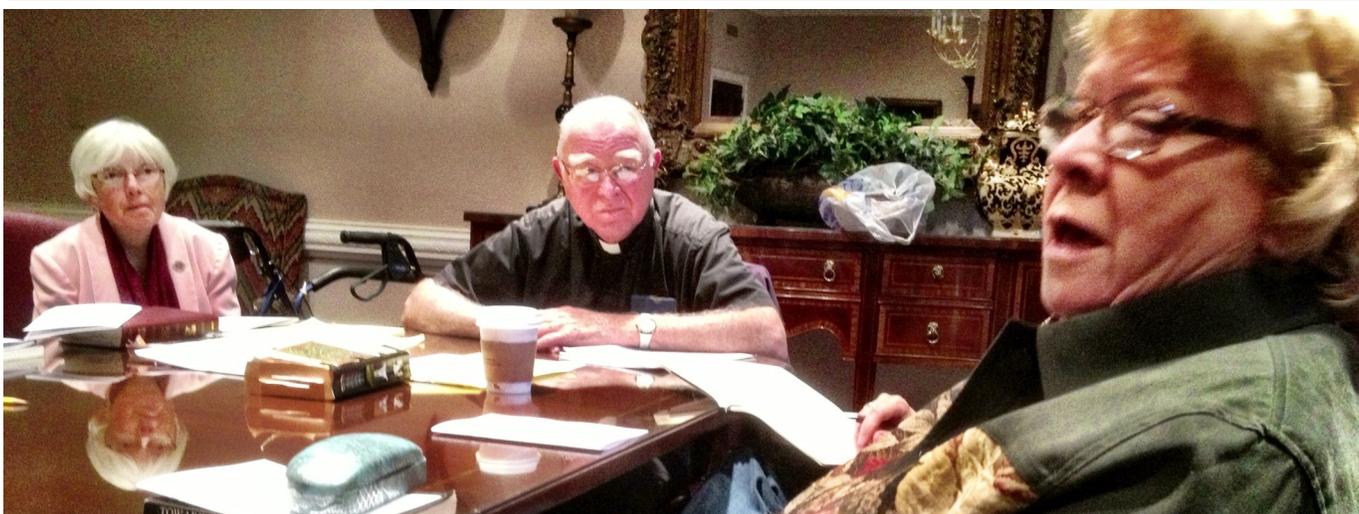




## Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

January 2013



*What makes a good oblate? At the December meeting, Brother Emmanuel Slobodzian posed the question to Father Arthur Pendleton and the group, "What makes a good oblate?" Joan Owens, OblSB, pictured above on the right, shared these insights: "You can never really leave being a Benedictine oblate. It becomes your breath... I've been an oblate for 28 years and I've not found it easy. The most important thing for me at my stage of life is to lead the good example of a Benedictine oblate to those I come in contact with. Which means no murmuring. That is very hard to do, no murmuring... But the only way is by being present and praying and hopefully living a good example. And when all else fails, the Psalms are to my rescue."*

### Meeting in January

Oblates will meet in January on the 20th.

First year novices will continue reading Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps for Everyday Life by Abbot Christopher Jamison and Benedict of Nursia: His Message for Today by Anselm Grun. They should continue to read Part One: Everyday Life in the Jamison book.

There will be no meeting for second year novices, as George Cobb, OblSB, will not be able to be attendance. They are more than welcome to join the first year novices if they are so inclined.

Oblates will review chapter 5 of Michael Casey's Toward God: The Ancient Wisdom of Western Prayer (postponed from the previous meeting where Father Arthur Pendleton talked about the Benedictine office, among other things.)

### Oblate to share reflections from Eastern European pilgrimage

At the Feb. 17 oblate meeting, Richard Hansgen, OblSB, from Columbus, Ohio will be telling the story of his pilgrimage last year to Eastern Europe. That 14-week trip included many prayerful retreats at monasteries and convents -- Benedictine, Carmelite, Norbertine and Trappist -- in the Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. Richard is planning to share many photographs of the monasteries and countryside and read reflections from the journal he kept.

Before retiring in 2004, Richard was a professor of education at Bluffton University, a small liberal arts university affiliated with the Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio. In his varied career, he has taught physics and education.

