

Oblates of Saint Benedict

Saint Martin's Abbey

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I Was Thinking by Brother Edmund Ebbers O.S.B.

For some weeks now, I have been mulling over in my mind and spirit what to write for this next Newsletter and the same topic comes up time and again. I never tire of hearing or reading about **silence**. St. Benedict seems to stress **silence** a great deal in the Holy Rule. I have also been reading a small book, "The Breath of the Soul" by Sr. Joan Chittister, which was recently handed to me by an oblate.

Silence is more than just the absence of sound. Silence also comes from within each of us. In other words, there could be quiet about our person but our mind is running us in circles. Today with so many distractions that come in the form of electronic gadgets, work, family, children, friends and social events we are left with a big question, where is there time for God and me. Each one of us has to find that answer. For some this time is found when traveling to work or coming home. Others schedule time in the early morning before the day begins or in the evening when things have quieted down. Whatever time works for you it is a time that requires you to slow down and listen with the heart. The listening process involves quieting the mind, body, and surroundings.

Finding the silence in a day can be challenging and after the external noise is gone, there is still the internal ruckus to contend with. The internal journey often brings about harsh reality checks. The mind seems to resist silence and rest. I'm told the Buddhist calls this, "taming the monkey mind" but we call it "resisting distractions". I believe a caution is in order here, as I know many search everywhere to find God, failing to recognize that **God is within each of us**. Once we realize this, we can begin building a relationship with Him. We need not waste so much precious time running to this retreat, that Church, shrine or mountain. So often, we fall into the role of Martha and find ourselves doing rather than being. The doing can block our journey to be with God.

I have never forgotten the words spoken to me by my novice master: "learn to waste time for God." Now wasting time in the eyes of our world is not being productive. However, I believe the meaning held by this phrase is to give time freely to God in prayer, by listening in silence - just **being** in God's presence. Like any relationship, one has to be available and present. God loves us immensely and desires that personal relationship with us - it is up to us to accept it by making time in our day to meet with Him. None of this can be rushed. If I'm engaged in this relationship, being transformed then I'm where I ought to be. God has individual plans for us and collectively too. The stronger my relationship is with Christ the more Christ like I become. I begin to see the world as God sees it. I become less wrapped up in myself and better able to respond to the needs of others.

Sr. Joan says, "There is no finding God, however, until we manage at last to listen to the silence, to rest naked before God, to come to peace with the self." Being boldly "naked before God" makes us vulnerable to God and in turn to each other. Can we trust God to lead us to find Him? Are our fears so great that we believe God does not know them already? Fear restrains us from growth. **Letting go** of our fears, concerns, wants and desires, frees us to give ourselves totally for a relationship with God.

In addition, I might ask myself, why do I want to get close to God or develop this personal relationship? Sr. Joan says, "The purpose of prayer is not prayer. The purpose of prayer is to come to love God as much as possible with all the insights into the nature and presence of God this world allows." We don't pray just to be a saint, a worker of miracles or as a consolation prize. We pray to enter fully into the mysteries of Christ.

The first step to silence is the desire to have a relationship with God. Then the willingness to be vulnerable and trust in God, that he knows our needs and will not bring us to harm. As we begin to trust, we repeat the benefit of growth. When practicing listening and silence we begin to hear God and the needs of those around us. Like so many things in life, it takes practice and a commitment to meet God daily in silence. Lent is a good time to renew our practice of Benedictine silence and plan a special God time.



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

In the last step, contemplation (the action of looking thoughtfully at something for a long time; deep reflective thought; religious meditation that seeks a direct experience with the divine), we simply rest in the presence and power of God who has invited us, through the Word, to accept his love, which transforms us. People who are truly in love do not always communicate with words. We see that in people who have been married to one another for a long time. They are happy just to be with each other. They do not always need to speak. They know and anticipate the other in silence. This silence is essential; it is another time to let go of words.

