



# Oblates of St. Benedict

**Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC**

**November, 2018**

## THE FORGOTTEN STEP IN LECTIO DIVINA



We have read many times the four steps of Lectio Divina. But there is another step that should occur before we begin our reading: research. "There is not much point in spending time with the Scriptures if we are not diligent in searching out the authentic meaning of the text

before us. The Bible is not an easy book to read. It is an anthology of texts from distant cultures written two to three thousand years ago. It seems to me that we will never understand the Bible unless we appreciate just how alien it is." (Michael Casey, *Sacred Reading*, p. 63.)

There is also the language issue. At best most of us will only read the Word of God through a translation and not know the deeper meaning that can read more readily recognized in the original languages. St. Therese of Lisieux once stated "Had I been a priest, I would have learned Hebrew and Greek, and wouldn't have been satisfied with Latin. In this way I would have known the real text dictated by the Holy Spirit." (John Clark, *St. Therese of Lisieux, Her Last Conversations*, p.132).

"Love for the Scriptures makes us want to be sure that it is really God's word that we receive and not merely feedback from our own opinions and prejudgments.

I am suggesting that in many cases, before we begin spending a lot of time on a particular book of the Bible, it can be useful to spend some time in preparatory study. Before we begin a journey it makes sense to consult a map and acquire a basic familiarity with the major routes, even

though the details may be left open. We may also profit from a tourist guide that will alert us to what is noteworthy in the area and give us information that will help us to appreciate what we see. In the same way, the adventure of taking up a new segment of the Bible can be enhanced by our having some general knowledge about the book and its contents. " (Casey, *Sacred Reading*, p. 64)"

By taking some time to look over some basic information and history, you will enhance your understanding of the Scriptures. For example, books that could be consulted are:

- a good bible atlas (Where is Mt. Carmel in relation to the city of Samaria?),
- a concordance (where else can this reference be found in the Scriptures?),
- a biblical commentary to help understand the meaning of a passage or word in the light of Church Tradition and teaching (Why are there two stories of creation?), and
- a general understanding of culture and place (what on earth is a "measure" and just who were those Babylonians?).

For the non-biblical scholar it is unnecessary to have a whole biblical library, but we need to take the preliminary work of Lectio seriously and a good study bible has many of these items. This is why the Formation Team suggested using the *Alive in the Word* series as a learning tool to teach Lectio Divina. Liturgical Press does in their small booklets what each of us should do when we study the Scriptures. The *Alive in the Word* series gives you a sample of what we need to do. Most of the chapter in



The next meeting of the Oblates will be November 18, 2018 at 2:30 PM in the Oblate Room in the Old Music Building.

each booklet gives you the background of the passage presented. The questions are not the primary reason of the lesson. They are to help guide you in pondering the different ways you could understand a particular passage and how it applies to your life: exactly as you should do with your own *lectio*.

***For the next Oblate meeting we are only giving you the Scripture passage to discuss. You are invited to do the work in order to discuss the passage at the next meeting. The only question in advance of the meeting is this: What material did you use to prepare for the discussion?***

## FOR THE NEXT MEETING: PSALM 139

### **The New Grail Psalms (Conception Abbey)**

O LORD, you search me  
and you know me.

2 You yourself know my  
resting and my rising;  
you discern my thoughts  
from afar.

3 You mark when I walk or  
lie down;  
you know all my ways  
through and through.

4 Before ever a word is on  
my tongue,  
you know it, O LORD,  
through and through.

5 Behind and before, you  
besiege me,  
your hand ever laid upon  
me.

6 Too wonderful for me,  
this knowledge;  
too high, beyond my reach.

7 O where can I go from  
your spirit,  
or where can I flee from  
your face?

8 If I climb the heavens,  
you are there.

If I lie in the grave, you are  
there.

9 If I take the wings of the  
dawn  
or dwell at the sea's fur-  
thest end,

10 even there your hand  
would lead me;  
your right hand would hold  
me fast.

### **Revised Standard Ver- sion (RSVCE)**

O Lord, thou hast searched  
me and known me!

2 Thou knowest when I sit  
down and when I rise up;  
thou discernest my  
thoughts from afar.

3 Thou searchest out my  
path and my lying down,  
and art acquainted with all  
my ways.

4 Even before a word is on  
my tongue,  
lo, O Lord, thou knowest it  
altogether.

5 Thou dost beset me be-  
hind and before,  
and layest thy hand upon  
me.

6 Such knowledge is too  
wonderful for me;  
it is high, I cannot attain it.

7 Whither shall I go from  
thy Spirit?  
Or whither shall I flee from  
thy presence?

8 If I ascend to heaven,  
thou art there!

If I make my bed in Sheol,  
thou art there!

9 If I take the wings of the  
morning  
and dwell in the uttermost  
parts of the sea,

10 even there thy hand shall  
lead me,  
and thy right hand shall  
hold me.

### **New American Bible (NABRE)**

Lord, you have probed me,  
you know me:

2 you know when I sit and  
stand;  
you understand my  
thoughts from afar.

