



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

September, 2013



September Meeting

The next Oblate meeting is on **September 22** and will begin at 3:00 in the Abbey Church. Abbot Placid will offer Mass and he will receive the renewal of Oblations. **Novices wishing to make their first and final Oblations** are requested to contact George Cobb by email at gkcobb0929@gmail.com.

Readings for the Year

Oblates are asked to obtain a copy of *Life Lessons from the Monastery* by Jerome Kodell, OSB. Second year novices need to get a copy of *St. Benedict's Toolbox* by Jane Tomaine. First years should purchase *Finding Sanctuary* by Abbot Christopher Jamison, OSB as well as *Life of St. Benedict by Gregory the Great* by Terrence Kardong, OSB.

Renewal of Oblations

We are requesting this year for Oblates to take seriously their renewal of their Oblation. You might remember last year we were notified of the passing of one of our Oblates two years after the fact. The request to annually renew your oblation is an opportunity for you to remember the promises that you made to the Abbey and the commitments you made to yourself and to God. The form we as you to mail back is our way of making sure that the mailing lists are kept up to date and that you are still active in the ministry of the Oblate program. Please make sure you complete and mail back the attached form as soon as you are able.

Obligations of an Oblate

As an Oblate of Belmont Abbey, you share in the prayers and good works of the Abbey and your brother and sister Oblates. It has been asked many times what we should be doing as Oblates. First and foremost is to pray for the Abbey, the Abbot, and the monks. Second, we are supposed to be examples of the Rule in everyday life, living as close to the Rule as your vocation in life permits.

Abbot Placid approved the following guidelines April 12, 2012 and are now binding on all Oblates of Belmont Abbey. Oblates are reminded that these are goals they should strive toward and they accept this voluntarily. They are also reminded that these are tools to help them develop spiritually but they must take into consideration their state in life in determining how they should use these tools 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 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 keep in mind always the words of Our

Lord of "necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary." (Luke 18:1). In the Benedictine tradition 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, because of circumstances in life, may be prevented from praying the Liturgy of the Hours or practicing *lectio divina* on a regular basis. In this case they should consult their spiritual director on alternative prayers and meditations.

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:

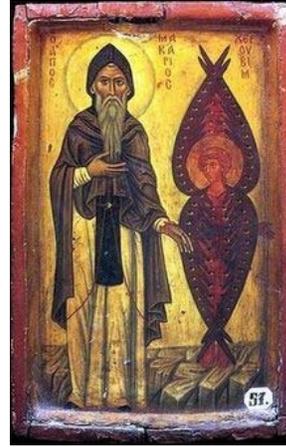
Oblates are representatives of the monastery "in the world." As such they should commit to fulfilling one or more of the following at least once a year:

- 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).

Desert Wisdom



A brother came to see Abba Macarius the Egyptian, and said to him, 'Abba, give me a word, that I may be saved.' So the old man said, 'Go to the cemetery and abuse the dead.' The brother went there, abused them and threw stones at them; then he returned and told the old man about it. The latter said to him, 'Didn't they say anything to you?' He replied, 'No.' The old man said, 'Go back tomorrow and praise them.' So the brother went away and praised them, calling them, 'Apostles, saints and righteous men.' He returned to the old man and said to him, 'I have complimented them.' And the old man said to him, 'Did they not answer you?' The brother said no. The old man said to him, 'You know how you insulted them and they did not reply, and how you praised them and they did not speak; so you too if you wish to be saved must do the same and become a dead man. Like the dead, take no account of either the scorn of men or their praises, and you can be saved.'

The Ordo

Listed are the Feast days and Memorials that are observed at the Monastery and follows the Ordo of the American Cassinese Congregation.

SEPTEMBER

- 22 **Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time** (Week IV)
- 23 Pio of Pietrelcina, Presbyter. Memorial.
- 27 Vincent de Paul, Presbyter, Religious Founder. Memorial.
- 29 **Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time** (Week I)
- 30 Jerome, Presbyter, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.

OCTOBER

- 1 Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin, Religious, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 2 Guardian Angels, Patron of Congregation. Feast.
- 4 Francis of Assisi, Religious Founder. Memorial.

- 6 **Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time** (Week II)
- 7 Our Lady of the Rosary. Memorial.
- 13 **Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.** (Week III)
- 15 Teresa of Jesus, Virgin, Religious, Doctor of the Church. Memorial.
- 17 Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop, Martyr. Memorial.
- 18 Luke, Evangelist. Feast.

October Meeting

Our next meeting will be October 20, 2008. If you need to reach me please write to:

George K. Cobb, OblSB
 Oblate Coordinator
 100 Belmont-Mt Holly Road
 Belmont, North Carolina, 28012
gkcobb0929@gmail.com



Each Oblate should renew their oblation once a year. If you do not plan on attending the meeting on September 22, please renew your Oblation privately. **If you wish to continue as an Oblate of Belmont Abbey and continue to receive the newsletter please return this form signed.**

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* that October 1, 2013 to:

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