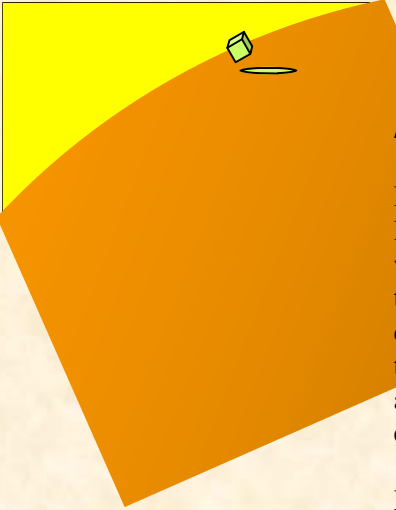
Here are some additional points about Lectio Divina. Our reading will demand some of our time, which we might initially think we need to reserve to other projects. However, it is important to give priority to your prayer life. Doing so is a "reverence" that helps keep us quiet and be more open to the word that speaks to our soul, which then allows us to be touched by God. It must be done in a spirit of reverence consciously excluding anything that will fall into the category of the non-sacred. We all have a need for some forgiveness, healing, and an acceptance of God's love and mercy.

What does all this result in? After some practice, lectio, entered into fully, leads us to become better and more successful doers of the word. Unless we enter into lectio with the idea of conversion, our exercise will fail. We have to be willing to be reformed and to deepen our relationship with God. When God is silent, it is most often due to our resistance to change or that we have a multiplicity of other concerns. But sometimes those distractions are a call to look at our lives again, and see if our life is in harmony with the Word we have been reading. Maybe we need some serious healing. Maybe we are not convinced of God's abundant mercy.

The bottom line is that we cannot just be hearers of the Word. Unless we come to the Word with a desire to grow and to become much better, to convert our life where it needs to be converted, then lectio will be a waste of time. Instead of rising early, we might as well stay in bed a little longer! Another point to keep in mind is that lectio cannot be just another spiritual novelty. It must be regular and not erratic. We need to work quietly through the gospel or an Old Testament prophet waiting and wanting to be surprised by the Lord. We abandon trying to control totally what we read. The result is that our minds, our hearts, and our actions are changed. We are moved into the life of the Spirit.

Lectio demands a lot of us through study, meditation, and prayer, but it is a very rewarding experience as well. It renews us spiritually. The consistent enrichment of the Word in our life experience gives meaning to our struggles and keeps hope alive. Lectio allows one to grow with the scriptures and to be penetrated with their spirit. The contact with the Word in scripture is a great joy because it brings us closer to God, the God we say we are seeking, and to the Son Jesus, who forever calls us.

I hope this article, suggested by one of our Oblates, has assisted the reader in a better understanding of Lectio Divina. I hope you will try Lectio as a way to seek out Jesus, the Word of God, within the scriptures, which are, after all, the very words of God!



"THE VERY WORDS OF GOD."

PRAYER REQUESTS

Oblate Pat Fahle, who recently passed away.

Oblate Loretta Morgan for the loss of her brother.

In the Beginning... by Fr. Gerard Kirsch, O.S.B.

"Our Family Circle" (the abbey publication) considered the biggest news of the month the meeting of the science and mathematics division of the American Benedictine Academy at Saint Martin's on July 5th-8th, 1953. Delegates included 27 priests, 19 sisters, two lay persons and two Saint Martin's clerics (young monks studying for the priesthood). Field trips included a trip to Mount Rainier and a tour of the University of Washington oceanographic laboratory at Friday Harbor.

On July 10th, three choir novices and two brother novices were invested by **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903--1971): John Hulscher (Father Alfred); Germain Buselmeier (Frater Germain); William Money (Frater Matthias), Robert Bond (Br. Louis) and Roger Wirtz (Br. Victor)**. The last two remained good friends after leaving Saint Martin's and died in 1997 within a few days of each other.

On July 11th, three young monks professed first vows: **Frater George (Joseph) Seidel, Frater Leo (James) Patten, and Frater Frederick (Robert) Theiss**. At the same Pontifical Mass, three clerics professed final vows: **Frater Nicholas (Bernard) Rausch (1928-2003); Frater Ambrose (Donald) Turner; and Frater Thaddeus (Raymond) Arledge**. Concluding the ceremony was the renewal of vows by **Father Sebastian Ruth (1875-1958)** in commemoration of his golden jubilee of vows.

