

Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey Oblates of Saint Benedict

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A Letter from the Oblate Director — Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.

Dear Oblate brothers and sisters:

This past Sunday a few of us were together to begin the study of Obedience in the Holy Rule of Benedict. As we were working through the chapter, with the help of a study guide from Walburga Abbey in Colorado, I was beginning to sense how complex the subject is.

I believe there are those that do not think much about “Obedience” because, for many, it has a negative connotation of being submissive, and perhaps society is more interested in doing what makes them happy. I believe we need to think of obedience not as a matter of submissiveness but as a healthy means for a good society and our soul’s development. Where does God come into our lives? How does Benedict’s rules of obedience apply to our obeying the law of the land or to God? Is obedience only for monks and religious? Those who believe Benedict was referring to obedience to God have difficulty understanding how that is translated to obeying superiors, supervisors and one another. At times the aforementioned abuse their authority. Knowing when God's law requires obedience does not always help us manage the disagreements between us. Some people air their opinion through strikes, protests, social media or worse, by violence.

At one point in our discussion, I brought up that the Rule of Benedict places the “Degrees of Humility” just before the chapter on Obedience. Along with the beatitude’s, the degrees of humility can enable us to move toward “true obedience.” Obedience carries a sign of respectability and truth.

Lastly, we asked what St. Benedict’s motivations for obedience were. In addition, what might be ours? We had some answers, but I ask you the reader, to ponder and answer these questions for yourself.

Come on August 4th to our Oblate discussion of The Rule to learn more.

In St. Benedict and Jesus,
Brother Edmund E., OSB

Abbot's Reflection by Abbot Neal Roth, OSB

On Silence, RB 6

We live in a world today that is not very silent. Often, on my way to our lower campus to attend a meeting or some other event, I pass students walking along with ear phones on, and minds focused on music or perhaps the radio. It is difficult to wrench them away from their music for a quick greeting. I plead ignorance of knowing anything at all about modern electrical/computer devices such as the iPod, iPad and iPhone (information garnered from a young monk!). My life experience is that some people cannot abide periods of silence.

Silence is a favorite theme in the Rule. It must be because Benedict refers to it rather often—silence in the refectory, silence during rest periods after the midday meal, silence during prayer and silence at night. Silence can be both calming and beneficial for the soul or it can be used as a weapon such as giving someone the “silent treatment” for some real or imagined grievance. Then there are those individuals who feel they must fill every vacant minute with talking, gossip, jokes, or just nonsense. In other words, not much good comes out of all that talking. How does Benedict's concept of silence apply to Oblates?

As Oblates, one cannot expect that you would keep great periods of silence at the workplace or in the family home when work or family members need your attention. Nor does silence mean our world must be terribly serious and absent of joy and good humor. Even though our world is not silent, we can work towards maintaining an internal silence. Our private prayer, the frequent reception of sacraments and daily reading and digesting scripture are enormous helps for one who is serious about his/her spiritual life. Such a life of prayer and sacraments gives one a balanced and moderate life, and should assist one in developing appropriate silence. I do know people who do not talk a great deal. They are persons who don't need to speak many words. They have a peace and wisdom about them that radiates charity and joy. They have disciplined themselves to listen instead of speaking and they are generally edifying persons. They have a true spirit of silence, calm, and peace. The whole subject of silence in one's life is worth some time and genuine consideration on just how silence can enhance one's spiritual life as a follower of the Rule of Benedict.

**IN THE BEGINNING -
FATHER GERARD KIRSCH, OSB**

On Nov. 16, 1956, **Father Nicholas Rausch (1928 - 2003)** and his high school debaters drove to Yakima to take part in the Marquette high school debate tournament... On Nov. 17, **Father Bede Ernsdorff (1909 - 1982)** conducted a day of recollection for the ladies of the altar society of Sacred Heart parish, Lacey... On Nov. 20, Father William Dickerson and Father Andrew McHugh went out to “winterize” the abbey boat “Sea Ranger”... On Nov. 23, several fathers from the various Benedictine parishes attended the abbey corporation meeting. On Nov. 26, the morning schedule for the students on a new “trial” basis began, with rising, student Mass and breakfast a half hour later than previously... On Nov. 28, **Brother Candidate Donald Pape (1905 - 1958)** - later **Brother Justin** - began his 8 - day retreat preparatory to his investiture as a novice... On Nov. 30, the college basketball team began its season with a 78 to 69 victory over Seattle Pacific College.

