



# Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

October, 2012



## Meeting in October



Oblates will meet in October on the 21st. Mass is scheduled at 3 p.m. Abbot Placid will be principal celebrant and will receive the new Oblates' and Novices' Oblations.

If you are making your novice or final oblation for the first time, please notify George Cobb, OblSB, by email immediately ([gkcobb0428@gmail.com](mailto:gkcobb0428@gmail.com)) or send a request to Gail Warlick, Office of the Abbot, 100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road, Belmont, NC 28012.

Oblates who are present will also renew their Oblations at that time. Oblates who cannot attend because of health and distance need to send in the enclosed Oblation renewal form to maintain their name on the mailing list. If you wish to make either your first or final Oblation, please fill out the enclosed form and mail to the Abbey no later than September 14.

*There will be no novice classes in October.*

## How important are the things we save?

We all take care of the important things of life. We build our careers, care for our families and we hold on to items that we will need in the future. Recently my father-in-law passed away and I was helping my wife and sister-in-law in clean up the house. It is amazing how much we collect over the years that we believe is important: vacation pictures, files, books, speeches and talks, awards and various other items that are important to us. My father-in-law was particularly meticulous about saving tax records and financial information and



his office wall was covered with the awards of a successful career.

My wife was responsible for going through the more personal items while my task was the attic and the financial records. It went back years and years. When I was through, there in the garage was more than 30 years of tax forms and records – over 12 boxes worth! Thousands of pages of what most of us would agree are important and that most of us would save. I stepped back and scratched my head. My intent was to save three years plus one and then shred the rest but I had no idea what I had volunteered for when I said I would shred them. So I took six boxes down to the office store nearby and asked them if they could. Their price was reasonable so I helped them lock the pages up and went home to decide what to do with the last six boxes.

When I got back my wife had found out that the city would shred at their recycle center so I took the remaining boxes down to them. While I was helping the crew sort through the boxes they explained what the different bins were for. Cardboard went to one, file folders went to the cardboard bin, old photographs in another bin, magazines went to another. Innocently I asked what the tax records would be used for. "Oh!" he said, "that's the good paper. That will be turned into paper towels and toilet paper." So I watched him shred the 30+ years of tax files thinking "toilet paper."

Pictures were taken of the awards and then sent to scrap, books were donated to the library or recycled, only a fraction of the pictures taken were saved, clothes were given to charity, furniture given to family members or to charity. The accumulation of a lifetime gone except for some items that were deemed important keepsakes. It made me stop to think and I hope it helps you also to put things in priority. So as we approach the Advent season – it will be here sooner than you think – remember toilet paper.

**- George Cobb, OblSB**

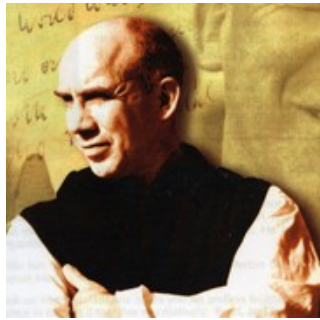
It is easier than we think to use spirituality to keep at bay what spirituality will one day make us face head-on: our own personal struggles. The threads of Providence are braided right into the knots of our own aversion, despair, depression, and panic. Insofar as we discover the Life (Jn 14:6) that is revealed on the contemplative path, we will encounter at some point the dark side of the emotions. Living through, praying in the midst of, and ultimately seeing through our emotions is crucial to learning what this ordeal has to teach. This is not to say that our emotions are not real. They are just not real in the way we normally think they are. Our emotions are transparent to the Light that grounds them.

- Martin Laird

*A Sunlit Absence: Silence, Awareness and Contemplation*

**An existence that is meaningless and futile**

In our society, a society of business rooted in Puritanism, based on a pseudo-ethic of industriousness and thrift to be rewarded by com-fort, pleasure, and a good bank account, the myth of work is thought to justify an existence that is essentially meaningless and futile. There is, then, a great deal of busyness as people invent things to do when in fact there is very little to be done. Yet we are overwhelmed with jobs, duties, tasks, assignments, "missions" of every kind. At every moment we are sent north, south, east, and west by the angels of business and art, poetry and politics, science and war, to the four corners of the universe to decide something, to sign something, to buy and sell. We fly in all directions to sell ourselves, thus justifying the absolute nothingness of our lives. The more we seem to accomplish, the harder it becomes to really dissimulate our trifling, and the only thing that saves us is the common conspiracy not to advert to what is really going on.



- Thomas Merton

*Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, p. 177*



**No one should be given up for lost**

Paphnutius himself continued to develop his life to the highest degree of abstinence and spiritual labours, and not long after this an angel of the Lord came to him saying; "Come, O blessed one, and enter into those eternal tabernacles which are your just deserts. Behold the prophets, who take you up into their choirs. You have not been told about this before lest you be-

come conceited and receive only damnation as a reward for your labours."

He was given one more day in the flesh after this while certain priests came to visit him, to whom he made known all that the Lord had revealed to him. He told them that *no one living in the world should be given up for lost*, even if they had been robbers, or actors, or farmers, or married, or merchants seeking profits. For in every sphere of life there were souls pleasing to God, doing in secret works with which God was well pleased. Whence it was obvious that it was not an outward profession of life or the wearing of a habit which was pleasing to God so much as sincerity and integrity of mind, and honesty in all one's dealings. He expressed a few similar sentiments on each of these topics and gave up his spirit. And the priest and all the brethren present plainly saw him taken up by the angels singing hymns and praising God all together.

**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/>.

**OCTOBER**

- 21 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary time (Week I)
- 28 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week II)

**NOVEMBER**

- 1 All Saints, Solemnity
- 2 Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, Memorial
- 4 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)
- 9 Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome, Feast.
- 10 Leo the Great, Pope, Doctor of the Church, Memorial.
- 11 32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week IV)
- 16 Gertrude the Great, Memorial.
- 18 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 21 The Presentation of the Bl. Virgin Mary, Memorial.
- 22 Cecilia, Memorial.
- 24 Andrew Dung-Lac & His Companion, Memorial.
- 25 Sunday: Solemnity of Christ the King (Week II)
- 30 Andrew, Apostle, Feast.

**DECEMBER**

- 2 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent (Week 1)

**Meeting in November**

Oblates will meet in November on the 19th. Should you have any questions, please contact:

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