Meanwhile, **Abbot Raphael** was scheduled to embark on August 16th, 1953 for the Congress of Abbots in Rome, sailing from New York on August 21th and spending some time in England before attending the Congress, September 18th-25th. Further visits of monasteries would culminate on November 11th with a reception of a relic of Saint Martin of Tours from the Archbishop of Tours. **Abbot Raphael** would then depart from Cherbourg on November 20th and be back at the abbey on November 30th.

July 13th-19th found the abbey's brothers vacationing at Lambert Lodge on Puget Sound. The Sisters of Saint Martin's Convent spent July 22nd at the Lodge and substitutes were found for their work in the kitchen. Sister Dolorosa, of Saint Martin's Convent, celebrated her silver jubilee of vows at the Motherhouse in Cottonwood, Idaho, and her brother **Frater Urban Feucht**, a Saint Martin's cleric, attended the ceremony, besides making a home visit to his family.

On a personal note, taking shameless advantage of his authorship of this column (which includes equally shameless use of materials in the archives), your **Father Gerard** would like to note that July 7th-14th, 1953 saw the Kirsch family (his parents and 4 sons) trekking from Fairbanks, Alaska to East Wenatchee, WA, which would be home for his parents for the next 39 years.



May they and all of our faithfully departed monks, nuns, and oblates rest in peace.

OBLATE SUNDAY May 15th

Join us for Mass in the Abbey Church at 11AM. Lunch in the cafeteria and then at 1:30 Br. Nicolaus will be speaking on Lectio Divina. The Benedictine practice of spiritual reading. After the meeting there will be a brief discussion on the Rule of St. Benedict. Please plan to stay and participate.



From the Hill... by Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.



Magnolias have always been a part of my life. Growing up in Sacramento, the walk up the house was flanked by two story high, ancient magnolias. When I was a child, two “tulip trees” — another variety of magnolia — were added to the garden. The abbey gardens have three magnolias. Two are star magnolias, and the third is a classic magnolia given to the abbey by the family of our late confrere **FATHER ALBERT DE WILDE**. Our older star magnolia took several years before it began blooming. Now it begins to bud soon after the arrival of the New Year, and by spring the blossoms are opening and it is in full bloom. Our magnolias add greatly to the beauty of our campus.

BROTHERS NICOLAUS WILSON and **MARK BONNEVILLE** traveled to the land of magnolias this spring when they traveled to the deep south one weekend to participate in the Abbey Youth Festival at Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College in Louisiana. They were part of the Benedictine presence there for more than 3,000 Catholic youth who participated. During their brief stay, **BROTHER NICOLAUS**, who is part of our own schola, was an ad hoc member of Saint Joseph Abbey’s schola...**FATHER KILIAN MALVEY** traveled to California several times on behalf of the University’s admissions and Alumni Offices this spring. He also traveled to Saint John’s in Colledgeville, to attend a conference aimed at promoting awareness of our Benedictine heritage in our Benedictine schools. **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** gave a special blessing to student on our own campus who had completed a special program promoting awareness of our Benedictine heritage...**BROTHER PETER TYNAN**, the Abbey’s deacon, who is completing theological studies at Mt. Angel Abbey, Oregon, prior to his priestly ordination this summer, received a special award from Mt. Angel Seminary. He was the recipient of a student scholar award, dedicated to Saint Thomas Aquinas, for his academic excellence and scholarship. The award carries with it a medal and a 500.00-dollar prize. Congratulations!

ABBOT NEAL and the monastic community welcomed **BROTHER PIUS LAZARO ABASINGI** of Hanga Abbey, Tanzania. **BROTHER PIUS** was met at the airport by **FATHER PAUL WECKERT**, guest master and vocation director. **BROTHER PIUS** will remain at the Abbey for several years as a guest of the Saint Martin’s community and will attend classes at Saint Martin’s University.

