



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

March, 2012



Meeting in March

Oblates will meet on the third Sunday in March on the 18th. 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) Read Chapter 3 in Michael Casey's "Toward God."
- 2) Please take a peek at Chapter 49, Observance of Lent, in "The Rule" booklet.
- 3) Chew on the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and its context related to the other readings.

Oblate novices will discuss "Part Two: Monastic Steps, Step 3: Obedience" in "Finding Sanctuary" by Abbot Christopher Jamison. Novices will meet in the Gallagher Room one hour before the regular meeting.

The Glory of these Forty Days

Hymns are much more than noises made to accompany church activities like the entry and exit of the clergy and the collection of the offering. Our hymns embody the teaching of the church, and even for those who "cannot sing," there is a wealth of inspiration, comfort, remembrance and support for the Christian walk contained in a Hymnal's pages. We can find in hymns the particular help we need during Lent for the self-examination, confession, prayer and fasting that are essential if we are to be prepared for Resurrection. Let us take a brief look at one of the Lenten hymns of the church: The glory of these forty days.

This hymn is very old, dating to the tenth century or earlier – it has sometimes been attributed to Gregory the Great (sixth century). So, since the Dark Ages, this hymn has been bringing light into the lives of Christians.

The forty days of which it speaks are the forty days of Christ's temptation. The Gospel according to Mark tells us that the Spirit drove Jesus into the desert to be tempted. Being driven and being tempted do not match our ideas of glory; this just means that, as usual, we have gotten it wrong. It suggests a different possibility for our Lenten discipline. It suggests that we not expect to be gloomily deprived of some favorite food or activity, to contemplate with increasing resentment the cause of it all – Jesus and His Church. The hymn teaches us to celebrate and sing praises during Lent – which we can do because we know how the story ends.

The inner verses of the hymn remind us that fasting and prayer have historically led, not to misery and deprivation, but to visions of the glorious future God has prepared for us. The examples of the patriarchs and prophets, which we will do well to spend time re-reading and meditating on during Lent, lead us back to singing the praises of our Triune God. So, strengthened

by God's angels, may we prepare with joy for the coming feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord.

*The glory of these forty days
We celebrate with songs of praise;
For Christ, by Whom all things were made,
Himself has fasted and has prayed.*

*Alone and fasting Moses saw
The loving God Who gave the law;
And to Elijah, fasting, came
The steeds and chariots of flame.*

*So Daniel trained his mystic sight,
Delivered from the lions' might;
And John, the Bridegroom's friend, became
The herald of Messiah's Name.*

*Then grant us, Lord, like them to be
Full oft in fast and prayer with Thee;
Our spirits strengthen with Thy grace,
And give us joy to see Thy face.*

*O Father, Son, and Spirit blest,
To thee be every prayer addressed,
Who art in threefold Name adored,
From age to age, the only Lord.*

– Angie Forde, OBlSB

Annual Appeal for Aims for the Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM)

In a single ray of light Benedict saw the whole world! During Lent, with a single act of generosity you can touch the whole world! By contributing to the AIM Lenten Appeal, praying for Benedictine and Cistercians throughout the world and spreading the word about the work of AIM and the needs of our brothers and sisters around the world. AIM-USA is deeply grateful for whichever response(s) you make. For more information on AIM, write to: 345 East Ninth Street, Erie, PA 16503-1107 or call 814-453-4724. or go to the website: aim-usa.org.

Lenten Reading List

"On the days of Lent, from morning until the end of the third hour let them apply themselves to their reading, and from then until the end of the tenth hour let them do the work assigned them. And in these days of Lent they shall each receive a book from the library, which they shall read straight through from the beginning. These books are to be given out at the beginning of Lent." (RB-48)

Each of us are asked to give up something at the beginning of Lent. St. Benedict asks us also to give up a little of our time,

turn aside, and read something extra. In that spirit the following titles are offered as suggestions for reading during Lent.

Monk Habits for Everyday People, Dennis Okholm
The Road to Eternal Life: Reflections on the Prologue of Benedict's Rule, Michael Casey (These can also be downloaded and listened to: <http://www.cistercian.org.au/iMonk/>)
The Life of St. Benedict, A Translation and Commentary, Terrence G. Kardong
A Lenten Journey with Jesus Christ and St. Benedict, Rev. John R. Fortin, O.S.B.
Listen My Son: St. Benedict for Fathers, Dwight Longenecker, OblSB
The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis
The Institutes, John Cassian
Benedict & Bernard, Seeking God Alone -- Together, Linus Mundy
Desert Mystics, Thirsting for the Reign of God, Lunus Mundy

The Commentary on the Psalms written by Blessed John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. As of this post there are 14 published to the site and are downloadable from the Oblate web site:

Psalm 24 (23)	Psalm 145 (144)a
Psalm 67 (66)	Psalm 145 (144)b
Psalm 96 (95)	Psalm 146 (145)
Psalm 100 (99)	Psalm 147 (146)
Psalm 118 (117)	

– *George Cobb, OblSB*



The Novena Prayer to St. Benedict

We are approaching the feast of the Passing of Our Holy Father Benedict on March 21. The Novena begins March 12th. The following is the Novena prayer:

Glorious Saint Benedict, sublime model of virtue, pure vessel of God's grace! Behold me humbly kneeling at your feet. I implore you in your loving kindness to pray for me before the throne of God. To you I have recourse in the dangers that daily surround me. Shield me against my selfishness and my indifference to God and to my neighbor. Inspire me to imitate you in all things. May your blessing be with me always, so that I may see and serve Christ in others and work for His kingdom.

Graciously obtain for me from God those favors and graces which I need so much in the trials, miseries and afflictions of life. Your heart was always full of love, compassion and mercy toward those who were afflicted or troubled in any way. You never dismissed without consolation and assistance anyone who had recourse to you. I therefore invoke your powerful intercession, confident in the hope that you will hear my prayers and obtain for me the special grace and favor I earnestly implore.

(mention your petition)

Help me, great Saint Benedict, to live and die as a faithful child of God, to run in the sweetness of His loving will, and to attain the eternal happiness of heaven.
Amen.

Love me, Lord: An Oblate's Prayer

Remember me Lord,
When I am kind and forgiving,
Understanding and compassionate.
Forgive me Lord,
For not always being,
Patient and tolerable.
I'm sorry, Lord,
For all the pain I have caused You.
Love me, Lord,
Even when I can not love myself.
Hold me, Lord,
And fill me with Your Holy Spirit.
Embrace me Lord,
For I have persevered in embracing You.
I Love You, Lord,
Now and forever - Amen.

– *Christine St Clair-Krantz, OblSB*

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/>.

MARCH

4 Second Sunday of Lent (Week II)
7 Perpetua & Felicity, Memorial
11 Third Sunday of Lent (Week III)
12 Begin Novena in honor of St. Benedict
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)
26 Annunciation of the Lord, Solemnity (moved from the 25th)
28 Anniversary of Dedication of Belmont Abbey, Solemnity

APRIL

1 Palm Sunday (Week II)
5 Holy Thursday
6 Good Friday
8 Easter Sunday
15 Divine Mercy Sunday (Second week of Easter)
16 Monday of the Second Week of Easter (Week II)
25 Mark, Feast

Meeting in April

Oblates will meet in April on the 15th. Should you have any questions, please contact:

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