



Oblates of St. Benedict

Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC February 2020

NO CHANGE IN MEETING SCHEDULE

For the moment there will be no change in the meeting schedule for the Oblates. We will meet at 2:30 PM every third Sunday until further notice.

INCLEMENT WEATHER



If a meeting is cancelled because of weather, notice will be put on the website as soon as that decision is made. Please also monitor local television stations for campus closings.

NEXT MEETING

Oblates: The discussion will continue from the book *Monastic Practices* and will be covering the chapter on "Community and Communications".

Novice Oblates: Review of the material distributed last month on Work. Please reflect on the questions in the "Conversion" handout.

2020: YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

CHARLOTTE [(Catholic News Herald (Edited for space))]: Bishop Peter Jugis officially declared 2020 as the "Year of St. Joseph" in the Diocese of Charlotte during a Jan. 1 Mass celebrated at St. Patrick Cathedral.

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX proclaiming St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, as the patron of the Universal Church, in his 1870 decree "*Quemadmodum Deus*." . . .

"We can use this special anniversary year as an opportunity to honor this great and holy man, the foster father of Jesus and the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary," Bishop Jugis said in his homily, "and in honoring him, draw attention to our own vocation to be holy."

Every member of the Church – no matter his or her vocation in life – must strive to be holy, the bishop said. Underscoring



this universal call to holiness, "Be holy" is the theme he has chosen for the 2020 Diocese of Charlotte Eucharistic Congress set for Sept. 11-12. . . .

"What does this holiness mean?" he asked. "It means practicing our faith. It means faithfully participating at Mass. It means conversion from sin. Going to confession. Being reconciled with others. Forgiving past offenses."

"What a great way to start the new year. A new slate, a new page – forgiving past offenses. Being faithful to daily prayer. Practicing charity – the sign of holiness," he said.

"Why is it so important to be holy?" he asked. "It is more than just something nice to do. To live in God's love, practicing our faith, it is important to be holy because we are interested in our own salvation. If we want one day to come into

The next Oblate meeting will be February 16, 2020 at 2:30 PM in the Geyer (Oblate) Room in the old Music Building.

the presence of the All Holy One, Almighty God Himself, then we must be living in His presence even now, to be with God forever in the kingdom of heaven.”

It is also important to be holy, he said, so that we may be witnesses to others of the Gospel message – that Christ is alive, He lives in us, and we are His missionaries to bring others to Him.

St. Joseph can be our model in holiness, he continued. “St. Joseph was with Jesus every day – he lived with God in the flesh every day. He carried Jesus in his arms, he held Him. He took care of Jesus. He clothed Jesus, he taught Him, he fed Him – he did everything any father would do for his son. But this son is the Son of God. This continuous living with Jesus, being in Jesus’ presence constantly, made St. Joseph holy.”

“Just imagine,” he said, “being in the presence of the Holy One in the living flesh and blood at every moment – what holiness would be communicated to you.”

Bishop Jugis marveled at the crucial role St. Joseph was given by God to protect and watch over Jesus as He grew. “What an awesome responsibility. He had a great influence over Jesus, being the man of the house. And Jesus had a great influence on St. Joseph, making him holy.”

“God chose St. Joseph to be the spouse of the Blessed Virgin and to be the legal father of the Son of God. His life with them made him strong in virtue and in God’s graces. He lived with the two holiest, sinless people of the face of the earth. What a blessing God gave to him,” he said.

In conclusion he prayed, “Let us ask St. Joseph to intercede for us, to obtain God’s blessing on us as we make our way in life this year.”

Go online to www.YearofStJoseph.org for details.



YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH: PLENARY INDULGENCE GRANTED

The Holy See has granted a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions for pilgrims who visit St. Joseph Chapel

on the campus of Belmont Abbey College. The chapel is open 24 hours a day. In addition, the indulgence can be earned by visiting any of the following St. Joseph Parishes & Chapels:

- Charlotte: St. Joseph Church, 4929 Sandy Porter Rd, 28273;
- Mt. Holly: St. Joseph Seminary, 3452 Willow Oak Rd, 28209;
- Mt. Holly: (Old) St. Joseph Chapel*, N.C. 273 & Sandy Ford Rd., 28120 (National Historic Landmark);
- Asheboro: St. Joseph Church, 512 W. Wainman Avenue, 27203;
- Bryson City: St. Joseph Church, 316 Main Street, 28713 ;
- Eden: St. Joseph of the Hills, 316 Boone Road, 27288;
- Kannapolis: St. Joseph Church, 108 St. Joseph Street, 28083;
- Newton : St. Joseph Church, 720 W 13th Street, 28658

*St. (Old) Joseph Chapel will be open for Mass on 3/17/20 and 3/19/20

ORDO

*Indeed, Nothing Is to Be
Preferred to the Work of God. (RB 43)*

FEBRUARY

2 **Presentation of the Lord, Feast (Wk IV)**

3 *Blaze, Bishop, Martyr (Opt. Mem)*

5 Agatha, Virgin, Martyr. Memorial

6 Paul Miki, Martyr, and his Companions,
Martyrs. Memorial

9 **5th Sunday in Ordinary Time. (Wk I)**

10 **Scholastica, Virgin, Religious Founder,
Feast**

14 Cyril, Monk, and Methodius, Bishop. Me-
morial.

16 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time. (Wk II)