BROTHER LAWRENCE VOGEL, **BROTHER EDMUND EBBERS** and this writer attended the funeral of Herta Herrera. Mrs. Herrera was a long time cook at Saint Martin’s and a friend of many of us. She was especially adept at preparing dishes from her native Germany. She was a gymnast in her youth, and preformed in the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin. May she rest in peace! A beautiful tribute to Herta can be found at www.millsandmillsfunerals.com

Joyous spring and
a pleasantly
enriching
summer.

Need an Oblate Polo Shirt?

Brother Edmund just received a new order. Come and check it out. If he doesn’t have your size available we can place a new order.

Answering Back by Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

Talking to oneself is considered not unusual
 Within the confines of the monastery,
 Many monks seem to articulate themselves
 Out loud.
 I guess so at least someone
 Is listening, even if only themselves.
 As I stand on the deck, by the sea,
 I talk to the ocean for it seems sympathetic.
 For it too seems never to make any progress.
 Only racing to the shore
 and then back out again.
 In the film, "What about Bob?"
 The psychiatrist has written a book that says
 "You must take baby steps," which Bob tries to do.
 The Pacific Ocean seems to race to the shore only to retreat moments later.
 And then senselessly tries again.
 High tide reaches further, but low tide is back out again,
 Where it started, at least to the unscientific mind.
 Once in awhile, the sea goes wild
 And swallows a house or two during the long, winter turmoil.
 But normally it just keeps going
Back and forth,
 Actually getting no where, only repeating herself.
 I feel the same.
 I ask questions that I can only answer,
Back and forth,
Back and forth,
 A one sided dialogue, steeped in baby steps,
 Imitating the ocean, caressing the shore and out again.
 The answers are there.
 Maybe my questions are wrong.
 If Only I could find the right questions.

"If there were any way for
 me to become human for you-
 no matter what the price
 was, I would pay it."
 Stephenie Meyer, Eclipse



Oblate Retreat
 August 6th 2011

Plan now to attend. We will begin with Mass at the Abbey church at 8am and then proceed to Lambert Lodge about a 20 minute drive on Eld Inlet. Maps will be available. We will have a potluck lunch. Our day will concluded at 3:30 pm.



Reflections on being an Oblate by Oblate Bill Lagreid



During our Lenten Oblate Sunday is when we are usually called to renew the promises we made at the Altar of the Abbey Church be it last year for the first time or many years ago. Each of us stood before the Abbot and the assembled oblates, signed a document, and made our oblation establishing our spiritual association with community of St. Martin’s Benedictine monks. At that moment, we accepted a new way of life that includes prayer and working more fully as Christian apostles. It is as serious a moment as when a couple exchanges marriage promises. We did not enter this new way of life lightly so it is good from time to time, that we reflect, on what we have committed to do with our time, talent, and responsibilities as Oblates of St. Benedict.

Our excellent St. Martin’s Oblate Manual, along with the copy of the Rule of St. Benedict we received at our oblation, contains the material we need to begin and continue on this commitment. This writer, from personal experience, suggests that as years pass we face new life experiences and spiritual challenges that change us so that the printed words and ideas take on new meaning.

Our calling to be an Oblate is unique; we don’t have bells calling us to prayers so it requires us to order our lives in a way that we makes time for prayer, meditation, and reflection. Within our work places and families, we are called to serve others to be caring and compassionate with people who are in need or have little faith. Our example of living the Rule is reflected on all we do. To all around us we are known as people of prayer and self-discipline.

The world is filled with anger, dissention, and conflict, that overshadows the good. This world invades our friendships and families as it spins out of control. Hostility, vulgarity, and indecency can assault us and threaten to shake our foundation. As Oblates, we strive to bring our lives into balance. I hope that that balance helps those around us. By devoting our time and talent where it is needed so that God may be glorified, we step away from the chaos of the world. By our example, we quietly and carefully teach others to follow a higher path. The Rule of St. Benedict gives us our guidance and allows us to live according to our circumstances and to use our special abilities to influence the world around us.

For more helpful information consult the Oblate Manual, St. Martin’s Abbey, pages 200-205 under Guidelines for Oblates of Saint Benedict.

