



# Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey

Oblates of Saint Benedict

March 2021

Volume 2 Issue 53

## A Letter From the Oblate Director – Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.

Dear Oblate Brothers and Sisters:

The tone of this letter will be Lenten. Though you may not be a monk, the first sentence of chapter 49 of the Rule on the Observance of Lent reads as follows, “The life of a monk ought to be a continuous Lent.” This should give you cause to do some measure of striving to move forward to our “heavenly homeland.”

Our country and maybe the world needs us to be good Christians who strive to live morally. Our examples do more than our preaching. Since I do not hear from too many Oblates, I do not know much about how many of our Oblates live. From those of our community that I do hear from and what I have read about Oblates from other communities their lives are very inspirational. Therefore, I believe good and even exemplary Benedictine lives can be lived outside the enclosure.

Often, I hear people say what they are “giving up” for Lent, but I would like to hear more of, “I am going to do this for Lent.” Both are good. Giving up sin is very good! These days perhaps more than previous years doing something for the poor and homeless is an excellent thing, putting aside our selfishness, pride and doing good for the less fortunate. Remember most of us have far more than what we need. We should ask ourselves, am I willing to share some of my blessings or bounty with those troubled and worried about a future they may or may not have?

Jesus plainly tells us, “Those that give to the least of my brothers and sisters, give to me.” Do I dare turn down our Lord?

Read and meditate on the very short chapter 49 in the Rule on The Observance of Lent. Do this with a spirit of joy. Whatever we do, do it with a blessing from God.

If you will, let me know some of your inspirational thoughts, I would love to hear from you.

Lovingly in St. Benedict and our Lord,

Br. Edmund E., OSB



CartoonChurch.com

Image found at: [www.davewalker.com](http://www.davewalker.com)

## From The Hill - Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.

As I write these lines in early February, the last of the lovely Christmas poinsettias is now gone from the Abbey Church, and the Church is filled with the scent of a large arrangement of Casablanca lilies which adorn the sanctuary. Immediately outside the Church doors, buds are beginning to form on the camellia bushes. We are beginning a new year, which can fill us with hope for the possibilities that the year may have in store. As we begin the year, as a community and as individual monks, we can be thankful for the many blessings we, collectively and individually, have already received from the hands of God.

Shortly after the beginning of the New Year, **ABBOT MARION NGUYEN** and many of the monks “broke bread” together at Lambert Lodge at the community’s annual post-New Year dinner. **NOVICE PACHOMIUS HAMOR** prepared two versions of his acclaimed meatloaf and this writer, as assistant to the chef, prepared a salad of shrimp, avocado, butter lettuce and spinach. Others, including **BROTHER MARK BONNEVILLE** assisted with the cleanup.

On 1st February, retired **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** returned to the Abbey following his eight month mini-sabbatical. **ABBOT MARION** visited him for a few days at his Alaska parish and returned home with him. **ABBOT MARION** has appointed **ABBOT NEAL** Novice Master, a position that the latter previously held. **ABBOT MARION** thanked **FATHER PAUL WECKERT** for temporarily filling in as Novice Master since the untimely death of the previous Novice Master **FATHER GERARD KIRSCH** in March 2020.

**BROTHER PACHOMIUS** was recently joined in the novitiate by **POSTULANT JESSE PASCUA** and **POSTULANT KENJI GOODSON**. **ABBOT MARION** invested **JESSE** and **KENJI** as novices during a vesper service on the Feast of the Presentation. As the Abbey Church is still closed, it was a private investiture, attended only by the community. It is our custom to take a new name on entering the novitiate. The Abbot assigned **JESSE** the name of **BROTHER THERIE**, with Saint Therese, the “Little Flower” as his patron saint. **KENJI** is now known as **BROTHER SIMEON**, with Saint Simeon as patron saint and name day on 3rd February. Warm welcome!



Brother Therie, Abbot Neal, Brother Simeon.

## From the Hill continued:

My own investiture was quite different and took place on Halloween. The evening before, I was permitted two local phone calls. The investiture itself took place at the monastic conventual Mass at 6:20 a.m. Despite the hour, several friends attended. Breakfast followed Mass, after which I was permitted to send the following telegram, collect, to my parents: NO BATCHLOR (sic.) PARTY. INVESTITURE 6:20 THIS A.M. QUASI-PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS. BEAUTIFUL SUNRISE MANY THANKS. For the first time I signed “**Boniface, O.S.B.**” the name I was given by the late **ABBOT RAPHAEL HEIDER**. The rest of my investiture day? Work! I was assigned to re-paint the high school recreation room in preparation for some meeting to be held there soon. Other work during my novitiate included hauling laundry with **BROTHER RAMON NEWELL** in a pale salmon-colored pickup; feeding the pigs; some work in the Abbey print shop; and briefly assisting then **BROTHER KILIAN MALVEY** in the Saint Martin’s Bookstore. Most of my work during my novitiate, however, was making candles with **BROTHER RAMON** under the supervision of the late **FATHER CLEMENT PANGRATZ**.

