



Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC

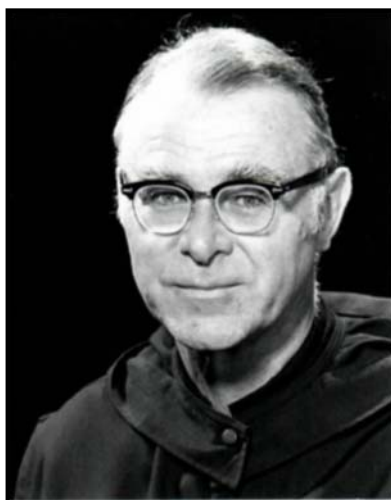
March 2020

**FR. ARTHUR PENDLETON, O.S.B. , JANUARY
24, 1930 — FEBRUARY 21, 2020**

At the reception of Father Arthur's body yesterday evening, as excerpts from the Prologue to the Rule of St. Benedict were read, it seemed so clear to me St. Benedict's description of the life he envisioned for his monks had been lived in our midst by Father Arthur. "Listen, my son, to the precepts of the Master and incline the ear of your heart, and gladly take up and put into practice the admonition of a loving father, so that, by the labor of obedience, you may return to him from whom you have strayed..." Father Arthur listened all his life. He was an extremely intelligent man with a vast range of interests and intellectual curiosity. He read extensively, in the complex working of atoms and molecules as well as in an amazing breadth of books and articles he devoured, and he reveled in sharing what he had discovered in his reading of both the physical and the intellectual worlds. At the heart of his reading, however, was that essential prayer of the monk which St. Benedict prescribed for us, *lectio divina* - the daily meditation on the divinely inspired Word of God in the Bible. Father Arthur thought he had come to the South from his native Rhode Island many decades ago to pursue a career in the textile industry. But he heard with the ear of his heart another voice, which pointed to another career: Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest... And so Father Arthur came to the monastery, and here he found rest in Jesus, and he truly became meek and humble of heart. As a monk and priest, he showed us by his life the image this Scripture passage presents of Jesus. As one of our alumni said in his tribute to Father Arthur: "He was always

the most gentle confessor and an amazing spiritual father and friend."

The text of the Prologue continued: "This message of mine is for you, then, if you are ready to give up your own will, once and for all, and armed with the strong and noble weapons of obedience to do battle for the true King, Christ the Lord." Father Arthur incorporated fully into his life that most fundamental virtue of St. Benedict's Rule, obedience. There was a humorous instance last spring, in one of the precious moments of these last years as he struggled with dementia, when he worried too much about his obedience. One day the nurses in our infirmary told me that I had to speak with Father Arthur. He was upset. When I asked what was wrong, he responded in all innocence that he was supposed to die when he was ninety and so he was not supposed to be here. I don't know where he got that idea that he was to die when he was ninety, but he was convinced that he needed to



obey. I assured that it was all right because he was only eighty-nine. Once he understood that, he was fine. This little interaction was simply the expression, in the confusion of his memory, of his life-long discipline of giving up his own will in order to do whatever was asked of him. Perhaps, however, there was more to this than I realized. Father Arthur turned ninety on January 24, and here we are one month later! Indeed, Father Arthur always persevered in doing what he was asked to do, even when he felt inadequate to the task. It was his humble and steadfast presence that anchored our community through particularly difficult times. He lived the words of the Apostle: We are always courageous, for courage is the virtue which allows us to do what we know we ought to do even when we doubt our ability to see it through well. I think Father Arthur kept St. Paul's final words to us today always in mind: We must all appear before the

judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil. In fidelity to his monastic vocation, Father Arthur was diligent in fulfilling all his responsibilities as monk, priest, professor and friend. In particular, in his teaching career, he knew he was here to serve his students. He pushed them to do their best and to learn what they were supposed to learn, but he was also ever willing to help those who were struggling and find ways to help them succeed. He did this, because he loved them. He loved them because, as St. Paul has told us today, Therefore we aspire to please him, that is, please the Lord. I suspect that, at this moment, we are all hoping that we will have as easy a time when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ as we are pretty sure Father Arthur is having.