In early December, the brothers were busy at a new project, making beautiful Christmas ornaments of tin can tops... On Dec. 6, **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903 - 1971)** drove to Seattle for more arrangements in regard to the projected college dormitory Baran Hall... Dec. 9 saw 3 inches of rain... On Dec. 11, **Abbot Raphael**, with **Fathers Alcuin Lawrence (1906 - 1984)**, **Arnold Fox (1903 - 1999)** and **Thaddaeus Arledge (1927 - 2015)** of Assumption parish, Seattle, attended the Seattle Mothers’ Club Christmas party... On Dec. 13, **Father Christopher Abair (1924 - 1988)** moved to the infirmary to break a persistent attack of “flu”... By Saturday, Dec. 15, the college area was quiet as those students had gone for Christmas vacation, but the high school would continue for another week.

On Dec. 17, the high school glee club was in Tacoma to give a concert to a doctors’ Christmas party at St. Joseph Hospital... On Dec. 20, **Father Jerome Toner (1899 - 1977)** was on his way to Cleveland, Ohio to assist at Christmas and attend various conventions... On Dec. 21, the father - son banquet for the high school ended school for 1956... On Dec. 22, **Frater Adrian Parcher** received clerical tonsure at the hands of **Abbot Raphael Heider** at a quasi-pontifical Mass... Community Christmas began at 7:15 PM, Dec. 25 in the Fathers’ recreation room... On Dec. 26, **Father Bede Ernsdorff**, **Father Bertrand Trautman (1918 - 1972)**, **Clement Pangratz (1919 - 2017)** and Maurus Keller laid out markers for the Baran Hall road... On Dec. 28, the younger priests of the abbey took the Junior Clergy exams... On Dec. 30, **Father Luke O'Donnell (1913 - 1999)** was returning home from a meeting of novice masters at St. Bede Abbey in Illinois.

In other news, **Brother Hugh Evans (1900-1957)** was hospitalized for two weeks at St. Peter Hospital, Olympia to correct a circulation deficiency in his legs, returning to the abbey on Dec 28... **Abbot Raphael** was scheduled to leave Saint Martin’s on Jan. 13 for Chicago to attend a meeting of abbots of our American Cassinese Congregation, followed by a meeting of the American Benedictine Academy... Anselm Hall students from the Yakima area celebrated a bit of Christmas by a get-together with **Father Christopher**, the hall counselor, who was assisting at Saint Paul’s Cathedral in Yakima. A business trip to California took **Father Pascal Merola (1902 - 1977)** away from the abbey Dec. 16-24, visiting friends who were interested in Saint Martin's and its building program.

From the Hill

Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.

When I began my theological studies with the Jesuits in Madrid, one of the first of our required courses was titled “The Mystery of God.” One morning, during the second or third week of classes, while we were on our mid-morning break, one of my new classmates said to me: “Boni, now I know what the Benedictine idea of God is.” Somewhat surprised, as I was not certain if I knew after a number of years as a Benedictine, I inquired how she had discovered that. She replied that she’d been watching me - a Benedictine - during those first weeks of class. I’m not sure what she saw in observing me, but I quickly replied that I was not certain if I was typical of all Benedictines.

God is an important element in the lives of all of us who are religious. Saint Benedict says that in considering candidates one should ask if they are truly seeking God. This Spring, **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** received **BROTHER PASCAL MARY (Lance) GREENE** into the postulancy at the Abbey. **FATHER GERARD KIRSCH** is the Director of Postulants. **BROTHER PASCAL MARY** for many years lived as a Franciscan Friar, and was introduced to Saint Martin’s by **NOVICE MICHAEL FERMAN** and Vocation Director **FATHER PAUL WECKERT**.

BROTHER PASCAL MARY, who was born and raised in upstate New York, spent some fourteen years as a Friar. Prayer is an important part of **BROTHER**’s life, and he was strongly drawn to the balance of prayer - private as well as communal - and work in the life of the Benedictine and discerned a vocation to continue a search for God as a member of our Benedictine community. Here, he hopes to develop a deeper relationship with God, and learn from his confreres who have lived the Benedictine life for many years. He seeks to assist others, both spiritually and physically, and as a Friar spent many years involved in street ministry. **BROTHER PASCAL MARY** enjoys various forms of exercise, films and board games as forms of recreation. Warm welcome!

At the end of our annual retreat, the community celebrated the jubilees of three confreres: **ABBOT NEAL**, sixty years in vows; **ABBOT ADRIAN PARCHER**, sixty years of ordination; and **FATHER EDWARD RECECONI**, sixty years of priestly ordination. There was a Mass of Thanksgiving, and the jubilarians were feted at a special dinner and given a gift. *AD MULTOS ANNOS*.