**TO THE GLORY OF
GOD**

ON THE BOOK SHELF

Benedictine Daily Prayer, A short breviary produced by the Liturgical Press. *A compact book of psalmody and Scriptures.*

Torment of the Soul: Suicidal Depression and Spirituality, by Fr. Benedict Auer and Dr. Jessy Ang. *Br. Edmund is suggesting this book again for those who may have missed it in the past. He has heard from so many who say this book has been of great help to themselves and friends.*

A Traveler's Prayer Book, by Christopher L. Webber. *Just in time for the summer travelers*

Pray, Repent, and Enjoy by Oblate J.J. Nugent

Why is it so hard for people to embrace God and the Good News? I think it is because people are afraid to let go of the very things that are making them unhappy.

I remember when I was a Freshman living in the dorms at Saint Martin's, and a monk stopped by and handed out many Green Scapulars. The piece of paper came with the scapulars suggesting that we could hang it above our beds and it would be a source of protection from a bunch of things including impure thoughts. Almost nobody hung them in their rooms.

One night I mentioned this to several of my friends who were sitting around the fireplace in Baran Hall and a fierce argument broke out. While everyone conceded that sex before marriage was probably a sin or just a plain bad idea; nobody wanted to hang up a scapular on the off chance that they might find a willing girl. None of my friends were willing to gain the blessings offered by God in exchange for refraining from premarital sex. After a brief reflection on the drama and disruptions that premarital sex can cause, I hung the Scapular in my room (for at least a year).

Later in life, a Wicca friend wanted to be baptized. She claimed to be ready to become a Christian, but just one thing got in the way. She couldn't accept the idea that forgiveness was freely given. A closer examination of the issue revealed that she was holding grudges and wanted to see people who hurt her in the past, pay for their wrongs. If she could be forgiven then they could be forgiven and this was just unacceptable to her. She couldn't bring herself to accept God's graces. Nor could she bring herself to let go of the wrongs she had experienced and then forgive others. Therefore, she still spends her life tortured by anxiety, depression, and hate.

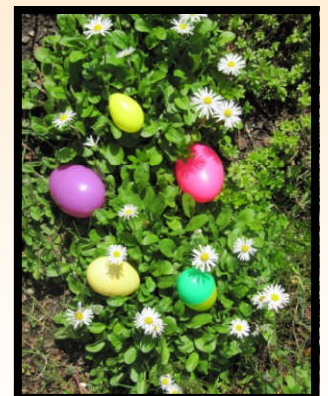
Recently, I helped a Non-Catholic Christian friend start in RCIA. He called me the other day, in serious emotional pain. He said, "I feel like I am losing myself in this conversion process." I shared the definition of change taught by Thomas Aquinas. When something changes something new comes, something old goes away and something remains the same. In his case I pointed out that grace, joy, and healing are coming. Sin and ignorance are leaving and his real personality (a reflection of God's image) will remain. In his case, he was willing to let go.

I think that's the key. People need to let go and accept God's grace and love. Perhaps my calling is to help them with compassion to recognize that it is the rejection of the Good News that Jesus came so that we might all have life abundantly that is holding them back. To pray for them and in compassionate dialogue without excuse or judgment suggest that they give up the thing that is causing them so much pain.

Easier said than done and we are engaged in this battle of not wanting to give up the things that cause us so much pain. This is what is so wonderful about the Easter season. Every year we are challenged by the church to fearlessly give up something that keeps us from growing closer to God. By the time this article comes out, Lent and Easter will be concluding but it is my hope that each of us will have quietly examined our conscience and ask ourselves a question. What pain are we still refusing to let go of? When will we allow God's healing grace begin in us? So, this Easter let our mantra be pray, repent, and enjoy.



LET IT BE





Prophetic, Priestly, and Kingly by Robert Royal

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ShareDeo volente, I will speak this afternoon at a panel sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Catholic University of America about the Church's role in immigration. The organizers of such events are well-intentioned and, contrary to what critics of the bishops' conference think, often seek diverse voices.

