



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

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 46

SEPTEMBER 2019

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

Dear Oblate brothers, sisters, and friends:

I have just come to realize there are many friends of the Abbey that also read this Oblate Newsletter. It would be nice to send it out electronically but many do not have email service. It is still nice to put a hard copy in the hands of all.

This month I would like to focus on the readings of this past week. The first one had to do with Exodus. Recall, our Lord led the Israelites out of Egypt and however so briefly, they were thankful for this gift from God. They even proclaimed they would do everything that God would ask of them. How long did this thanksgiving last? They soon became such complainers asking where would they get food? Then when they got food, they complained about that. Moses was so annoyed and I believe he would have thrown in the towel if it had not been for his faith and God's divine constant intervention.

How does this ring true for us today? So many promises, small and big alike. Yes, even bargaining with God. If you do this for me, I will do whatever you ask. Religious make vows with good intentions to carry them to the end. Oblates make promises intending to keep them. Couples get married and plan to death do us part. There are lesser promises we make to God or friends, parents etc. but when the going gets tough what happens? We either buck up and resolve to do better or throw in the towel and give up.

Taking the challenge to resolve our difficulties through prayer and making a new commitment to follow our original plan can be rewarding, and bring us closer to our God. We certainly do get stronger when future trials come our way. Things become easier if we make every effort to push through each trial. On the other hand, if we back away from such challenges we will not learn how to mature spiritually.

In St. Benedict,
Brother Edmund E., OSB

Abbot's Reflection by Abbot Neal Roth, OSB

Cistercian monk Thomas Merton wrote: "Today, in a moment of trial, I rediscovered Jesus, or perhaps discovered Him for the first time. But in a monastery, you are always rediscovering Jesus for the first time." I enjoy those "first" times in my life. Every time I receive the vows of a monk, I find that later in the day I think about the vows newly professed, and inevitably, I focus on conversion through a monastic way of life. But as an Oblate, what does that really mean? I think it means to embrace and use with faithfulness the Rule of Benedict in our journey of life. Conversion is for anyone who is serious about the Christian life. The Rule can become an important supplement to the gospel.

I believe that conversion of life goes beyond obedience. It is not a mere matter of following the rules literally. I think it is possible to fail against conversion of life without failing against obedience. We can easily be faithful exteriorly but lack a true spirit of conversion interiorly. Our Christian and Oblate calling is always "to sound" the depths of Christian conversion. The Benedictine life is a life that is to be tried and tested. It most certainly involves actual conversion and obedience according to one's state in life. Each Ash Wednesday we are anointed with ashes and we hear "Remember you are dust and to dust you will return" or the more modern, "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel."

No amount of physical separation from the world can convert our hearts. Even while living in the monastery, one can fail to focus appropriately on conversion.

We humans easily mislead ourselves by fragile excuses for our behavior: they are ramblings of conscience. And, as a result, we thwart our transformation, our conversion in Christ. We impede our spiritual growth. Someday our faces will be uncovered. For me personally, that is a strong motivation to try to improve myself.

The spirit of the vow to conversion of life is to desire and to aspire to a transformation in Christ. Not to be better than other people or to believe that we are superior to the rest of humanity, but because Christ died and rose again precisely for this. For this we were baptized. We persevere and never give up.

Paul states it very well. "The life I live now is not my own: Christ is living in me. I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved and gave himself to me." (Gal. 2:20)

God calls men and women to himself through dedication and faithfulness to our Christian faith and especially through conversion. To allow God to transform our weak but honest efforts into an image that reflects the Son is not pride. But rather, we express gratitude for the grace of our lives as Christians and as Oblates. Conversion helps us along the way.

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

On January 1, 1957 many Fathers were returning from parish assignments, as well as a number of students. On January 3, **Father Jerome Toner (1899-1977)** returned from Cleveland, Ohio and **Father Luke O'Donnell** from Peru, Illinois, where they had been attending meetings... A swamp west of the site for the forthcoming dormitory Baran Hall was impassable for road construction work so plans were made to circumvent it... On January 6, **Father Sebastian Ruth (1875-1958)** officially retired from parish work after offering Mass at Visitation parish in Tacoma... On January 8, the monastic dining room was being painted by Don Stevens, whose wife Sirkka, was administrator to bursar **Father John Raymond (1911-1974)** ... On January 11, negotiations between the right-of-way agent for the Department of Highways and St. Martin's, begun the day before, continued for the property which will be required for the construction of a new freeway. On January 13, Mother Augustine OSB, prioress of St. Gertrude's Convent in Cottonwood, Idaho, and three Sister companions stopped at the local convent in route from the Sister Formation Conference in Everett.