Summer is often a time of travel for the members of the community. **ABBOT NEAL** and **FATHER PETER TYNAN** will attend a meeting of the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities in Yankton in June and **ABBOT NEAL** and **FATHER PAUL** will later attend our Federation’s General Chapter in Manchester, New Hampshire... Come late August, **FATHER PAUL** will lead a European pilgrimage beginning in Poland... **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** is on a study tour of Russia, which includes an immersion in the Russian language and culture... **FATHER GEORGE SEIDEL** traveled to California to preside at the funeral of his sister Janice who had succumbed to cancer... **BROTHER MARK BONNEVILLE** attended an international gathering of members of Circle K, of which he is an advisor, in Florida... **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH RAPPUHN** attended classes at Catholic University, Washington, D.C., after first having assisted at a two-week institute for Benedictine monks in first formation.

During the 2019 Homecoming celebrations, the University’s National Alumni Association honored this writer with a Distinguished Alumnus Award... **FATHER BEDE ERNSDORFF** and **FATHER PLACIDUS REISCHMAN** were both honored posthumously by Saint Martin’s University. The newly dedicated science and math center on campus is named for **FATHER BEDE**, long-time member of the University’s chemistry department, and the department itself has been named for **FATHER PLACIDUS**, the University’s long-time biologist. The monastic community purchased crucifixes from Germany and France for the new Ernsdorff Center.

May your summer be blessed in abundance as you continue your search for God!

It Makes for a Lovely Background by Oblate Mary Randall

I was sitting in Church one Sunday morning during the Easter Season waiting for Mass to begin while taking in the images and sounds of beauty that the Church expresses during this season of joy. Even the Easter flowers were still in full blooms

A man behind me broke through my thoughts when he suddenly said to his wife,

“Look at the white cloth draped behind the cross. It makes for a lovely background.”

As he said these words, I thought to myself, “Does he really know what the cloth represents?” How it wasn’t just a backdrop for the “old rugged Cross”, but Christ denouncing death by His own Resurrection. The white cloth was a symbol of what had transpired 2000 years ago. How this white piece of material marked the burial cloth Our Lord was wrapped in following His unbelievable suffering endured for us. What began with His agony in the garden was followed by the scourging at the pillar, the crowning of thorns, the carrying of the Cross, ultimately resulting in His hanging on the Cross for six long agonizing hours. Jesus did this because He loved us. His suffering and death unlocked for us the eternal gates that had been closed since the time of disobedience by Adam and Eve. We were no longer closed off from God our loving Father.

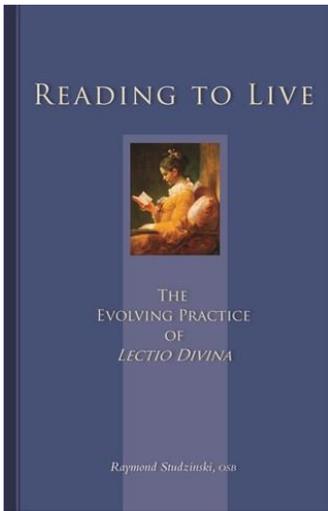
I wanted to share with this man why the cloth was draped on the Crucifix, but I refrained hoping his wife would respond to this teachable moment. However, only silence greeted his statement.

A question you might ask yourself is this: “What symbol or symbols that the Church uses to reflect the liturgical seasons causes you to ponder?”

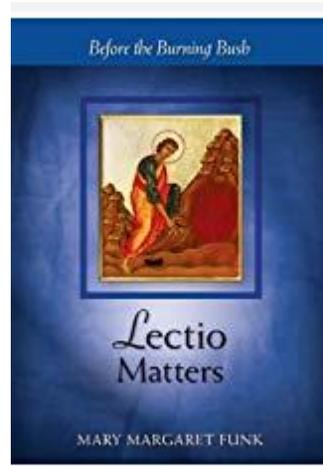


Image by Rick Schroepel/iStock/thinkstock

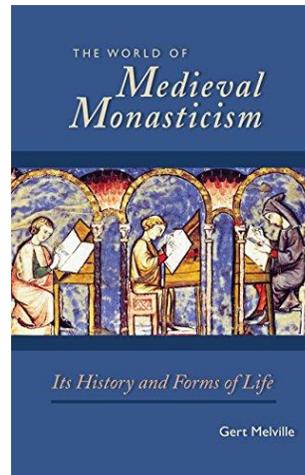
On the Book Shelf



Reading to Live by Raymond Studzinski, OSB



Lectio Matters
by Sr. Margaret Funk, OSB



The World of Medieval Monasticism
by Gert Melville

Prayer Requests

For all the aging, the ill and the spiritual needs of Oblates.

Prior Brother Nicolaus who is receiving chemotherapy.

Oblate Joshua Roberts and his family. Joshua has a neuro-muscular ailment, which has not been diagnosed, and he is currently unable to walk.

The Glidden Family, still grieving over daughter's death this past Holy week.

Oblate Suzanne Rothwell, health issues.

