

## Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC

May, 2021

### ON-LINE MEETINGS

There is some confusion as to which on-line meeting Oblates and Novice-Oblates should attend. The current schedule is:

**Oblates and Novice-Oblates who have completed the formation program:** Meetings are third Sunday of each month at 3:00 PM.

**Inquirers and Novice-Oblates:** Meetings are the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM.

None of the meetings are exclusive to either group and are, of course, open to everyone. But ZOOM requires and invitation to be sent so, if you wish to attend and you have not already sent your information please contact George at gkcobb0321@pm.me

### READING ASSIGNMENTS FOR ON-LINE MEETINGS

The following are the materials for each of the ZOOM meetings for the month of May:

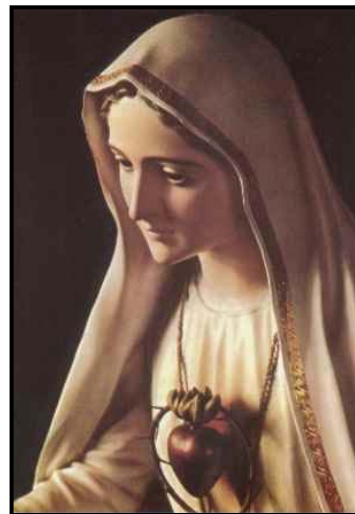
**Oblates and Novice-Oblates who have completed the formation program:** St. Benedict's Toolbox: Chapter 2

**Inquirers and Novice-Oblates:** Work. The material will be emailed the first week of May.

### THE FORGOTTEN SECOND SECRET

We have all become more aware of the increasing persecutions of the Church throughout the world: thousands of Christians either killed or made homeless, the legalistic attacks on Judeo-Christian beliefs including marriage, and the appalling revelations about Planned Parenthood.

One of the subjects I spent a great deal of time studying over the years has been the visitation of Our Blessed Mother at Fatima. There were three great Secrets but with all the speculation over the Third Secret most have



annihilated."

*"To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays."*

Saint John Paul II fulfilled the first part with the consecration of Russia to Mary's Immaculate Heart in 1984. But with the fall of the Soviet Union the rest of the message was forgotten. History teaches us that the Soviet Union was a contributing factor to many of the upheavals we see today. There is also indisputable evidence of unusual and long-lasting famines and major persecutions of the Christian Church. There is also no doubt that if we are suffering, at least mentally from what we see about us, there can be no doubt that the Holy Father is also suffering.

So why the turmoil we see today? The answer is in the second half of Our Lady's request: *"I shall come to ask for. . .the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays."* On December 10, 1925, Our Lady, holding the child Jesus, returned to Lucia, the oldest of the three Fatima seers, and said:

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*Look My daughter, at My Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console Me, and announce in My Name that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturdays of five consecutive months, confess, receive Holy Communion, recite the Rosary and keep Me company for fifteen minutes meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary with the intention of making reparation to Me.*

At one time many of us have made the first five Saturdays. But how long ago and did we with the intention of making reparation? It really was not supposed to be a one time deal, it should be something we all do on a regular basis. As stated by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima:

*"The promise associated with the practice of the devotion on five consecutive First Saturdays has been mistakenly construed by many to mean that, once one has completed a series of five in succession, they have accomplished the practice of the devotion – that they are finished. This was not Our Lady's intention in making the promise, and has resulted in a far fewer people practicing the devotion's than are necessary to fulfill her request. This is one reason why wars, famines and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father have increased rather than abated."*

The answer to the reason for the turmoil in the world is that we the faithful have not satisfied Our Lord or Our Lady in making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is a very simple request and not hard to do. For many of us it is simply setting aside the time on the First Saturday of each month with the intention of making reparation for offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

- Go to Confession;
- Receive Holy Communion worthily;
- Pray five decades of the Rosary;
- Keep Our Lady company for 15 minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.

You may download a free copy of a devotional guide at the World Apostolate Of Fatima, USA Blue Army website.

