYONE
WANTS TO
GO TO
HEAVEN
BUT NO
ONE WANTS
TO DIE TO
GET
THERE.**

Through Benedict's eyes, we see that we must die to the "flesh" which surely must include the mind and the will, as well as the body. As Christians, we believe that to live according to the flesh is to live without God being much in the picture. We also believe that God moves us, through our life experiences, to himself if we are open to being moved!

If we are serious about our monastic journey and our Christian life, we persevere in the struggle with the flesh. After all, we want to become a part of Christ in eternity.

Writer and humorist Mark Twain commented, "Everyone wants to go to heaven but no one wants to die to get there."

During the communist era in Russia, a priest was destined be executed simply because he was a priest and practicing his ministry. Just before his death, he wrote to a friend: "Afraid of death? Afraid? Afraid of what? Afraid to see the Savior's face - to hear his welcome and to trace the glory gleaned from wounds of grace? Afraid of that? Thank God, no!"

Death is our final "yes" to God. If we have spent a life trying to be virtuous (to die to the flesh), assisted by the Church, the sacraments, the gospel, and for us, the Rule, we have no need to be afraid of death. It will come and we will be ready.



OBLATE SUNDAY MAY 2ND 2010

11:00 AM— Mass in the Abbey Church

Lunch in Gertrude Hall of the student cafeteria with other Oblates a time to socialize. We will remain there and have our conference which will begin at 1:30PM

Oblate Loretta Matulich will talk on prayer & work ... Ora et Labora.

If the acoustics work out we will hold our future meetings here but our spring and fall investitures and oblations will still take place in the church after the conference we will move to the church.

If you recall last meeting I mentioned that you would need to bring your copy of the Rule of St. Benedict. We will have a brief discussion on Chapter 6, regarding "Restraint of Speech". Please spend some time reflecting on this chapter and come prepared to share your thoughts or questions with others.

Mark your Calendars...

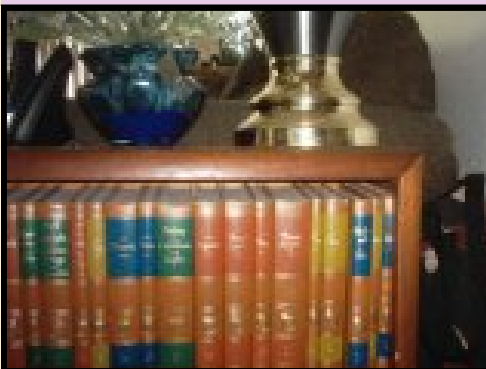
July 11th 2010 we will have our Annual picnic after Mass. Oblates are asked to bring a potluck dish that day to share with other oblates.

Conference talk by Br. Peter Tynon, O.S.B.

August 7th 2010 Oblate retreat, more information to come.

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



ON THE BOOK SHELF

Spiritual Formation - Following the Movements of the Spirit.
By Henri J. M. Nouwen.

The Fifteen Faces of God - A Quest to Know God Through the Parables of Jesus. By Michael Manning.

Reclaiming Catholicism - Treasures Old and New.
By Thomas H. Groome and Michael J. Daley.

Rebuild My Church - God's plan for Authentic Catholic Renewal. By Alan Schreck, Ph.D.

Understanding the Revised Mass Texts. By Paul Turner (The Obl. Dir. strongly encourages this read by all to be prepared for understanding the coming changes.)

IN THE BEGINNING... by Father Gerard Kirsch, O.S.B.

On February 24th, 1953, at a quasi-Pontifical Mass offered by **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903-1971)**, Brother Justin (John) Sampsell made first vows and Brother Aloysius (Robert) Graaff made final vows. On February 17th, Brother Joseph Crowley met with an accident in which his face was burned with a caustic solution in the heating plant. Fortunately, none of the material went into his eyes. With his usual calm, Brother Joseph just applied some ointment and went back to work.

On February 25th, the mother of **Father Ansgar Hallen (1902-1985)** died in Puyallup and was buried on February 28th. Present at the funeral of the mother of our Director of Brothers, were Abbot Raphael, **Father Philip Bagan (1905-1992)**, Br. Anthony Hanson, and brother candidates Robert Bond and Roger Wirtz.

Rev. Luke O'Donnell (1913-1999) acquired a considerable number of volumes for our library owing to the generosity of friends among fellow librarians. Catholic Book Week was duly observed on February 22nd - 28th with special exhibits and programs. Father Luke planned to attend national meetings of librarians at Columbus, Ohio during the first week of Easter. In February, Father William Dickerson attended meetings of the Northwest Drama Conference in Seattle.