Two of our junior monks, **BROTHERS DAMIEN-JOSEPH RAPPUHN** and **MICHAEL FERMAN**, are back at their theological studies at Mt. Angel, Oregon. It was great having them here for a long post-Thanksgiving break. **BROTHER PASCAL-DAVID GREENE** is accustoming himself to his new assignments, now being charged with managing Lambert Lodge as well as the Abbey gardens. He also is taking a religious studies class in our university. **FATHER KILIAN** is Junior Master.

At Saint Martin’s University’s annual homecoming celebration in February 2021, our National Alumni Association paid tribute to our late confrere **FATHER MAINRAD J. GAUL**. **FATHER MEINRAD** was a history professor at Saint Martin’s College, and instrumental in raising funds for the construction of the Marcus Pavilion and, later, for the construction of a new library building, which he never lived to see constructed.

Stay well and continue to remember us in your prayers as we do you.  
May God bless you and yours in abundance.

## Abbey Church Events

Events are not ticketed and seating is generally unreserved. Doors open one hour prior to starting time. A freewill donation in support of Abbey Church Events is suggested. Events are at 8 PM.

March 28th 2021 Maxim Lando Piano

To be on the safe side check the website [WWW.stmartinsabbey.org](http://WWW.stmartinsabbey.org) under news and events just in case this is rescheduled.

## The Artist's View of the Abbey Church's Etched Glass Doors by Fr. Peter Tynan, Archivist

When working in the abbey archives, I come across many interesting documents. Just recently I found one explaining the artist's take on the etched glass doors found in the Abbey Church. The artist was Seth Polanski and in 1975 he wrote a detailed explanation of his composition. I was curious, so I started to read it. What I found was that artists have a language all their own. Here is a sample:

“In a monastery this is especially true because the threshold of the church is part of the rhythm of daily collective movement. Doors help to choreograph from profession to death the life of the community through time and in a real sense a building used so extensively as an abbey church becomes a symbol of self ... people identify with what happens inside it.”

Having read some dense text during my graduate studies, I can figure out most of what he is trying to say. If I were teaching English, Polanski's writing would see a lot of red ink. In fact, I would ask for a rewrite. As a priest, though, I am called upon to interpret texts and experiences for people using ordinary language and common ideas. So, allow me to interpret some the artist's ideas.

In creating the first set doors you find on entering the Abbey Church, Polanski was trying to recreate the experience of encountering the front façade of a great, medieval cathedral. This is the reason for the inclusion of the flying buttress images. He also wanted to make the experience modern. So instead of showing a well-organized composition representing a well-organized society, the etching is chaotic in order to represent our complex, modern world.

To Polanski the modern world is like the wheels of fire described in the Book of Ezekiel (Ez 1:16-21). They churn about. We find in the entry door the four living creatures (lion, angel, eagle, and ox) caught up in this churning. Of course, one of the creatures is absent, the ox. Polanski wants us to include it through noticing its absence. We complete the work of art through our engaging with it, just as we add something to our world when we engage with others.

In the entry door there are three quotes:

“The stranger did not stay without, my door was open to the traveler.” Job 31:32.

“See! I have put before you an open door that no one can close.” Revelations 3:8.

“You are built upon the apostles and prophets as your foundation, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone. Through him every part of the building is closely united and grows into a temple sacred through its relation to the Lord, and you are yourselves built up into a dwelling for God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:20-22.

These sayings express an invitation to enter the Church in the same manner you entered the artwork. Your inclusion brings it to completion and is most welcome.

The etched doors at the entry to the Eucharistic Chapel have two main motifs. The first is the Tree of Life. The image of the crucified Christ is seen within a leafy tree. The image of the tree was taken at the Nisqually delta. The symbol, found also on the doors to the Abbey Church, is that of Christ's death bringing new life, the life of the Church. Polanski used the native tree to show that the once-and-for-all-time event of the Paschal Mystery is made local here-and-now when the Church celebrates the Divine Liturgy. The second motif is that of Saint Martin of Tours as seen wearing a miter and cope. Our patron is surrounded by flowers showing our love and reverence for his saintly example.

