



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

February, 2012



Meeting in February

Oblates will meet in February on the 19th. The meeting will be held as usual in the Gallagher Room.

Brother Edward asked that the oblates and novices to continue reading and reflecting on four items for the meeting:

- 1) Continue reflecting upon chapter 9 on short prayer from "Toward God" by Fr. Michael Casey; the prologue to The Rule and the first chapter of "The Life of Our Most Holy Father Saint Benedict."
- 4) "Chew" on the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and its context related to the other readings.
- 5) Reflect on how prayer has improved your life
- 6) For those who attended the last meeting, pray for the person who was sitting to the right of you.

(Free copies of "The Life" were distributed to oblates who attended the meeting in December. It can be downloaded off the Oblate website <http://oblatesosbbelmont.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/life-of-st-benedict.pdf>

Oblate novices will discuss Abbot Christopher Jamison's book. (We should be at chapter 2 by now...)

Novices will meet in the Gallagher Room one hour before the regular meeting.

Numbering the Psalms



At the last Oblate meeting a question about the numbering of the Psalms was raised. This difference is important particularly as you read the *Rule of St. Benedict* or the commentary on the Psalms that have been posted to the site. The reason for the difference is the Christian numbering of the Psalms, as found in the Septua-

gint, differs from the Hebrew numbering of the Psalms. The principle difference is Psalms 9 and 10 in Hebrew are joined together as Psalm 9 in the Greek/Latin versions.

Most modern bibles follow the Hebrew numbering. *The New American Bible* numbers the Psalms following the Hebrew numbers but arranges the Psalms in conformance with the Septuagint. For example the problem Psalm 9 is identified as 9-10 and is divided between section A and B. *The New Revised Standard Bible* follows the Hebrew numbering. For serious study I would suggest obtaining a copy of *The Ignatius Bible*, second edition (Revised Standard Version) which numbers the Psalms both ways.

The Revised Grail Psalms as has the Psalms numbered both ways. The following table, which highlights the differences might also be of help.

Septuagint	Hebrew	Notes
1-8	1-8	Numbered the same in both the Greek and Hebrew
9	9-10	Psalms 9 and 10 in Hebrew are together as Psalm 9 in Greek
10-112	11-113	Greek is numbered lower by one than the same psalm in Hebrew
113	114-115	Psalms 113 in Greek are Psalms 114 & 115 in Hebrew
114-115	116	Psalms 114 & 115 in Greek are Psalm 116 in Hebrew
116-145	117-146	Greek is numbered lower by one than the same psalm in Hebrew
146-147	147	Psalms 146 and 147 in Greek form Psalm 147 in Hebrew
148-150	148-150	Numbered the same in both the Greek and Hebrew

Faith

We too often forget that faith is a matter of questioning and struggle before it becomes one of certitude and peace. You have to doubt and reject everything else in order to believe firmly in Christ, and after you have begun to believe, your faith itself must be tested and purified. Christianity is not merely a set of forgone conclusions. Faith tends to be defeated by the burning presence of God in mystery, and seeks refuge from him, flying to comfortable social forms and safe convictions in which purification is no longer an inner battle but a matter of outward gesture.

- Thomas Merton

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://oblatesosbbelmont.org/ordo/>.

FEBRUARY

- 19 Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)
- 21 Peter Damian Memorial
- 22 Ash Wednesday
- 23 Polycarp Memorial
- 25 Walburga Memorial
- 26 First Sunday of Lent (Week I)

MARCH

- 4 Second Sunday of Lent (Week II)
- 7 Perpetua & Felicity Memorial
- 11 Third Sunday of Lent (Week III)
- 18 Fourth Sunday of Lent (Week IV)
- 19 Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary Solemnity
- 21 Passing of St. Benedict Solemnity
- 25 Fifth Sunday of Lent (Week I)

Oblate Obligations



At the last meeting a description of how Benedictine Oblates might best serve in the light of Vatican II was submitted for discussion. Using the *Constitution and Guidelines for the spiritual life of Oblates*, as approved by American Cassinese Federation,

the following outline was developed. Oblates are reminded that these are goals they should strive toward. But we should reflect on them and how they will apply in our own spiritual journey based on the Rule:

In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love. Do not be daunted immediately by fear and run away from the road that leads to salvation. It is bound to be narrow at the outset. But as we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love. (Prologue 46-49)

Oblates and Oblate novices are invited to submit any comments either online or in writing. It is encouraged to submitted comments online since other Oblates would have a chance to reflect on what is posted. Emails should be sent to gkcobb0428@gmail.com. Letters should be sent to Director of Oblates, Belmont Abbey, 100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road, Belmont, NC 28012. In the March meeting the comments will be presented. The final outline will be submitted to Abbot Placid for his approval.

Oblates Foster a Spirit of Community

- Oblates are committed to their monastery, its values, culture and its prayer;
- The Oblates pray for the monastery, the monastic community and the other Oblates;
- Oblates attend the Oblate meetings on a regular basis.

Oblates Strive for Their Own Continued Christian Renewal and Improvement:

- Oblates are persons whose lives are shaped by Benedictine spirituality.
- They follow the Rule of St. Benedict in their daily lives as far as their vocation in life permits;
- Oblates commit to a two year period of formation following a course of study approved by the Abbot;
- Attend at least one retreat or day of recollection once a year (see RB 49:1-3).

Oblates Strive to Be Men and Women of Practical Spirituality

and to keep the spirit of St. Benedict alive by the way in which they live. They study and read the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the writings of St. John Cassian, St. Basil, or the writings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers at least weekly and try to apply the passages to one's daily life; these should be read as *lectio divina* and studied with the help of a commentary or at meetings with one's fellow Oblates (See RB 48:10-16, 22; RB 73).

Oblates Strive to Be Men and Women of Prayer.

- Oblates should: pray the *Liturgy of the Hours*, especially Morning and/or Evening Prayer, as the duties of their vocation in life permit; (see RB 19:1-2);
- practice *lectio divina* daily, primarily using the Scriptures (see RB 48:10-16, 22).

Oblates Strive to Be Loyal and Active Members of Christ and His Church and to live as Men and Women of Christian Virtue and of Peace:

Oblates are representatives of the monastery "in the world." As such they should commit to fulfilling one or more of the following at least once a year:

- contributing in a significant way to a project that improves the natural environment for one's community or parish (see RB 31:10-12);
- participating actively in a movement that works for peace and justice in one's local community, one's country, or the world (see RB Prol:14-17);
- undertaking in a specific and regular way one of the spiritual or corporal works of mercy: instructing and advising in the ways of faith, consoling, comforting, forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently; feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead (see Mt 25:31-46; RB 31:9, 4:14-19);
- helping to build up one's parish family or civic community by concrete, regular involvement in a parish or community project (see RB 58:24- 25).

Meeting in March

Oblates will meet in March on the 18th.