On March 6th, the large marble bas-relief carving of Saint Martin of Tours arrived. The original order for this work of art was placed in February 1952 so it was just over a year of waiting for the carving. The 10 x 13 ft and 4 inches thick carving's weight totaled, including crate, 3 tons, with the plaque in two pieces. The issue of installation remained, involving the ingenuity in particular of **Prior James Piotrkowski (1897-1974)**.

On March 9th, the 800 pound bell, acquired several years before, was installed on the roof of the monastery (at the time located in the north end of Old Main). It harmonized beautifully with the original bell, which had been installed some years before. All that remained was to add a third bell to complete a recognized peal of bells. A 200 pound bell, providing a major harmony, rather than a 1500 pound bell providing a minor harmony, seemed likely in light of the lower cost.



LET US PRAY...

For Our community of St. Martin's Abbey for their loss and for the soul of Father Terence Wager O.S.B.

Anthony Vitolo the father-in-law of Oblate Paul Spencer who recently passed.

WHO ARE WE? by Oblate Bill Lagreid

AS Oblates of St. Martin's Abbey we are Christian men and women following the rule of St. Benedict and the teachings of Jesus Christ while living out our oblation and commitment in many diverse ways. We are lectors, Eucharistic ministers, caregivers to people in need. We are members of the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Community Services who serve the less fortunate and needy in our parishes and communities. We have husbands and wives, children, grandchildren, many of us have full time jobs, and careers and some of us are retired.

As oblates of St. Martin's Abbey we are among the thousands of other lay people, all over the world, who have been called to be Oblates and to pray daily with the monks and sisters who live in Monasteries. We offer prayers for the needs of each other and the monks as well as the students who are attending St. Martin's University and parish schools. Many of us help the monks when asked to assist them in other ways that reach out far beyond our community as makers of rosaries, gardeners that keep the grounds beautiful that welcome visitors and contributors to the newsletter.

As Oblates, we gather periodically for meetings at the Abbey to hear and learn from the Abbot and monks on topics that enrich our lives. Some of us gather in smaller geographical groups for prayer and sharing thoughtful scriptural readings on our spiritual journey.

Each of us has been called to the Oblate way of life as our vocation. We do what we can do best by living our lives as witnesses to the rule of St. Benedict with those we live with daily in the work place, our homes, and parishes. We reach out daily in those places in our lives as Benedictines that our Priests and Brothers are unable to reach.

For most of us, ours is a quiet private life of prayer and service, however we are never alone in our quest for a richer religious life; we are supported daily by the prayers of the monks at the monetary our families and Oblates in our community.



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... De la colina... Om Hügel... από το λόφο... by Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.

“...winter is past, the rains are over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth.
The season of glad songs has come.”

For our long – time confrere **FATHER TERENCE WAGER**, the “season of glad songs’ has come. **FATHER TERENCE** passed to God on the 22nd of February, following a long bout with cancer. At the time of his death, **FATHER TERENCE** had been a monk for over fifty years and had worked in all of the Abbey apostolates. His many assignments included that of Principal of Saint Martin’s High School and pastor of St. Columban Parish in Yelm, Washington, and St. Peter Mission in Tenino. He was a man of many talents and interests. A succession of canine companions resided with him at his various pastoral assignments, he was an enthusiastic gardener, and had a great fascination with trains. **FATHER TERENCE** loved music, and spent many hours in the restoration of organs and pianos. He is greatly missed. R.I.P.

FATHER TIMOTHY LAMM returned recently from a six-month stay at the Benedictine Abbey of San Antonio Abad, Humacao, Puerto Rico. During his time there, **FATHER TIMOTHY** had private classes geared to perfecting his Spanish and taught special English classes at San Antonio’s prep school... this June, **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** and this writer will travel to St. Bernard Abbey, Cullmen, Alabama. They will attend the General Chapter of the American Cassinese Congregation. **ABBOT NEAL** will attend as abbot of Saint Martin’s and this writer as Saint Martin’s Abbey’s elected delegate... In mid – March, **FATHER BENEDICT AUER** was one of the leaders on the University’s mid-term break study tour to Italy. The forty plus person group spent extensive time in the Holy City, and saw Michelangelo’s famous “David” in Florence.

