



Oblates of St. Benedict

Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC

November, 2016

SPECIAL MEETING WITH MASS NOVEMBER 6

Abbot Placid Solari will receive final and temporary oblations from Oblates candidates on November 6 at a special Mass in the Abbey Basilica at 3:00. Family members are welcome to attend the Mass and ceremony which will be followed by a reception. **Please email George Cobb at gkcobb0929@gmail.com to confirm your intention of attending.** Please put in the email whether you are intending to make your final oblation, your first oblation, or renewing your oblation. Please mail the enclosed form to the Abbey as soon as possible.

Oblates who have already made their final Oblation will be renewing their Oblations at this Mass. Oblates who cannot attend are expected to renew that Oblation privately and then mail their renewal in to the Abbey.

FOR THE NOVEMBER 20TH MEETING

We will continue with the dual format makeup of the meeting for November 20. The **Scripture study** for the first half of the meeting concerns Psalm 103:6-18. The questions* to ponder before the meeting are:

1. Pope Saint John Paul II wrote that "mercy is the greatest of the attributes and perfections of God, and the Bible, Tradition and the whole faith life of the People of God provide particular proofs of this (*Dives in Misericordia* 13). What other stories in Scripture remind you of God's mercy?
2. How do the Hebrew words for mercy change or add to your understanding of the word?
3. When have you heard of a judge, leader, or group of people acting with surprising mercy?
4. Who in your life has shown you mercy?

Questions from Br. Edward to think about before we meet on November 20.

Reflections on the Psalms by C.S. Lewis: Chapter 7 "Connivance"

1. According to C.S. Lewis how should we behave in the presence of very bad people?
2. As an oblate, how would we add to C.S. Lewis's answer to question 1?
3. How can a Christian avoid, meeting with people who are bullies, lascivious, cruel, dishonest, and spiteful and so forth? (Priggery-A person who demonstrates an exaggerated conformity or propriety, especially in an irritatingly arrogant or smug manner. 2. Archaic. a. A petty thief or pickpocket.)
4. (On page 74) What makes the contact w/ wicked people so difficult? Please explain your answer. (Connivance - Willingness to secretly allow or be involved in wrongdoing, especially an immoral or illegal act. "This infringement of the law had taken place with the connivance of officials" synonyms: collusion, complicity, collaboration, involvement, assistance)
5. Closely connected with warnings against what C.S. Lewis calls "connivance" are the protests of the psalter against other sins of the tongue. Describe how the psalmists feel about sins of the tongue?

PRE-ELECTION NOVENA

([CNA/EWTN News](#)).- With the Nov. 8 election approaching, the Knights of Columbus have released a novena addressed to Mary, the Immaculate Conception, who is the patroness of the United States.

The novena consists of nine days of prayer, starting Oct. 30 and running through Nov. 7, the eve of the election.

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In 1791, America's first bishop, John Carroll, entrusted his diocese – which was the entire country at the time – to Mary in 1791. The U.S. bishops affirmed that dedication in 1846, declaring Mary the Immaculate Conception to be patroness of the United States.

The novena prayer comes from the 1959 dedication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. It was approved that year by Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle, then-archbishop of Washington.

Parishes, Knights of Columbus councils, families and individuals are invited to participate in the novena.

"The Church teaches that Catholics are called to form their consciences based on Church teaching and vote in accordance with that well-formed conscience," said Knights of Columbus CEO Carl Anderson.

"Pope Francis has said in reference to the U.S. election that we should 'study the proposals well, pray and choose with your conscience,' and this novena is designed to help Catholic Americans do that."

The text of the novena reads:

Most Holy Trinity: Our Father in Heaven, who chose Mary as the fairest of your daughters; Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as your Spouse; God the Son, who chose Mary as your Mother, in union with Mary we adore your majesty and acknowledge your supreme, eternal dominion and authority.

Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America into the hands of Mary Immaculate in order that she may present the country to you. Through her we wish to thank you for the great resources of this land and for the freedom which has been its heritage.

Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America. Grant us peace. Have mercy on our president and on all the officers of our government. Grant us a fruitful economy, born of justice and charity. Have mercy on capital and industry and labor. Protect the family life of the nation. Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations. Through the intercession of our Mother, have mercy on the sick, the tempted, sinners – on all who are in need.

Mary, Immaculate Virgin, our Mother, Patroness of our land, we praise you and honor you and give ourselves to you. Protect us from every harm. Pray for us, that acting always according to your will and the will of your divine Son, we may live and die pleasing to God. Amen.

I DON'T KID MYSELF

There is a saying, though who originally said it I have no idea. The saying goes like this: "Human justice is without mercy." I believe there is more than a grain of truth to this, mostly from experiencing this within my own heart. It is easy for me to condemn, it is almost instinctive and the power in which it is felt can at times frighten me. Thinking in terms of justice, when it is revenge that I really seek; best served cold as they say. It does not have to have anything to do with me; it can be a news item, something I read about, or even better, when watching a movie. So yes, revenge, mercy, no. I am often disappointed when someone does not get "what is coming to them". It seems to be a very primitive aspect of my inner life, probably fed from the deep dark pool of my past experiences, at least partly; the rest is just my humanity. Perhaps in the past it was needed, but this tendency seems to have outlived its usefulness for the most part.

Over the years, I have learned not to trust my first reactions towards something that I feel is an injustice, either done to me, or to another. Justice sought in anger is often ineffective, though anger in itself is a very good emotion if used probably. It gives one the energy and will to right a wrong and the fortitude to see it through. Justice brings balance;

ORDO

NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints. Solemnity (Week III)
- 2 Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, Memorial
- 4 Charles Borromeo, Bishop. Memorial
- 6 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week IV)
- 9 Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, Feast
- 10 Leo the Great. Memorial
- 11 Martin of Tours, Bishop. Feast
- 13 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 16 Gertrude, Virgin, Memorial
- 20 Christ the King (Week II)
- 21 Presentation of the Virgin Mary. Memorial
- 22 Cecilia, Virgin. Memorial
- 24 Andrew Dung-lac and his Companions, Martyrs. Memorial
- 27 First Sunday of Advent (Week I)
- 29 *Begin novena in honor of Immaculate Conception*
- 30 Andrew, Apostle, Feast

revenge just allows things to fall into further chaos. It is difficult being human, being just and fair makes it even harder, yet in the long run it makes life run more smoothly, both on an individual and communal level.

I don't kid myself, nor can I place myself above those who fall into revenges trap, it is easy, and seems right at the time. Just read the papers, it never works. Tit for tat, hit for hit, slap for slap, then death for a wound, until the innocent fair targets to make a point. No I could also fall into that, and I pray that I will never be put in a situation where I do not seek God's grace, mercy and healing before I act.

Br. Mark Dohle, OCSO,
Holy Spirit Monastery



NECROLOGY



NOVEMBER

- 2 Fr. Lawrence McHale (1957)
- 3 Fr. Albert Goetz (1935)
- 5 Abbot Vincent Taylor (1959)
- 5 Fr. Wilfrid Foley (1968)
- 7 Fr. Raphael Beer (1893)
- 8 Br. Gilbert Koberzynski (1920)
- 9 Fr. Boniface Hilgenboecker (1890)
- 9 Fr. Cornelius Diehl (1957)
- 15 Fr. Thomas Oestreich (1943)
- 21 Fr. Anthony Meyer (1928)
- 22 Br. Willibald Marschall (1932)
- 24 Fr. Raphael Bridge (1996)
- 29 Fr. Bernard Haas (1933)

DECEMBER

- 1 Fr. Cuthbert Allen (1977)
- 5 Fr. Eugene Egan (1940)
- 6 Br. Albert Popp (1924)

NOVEMBER 11: ST. MARTIN OF TOURS



On Nov. 11, the Catholic Church honors St. Martin of Tours, who left his post in the Roman army to become a "soldier of Christ" as a monk and later bishop.