3 You sift through my trav-  
els and my rest;  
with all my ways you are  
familiar.

4 Even before a word is on  
my tongue,  
Lord, you know it all.

5 Behind and before you  
encircle me  
and rest your hand upon  
me.

6 Such knowledge is too  
wonderful for me,  
far too lofty for me to  
reach.

7 Where can I go from your  
spirit?  
From your presence, where  
can I flee?

8 If I ascend to the heavens,  
you are there;  
if I lie down in Sheol, there  
you are.

9 If I take the wings of  
dawn  
and dwell beyond the sea,  
10 Even there your hand  
guides me,  
your right hand holds me  
fast.

## ORDO

### NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints. Solemnity (Week II)
- 2 Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, Memorial
- 4 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)
- 9 Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, Feast
- 10 Pope Leo the Great. Memorial
- 11 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week IV)
- 16 Gertrude the Great, Virgin, Memorial
- 18 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 21 Presentation of the Virgin Mary. Memorial
- 22 Cecilia, Virgin. Memorial
- 24 Andrew Dung-lac and his Companions, Martyrs. Memorial
- 25 Christ the King (Week II)
- 29 *Begin novena in honor of Immaculate Conception*
- 30 Andrew, Apostle, Feast



The enclosed Voter's Guide is provided by the Priests for Life in 2016. The platforms of neither party have changed so please review the enclosed material before voting Tuesday, November 6.



## 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)

## SUFFUSED WITH REMEMBRANCE

*By Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB*

November is the month of remembering. All Saints, All Souls, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, the first days of Advent: they whiz by. As we zigzag between the famous and the humble, modern history and the deep past, God help anyone with a November birthday or anniversary to throw in the mix!

Why so much remembering? We learned it from the Jews. In their Scriptures they kept a vibrant memory of spiritual ancestors, communal trials and trauma, moments of peace and prosperity. For them it was all worth remembering, every bit they could write down. They had the honesty and confidence to describe the often painful and embarrassing saga of growing into God's plan for them. They taught us the importance of genealogy, of making sense of our small lives by placing them within a much bigger frame. This instinct is evident in the Gospels, as the evangelists in their various ways locate Jesus within a matrix of patriarchs, prophets, and kings. Only by remembering where Jesus came from could they understand who he might be for us.

At first glance this can seem like an obsession with the past or a fixation on purity of lineage. This misses what remembrance meant in the religious culture that shaped Christianity. Invoking these people, these events, was for Jews and early Christians a daily celebration of God's faithfulness. It flowed from generation to generation.

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## JOURNAL WRITING: IN DEFENSE OF THE FOUNTAIN PEN FOR WRITING (PART II)

In September there was an article on the value of using the fountain pen for journal writing. Here are a few more reasons that you might consider giving up computers and ball points for this “fancy” pen:

**Simplicity:** It is just ink, paper and a pen that responses easily - that's it. Oh, the same argument can be made about a ball point except when it runs dry, skips and dries out before you even use it. And for the computer buffs a notebook and pen are easier to carry. But also, what happens when you have a computer's crash or forget the password to your computer's files? The notes are gone and so are the thoughts on how the scriptures have added to your life. Oh I know, paper burns, but house's fires are less frequent than computer's crashes.

**Writing draft history.** This applies to all writing instruments, not just fountain pens but, if we agree with the supposition that it is easier to write with a fountain pen it belongs here. Anytime we write something it is usually a first draft. Hand writing it out in double space and then editing it the first time on the same paper helps organize your thoughts and recognize writing patterns – both good and bad. It is also easier to take notes and organize them into coherent thoughts. We used to write book notes on 3x5 index cards and then organize the cards around the outline of a report. I know some have found the computer easier but cutting and pasting from the screen does not help you edit

– or keep the quote succinct. Plus it is much easier to layout your cards then to try to organize this out on a computer screen. Computers are great for short memos but for a serious report, hand write your notes and large sections of your draft. You will retain the information better and it will be more your own writing and not just a cut and paste exercise from the internet.

**Limitless ink colors,** many of you use different ink colors. Maybe because of mood or for artistic reasons, we want variety in our color. fountain pens permits that, If is just a matter of changing ink. You can use the same pen.

**Wide variety of style:** there is a pen out there to meet every need. Ball point pens force you to use just a few standard styles, not

so with fountains pens, they come heavy or light, thick or thin, large or small, it is just a matter of finding the right size to feed your need

**Improve your handwriting:** usually you decrease speed when writing with a fountain pen – but it also makes you wish you had kept up with your handwriting! So you find yourself pushing to do a little better. Considering I could not even sign my name a few weeks ago, I am much improved but a long way to go!

**Handwritten notes help you remember and learn.** Recent studies have shown that students who takes notes by hand retain more than students who takes notes by computer. The student who used the computer had more notes but yet retained less. Students who wrote their class notes “engage in more processing than laptop note takers, thus selecting more important information to include in their notes” (Mueller/Oppenheimer: “The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard”, 2014). So, if you want to retain more, write it.

As an aside, having used hand notes and computer notes extensively, I find I am wordier using the computer. Hand writing an article like this one, forces me to be better organized and reduce verbiage.

*The Analog Oblate*

The December meeting of the Oblates will be on the 17th at 2:30  
unless otherwise announced.