In recent years, he has taught overseas, mostly in the eastern European countries of Slovakia, Poland, and Lithuania although, during the 2007-8 academic year, he also taught at a large state university in Nanjing China. Most of those assignments were under the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America for whom Richard was a volunteer missionary.

Richard and his wife Karen have a modern "blended" family of six children, all grown and long out-of-the-nest.

Classroom #215 in Stowe Hall at the Belmont Abbey has been reserved for this presentation at 3:30 p.m.

### Oblate Website

We started the Oblate website three years ago as a way to expand the number of articles that Oblates are provided and still keep the cost of postage down. In case you are new or are not familiar to the site, the web address is <http://OblatesOSBBelmont.org>. Please remember that if, for some reason, we have to cancel meetings, it will appear on the website first.

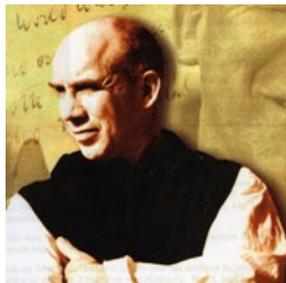
The website is updated almost daily and the articles mostly focus on Benedictine teaching and news. Often these are articles that you can read in less than five minutes and are meant to provide some food for thought. There are currently almost 1,800 articles on the site, so don't be afraid to do a search – you might be surprised what you have forgotten or missed. Over the next couple of months we will be adding two new writers who will be contributing to the site on a regular basis. So if you are not coming to the website your missing out!

The number of visits has grown steadily, 7,000 over last year to almost 38,000, averaging over 100 visits per day. Visitors to the site come from all over the English speaking world with regular visitors from as far away as Canada, India, Australia, South Africa, Ireland, and England. In the United States the largest number of visitors come from North Carolina, but after that it is California, Texas, and Georgia. The seed has taken root and the branches have expanded, now touching hundreds of people we will never meet.

### The whole mechanism of modern life is geared for a flight from God

Everything in modern city life is calculated to keep man from entering into himself and thinking about spiritual things. Even with the best of intentions a spiritual man finds himself exhausted and deadened and debased by the constant noise of machines and loudspeakers, the dead air and the glaring lights of offices and shops, the everlasting suggestion of advertising and propaganda.

The whole mechanism of modern life is geared for a flight from God and from the spirit into the wilderness of neurosis."



*- Thomas Merton  
No Man Is an Island*

### Against anger and vengeance

One of the brethren that had been insulted by another, came to Abbot Sisois and told him the scorn that had been put upon him, and said, "I am set to revenge myself, Father." And the old abbot began to entreat him to leave vengeance to God. But he said, "I shall not rest till I stoutly avenge myself." So the abbot said to him, "Since you have made up your mind once and for all, now let us pray," and rising, the abbot began to pray in these words: "God, You art no longer necessary to us that You need not be anxious for us: for we ourselves, as this brother has said, are able to avenge ourselves." But when the brother heard it, he fell at the abbot's feet seeking his pardon, and promised that he would contend no more with the man against whom he was angered.

### 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/>.

### JANUARY

15 Maur and Placid, Disciples of St. Benedict  
17 Anthony, Memorial  
20 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time ; Fabian; Sebastian (Week II)  
21 Agnes, Memorial  
24 Francis de Sales, Memorial  
25 Conversion of St. Paul, Feast  
27 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time; Angela Merici (Week III)  
28 St. Thomas Aquinas, Memorial  
31 John Bosco, Memorial

### FEBRUARY

2 Presentation of the Lord, Feast  
3 4th Sunday of Ordinary Time (Week IV)  
5 Agatha, Memorial  
6 Paul Miki, Memorial  
10 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Scholastica (Week I)  
11 Our Lady of Lourdes, Opt. Memorial

### LENT

12 Ash Wednesday, Memorial (day of Fast and Abstinence for Catholics)  
17 1st Sunday of Lent (Week 1)

### Meeting in February

Oblates will meet in February on the 17th. Should you have any questions, please contact:  
George K. Cobb, OblSB,  
Belmont Abbey Monastery  
100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road,  
Belmont, NC 28012  
[gkcobb0428@gmail.com](mailto:gkcobb0428@gmail.com).