We look for something we can do. We feel helpless before secular powers that seem to have everything on their side. We are troubled as we see the norms of society tuned upside down. We see the plight of the persecuted and the martyred. We wonder what we, as Christians, should do in response to what is going on in the world. It seems our Lady has already told us what Our Lord requires. Our Lady, Help of Christians, helped the Christian world defeat

the Muslim invaders at the Battle of Lepanto. Today, perhaps no fleet of ships are needed, just a simple act of reparation.



## EXCELLENCE OF THE CHURCH FATHERS

The Fathers of the Church are our fathers in the faith, the faithful witnesses of the Holy Spirit. Their importance in the history of Christian spirituality is exceptional. If they are judged individually, their merits remain varied, depending on the viewpoint from which they are considered. If they are compared among themselves, great differences may be observed in every sense of the word. Thus, St. John Chrysostom is not Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Augustine differs much from Cassian. But they all have in common the incomparable quality of having been the organs of the Holy Spirit in the privileged epoch of the Church when God showered down the gifts that would serve as a light and guide for future ages.

After the apostles, the Fathers were the first spiritual masters of the Church. That, without doubt, is their most essential characteristic and can be regarded as the unifying element of all their activities. True, they may be considered as witnesses of the Christian faith, apologists, exegetes, theologians, polemicists; but all these are only accidental aspects of their original task of safeguarding, illuminating, scrutinizing, and spreading the pure spiritual doctrine among Christians. In their writings there are no precise boundaries neatly dividing spirituality from theology, biblical commentary and ascetical doctrine, mystical theology and morality. The Fathers did not separate anything; for them everything is divine life. In taking up the pen or preaching a homily or sermon they had but one goal in mind: that Christ's faithful should have life and have it in abundance. For that reason it may be affirmed without hyperbole that all Patristic literature is spiritual as well as exegetical and pastoral. In all they did and wrote, they kept before their eyes the living and entire essence of Christianity. Through them - the outstanding links of tradition - this essence has reached us explained, vital and uncontaminated.

The Fathers excelled in assimilating the spirit of Christ in a truly marvelous manner. Hans Urs von Balthasar has written quite rightly, "In modern times theology and sanctity have been developed separately, to the great prejudice of both. It is rare nowadays for saints to be theologians, for which reason theologians do not take them into consideration." That does not hold true of the Fathers. On the

contrary, in them word and life, doctrine and holiness, are in perfect accord and are interpreted reciprocally. The Fathers lived what they taught; they taught what they lived. As a result, their writings convey to us simultaneously both teaching and experience.

Their extremely vigorous faith shows itself in their lyricism. They are poets — spiritual poets — who know how to discover and to sing of God's action in the visible universe of nature and in the invisible universe of souls. Instead of enunciating their Christianity in an abstract and impersonal manner, they possess style so communicative, heart-felt and lyrical — in loving and explaining the Christian realities — that they enrapture the reader. This is true, for example, when they treat of Jesus Christ, the motherhood of Mary and of the Church, the action of the three divine Persons in the human soul.

The eminently intuitive character of sensitivity is well known. Full of love and enthusiasm for Christ and his Church, the Fathers possessed an admirable and captivating intuition. In them life in all its complexity and simplicity manifests an effective primacy over formula, the communion with the Holy Spirit over the logical development of thought. They have a feeling for the divine, a precise theological vision of the visible and the invisible world. They possess the secret of expressing what they think and feel in a marvelous manner; they know how to communicate their enthusiasm.

From *Reading God* by Garcia M. Colombas, pp. 108-110 (Used with permission)



## PRAYER TO OUR LADY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS

Most Holy Virgin Mary, Help of Christian,  
how sweet it is to come to your feet  
imploping your perpetual help.  
If earthly mothers cease not to remember their children,  
how can you, the most loving of all mothers forget me?  
Grant then to me, I implore you,  
your perpetual help in all my necessities,  
in every sorrow, and especially in all my temptations.  
I ask for your unceasing help for all who are now suffering.  
Help the weak, cure the sick, convert sinners.  
Grant through your intercessions many vocations to the religious life.  
Obtain for us, O Mary, Help of Christians,  
that having invoked you on earth we may love and eternally thank you  
in heaven.