I hope this helps you better appreciate the art within our Abbey Church when you can once again join us in worship. In the meantime, I will keep an eye out in the Abbey Archives for any other interesting documents to share with you. Till then, may God's blessing rest with you and keep you safe in this time of pandemic.

## The Gift of Albert by Oblate Kathleen Hystad

In the year of 2018, I was on my way to meet a friend. I intended on doing a few errands before meeting her. So, I was in a bit of a rush.

A man spoke to me saying, “Hello, how is your day?”



Image found at [www.dnyuz.com](http://www.dnyuz.com)

I glanced at him in my wanting to rush on to my errands and I responded with a, “Hello, my day is good and how are you?”

He looked homeless. I paused as St. Benedict’s Holy Rule flashed across my thoughts. I knew I wasn’t being present with him. I wasn’t actively listening. So, I stopped.

He asked me to if I had a few moments to talk. Then added, “When I ask someone to talk with me, they are always too busy. I guess you women are really busy these days, aren’t you?”

I responded, “Yes, it seems so. I was up this morning baking at four A.M. and now was rushing to get some errands done before meeting a friend, but I can chat for a bit.”

He told me his name was Albert and he talked of his life, and his dreams.

Then I said, “I must go across the street to meet my friend, we are meeting for lunch. Are you hungry? I will buy you a Subway sandwich before I go.” I got him a sandwich and took it to him as my friend came over to where we were, and we started off to lunch.

Months later, I was at the library. A man with a huge smile motioned to come to him. I thought it must be someone behind me for I did not recognize the man. I turned around. There was no one. I pointed to myself as in asking me. He nodded his head yes. So, I crossed the library towards him. Wondering why he wanted to talk with me. I didn’t know him. As I got closer, he looked a bit familiar, but I dismissed that thought.

He remarked, “You don’t remember me, do you?”

I said, “You look a bit familiar, but I can’t quite place you.”

He went on to remind me of the day we chatted, and I bought him a sandwich.

“When we talked about my dreams you encouraged me as if I was someone of value. As we talked, I felt I could do it and I felt you thought I could follow my dreams too. You really listened. I’m leaving for Arizona. A buddy is going to help me get a job and on my feet. I have come to the library every day this week at different times hoping you would come in so I could thank you and tell you. I appreciated the sandwich very much, but your time meant even more to me, it fed my soul, you treated me like someone of value and with respect. When your friend came and you walked away, I heard her ask you, ‘Who is he?’ You said, ‘I just met him. He is very interesting.’ Your friend said, ‘Oh, that’s great, we need interesting people,’ usually as people walk away, they say hurtful things like I have no feelings or am not human. They think it never gets back to us homeless, but it always does.” We hear the words, or a buddy nearby does.”

I wished him all the best and told him, “I know you will make it.”

I often think of him and his gift of gratitude and how thoughtless words can hurt everyone. I am grateful for the gift of Albert.

## My Hour Has Come by Oblate Mary Randall.



Image found at [www.sermons.com/powerpoint/the-hour-has-come](http://www.sermons.com/powerpoint/the-hour-has-come)

In the Gospel of John, Jesus often responded when asked by others to do something, “My hour has not yet come.”

Then finally, we read where Our Lord said, “My hour has finally come.” After hearing this response, within a Bible study session, there was a long pause. What followed next was a participant’s question. She asked, “Mary, what does Jesus mean when He says, ‘My hour has finally come.’ Is He referring to sixty minutes when he said these words?”

Before you continue reading this article, how would you have answered this question?

Inwardly, I smiled, thinking of the television news series, “Sixty Minutes.” Outwardly, I answered this person by gently explaining to her what this time frame meant. In uttering the words, “My hour has finally come,” Jesus was saying His moment was now here. His time had finally arrived from the moment of His birth to this very hour. “My hour has finally come,” was when He spoke these words at The Last Supper to His Apostles. However, it would also usher into the longer agonizing hours of His passion, and death. It would not be within a sixty minute time frame as if we were watching the hands of a clock tick, tick, tick. No, this hour would take endless hours of suffering from His time spent in agonizing prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane through His scourging at the pillar, His crowning of thorns, His painful experience of carrying the Cross, to His ultimate death on the Cross. But the time frame would not end there. “The hour” would extend through His death to His resurrection.”

Since this question was posed, I have been pondering its meaning. How many of us take so literal different parts of Scripture, not taking into account it’s deeper meaning?