On January 17, the project of putting gravel in soft spots on the new road to the site for Baran Hall, which began the day before, was being continued. On January 20, **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903-1971)** and **Brother Bernard Anderson (1898-1971)**, visiting **Brother Jerome Keppers (1880-1960)** at the hospital, found him exceptionally cheerful and slightly improved... The blanket of snow which covered the area on January 18, and to which more was added on January 20 and 21, promised to remain, owing to the lower temperatures which were predicted... On January 25, two features of the bid opening on Baran Hall were the disappointingly high bids and the coffee and pastries which were served to the contractors who attended. On January 26, the first semester ended, and some new students arrived to take up their education at St. Martin's... On January 29, a meeting of the building committee decided to proceed with construction of Baran Hall and investigated certain possible savings which might be affected (the dorm actually being finished in time for the opening of the college year in September 1957).

In other news, **Fathers Anselm Lenzlinger (1899-1960)** and **Daniel Regimbal (1910-1988)** were noted for their care of the whole of Clallam County, assisted by **Father Clement Pangratz (1919-2017)** on weekends. Apart from the parish of Queen of Angels in Port Angeles, there were missions at Sequim, Forks and Clallam Bay, as well as the radar base at Neah Bay... Mr. William Sawyer, St. Martin's high school graduate of 1937, donated an acoustic ceiling for the student dining room in honor of **Father Gregory Wall (1894 - 1979)**... Trees fell to progress as a road was being cleared and graveled for access to the area where the new Baran Hall was to rise. Students of the 1920's had helped **Fr. Gregory** plant this area after the clear-cutting of the 1910's. It was accurately predicted that other buildings would rise there (apart from the freeway cutting across the northwest corner of St. Martin's property--to say nothing of further real estate developments later in the century).

From the Hill

Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.



Beautiful roses abound in the garden adjacent to the atrium of the Abbey Church -- and in great variety.

Early in the summer, I visited the garden of friends in order to see the roses, just beginning to bloom. There I saw a new type of rose, at least to me, a rambling rose. Several, in fact. Many years ago, in London, I visited a rose garden in a park named for Queen Alexandra or perhaps her daughter-in-law, Queen Mary. I cannot remember that, but I do remember all of the really lovely roses I saw. Roses, like other flowers, are seasonal. We've just ended the peony season and, in a few months, can look forward to fall mums. Life, too, has seasons. I have a very elderly artist friend in the south who spent all of her adult life creating art and teaching others. She recently was told by a friend that now that she had less in the way of obligations in her convent, she is able at this season of her life to pray more and to work on her relationship with God.

Mid-summer, **FATHER PAUL WECKERT**, vocation director, traveled to his native Mount Vernon, Washington, to preside at the funeral Mass of his brother-in-law, husband of his eldest sister Janice. **FATHER KILIAN MALVEY** accompanied him and represented the Abbey at the funeral. R.I.P.

The late **ABBOT DUNSTAN CURTIS** used to refer to Independence Day as the "glorious 4th." This "glorious 4th" **PRIOR NICOLAUS WILSON** and this writer planned and prepared annual Independence Day lunch at Lambert Lodge on the Sound for about sixteen of the confreres. All seemed to enjoy the beautiful day, the fellowship, and the traditional menu served. **BROTHER PASCAL MARY GREENE** assisted with the cleanup at the end.

Earlier in the summer, **BROTHER PASCAL MARY** and **BROTHER MICHAEL FERMAN** participated in the University's week-long Spiritual Life Institute, which, this year, included afternoon's working in the community garden as well as the usual lectures ... **FATHER BEDE CLASSICK** and **FATHER PETER TYNAN** completed long-standing assignments assisting at Sacred Heart Church, Lacey, this summer. The parish now has an associate pastor ... **FATHER PETER**, along with **BROTHER MARK BONNEVILLE**, is one of the community's runners. He's also an aficionado of disc golf. For some years now, he has also been writing homilies for publication in a periodical ... **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** got a brief respite from duties at the Abbey when he spent a long weekend with the University's president and others at the former's "getaway" in the Oregon woods ... **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH RAPPUHN**, studying this summer in Washington, D.C., hosted our Tanzanian confrere **FATHER NOVATUS** briefly when the later was in the nation's capital. Together, the two monks visited the city's important monuments ... Earlier, **FATHER LAURENTI** had paid a week's visit to the Benedictine Mission Home in Nebraska ... After returning from his Russian study trip, **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** headed east to attend a conference and then to do library research ... Retired **ABBOT ADRIAN PARCHER** is a voracious reader and book-lover. Decades ago, he was key in establishing a library within the monastic cloister ... This writer will travel to Sacramento, California, to attend a reunion of Bishop Robert J. Armstrong High School (now known as Christian Brothers High School.) The late Bishop Armstrong had been a priest in Yakima, Washington, before being appointed bishop where he was affectionately known as "Father Bob."