Martin was born around the year 316 in modern-day Hungary. His family left that region for Italy when his father, a military official of the Roman Empire, had to transfer there. Martin's parents were pagans, but he felt an attraction to the Catholic faith which had become legal throughout the empire in 313. He received religious instruction at age 10, and even considered becoming a hermit in the desert.

Circumstances, however, forced him to join the Roman army at age 15, when he had not even received baptism. Martin strove to live a humble and upright life in the military, giving away much of his pay to the poor. His generosity led to a life-changing incident, when he encountered a man freezing without warm clothing near a gate at the city of Amiens in Gaul.

As his fellow soldiers passed by the man, Martin stopped and cut his own cloak into two halves with his sword, giving one half to the freezing beggar. That night, the

unbaptized soldier saw Christ in a dream, wearing the half-cloak he had given to the poor man. Jesus declared: "Martin, a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment."

Martin knew that the time for him to join the Church had arrived. He remained in the army for two years after his baptism, but desired to give his life to God more fully than the profession would allow. But when he finally asked for permission to leave the Roman army, during an invasion by the Germans, Martin was accused of cowardice.

He responded by offering to stand before the enemy forces unarmed. "In the name of the Lord Jesus, and protected not by a helmet and buckler, but by the sign of the cross, I will thrust myself into the thickest squadrons of the enemy without fear." But this display of faith became unnecessary when the Germans sought peace instead, and Martin received his discharge.

After living as a Catholic for some time, Martin traveled to meet Bishop Hilary of Poitiers, a skilled theologian and later canonized saint. Martin's dedication to the faith impressed the bishop, who asked the former soldier to return to his diocese after he had undertaken a journey back to Hungary to visit his parents. While there, Martin persuaded his mother, though not his father, to join the Church.

In the meantime, however, Hilary had provoked the anger of the Arians, a group that denied Jesus was God. This resulted in the bishop's banishment, so that Martin could not return to his diocese as intended. Instead Martin spent some time living a life of severe asceticism, which almost resulted in his death. The two met up again in 360, when Hilary's banishment from Poitiers ended.

After their reunion Hilary granted Martin a piece of land to build what may have been the first monastery in the region of Gaul. During the resulting decade as a monk, Martin became renowned for raising two people from the dead through his prayers. This evidence of his holiness led to his appointment as the third Bishop of Tours in the middle of present-day France.

Martin had not wanted to become a bishop, and had actually been tricked into leaving his monastery in the first place by those who wanted him to lead the local church. Once appointed, he continued to live as a monk, dressing plainly and owning no personal possessions. In this same spirit of sac-

rifice, he traveled throughout his diocese, from which he is said to have driven out pagan practices.

Both the Church and the Roman Empire passed through a time of upheaval during Martin's time as bishop. Priscillianism, a heresy involving salvation through a system of secret knowledge, caused such serious problems in Spain and Gaul that civil authorities sentenced the heretics to death. But Martin, along with the Pope and St. Ambrose of Milan, opposed this death sentence for the Priscillianists.



Even in old age, Martin continued to live an austere life focused on the care of souls. His disciple and biographer, St. Sulpicius Severus, noted that the bishop helped all people with their moral, intellectual and spiritual problems. He also helped many lay-

persons discover their calling to the consecrated life of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Martin foresaw his own death and told his disciples of it. But when his last illness came upon him during a pastoral journey, the bishop felt uncertain about leaving his people.

"Lord, if I am still necessary to thy people, I refuse no labour. Thy holy will be done," he prayed. He developed a fever, but did not sleep, passing his last several nights in the presence of God in prayer.

"Allow me, my brethren, to look rather towards heaven than upon the earth, that my soul may be directed to take its flight to the Lord to whom it is going," he told his followers, shortly before he died in November of 397.

St. Martin of Tours has historically been among the most beloved saints in the history of Europe. In a 2007 Angelus address, Pope Benedict XVI expressed his hope "that all Christians may be like St. Martin, generous witnesses of the Gospel of love and tireless builders of jointly responsible sharing."

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RENEWAL OF OBLATION

Each Oblate is to renew their oblation once a year. If you do not plan on attending the meeting on November 6, 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

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.

Signature

Date

Name (Printed or typed)