



# Oblates of St. Benedict

*Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC*

*February, 2016*

## I CAN BE VERY CRANKY

*"Advance, advance... Let nothing hinder your trustful steps forward; Trustful---of course---since I am there".*

(He and I Pauline Press)



I find that my responses towards events in my life can be very cranky. When things slip out of my control, and I am already in a 'mood', then my lack of trust in others as well as with God is very apparent. I want to grasp 'reality' and make it do what I want. No wonder I get ornery at times. Reactions are spontaneous, out of ones control. It is how we deal with these situations that are important. When I am tired, or being pulled in too many direc-

tions, my childish nature will arise and cause some turmoil. It does not have to be a big thing; in fact it is often little things that can set me off because the big things I have to deal with in a manner that will not make things worse. In small events I may not do so well.

This morning I was in one of my cranky-sulking-looking for a fight mood. As we were doing the first nocturne I wondered if I would be able to even begin to settle down in order to meditate. We have a 30 minute meditation session during vigils, between the first and second half. So I was going to go to my room and read in order to get this monkey off my back. Then I thought, no, I will do what I have learned over the years. To pray with my emotions, no matter what they are. So I sat and allowed my 'spoiled-child-things are not going my way-inner tantrum' to become the energy to propel me into mediation and prayer. Once I stop fighting this kind of

moodiness and focus it towards prayer, things settle down.

Sometimes I think of the 'Gordian-Knot' the one that Alexander the Great cut in two with a sword. In dealing with this kind of knot in ones inner world, needs another approach. A weapon would only make things worse. I have found that whatever causes my moods, and I have decided that I will never really understand them fully, that just sitting and allowing the angry-frustrated energy to express itself but in a guided way, allows the knot to loosen, but does not unravel; which is enough for me. True it is not easy, focus can take time, but it is well worth the effort.

To accept ones 'powerlessness', is not the same as being 'helpless'; one leads to inner freedom the other to despair. I am powerless to control other drivers on the highway; however I am not helpless in how I react. To constantly be angry when driving is an indication of some deeper issue....control most likely one of them. The paradox, power is given over to those who are in other cars, giving them a power that they really don't have or don't want.

Pope Frances has a devotion to 'Our Lady of the Knots', so I think of Mary and ask her to help me disentangle in the right way. Sometimes the disentanglement comes from insight, at others times it is pure grace, a deep healing. It is when I think I have to control everything that I can cause myself some deep inner conflict which is not worth it....yet the only way is to consciously let go and move on. Br. Mark Dohle, OCSO, Holy Spirit Monstery.

The next Oblate meeting will be February 21, 2016 at 3:30 PM in the Gallagher Room on the first floor of Stowe Hall.

## RENEWAL OF OBLATION

Each Oblate is to renew their oblation once a year. Please renew your Oblation privately using the following form. Please sign it and return it to:

Director of Oblates  
Belmont Abbey  
100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road  
Belmont, NC 28012

## IMPORTANT!

Because of a scheduling conflict in the Abbey Church, the Mass and Renewal of Oblations originally scheduled have been cancelled. More information will be provided in the next newsletter.

## 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.

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Signature

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Date

### 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:

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Would you prefer to receive the newsletter by email (Please check only one)?

Yes:  No

## NECROLOGY



### FEBRUARY

- 3 Br. Eugene O'Neil (1986)
- 8 Fr. Kenneth Geyer (2012)
- 18 Fr. William Regnat (1953)
- 24 Br. Aegidius Seier (1973)
- 24 Br. Gregory Corcoran (1990)
- 25 Fr. Melchior Reichert (1940)
- 28 Br. George Poellath (1963)

### MARCH

- 3 Fr. Michael McInerney (1963)
- 10 Fr. Vincent Campbell (1965)
- 14 Fr. William Mayer (1904)
- 17 Br. Christian Hierl (1930)
- 18 Fr. Florian Checkhart (1951)
- 18 Fr. Joseph Tobin (1978)
- 21 Prior Nicholas Bliley (1943)
- 24 Br. Celestine Wiegerle (1928)
- 25 Fr. Patrick Dolon (1913)
- 28 Fr. Ambrose Gallagher (1946)
- 28 Fr. Richard Graz (1952)



February 10: St. Scholastica, Virgin, Religious Founder.

### COLLECT

O Lord, who made Saint Scholastica resplendent with the brightness of an incomparable purity, grant that we may please you by the transparency of our daily lives and, by faithfulness in the school of your service, be found worthy of praising you in heaven with all the angels and saints. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever.

