



## Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

August, 2008



### August Meeting

The next Oblate meeting is on August 17 and will begin at 3:30 in the Abbey Church with Mass. Those who would like to begin instruction as Oblate Novices will make their first Oblation (promise) at that time. Oblates present will also renew their own Oblation at that time. Oblate Novice classes will begin in September.

Those interested in making their oblation as Oblate Novices should contact Gail Warlick at the Abbey. She can be contacted at (704) 825-6675 or at [GailWarlick@bac.edu](mailto:GailWarlick@bac.edu). Please do not contact George Cobb who is unavailable until the meeting.

### Oblation

The Oblation is simply a formal promise. They are not vows nor are you under any penalty of sin for not fulfilling your promise. At this monastery it is made to the Abbot. If it is not possible to make the oblation to the Abbot because of distance or infirmity it made be made to your parish priest. There is really only one oblation that the Oblate makes which is after they have completed the prescribed course of study and are ready and willing to assume the responsibilities of being an Oblate. The Oblate is required to renew this Oblation each year, either to the Abbot or privately if they are unable to come to the Abbey.

Simply, the Oblate promises to:

- be committed to their monastery, its values, culture and prayer;
- be committed to a life of continual conversion;
- pray some part of the Liturgy of the Hours Daily;
- be faithful to the practice of Lectio Divina;
- study the Rule of St. Benedict;
- attend annual retreats;
- attend meetings as their vocation and distance permits; and
- maintain fidelity to one's Christian tradition.

“Oblates are persons whose lives are shaped by Benedictine spirituality. They follow the Rule of St. Benedict as far as their station in life permits.” Above all “Oblates are representatives of the monastery ‘in the world.’”<sup>1</sup>

The Novice team is finishing the course of instruction which will be explained after the Mass at the August meeting. There is only one item that needs to be touched on here and that is the Liturgy of the Hours. There is a wide variety of breviaries on the market to chose from. It is recommended that you do not go and by one immediately. You will have a chance to review many of them at the Oblate meetings. There is a reason we do not recommend just one form of breviary and that is the choice is very personal. You will be using it for a long time. Don't rush. See what other Oblates are using and their preference. Look on line at commentaries and other Benedictine sites. There is no rush. There is only one version that we do not permit and that is the version published in *Magnificat*. Other than that, each person is free to use the version that you are most comfortable.

### Wisdom from the Desert

We believe that the divine presence is everywhere and that “the eyes of the Lord are looking on the good and the evil in every place.” But we should believe this especially without any doubt when we are assisting at the Work of God. To that end let us be mindful always of the Prophet's words, “Serve the Lord in fear” and again, “Sing praises wisely” and “In the sight of the Angels I will sing praise to Thee.” Let us therefore consider how we ought to conduct ourselves in the sight of the Godhead and of His Angels, and let us take part in the psalmody in such a way that our mind may be in harmony with our voice. St. Benedict

### Web Resources

For those of you interested in the early writings of the Desert that is not only an excellent archive of many of their writings, but also has a daily thought for the day. The site is: <http://www.innerlightproductions.com/archive.htm> and is produced by Inner Light Productions

### From the Scriptorium

Summer can be a great time to catch up on reading and one book that might be of interest is *Cluny, In Search of God's Lost Empire*. The book was an excellent expose' of the history of the Clunic branch of the Benedictine Order. Within this short volume (only 245 pages in including footnotes and index) the author brings to life the art and architecture of the Order and their major impact on the history of Europe and the Church during the Middle Ages. The reader is introduced to such remarkable personalities as Sts. Odo, Maiolus, Odilo, Hugh, and Bl. Peter the Venerable (their

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<sup>1</sup>North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors, C-4.

feast day is May 11). While the author is not too kind toward St. Bernard, it is still a good book unhampered by previously written histories. Edwin Mullins, the author, also takes great pains to describe the great Abbey at Cluny, possibly one of the largest churches ever built. Not the typical history book, Mullins brings alive Cluny and makes one wish the monastery at not been destroyed during the French Revolution and was still standing so we could also enjoy it today.

### **The Ordo**

There have been a few questions concerning the listing of the memorials and feast days that are listed in this section. There are many optional Memorials that are not celebrated at the Monastery. What is listed here are the Feats days and Memorials that are observed at the Monastery and follows the Ordo of the American Cassinese Congregation.

#### **AUGUST**

- 20 Bernard, Abbot, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 21 Pius X, Pope. Memorial.
- 22 The Queenship of the Virgin Mary. Memorial.
- 27 Monica, Married Woman. Memorial.
- 28 Augustine, Bishop, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 29 The Martyrdom of John the Baptist.\* Memorial.

- 3 Gregory the Great, Pope, Religious, Doctor of the Church. Feast
- 4 Anniversary of Dedication of Cathedral, Diocese of Charlotte. Memorial.
- 8 Birth of the Virgin Mary. Feast.
- 13 John Chrysostom, Bishop, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Feast.
- 15 Our Lady of Sorrows. Memorial.
- 16 Cornelius,\* Pope, Martyr, and Cyprian,\* Bishop, Martyr. Memorial.
- 20 Andrew Kim Taegon, Presbyter, Martyr, Paul Chong Hasang, Catechist, Martyr, and Their Companions, Martyrs.

### **September Meeting**

Our next meeting will be September 21, 2008. If you need to reach me please write to:

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