They rarely hear them, however, because, except in pro-life discussions, social conservatives are typically token participants. And so avoid these events. It's an uncomfortable and usually fruitless task, but someone has to do it.

I've written on immigration before, which is close to my daily life. My wife's family, Catholic Slavs rounded up and taken to Nazi work camps, escaped and later immigrated - legally, and at considerable cost and trouble. She teaches in a Catholic school that is predominantly Hispanic, most of the families illegals.

Despite her experiences of being young in an alien culture and language, there's a visceral reaction for her - and many other Americans - that it's simply wrong to treat illegals lightly. And they believe that since the law has been broken, such immigrants are not "undocumented." "Social justice" arguments cut the other way for them. How is it just to treat illegals like American citizens or legal immigrants or like people who have only transgressed some minor regulation, like a traffic violation? Or to give the children of illegal immigrants, blameless though they may be, full social benefits?

All true, and at the same time, it's clear that you cannot deport 10 or 20 million people. It's never happened absent a Stalin or Mao. America is a nation of immigrants, and will never, despite the talk, go down that road. So we need to find a way - demanding, even somewhat harsh, forget "DREAM" acts - that will regularize those now here and deter others from breaking the law in the future.

The Church can help in the transition in three ways: prophetic, priestly, and kingly. I know it's unusual to use Biblical categories rather than policy wonk approaches on public issues, but bear with me.

Prophetic: The Church is playing on its home field when it opposes un-Christian cultural elements. As Cardinal George has argued, all cultures have demonic and angelic aspects. About Hispanic immigration in particular - the real subject of immigration reform - the Church has to be careful, however, about being prophetic or countercultural, "be orator/ but with an accurate tongue," as the poet Wallace Steven put it.

For instance, the Church has repeatedly warned us to "welcome the stranger among us." But America already does, legally and in large numbers. Since 2000 we've averaged well over a million immigrants per year, illegal and not, and we're annually granting permanent resident status to 1.25 million. Naturalization rates, according to Pew surveys, have risen sharply in recent decades. Hardly evidence of a xenophobic nation. So we should beware of the "prophet motive" and easy sermonizing about welcoming the stranger. Most Americans already agree, but don't like being lectured about what they regard as an essentially legal issue.

Similarly, the Church should be wary of playing the race card. Is there anti-Hispanic prejudice in America? Of course. Is it a major factor in immigration controversies? Not really. The problem is mostly cultural; people dislike crime, disorder, exploiting the system, etc. by illegals. But the real tension involves the sheer numbers of new Hispanics. Ethnic tensions have appeared - and happily dissipated - in our past. But being prophetic about respecting people's cultures should include recognizing that we have a culture, too. And Americans may justly feel threatened or disoriented by out-of-control challenges to a way of life.



Priestly: Which brings us to the priestly. Pastoral concern for all persons, something Catholics deeply understand, necessarily includes those already here. It's telling that this even has to be said. No nation will go to Heaven or Hell. But there's something sacred in historic human communities. We are bound by our laws, including rules about citizenship and crossing our borders. But we are also bound by a particular sense of belonging to one another. The Church has too long regarded nationality as a kind of disease, when in fact it's a natural human thing to cluster around language and culture, and a real good, so long as we recognize that others are attached to their cultural forms. Prophets call the culture to account, but priests place a sacred canopy over it in ways helpful to national solidarity.

Kingly: Unlike some evangelicals, Catholics are a Church not a sect, i.e., Catholicism believes in engaging all of society. Being kingly, translated into modern idiom, means understanding the importance of the common good. And the keystone to the common good in a pluralistic society is the rule of law.

This may sound harsh to Church people who believe in the law of love, but love in a social framework is best served by the rule of law. Frankly, the Church is in a good position to teach Hispanic immigrants, who have often suffered under unjust systems, about a proper respect for and trust in institutions. Machine politics, unions, and Catholic parishes did that for earlier generations of immigrants. It's a lesson worth retrieving. But to do it effectively, you have to value assimilation. And sadly, for good and bad reasons, that's in some dispute now.

