



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

February, 2011



February Meeting

The next Oblate meeting is February 27, at 3:00 in the Abbey Church with Mass. Abbot Placid will receive the new Oblates' and Novices' Oblations and renewal of Oblations from Oblates. Oblates who cannot attend need to send in the enclosed Oblation renewal form to maintain their name on the mailing list.

Light has come into the world

Around 700 BC, Isaiah, the great prophet of Israel, told of the coming day when it would be said that *the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light—a light that shone on all who lived in the land where death casts its shadow*. We celebrate the fulfillment of that prophecy each year on February 2nd, as we celebrate the **Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple**. The date is calculated by counting 40 days after Christmas. The feast commemorates the occasion when the Blessed Virgin Mary, in observance of the Mosaic Law (Exodus 13:2; Leviticus 12:2-4), presented herself for purification, and her baby Son for dedication to God. So this is both a feast of the Lord, and a feast of Mary.

Mary and Joseph were poor, so they took with them the sacrifice prescribed for poor people: a pair of doves or pigeons. Simeon, St. Luke tells us, has been looking for “the consolation of Israel”. The word translated *consolation* is the same word that St. John the Evangelist uses for the Holy Spirit — “the Paraclete”, a word that means advocate, comforter, one who goads. Simeon is longing for deliverance and transformation, for God’s salvation to come to his people. Suddenly his tired old eyes see a child carried in by two poor parents, and through the grace of the Holy Spirit, he sees in this child the salvation he has been waiting for so long. He bursts out into the great cry of thanksgiving that we now call the *Nunc Dimittis*. To show that this is not just the delusion of a crazy old man, the prophetess Anna confirms his insight: this child will have something to do with the coming redemption of Israel.

The Light of Christ continues to shine through lives of the Saints we celebrate during the rest of the month of February. St. Scholastica (Feb 10), the twin sister of our own St. Benedict, is particularly dear to us for the

light she, the first Benedictine nun, shed on the religious vocations of women, and the power of women’s prayers. We thank God also for the holy martyrs Agatha (Feb 5) and Polycarp (Feb 23). The Feast of the Chair of St. Peter (Feb 22) reminds us that Christ chose St. Peter to be a particular light for the whole Church.

As St. John reminds us, the light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness is unable to overcome it. So we today bear witness to the light of the presence of God in the world: light shining through us, the Body of Christ. May we, who take delight in Mary’s humble readiness to be the birth-giver of our Savior, live and rejoice in the light of Christ’s presence among us!

Lenten Day of Reflection

Belmont Abbey College is offering a Lenten Day of Reflection March 12, with a lecture, meditation, Mass and lunch.



Father Dwight Longenecker will talk on “Screwtape Meets His Match: Fr Longenecker on C.S. Lewis for Lent.” Father Longenecker’s recent book, “The Gargoyle Code,” is styled after Lewis’s *The “Screwtape Letters,”* and is especially designed to be

read during Lent.

The Abbey’s Dr. Ron Thomas will also present “Meditations on the Stations of the Cross” in the Abbey Basilica. Last year, Dr. Thomas made a CD recording of these meditations, with accompanying prayers recorded by Belmont Abbey students. EWTN found Dr. Thomas’s CD to be so powerful, they played his meditations on their worldwide radio network every day during Holy Week.

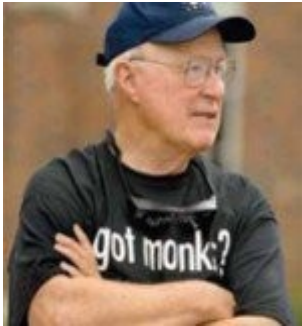


The event, sponsored by The Catholic Shoppe, will begin at 10 a.m. in the ballroom of the Haid and end at 2:15 p.m. Admission is \$30 per person, including lunch, or \$25 per person without lunch.

A complete schedule is available at <http://alumni.belmontabbeycollege.edu/Lent>, where you may also register. If you have questions, email Jillian Maisano at JillianMaisano@bac.edu. Those without Internet access may contact Jillian at 704-461-6869.

Breakfast with Benedict

The next Breakfast with Benedict sponsored by Belmont Abbey will be held on March 2 at 7:45 a.m. in the Dining Commons on campus. The speaker will likely be Fr. Kieran Neilson, O.S.B., a monk of the Abbey



At each event, a member of the college or monastic community provides a 15- or 20-minute reflection on one of the Benedictine hallmarks and the role that hallmark/charism/virtue plays in their daily life. There will then be time for questions/discussion.

Breakfast costs around \$6, but Dr. William Thierfelder, Belmont Abbey president, has offered to pay for the breakfasts of the first 20 oblates who sign up at the register in the cafeteria. If you have questions, contact Patrick Ford, Director of Catholic Student Leadership & Formation at patrickford@bac.edu or 704-461-6545.



Desert Wisdom

Do not get upset with transient thoughts. Be attentive to the thoughts of the mind. If some evil thought passes through you, do not get upset, for it is not the transient thoughts of your mind that the knowledge of the Lord of all

observes, rather He looks at the depths of the mind to see if you take pleasure in that evil thought which resides there; for hateful thoughts float over the surface of the mind, but it is the senses that are lower down which can chase away hateful thoughts, which the Lord of all examines. He does not judge what just passes over the mind, but rather the thoughts that are lower down than those hateful ones, namely those which appear in the depths of the mind, which can drive them away with its hidden hand. For He does not pardon the thoughts which spring up from the depth of the mind, for it is they which should be chasing away those which pass over the surface of the

mind; He judges those thoughts which have a passage into the heart.

- John the Solitary

The Ordo

Listed are the Feast days and Memorials that are observed at the Monastery. You can also see the observed feast days by going to: <http://oblatesosbbelmont.org/ordo>

FEBRUARY

- 2 Presentation of the Lord
- 3 Blaise; Ansgar
- 5 Agatha
- 6 Paul Miki
- 8 Jerome Emiliani; Josephine Bakhita
- 10 Scholastica
- 11 Benedict of Aniane
- 11 Our Lady of Lourdes
- 14 Cyril & Methodius
- 17 Seven Founders of the Order of Servites
- 22 The Chair of Peter
- 23 Polycarp

MARCH

- 3 Katharine Drexel
- 4 Casimir
- 7 Perpetua & Felicity
- 8 John of God
- 9 Frances of Rome
- 17 Patrick
- 18 Cyril of Jerusalem
- 19 Joseph, husband of the Bl. Virgin Mary
- 21 Passing of St. Benedict
- 23 Toribio de Mogrovejo
- 25 Annunciation of the Lord
- 28 Anniversary of Dedication of Belmont Abbey

Meeting in March

Oblates will meet in March on the 20th. Should you have any questions, please contact:

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

gkcogg0428@gmail.com



Each Oblate should renew their oblation once a year. If you do not plan on attending the meeting on February 27, please renew your Oblation privately using the following form and sign below it:

Renewal of Oblation

I renew my oblation of St. Benedict for the community of Mary, Help of Christians Abbey and promise again to serve God and all people according to the Rule of St. Benedict.

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.

Signature

Date

Name (Printed or typed)

Mailing List

The Oblate community would like to create a directory to improve communication. The directory would include Name, Mailing address, phone number and email address. If you would like to be included in the directory please check here:

Please take a moment and update your email address: _____

Would you prefer to receive the newsletter by email (Please check only one)? Yes No

Name (Printed or typed)

Please return this form *no later* than March 20, 2011 to:

Director of Oblates,
Belmont Abbey Monastery
100 Belmont-Mount Holly Road
Belmont, NC 28012