Oblate Kathleen Hystad, health issues

July 7th—Oblate Community Sunday and Picnic

Come join us for Mass in the Abbey church at 11 A.M.

Then after participate in our picnic. Please bring a food dish of your choice to share with others. Drinks and dining ware will be provided.

At 1:30 in the Abbey Church join us in learning about Sacred Reading.

Our topic for July 7th's Oblate Conference will be tips on the art of Lectio Divina also known as Sacred Reading.

Presenter is Oblate Mary Randall who will share insights and practical ways to read this most ancient form of reading.

As Oblates we are so lucky to develop this form of learning that deepens our relationship with God while transforming our spiritual being.

Come join us and invite a friend along.

Special invitation

Judith Valente, the author of *How to Live: What the Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us about Happiness, Meaning and Community* will be at St. Placid Priory on June 23 from 1-3pm. We hope you can join us in MP 2 for "Finding Our Place in the Great Benedictine Narrative." Ms. Valente is an award-winning author and journalist. Her most recent book is *How to Live: What the Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us About Happiness, Meaning, and Community*.

August 10th Oblate Lodge Retreat lead by Sister Monica Ellis of St. Placid Priory. Join us for Mass in the Abbey church. Then car pool to the Lambert Lodge. This is a pot luck so bring something to share. We will be back to the Abbey by 4 PM. RSVP to Brother Edmund if you would like to attend or have questions.

Contact information for these events:
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Oblate Community dates for 2019

August 10th Oblate Lodge Retreat lead by Sister Monica Ellis of St. Placid Priory

September 8th (Investitures and Oblations) Talk by Fr. Marion

November 15-17, the 3rd Annual Fundraising Bazaar times to be announced closer to the date. Will be held in the Cheney Room in the Marcus Pavilion.

December 8th Oblate Sunday talk by Fr. Kilian

Come study the Rule of Saint Benedict.

Come and study the Holy Rule with Br. Edmund and other Oblates. 2 p.m. first Sundays when there is no Regular Oblate Day. We are now studying obedience in the Holy Rule.

Come and enlighten us! We meet in the guest dining room in Old Main across hall from the monastic dining room. (ground level).

2019 Dates: June 2nd, Aug. 4th, Oct. 6th, Nov 3rd, Dec. 1st.

Newborn Hat Project for Tanzania

This project is yielding yarn and hats. We need more hat makers for newborns. Come and learn how to make an infant hat.

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.

First Saturday of the month.

Location: Guest dining room of Old Main across from the Monastery refectory.



*Image found at
www.ravelry.com*



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR — Nov. 15 — 17th.

Chairperson, Teresa LaBouff writes: My fellow Oblates, we are planning and organizing items to sell at our Christmas Bazaar this coming November. It was very successful last year, thanks to all who donated and offered their time in helping.

Please share your ideas, crafts, new or gently used items and talents to assist in making this even better! You may bring items to our upcoming gatherings. Please pack and price them, if possible, so they are ready to store and transfer to the event.

All who are interested in assisting by being on the Bazaar Committee or to help set-up and work are encouraged to contact me soon. Our first meeting will be after our July 7 conference 3:30- 4:30.

Contact info: Teresa LaBouff, 360-402-3082 or email teresalabouffceo@gmail.com.

Gardening and Wood:

Saturdays 1:00pm to 3:30pm

Help keep up the Abbey grounds and make firewood out of the tons of logs we have. All help is greatly appreciated I will not ask you to operate any machinery, maybe a maul, if you can swing it. But there is stacking that is useful. Presently I am getting enough split to take to our Lambert Lodge for the winter months. Additional wood goes into structured stacks to give to the needy for small donations to cover some of our cost of machinery maintenance. This is charity in action.

Call Br. Edmund for the next opportunity to work in either activity.

Rosary Makers will meet:

Time: 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm. First Saturday of the month.

Location: Guest dining room of Old Main across from the Monastery refectory.

Rosary Makers/Helpers are always appreciated in this ministry for the missions and military. Your help will make the difference in the spiritual life of someone.

Please come. Supplies are available.



*Image found
[www.etsy.com/knotted
rosary](http://www.etsy.com/knotted_rosary)*

LAMBERT LODGE WORK

Time: 10:00 - 3:00 sometime this fall.

The day includes, Prayers, Work, and a Potluck. If you are interested in lending a hand, contact Brother Edmund.

Oblate Advisory Meeting

Time: 10:00AM Place: Student cafeteria

2019: July 6th, Sept. 7th, Dec. 7th.

If you are interested in becoming more involved please contact Brother Edmund.

Welcome new Oblates



Novices: Mary Ellen Piccoli, Jacob Ferman, and Michelle Hutchinson.



Oblates: Judith and Bill Batstone, Shelley and Jonathan Sproufske, and Natalie Vavrek.