## ORDO

### FEBRUARY

(Week IV)

- 2 Presentation of the Lord. Feast
- 5 Agatha, Memorial
- 6 Paul Miki, and His Companions, Martyrs. Memorial
- 7 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)

### SEASON OF LENT

- 10 Ash Wednesday (Week IV)
- 11 Our Lady of Lourdes, Opt. Memorial
- 14 First Sunday of Lent (Week I)
- 21 Second Sunday of Lent (Week II)
- 22 Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle. Feast
- 25 Walburga, Abbess, Opt. Memorial.
- 28 Third Sunday of Lent (Week III)

### MARCH

- 9 Frances of Rome, Religious, Patroness of Oblates (Opt. Memorial)
- 12 Begin novena in Honor of Our Holy Father Benedict Begins
- 13 Anniversary of the Election of Pope Francis
- 19 Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin Mary. Solemnity
- 21 Passing of Our Holy Father Benedict, Abbot. Solemnity
- 25 Annunciation of the Lord. Solemnity
- 26 Belmont Abbey: Anniversary of Dedication of Church. Solemnity

### WHY THE PSALMS?

One of the best ways to learn to appreciate the Psalms is to acquire a habit of reciting them slowly and well. And for this it is decidedly helpful to be able to limit one's recitation to just a few Psalms or to one only. To recite the Office slowly and meditatively is a luxury which will be rarely within the reach of a busy priest. But there is nothing to prevent a layman from taking just one Psalm a day, for instance in his night prayers, and reciting it thoughtfully, pausing to meditate on the lines which have the deepest meaning for him.

A priest can achieve the same effect by making his morning meditation on a favorite Psalm. Many people who would be capable of savoring the Psalms in this way without too much trouble, are held back by an inordinate fear that the Psalms may be too difficult to understand. They feel that one cannot begin to meditate on the Psalms unless one has first thoroughly studied them with a commentary. And commentaries go into such bewildering detail. But this fear is without foundation.

In our private, personal use of the Psalms, we need only have occasional recourse to a commentary to solve our major perplexities. In the ordinary course of events, a good modern translation of the Psalter is all we need.

Thomas Merton, OCSO, *Praying the Psalms*, pp. 22-23

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

*As we enter the Lenten Season, and during this great Jubilee of Mercy, take some time to start, or renew the practice, or the daily examine of conscience. For Oblates it should be the last act of the day, usually at Compline or at bedtime. Fr. James Martin, SJ, has some advice for us.*

St. Ignatius Loyola used to say there was one prayer that his brother Jesuits should never miss praying daily (other than the Mass). Not the Rosary, or the *Memorare*, or the *Anima Christi*, as wonderful as those prayers are, but another one: the examination of conscience. Why? Because the examination of conscience, a prayerful review of the day, helps us to see where God is at work in our lives. And Ignatius knew that when we stop noticing this we start to feel distant from God. Moreover, since God communicates with us in our daily lives, we need to pay attention to what God is saying.

Essentially, Ignatius's examination of conscience (also known as the "examination of consciousness" or by its Spanish name, the *examen*) has five steps:

- First, remind yourself you're in God's presence;
- Second, call to mind anything for which you're grateful, then savor it and give thanks;
- Third, review the entire day, from start to finish, noticing places of encounter with God— whether in work, family life, friendships, nature, reading ... or anything. Ask yourself: in this moment, did I accept God's invitation?
- Fourth, ask God for forgiveness for your sins; and
- Fifth, ask God for the grace needed for the next day.

Many of us are quite busy. So while we say we know God is with us day to day, we often don't pause to notice. And not noticing is like neglecting to acknowledge a favor a friend has done for us. Noticing, as we do in the examination of conscience, helps us deepen our gratitude for God's grace, which in turn strengthens our faith.

*Fr. James Martin, "Teach Us to Pray: Examination of Conscience" from the October 2015 issue of Give Us This Day, [www.giveusthisday.org](http://www.giveusthisday.org) (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015). Used with permission.*

## COMPLINE

...Night Prayer (or Compline) is brief, a prayer to be said at bedtime. It is the last act of the day, and its purpose is to consecrate the night hours to God. From the very earliest times night was a symbol of death. In Night Prayer we anticipate our death, we prepare for death by trusting our lives wholly to God. The psalms and Scriptures of Night Prayer all serve to strengthen our hope in the risen Christ, and to help us rest with him in peace.

In Night Prayer we entrust our lives to the Lord who directs us even while we sleep.

*I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,  
who even at night directs my heart. (Psalm 15)*

The Scriptures are full of examples of God directing people through dreams and visions in the night. While our conscious mind is asleep, our unconscious can become the vehicle through which the Lord gives us guidance or brings to the surface things we may be avoiding or unwilling to face.

John Brook, *The School of Prayer, An Introduction to the Divine Office for All Christians*, p.



**There will be no meeting in March due to Holy Week. The next meeting will be April 17th at 3:30 PM.**