Since law is central to immigration questions, the Church needs to be shrewd in how it responds to legal developments. Cardinal Mahony - unwisely, I think -denounced Arizona's immigration law as Nazism, for example, and called for civil disobedience - in other words, further breaking of the law. Popular in Los Angeles, perhaps, but the right move for a debatable question in Catholic social teaching? Abortions take human life, yet the hierarchy has not notably advocated widespread civil disobedience over that. Americans, Catholics and not, draw conclusions from such behavior.

Prophetic, priestly, kingly - demanding, but Christ never said it would be easy. And if Catholics don't do it, who will?

Robert Royal is editor-in-chief of *The Catholic Thing*, and president of the Faith & Reason Institute in Washington, D.C. His most recent book is [The God That Did Not Fail: How Religion Built and Sustains the West](#), now available in paperback from Encounter Books.

Email Addresses: If you would like to receive your Oblate Newsletters by Email **only** please inform the Director and Editor.

If you have not given us your email address or have changed it please let us know as well.

WELCOME

Newly invested Oblates Margaret Birchem and Tamara Saroyan-Willington

And those who made final Oblation are Eugene Otis and Calvin Hertel.

Feast of Mercy - The Greatest Gift You Will Ever Receive by Oblate Steve

This year the Feast of Mercy is on 1st May. The whole devotion to Divine Mercy centers around this day. Jesus told St. Faustina that, "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment" (Diary No.699). This means that if anyone attends the Feast of Mercy and makes a genuine confession and receives Holy Communion, the sins of their entire life are wiped from their soul and the punishment which was justly due is cancelled. Jesus especially asked that the Feast of Mercy be attended by poor sinners.

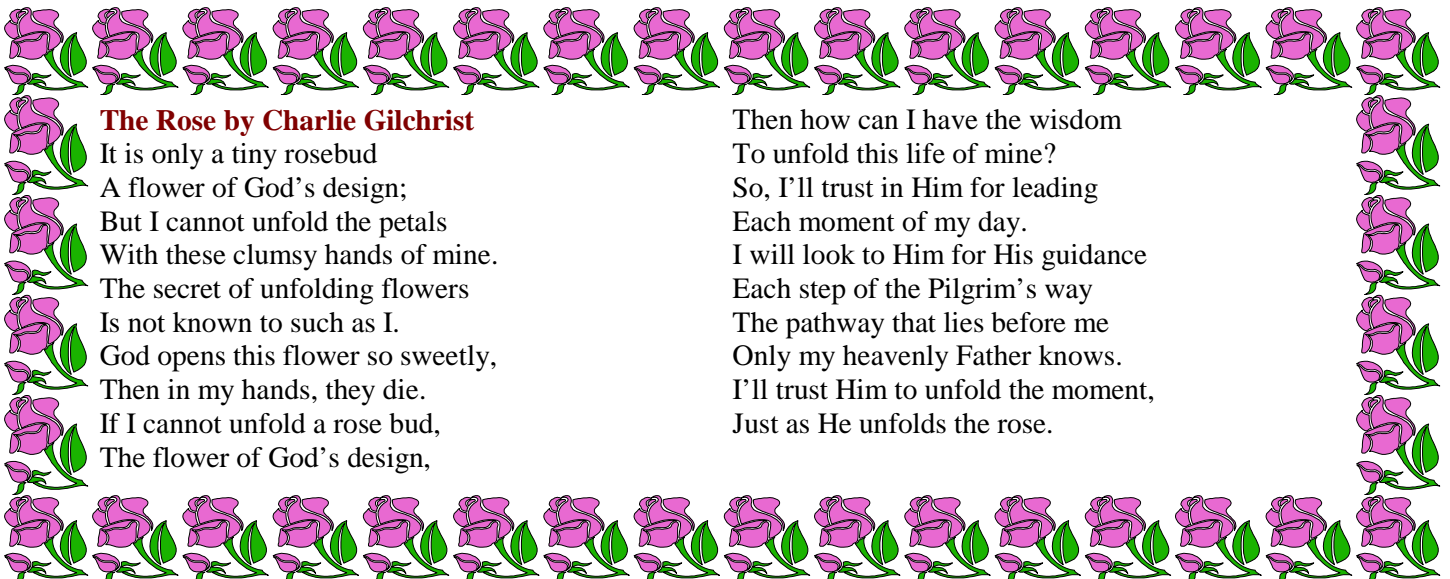
The Holiness of the Feast of Mercy is beyond our comprehension. Jesus said that on Mercy Sunday, "all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened" (Diary 699). This is another promise of the Feast of Mercy. It means that during the Feast of Mercy, we can bring our special intentions and petitions and He will grant them, of course, they must be in accordance with His Will. We can pray for our family members and friends and ask for special graces to become more loving and wiser people.