The final verse from the Prologue to the Rule we read at the service last evening was the concluding verse of the Prologue: "Never swerving from his instructions, then, but faithfully observing his teaching in the monastery until death, we shall through patience share in the sufferings of Christ that we may deserve also to share in his kingdom." By God's grace, Father Arthur accomplished this. Because he was passionate about things, because he was a competitor, he had continually to learn patience, but he was pretty good at the most important virtue, charity. While he was truly chastised a little in these later years, and especially in his final days, his struggle was, I suspect that final purification as gold in the furnace so that he could be the sacrificial offering worthy of God. The image from the Book of Wisdom of sparks darting through stubble is an apt one for Father Arthur, for his active and inquisitive mind darted among many things and would light up with the joy of understanding, often leaving the rest of us struggling to understand the connections he so easily made.

I said earlier that Father Arthur came to the monastery in response to Jesus' call, Come to me..." The Christian life is a process of transformation into the image of Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit. It is clear that Father Arthur entered wholeheartedly into that process. In a wonderful autobiographical sketch dating to 1958, we wrote with charming candor: "I gather that I was quite dogmatic and single-minded even in college but had evidently become more bearable by 1957." That single-minded dedication and passion for the truth endured. But in his humility, kindness, his gentleness as a confessor, his smile and the light in his eye, we saw reflected the transformation whereby he reflected more and more the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus Our Lord. This past Friday evening, listening with the ear of his heart, Father Arthur evidently heard that voice again, Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest. How can we anything but happy for Father Arthur, who so delighted in discovering the secrets of the physical world in his profession as a chemist, who was so eager to share with others what he had discerned in his contemplation of the world of the intellect and the spirit? How can we be anything but happy for Father Arthur, who always looked for the patterns and connections of things, and who now sees all of creation, which so entranced him, revealed clearly in all its splendor? Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to the childlike. Father Arthur was truly wise and learned, but most of all he learned the transparent and simple goodness of the childlike. We trust that Jesus, who called him and took him to himself, has fulfilled his word: No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. How can we be anything but happy for Father Arthur, to whom the Son has now revealed the beauty of the Father, the Creator of the world which so fascinated and entranced Father Arthur? How can we be anything but happy for Father Arthur who has now come to take his own place in that surpassing beauty which has existed for all eternity?

Father Arthur was our finest monk. He was a holy and compassionate priest, a passionate teacher, a beloved confrere, brother, uncle, mentor and friend. He touched, healed and enriched many lives. His good works have multiplied beyond his imagining. This community was God's gift to Father Arthur. Father Arthur was God's gift to our community. Thanks be to God for so precious a gift, which we now return with gratitude to the Giver of all good gifts. Amen.

In your kindness please offer the usual suffrages of our Congregation for our deceased confrere.

Abbot Placid Solari, OSB

NECROLOGY



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

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)



NOVENA TO SAINT BENEDICT

Glorious St. Benedict, sublime model of all virtues, pure vessel of God's grace! Behold me, humbly kneeling at thy feet. I implore thy loving heart to pray for me before the throne of God. To thee I have recourse in all the dangers which daily surround me. Shield me against my enemies, inspire me to imitate thee in all things. May thy blessings be with me always, so that I may shun whatever God forbids and avoid the occasions of sin.

Graciously obtain for me from God those favors and graces of which I stand so much in need, in the trials, miseries and afflictions of life. Thy heart was always so full of love, compassion, and mercy towards those who were afflicted or troubled in any way. Thou didst never dismiss without consolation and assistance anyone who had recourse to thee. I therefore invoke thy powerful intercession in the confident hope that thou will hear my prayers and obtain for me the special grace and favor I so earnestly implore (mention it), if it be for the greater glory of God and the welfare of my soul.

Help me, O great St. Benedict, to live and die as a faithful child of God, to be ever submissive to His holy will, and to attain the eternal happiness of heaven. Amen.