Pray that
we will be
ready
when the
“season of
glad
times”

FATHER BENEDICT returned from Italy just in time for the Abbey’s celebration of the Passing of Our Holy Father Saint Benedict. **ABBOT NEAL** was the principal celebrant at the Pontifical Mass that day, and **FATHER EDWARD RECECONI** acted as Master of Ceremonies. Following the Mass, the monastic community enjoyed a festive meal in the monastic refectory. Such celebrations are in the hands of the abbey rectorian, who at the present time, is **BROTHER EDMUND EBBERS**.

Languages are an important part of academic life, and several members of the monastic community work regularly with world languages. Some are monolingual, some bilingual, and others polyglot. This writer has long taught Spanish in our schools and has spent time living in both Mexico and Spain. **FATHER GEORGE SEIDEL** reads much in non-English languages in the course of doing his philosophical research. **FATHER THADDAEUS ARLEDGE** reads the Fathers of the Church in Latin. He also, translates and reads commentaries on the psalms in German. **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** has along- standing interest in both Spanish and Korean. Our university history instructor **FATHER GERARD KIRSCH** has adeptness in Latin and French, and **FATHER JUSTIN MCCREEDY** uses Spanish in his ministry and has been known to do translations from the Latin. While French is **FATHER TIMOTHY**’s forte, he has long been studying the Spanish language and culture as well. Our late confrere, **FATHER PHILIP BAGAN**, was a Latinist, and received his degree in classical languages from Catholic University. He was devoted to Latin, and toward the end of his life would pray the office in Latin.

Ave Maria,
GRATIA PLENA, DOMINUS
TECUM, BENEDICTA TU
IN MULIERIBUS, ET BENE
DICTUS FRUCTUS VENTRIS
TUI, JESUS. SANCTA
MARIA, MATER DEI,
ORA PRO NOBIS PECCA-
TORIBUS, NUNC ET IN
HORA MORTIS NOSTRAE.
AMEN.

WORK AND PRAYER

by Oblate J.J. Nugent

ORA ET LABORA



I was a registered counselor for 21 years and in that time, I had numerous opportunities to interact with the disturbed and the disturbing. I found most common in this group of afflicted people two characteristics. First, I noticed that those with mental illness are marginalized (rejected) from normal socialization. They are treated as if mental problems were contagious. Christians absolutely need to accept, respect, and love our injured sisters and brothers.

Therefore, the first thing we can do as Oblates is to share our God given social status and networks with the less fortunate. Research has consistently shown that it is the networks of social and business contact, which provided for our success and act as a safety net in the event that we fall on hard times. Why not share that which has been so freely given to us?

Typically, when a person shows up at an emergency room for a mental health crisis they report few or no friends in their life. Oblates should be friends to the poor and the homeless and the mentally ill.

In Olympia, we have a fabulous opportunity to volunteer at the homeless shelter on Devoe Street. This program strives to meet the social and practical needs of the less fortunate. Go for it...volunteer for game night or gardening or whatever you do and share it with others. God will approve and you will feel better.

Several years ago, I proposed to the Saint Martin’s Alumni Association that we use our mobile kitchen to feed the homeless. Severe discomfort immediately arose from the crowd. Somebody suggested that perhaps we didn’t want Saint Martin’s College associated with “those” kind of people. Father John Scott stopped the debate by insisting that it was a tradition associated with Saint Martin to help the less fortunate.

The second characteristic I observed in the mentally ill was an enormous amount of energy devoted to themselves. So much so, that little meaningful activity was performed on a daily basis. While this is understandable given the great pain that these people endure, it is not healthy or desirable in any fashion, for us to have an entire lifestyle of self-centered living.

When I counseled others, I suggested that they attempt two things. They should help others on a daily basis and spend time in daily prayer. This usually resulted in the client being empowered, gaining a social network, and functioning on a much higher level.

Saint Benedict’s formula for healthy living still applies in our modern times. We need a balance of work and prayer. If we are employed, underemployed, homeless or mentally ill, no matter what we can create a lifestyle of “Ora et Labora

I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in.

FEAR by Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

"Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back."
George Herbert, "Discipline."