21 Peter Damian, Bishop. Memorial.

22 Chair of Peter, Apostle. Feast.

23 **7th Sunday on Ordinary Time (Wk III)**

25 Walburga, Abbess, Secondary Patron of
Belmont Abbey. Memorial.

LENT

26 Ash Wednesday, Memorial

NECROLOGY

*Please remember to pray for the following
deceased monks of the Abbey.*

FEBRUARY

3 Br. Eugene O'Neil

8 Fr. Kenneth Geyer

18 Fr. William Regnat

24 Br. Aegidius Seier

24 Br. Gregory Corcoran

25 Fr. Melchior Reichert

27 Fr. Kieran A. Neilson

28 Br. George Poellath



LECTIO DIVINA: ASSIDUOUS READING

A final outstanding quality of *lectio divina* must be mentioned: its character of assiduous reading, of constant rereading; it knows no end. In order to have the courage of sustained attention, it calls for perseverance at all costs. St. Seraphim of Sarov read the entire New Testament every week. By/through assiduous reading and prolonged meditation, he had the library of Christ in his breast.¹² Outstanding models of perseverance in *lectio* are many, and some were captivating.

Dimitri Marejkovsky says of the Gospel, "A strange book! It is never fully read entirely. It is pleasant to read; it seems always to remain incomplete, as if something had been omitted, as if something remains uncomprehended. A person returns to read, and may always get the same impression. It is like the heavens at night. As one contemplates them, new stars appear." The same might be said of the other books that make up the divine Library. Whenever we go to read and return to read, we discover "new stars;" each time the stupendous and marvelous horizon of the universe which is the Bible expands a little more.

The Rule of Feriulus says, "Let reading be a frequent occupation of the monastic." The entire monastic tradition recommends the same thing: the Book ought to be in the hands of the monastic almost continually. Assiduity in *lectio divina* finds an indefatigable advocate in St. Gregory the Great. Gregory has experienced the profundity of the Bible, as unfathomable as God. "No one," he observes, "has so plumbed the depths of the knowledge that he or she cannot advance farther, because all human progress remains below the loftiness of God who has inspired Scripture. . . . However much it may be explained, it continues to hold secrets, since Scripture is composed in such a way that a person is ignorant of it even when he or she knows it, so that it is read with greater pleasure when it is read daily, since one can always discover something new in it, it possesses the art of fascinating and enchanting one." In another place he writes that the more a person reads the Bible, the more he or she desires it; accessible to uncultured readers, it remains always new to the wise. In the frequent use of Scripture, a person goes on discovering it progressively, and this process

never ends. In reality Scripture would be of little value if it were easy of access. "When the intellect finds the meaning of certain obscure passages, it feels encouraged in proportion to the effort of the search." The effort needed makes the reading fruitful. The obscure passages tend to alert our intellect, so that we are attentive to the depths even in the passages that apparently are simple and clear.

Lectio divina cannot be neglected; it allows of no vacation. In imitation of Rebecca, says Origen, every day a trip must be made to the well of Scripture. If at times we cease to make it the object of our *lectio* and read other authors, that is for the purpose of having those authors help us to appreciate better the Word of God contained in the Bible. But then we must return to Scripture or to a combination of both readings.

Furthermore, the Bible must be read in its entirety. All of its books, even those that appear less useful, contain the Word of God: that is the principal reason. But there is also a reason of a psychological nature: the extent and diversity of the sacred books witness to an element of variety not to be despised. We are human and, consequently, limited and inconstant. Everything, including matters most holy and sublime, becomes a matter of routine, to the point of causing disgust. Our mind accustoms itself to everything to such an extent that it can come to feel indifferent to the psalms or even to the Gospel itself. One might say that God has taken that into account and has tried to help us by offering us an extremely rich library. What variety in Scripture, especially in the Old Testament!

What wealth for the one who knows how to find it, or better, for the one whom the Holy Spirit grants the grace to discover it! By reason of the number, extension and diverse character of the writings that compose it, as well as the profundity of the ideas it contains, the Old Testament is really inexhaustible, if illuminated with the light of Christ. Thus our effort to persevere in "reading God" will be sustained by the marvelous variety of the sacred books.

To sum up, as J.M. Delvaux writes, we do not practice *lectio divina* for the purpose of textual study, no matter how venerable those texts may be, but to know and to love God, since we love to the extent that we know. "A heart that loves cannot do less than try to know God better whom it loves, to discover ever more God's true face." That is the principal reason for assiduity in *lectio divina*.

From *Reading God* by Garcia M. Colombas, pp. 65-68

MAJOR EVENTS FOR THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

January 1, 2020 | Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God:
Kick off Mass at Cathedral of St. Patrick

January 5-12, 2020 | Solemnity of the Epiphany:
Sacred Art Projection onto Diocesan Pastoral Center

March 18-19, 2020 | Solemnity of St. Joseph:
Parish Masses and Celebrations

May 1, 2020 | Feast of St. Joseph the Worker:
Outdoor Mass at new St. Joseph College Seminary

May 2, 2020 | St. Joseph College Seminary
Inaugural Open House to Public

December 27, 2020 | Feast of the Holy Family:
Closing Mass at Cathedral of St. Patrick



Celebrate the Year of St. Joseph!

Find a complete list of events, devotions, and more at
www.YearofStJoseph.org



PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities. O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness. As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.



Bishop Peter Jugis has proclaimed 2020 as the Year of St. Joseph. This will be a grace-filled time for the Diocese of Charlotte as we reflect on his holy example, gracious intercession, and powerful protection.

St. Joseph, pray for us!

**The March meeting of the Oblates will be on the 15th at 2:30
unless otherwise announced.**