Take time to thank God for the flowers and to savor whatever season of your life you may find yourself in at present.

What Is in it For Me? by Oblate Mary Randall

Do we ever ask ourselves the question: “What Is In it for me?” when we are asked to do something we don’t want to do or go somewhere that calls us out of our comfort zone?

To be an Oblate of Saint Martin’s Abbey may sometimes challenge us to ask the question implicitly or explicitly: “What is in it for me?”

Yet, we find when we take the extra step to go to our Oblate Sunday conferences, or annual Oblate retreats we do find special graces that come to us by merely “showing up.” It may be in meeting an old friend, or meeting a new Oblate or potential candidate, or hearing something at the talks that inspires us to continue on this road of spirituality.

We are so blessed to have as Oblates a community of monks (alive and deceased) who pray for us daily in our mission to share with the world our Benedictine concepts of work and prayer, hospitality, and stability.

Perhaps our vocation as Oblates can change the world one person at a time with the fruits we have learned and continue to learn in this “Little Rule for Beginners.”

Let us pray for our monks of Saint Martin’s Abbey and for Benedictine Oblates worldwide without asking the question: “What’s in it for me?”

Blessings,

Oblate Mary Randall



Image found at olgonastery.com

On the Book Shelf

The Ten Green Commandments of Laudato Si by Joshtrom Kureethadam.

Psalm Conversations by James Chatham.

A Costly Freedom, A theological Reading of Mark's Gospel, by Brendan Byrne, S.J.

The Crucifix on Mecca's Front Porch by David Pinault.

Arguing Religions by Bishop Robert Barton based on lectures he presented to Catholic groups of Google and Facebook in California.

Prayer Requests

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

Oblate Rob St. Clair who went home to the Lord 26th of July.

Oblate John Daniels Plott battling cancer.

Prior Brother Nicolaus who is receiving chemotherapy.

Oblate Joshua Roberts and his family. Joshua slowly declines because of his illness. He is very cheerful; he is a blessing. And a real blessing.

Oblate Suzanne Rothwell, health issues.

Healing prayers for Oblate Deacon Joe Nicholas.

Oblate Fr. Jim Lee as he copes with ALS.

Oblate Margaret Mazeski would appreciate prayer as she says, "I am so so." She has leg drop, a broken toe, and back problems. However, far away in TX she is taking interest in the Oblate Program.

I know there are others not mentioned so please keep the silent suffering oblates in prayer also.

September 8th—Oblate Community Sunday

Come join us for Mass in the Abbey church at 11 A.M. then for social time. Food is available for purchase in the student cafeteria

At 1:30 attend a presentation in the Abbey Church by Talk by Fr. Marion.

It is Investiture and Oblation time for those who are ready. Those wishing to enter or complete this process please contact Brother Edmund with your intention.

August 10th Oblate Lodge Retreat lead by Sister Monica Ellis of St. Placid Priory. Lambert Lodge Retreat: August 10. Begin with Mass here at the. Abbey at 8 a.m. and after Mass proceed to Lambert Lodge on Cooper Point Rd.. Take hwy. 101 to Evergreen College entrance but proceed to Cooper Point, take a left onto it and proceed out quite a ways to 67th Ave. (Lg anchor with names on the left) Take this left which is now 67th and proceed all the way to the end when it turns onto Belle Vista St., now to end on to dirt road and downhill to the Lodge at 6525. Begin about 10 a.m. and finish by 3:30 p.m. This a potluck so bring food to share with others. We are very near the water and the view is beautiful.

Oblate Community dates for 2019

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

Oblate Advisory Meeting

Time: 10:00AM Place: Student cafeteria

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

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

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: 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 esty.com

So many thanks for those working on infant hats. The project is going well. If you have contributed, yet please consider doing so. These Newborn hats may save a life in Tanzania colder regions. Booties and small blanks can also be donated. We have a stateside location to send them to.



*Image found
WallArtPrints.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.

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

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.

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. The rosaries in this ministry are for the missions and military. Your help will make the difference in the spiritual life of someone.

Please come. Supplies are available.



*Image Credit KNOM Radio
Mission, Inc.*

Contact information for these events:

Brother Edmund Ebbers OSB
Saint Martin's Abbey
5000 Abbey Way S.E.
Lacey, WA 98503
Phone: 360 - 438 - 4457
Email: br_edmund@stmartin.edu