I slept well last night.
A statement that both terrifies me
and says something is good,
or least my medication worked
for one night in many a week.
That is a lie, surprisingly
my meds have been working more
than usual, four and even five hours
of sleep a night on and off for a month.
Why? I wish I knew. The medications
are basically the same – tegretal,
lamictal, lunesta and clonazepam.
Some I have taken for years,
others are newer – some for the bipolar,
and others just for sleep.
It is the rapid cycling mind
that never stops that is the problem.
Sometimes just turning off the Internet
and e-mail is sufficient to slow it down.
The unpredictable events throw me,
or even predictable events through my mind
for a loop, and then it circles all night long.
Doctors have warned me that bi-polarism
is not curable, only controllable, yet I wish
a "Loudres-drian" cure, but whom am I to say
that the gift it has given me is something
that God should take away.
I am a productive mentally ill person
who uses my manic-depression to do positive actions:
such as writing and poeting, teaching and preaching,
listening and more importantly loving.
Would I do so if I were not blessed
with my moods that bring me up and down?
Medication helps the extremeness of the moods,



Would I do so if I were not blessed

but does not rid me of them.
When I write I write, when I love I love,
never in halves only wholes.
Sometimes I think of my needs and wants,
quite a bit in fact, almost always. My writing is inspired, I hope it is the Holy Spirit,
when I read what I write I do not often know how I did it or where it comes from.
Everyday life speaks to my soul,
and then I write of a tree or a feeling,
a stack of books or a simple bird,
whatever catches my eye, things other people often walk by.
I need love. We all need love.
When I am told "Father, everyone loves you,"
it helps, but often is not enough.
My mind falters, it is unsure.
When I know someone loves me,
I need those little things –
an inexpensive gift, a phone call, an e-mail to check on me,
a sharing of themselves that assures me that our friendship is based in God,
anything that helps me realize my worth
or helps my insecurities.
I guess by now, the winter of my life,
I should have grown out of this need,
but the hole in my soul still needs to be affirmed, filled, and even more loved.
Maybe I am still an adolescent at heart, never grown up, and possibly never will.
Maybe that is sad, but maybe that makes me who I am,
I am in touch with my inner child, or at least my inner teen,
when someone shares themselves with me, no matter how bad or even how little,
it affirms me, makes me feel what I do
is worth something, something even in the eyes of God.
I sit looking out on the Sound this morning,
it is grayish, bleak, but for some reason
I am not, rather I am up, and I know why:
an e-mail I got before I left showed me
that a friendship is important to both of us,
we can share no matter what,
it is a friendship that St. Aelred of Rievaulx
said is perfect: "You, I, and the Holy Spirit,"
one in caritas, agape, or just plain love.



Everyday life speaks to my

WHAT IS IT YOU SEEK? by Oblate Patricia McClure



I am no longer a stenographer to life so I did not take copious notes when I attended the conferences. I have been asked to elaborate more on the conferences so I will attempt to share with you the things that touched me from the talk given by Msgr. Andrew Tanya-anan, the undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious dialogue.

Benedictine ideals reflect eastern ideology. We try to balance our actions with our inner contemplative nature. The silence of contemplation often moves us to action and the business of action calls us to retreat into the peace of contemplative living. This is a common thread in our personal journeys as Benedictines.

The rule is about community and even though there are a lot of “I”s in a community it is about the us. Communication is important in a community and so dialogue becomes a critical part of our community living. As a monk, a partner, a spouse, and a parent, we need to listen and share.

We are all seeking the way to grow, different doesn’t mean that it is bad. In a country, that has such diversity, it amazes me that we still are afraid of those who act, think, or look different.

“... I have lost my pretenses, I don’t have to be anything but who I am. I am not going to change, only modify or maybe soften or mellow...”
 Father Benedict Auer O.S.B. “Rain”

We need to learn to talk to other Christians person to person not ideology to theology. We don’t need to convert everyone we meet but rather learn from the journey of the other, by allowing ourselves to experience how others live. This is no easy task. I once attended an oblate meeting in which we were asked to share something about our faith journey. I remember the woman next to me was someone who had perfect faith, she questioned nothing and was greatly appalled that anyone would. I knew that we were at opposite ends of the faith scale. Being young, I listened but did not question. Common ground seemed rather soft. Instead of envy I felt inadequate in my faith. I wish now that I had asked more about how she had gotten to that wondrous state. And maybe it would have been a help to me since my faith entails questions and a lot of grey area.

Within our community, it takes all kinds, those whose belief is as solid as a rock and those who hang on by a thread. In the end, it isn’t how we believe or what exactly we believe, it is what are you seeking? I think that the Abbot asks that of a monk as he begins his relationship with the community, perhaps it is really a good question to re-ask ourselves.

GOOD WORKS

Rosary Work. Saturdays, 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.

Meet in the Guest dining room of Old Main.

- April 10th
- May 8th
- June 5th
- July 10th
- August 14th
- September 11th
- October 9th
- November 13th
- December 11th



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

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

Have you read one of the books from the "book shelf" ? We welcome a review for the newsletter. Just email a short summary to Bro. Edmund or Patricia.