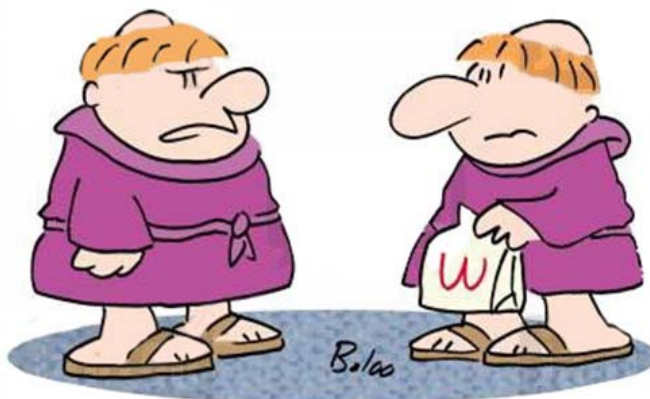


ORDO

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

MARCH

- 1 1st Sunday of Lent (Week I)
- 8 2nd Sunday of Lent (Week II)
- 12 *Begin novena in Honor of Our Holy Father St. Benedict*
- 15 3rd Sunday of Lent (Week III)
- 17 *Patrick, Bishop, Missionary (opt. Mem.)*
- 19 Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin Mary. Solemnity
- 21 Passing of Our Holy Father Benedict, Abbot. Solemnity
- 22 4th Sunday of Lent (Week IV)
- 25 Annunciation of the Lord, Solemnity
- 28 Anniversary of the Dedication of Belmont Abbey Basilica, Solemnity
- 29 5th Sunday of Lent (Week I)



"'Fasting' doesn't mean eating fast food!"

ANTIPHONS FOR LENT AND EASTER

For those Oblates currently using the *Oblate Psalter*, antiphons for use during Lent and Easter are available in PDF format from the Oblate website:

http://oblatesosbbelmont.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Seasonal-Antiphons_revLent_Easter.pdf

A link has been placed on the home page. It can be printed locally. Download the file and then print the pages as you need them. They are arranged by week so print two pages at a time (two pages will fit on one 8.5x11 piece of paper) and trim them so you can place them in the *Psalter*.



Benedict saw the entire world in a single ray of light. (Dialogues)

United States
Secretariat of
the Alliance for
International
Monasticism

Dear Friends,

Jesus showers his love upon us and asks that we do the same for others. With this in mind, AIM USA comes to you with its Lenten Appeal asking that you join in our mission. AIM promotes cooperation and solidarity among monasteries throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

By supporting developing communities in their birth, growth, and development, the communities in turn are able to assist with the needs of the people in their surrounding areas.

During Lent, please join us in:

- Saying the AIM prayer each day (see below);
- Fasting in a special way on Wednesday and/or Friday;
- Donating to the projects that are listed below.

Through your response to the 2018 Lenten Appeal, you will make grants possible in the following areas:

Education

- In Brazil formation studies will be provided for Camaldolese men and women.
- A brother in Peru will pursue studies in theology.
- A group of monks and nuns in the Congo will take theological classes.
- Three brothers from the Ivory Coast will be able to study theology.
- Two sisters in Uganda will be provided a formation course.
- Six monks from India will study theology.
- In the Philippines three communities of nuns will take part in a formation and retreat program.

Ecumenical Program: An opportunity for Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (DIM-MID) will be provided.

Community Prayer: Sisters in India will purchase materials for prayer for themselves and their retreat house.

Community Living

- After an earthquake, Sisters in Mexico will be able to repair their monastery.
- Sisters in Burkina Faso will construct a wall around their monastery for safety.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call or write. We can be reached at 814-453-4724 or aim@aim-usa.org.

Any donation you make to this Lenten Appeal is greatly appreciated. By helping these monasteries your love and concern spreads throughout the world. Checks may be sent to: AIM USA, 345 East Ninth Street, Erie, PA 16503. Thank you.

Pax,
Sister Theresa Zoky, OSB
Executive Director

A PRAYER OF AIM FOR MONASTIC LIFE

O loving God, We ask your blessing, on all monastic men and women, especially those who live and work in the most destitute parts of the world. Help us to become people of prayer and peace. May we be visible signs that strangers can live together in God's love. Give us hearts wide enough to welcome the traveler, the outcast, the neighbor. Enable us to listen to and learn from the people we serve, especially the poorest. May our communities be models of wise stewardship, of dignified human labor, of sacred leisure, and of reverence for all living things. Above all, O God, may a monastic presence in the world be a constant witness of justice, compassion and hope to all. Amen.

The April meeting of the Oblates will be on the 19th at 2:30 unless otherwise announced.