



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

June-July, 2010



May Meeting

The next Oblate meeting will be on June 13 and will begin with Mass in the Abbey Basilica at 3:30. Novices are asked to read the chapter on "Community" in *Finding Sanctuary*. Please also bring with you your copy of *Fully Human, Fully Divine*.

Honor and Deceit



Recently a young man was presented his Eagle Award. Just before the presentation the speaker talked about what is a central theme of the Scouting movement, Honor. A Scout pledges on his honor to do all that is expected of him as a scout, family member, and citizen. To violate his honor could mean forfeiture of rank and membership. But the word "honor" fell flat on the audience. It was obvious that many had not thought about the term or its implications up

until that moment. In society today there are few that truly understand what the term "honor" means any more. We generally know dishonorable behavior when it is observed, but do we still know what the term means? If we observe carefully we expect honorable behavior in others but we make exceptions for ourselves for any number of reasons and all of those reasons have, at the heart of them one particular sin and that is deceit.

The Rule states "*Rid your heart of all deceit.*" (RB 4:24) Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel defines deceit as holding one thing in your heart and pretending in your behavior to be doing something else. "It is a cunning of mind, and a hidden malice adorned with smooth words." It divides the heart of the Christian for "... by holding deceit in their heart they lose the indwelling Holy Spirit..." and "... cease to be the temple of the Holy Spirit, and through having deceit become the dwelling of the demon. For the one heart will not be able to keep hold of the Lord and of deceit at the same time." (*Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict*, Trans. David Barry, OSB, pp. 189-190).

This appears harsh to modern ears but Smaragus makes a good point. Eventually the person will be faced with either continuing with the deceit and holding on to their own perception of truth or recognizing the real Truth and returning to the Lord. We are taught to be single minded and have undivided hearts. Deceit, by its very nature, prevents us from the singleness of purpose the Lord asks of us. Deceit eats at our core – and those core values totaled

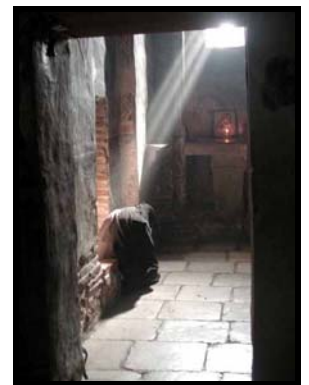
together is honor. We see examples of this every day in the news and papers and they do not need to be enumerated here. But usually when it makes the news the deceit becomes revealed – but usually at great pain and a general sense that "honor" has been violated.

So how does one deal with deceit and restore honor? Smaragus outlines that as well stipulating "The more hidden this vice is in the heart, the greater does it grow in malice; but when it is brought out in the open it is reduced to naught and healed." Being honest and open about who we are and how we act in accordance with the Gospel and the Rule will put light into the corners of our hearts. A good spiritual director or even a trusted friend can help you look deep into yourself and find these small demons locked in your heart. Remember that they only fester and grow when you do not expose them. The danger to honor occurs when we hold on to them and keep them enclosed in our hearts. But also remember the pain that can be inflicted and, once exposed, remember to make some reparation for the pain they may have caused, whether large or small. Only then is honor restored.

Conversion

Each of us as Oblates make a promise to a life of continual conversion. The following is a brief examination of conscience that could be followed each evening before bed.

- “Concretely, my examen might include the following steps:
- I begin with a moment of grateful remembrance of God’s gifts to me this day and ask for divine help now to make this examen fruitful;
 - I quickly replay the day to see whether my words and activities have been born out of a sense of God’s presence and as a response to the call of love in each situation;
 - honestly, but without depression or shame, I ask God for mercy and healing, confident that God loves me in spite of my frailty and brokenness;
 - finally, I commit myself and the rest of my life to God as his faithful servant for the future.



Such an exercise need take only a few minutes, but if it seems too elaborate, the first two steps can easily be omitted.”

Desert Wisdom

When Abba Apollo heard the sound of singing from the monks who welcomed us, he greeted us according to the custom which all monks follow... He first lay prostrate on the ground, then got up and kissed us and having brought us in he prayed for us; then, after washing our feet with his own hands, he invited us to partake of some refreshment...



One could see his monks were filled with joy and a bodily contentment such as one cannot see on earth. For nobody among them was gloomy or downcast.

If anyone did appear a little downcast, Abba Apollo at once asked him

the reason and told each one what was the secret recesses of his heart. He used to say, "Those who are going to inherit the Kingdom of heaven must not be despondent about their salvation... we who have been considered worthy of so great a hope, how shall we not rejoice without ceasing, since the Apostle urges us always, 'Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks!'"

The Ordo

Listed are the Feast days and Memorials that are observed at the Monastery and follows the Ordo of the American Cassinese Congregation. You can also see the observed feast days by going to: <http://oblatesosbelmont.org/ordo/>.

JUNE

- 13 Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time. (Week III)
- 19 Romuald, Abbot, Religious Founder. Memorial
- 20 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time. (Week IV)
- 21 Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious. Memorial
- 24 Birth of John the Baptist. Solemnity
- 27 Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 28 Irenaeus, Bishop, Martyr. Memorial
- 29 Peter and Paul, Apostles. Solemnity.

JULY

- 3 Thomas, Apostle. Feast.
- 4 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week II)
- 11 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)

- 13 Henry, Emperor, Married Man (Co-patron of Benedictine Oblates). Opt Mem.
- 15 Bonaventure, Bishop, Religious, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 18 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week IV)
- 22 Mary Magdalene, Disciple of the Lord. Memorial.
- 25 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 26 Joachim and Anne, Parents of the Virgin Mary. Memorial
- 29 Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Hosts of the Lord. Memorial.
- 31 Ignatius of Loyola, Presbyter, Religious Founder. Memorial.

AUGUST

- 1 Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week II)
- 4 John Mary Vianney, Presbyter. Memorial
- 6 The Transfiguration of the Lord. Feast.
- 8 Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)
- 10 Lawrence, Deacon, Martyr. Feast
- 11 Clare, Virgin, Religious Founder. Memorial
- 14 Maximilian Mary Kolbe, Presbyter, Religious, Martyr. Memorial.
- 15 The Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Solemnity.
- 16 Monday of the Twentieth week in Ordinary Time (Begin Week IV)
- 20 Bernard, Abbot, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 21 Pius X, Pope. Memorial.
- 22 Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 24 Bartholomew, Apostle. Feast
- 27 Monica, Married Woman. Memorial.
- 28 Augustine, Bishop, Doctor of the Church.
- 29 Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time. (Week II)

Next Meeting in September

The Oblates will meet again September 19, 2010. If you have any question please write:

George K. Cobb, OblSB
Belmont Abbey Monastery
100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road
Belmont, NC 28012

gkcobb0428@gmail.com