Another important point is that Jesus has said, "Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity" (Diary 699). How many people, knowing their sins, are afraid to approach such holiness, believing rejection to be the only just outcome? So many people suffer from this paralyzing fear. Fear of God's anger grips the soul in a way that ordinary fear cannot. Jesus knows we feel this way. In fact fearing God is good because it keeps people from committing acts, which would cause terrible pain, both for their victims and themselves. But on Mercy Sunday, everyone can make their peace with God and turn with confidence to His inconceivable Mercy.

The Feast of Mercy is a new holy day within the Catholic Church. It is important to understand that this holy day differs from many of the other holy days, which we celebrate every year. Most holy days were created by the Church to honor some aspect of our faith, but the Feast of Mercy was created by Jesus and imparted to us through a series of profound revelations to St. Faustina. After a thorough investigation by the Vatican, these revelations were pronounced authentic, something which is very rare within the Church. For this reason, Catholics should take seriously the promises made to us by Jesus on this Feast Day and it should help us to gain a deeper understanding of the true nature of God.

Oblate Steve Gallagher will be ordained to the Priesthood on Saturday, April 30th at 10:00 AM at St. Michael's Parish in Olympia. A Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated by Steve the following day, Divine Mercy Sunday. You can lend your support by attending.

Steve is being ordained in Olympia because most of his friends are in the area. His diocese is of Juneau, Alaska. He would very much appreciate your prayers at this time and in the years ahead that he truly be a servant of God.



The Rose by Charlie Gilchrist

It is only a tiny rosebud
 A flower of God's design;
 But I cannot unfold the petals
 With these clumsy hands of mine.
 The secret of unfolding flowers
 Is not known to such as I.
 God opens this flower so sweetly,
 Then in my hands, they die.
 If I cannot unfold a rose bud,
 The flower of God's design,

Then how can I have the wisdom
 To unfold this life of mine?
 So, I'll trust in Him for leading
 Each moment of my day.
 I will look to Him for His guidance
 Each step of the Pilgrim's way
 The pathway that lies before me
 Only my heavenly Father knows.
 I'll trust Him to unfold the moment,
 Just as He unfolds the rose.

GOOD WORKS

Rosary work

Saturdays 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

Meet in the Guest dining room of Old Main.

May 14th

June 11th

July 9th

August 20th

September 10th

October 8th

November 12th

December 3rd

Lodge work days

1:00 pm—3:30 pm

October 22nd

Please RSVP for this event since Brother Edmund leaves for the lodge at 9:30 am. You are welcome to come early and work. If you do then plan on bringing some food to share for lunch.



So many thanks to those who sent in their Oblation Renewals and donations.



Gardening:



Saturdays 1:00pm to 3:30pm when rosary making isn't in session and weather permitting! All are welcome to help make the grounds a work of wonder and share their green thumb expertise. We need wood cutters and stackers since one of our good deeds is to cut and stack wood for the Byzantine Nuns (it is their primary source of heat).

Don't forget to contact Br. Edmund if you think you would like to participate.

E-mail: br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Phone: 360-438-4457



Oblate Sundays for 2011

July 10th thoughts by Fr. Kilian and the annual Potluck. Please bring your special dish to share with others. The abbey will supply drinks, eating utensils, plates, and napkins.

September 11th thoughts by Oblate Emily Suda.

December 4th thoughts by Oblate Brian Suda.