St. John Bosco



## ORDO

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

## MAY

### 2 Fifth Sunday of Easter (Wk I)

3 Philip and James, Apostles (Feast)

### 9 Sixth Sunday of Easter (Wk II)

11 Odo, Maiolus, Odilo, Hugh and Peter  
the Venerable, Memorial

### 13 Ascension of the Lord, Solemnity

14 Matthias, Apostle, Feast

15 Pachomius, Abbot, Memorial

### 16 Seventh Sunday of Easter (Wk II)

### 23 Pentecost Sunday (Wk III)

24 Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the  
Church. Memorial

25 Bede the Venerable, Memorial

31 Visitation of the Virgin Mary to Eliza-  
beth, Feast

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

5 Fr. Edward Bissy (1969)

7 Fr. Ambrose Andelfinger (1889)

7 Fr. Adelard Bouvilliers (1950)

9 Br. Anthony Cahill (1985)

17 Fr. Leo Kuntz (1917)

18 Fr. Alphonse Buss (1951)

24 Fr. Hugh Hagerty (1979)

24 Fr. Matthew McSorley (2012)

26 Br. Andrew Huemer (1900)

27 Fr. Charles Kastner (1959)

30 Fr. Francis Meyer (1905)

31 Br. Joseph Maria Rabbani (1972)



## MAY 15: ST. PACHOMIUS, FOUNDER OF CENOBITIC MONASTICISM



Therefore, brothers, let us strive with all our heart, bearing death before our eyes every hour, and every moment imagining the fearful punishment. But these things the mind comes to perception and the soul is weighed down weeping, but it is also made contemplative and prepared to be turned toward God, undistracted by earthly things. And not only this, but once humility is worked out by these, the soul is persuaded to become compassionate and without vainglory, lowly and made a stranger to all worldly mentality.

Let the soul then, brothers, teach wisdom to this thick body every day when we come to our bed at evening, and say to each member of the body, "O feet, while you have power to stand and to move before you are laid out and become motionless, stand eagerly for your Lord." To the hands, let it say, "The hour comes when you will be loosened and motionless, bound to each other and having no motion whatever; then, before you fall into that hour, do not cease stretching yourselves out to the Lord."

And to the whole body let the soul say, "O body, before we are separated and removed far away from each other, and before I am taken down to Hades to receive everlasting fetters under darkness, and you are changed into primal matter and dissolved into

the earth, consumed in stench and corruption, stand boldly, worship the Lord. Make my perception made known by tears; make known to the Master your good service. Bear me as I eagerly confess God, before you are borne by others; do not condemn me to eternal punishment in your desire to sleep and to take your rest. For there will be a time when that most heavy sleep is going to overtake you. If you listen to me, we shall together enjoy the blessed inheritance. If you do not listen to me, then woe to me that you have been bound to me; because of you I also, wretched as I am, am condemned."

If you train yourselves daily in this manner, truly you will be a true temple of God. And since God is dwelling in you, what satanic wile is able to deceive you? For instead of having a myriad of teachers, the word of God is dwelling in you, teaching you more and making you yet wiser by his own knowledge. And whatever human speech cannot say, the all-holy Spirit teaches. For as it is said, we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself expresses our plea for us with groanings that cannot be put into words. If you train yourselves daily in this manner, truly you will be a true temple of God. And since God is dwelling in you, what satanic wile is able to deceive you? For instead of having a myriad of teachers, the word of God is dwelling in you, teaching you more and making you yet wiser by his own knowledge. And whatever human speech cannot say, the all-holy Spirit teaches. For as it is said, we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself expresses our plea for us with groanings that cannot be put into words.

St Pachomius, Armand Veilleux, trans.,  
"Pachomian Koinonia -- Volume II," (Kalamazoo,  
Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1981), pp. 41 -

*"In these latter times Mary must shine forth more than ever in mercy, power and grace; in mercy, to bring back and welcome lovingly the poor sinners and wanderers who are to be converted and return to the Catholic Church; in power, to combat the enemies of God who will rise up menacingly to seduce and crush by promises and threats all those who oppose them; finally, she must shine forth in grace to inspire and support the valiant soldiers and loyal servants of Jesus Christ who are fighting for his cause." St. Louis de Montfort*