It took great courage for this individual to speak up and ask for clarity of time. Her question moved from an obvious notion of time to a not so obvious reference of time. And in that teachable moment, we all gained deeper insights into the mystery of Christ’s passion, death and resurrection as one seamless moment of time.

As we begin our Lenten journey, let us be open to new insights, knowledge, wisdom and understanding as we follow in the footsteps of Our Lord and Savior. No question is ever too dumb or of such small value if it helps us to grow in a deeper relationship with God.

What question do you want to ask during this Lenten season?

2005 reflection from a class called Praying with Scriptures, Images of God and Self, using Psalm 139. by Oblate Kathleen Hystad.

You don't want to flee  
You want a closer walk with God  
And a relationship with him  
In your life more divine.  
You are restless because you are pulled  
in so many other directions  
And this, you much long for...  
The love of God  
and the walk in your life  
daily, hourly, minute by minute.  
Only this will fulfill  
the void deep inside you.  
Oh, restless one.



Image found at [www.brancatosnowremoval.com](http://www.brancatosnowremoval.com)

Listen to your heart  
and My calling.  
I am your shield,  
be not afraid.  
Trust the love of God.  
Listen and trust.

## Oblate Community Sunday March 7, 2021

Join us on Zoom from the comfort of your home.

Expect an email with the invite for the meeting from JT Batstone about a week prior to the meeting.

Meet on Zoom at 1:30p.m. For a Presentation by Br. Pachomius.

While some feel restrained from joining Oblates on Zoom, Br. Edmund would like to encourage you to push ahead and join us and learn from each other. Let us move ahead in solidarity to come to know Benedict and Christ our Lord.

### OBLATE COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2021

March 7, 2021 Oblate Zoom meeting Sunday 1:30 p.m.(Br. Pachomius)

April 11, 2021 Holy Rule Study Zoom 1:30 p.m. pgs. TBA

May 2, 2021 Oblate Zoom meeting Sunday 1:30 p.m. (Br. Mark)

June 6, 2021 Holy Rule Study Zoom 1:30 p.m. pgs. TBA

July 11, 2021 Oblate Zoom meeting Sunday 1:30 p.m. (Br. Ramon)

Aug. 14, 2021 Saturday Lambert Lodge retreat by Fr. Kilian (hopefully in person )

Sept. 12, Oblate Zoom meeting Sunday 1:30 p.m. (Oblate Kathleen Hystad)

Oct. 3, 2021 Holy Rule Study Zoom 1:30 p.m. pgs. TBA

Nov. 7, 2021 Holy Rule Study Zoom 1:30 p.m. pgs. TBA

Dec. 5, 2021 Oblate Zoom meeting Sunday 1:30 p.m. (Fr. Peter)

### Come study the Rule of Saint Benedict.

Come and study the Holy Rule with Br. Edmund and other Oblates. Be sure to read the Study materials so you can follow along more easily.

We are now using A Study Guide for The Rule of St. Benedict with reflections by Abbess Emerita Mother Maria-Thomas Beil, OSB of St. Walberga in Colorado.

If you wish to purchase the guide, they are \$40 each, postage included. Let the Oblate Director know so they can be ordered. The guide is well worth the price and will deepen your understanding the Holy Rule for years to come.

## On the Book Shelf

We welcome your recommendations and insights of the sacred texts you read. Let us know what books you read and what fruits you discover with a short synopsis of the books.

These three books are novels a bit different from our usual spiritual venue.

*A Clean Heart* by John Rosengren.

*See no Evil: A Father Gabriel Mystery* by Fiorella De Maria.

*Sinner and Saint: A novel of Francis of Assisi* by Eyre Price.

*Wild Hope Stories for Lent from the Vanishing* by Gayle Boss.

This is filled with beautiful art and short stories about animals, nature and our connection to them and the planet.

*Earth, Our Original Monastery* by Christine Valters Paintner.

An invitation to experience the earth and wonders around us.

## Prayer Requests

RIP Oblate Melinda Dietlein

Oblate Michelle Hutchinson health issues.

Oblate Joshua is recovering but has a way to go.

Oblate Fr. Jim's health declines but he is putting up a good fight.

Oblate Bill Batstone is doing better and continues with therapy.

Since COVID has come to us many people have become hypersensitive to the issues of our world. Let us pray for peaceful resolutions to our race, political, family, and financial crises.

For the homeless .

Our Oblates with physical, spiritual, and materials needs.

The new Oblate Manual is slowly materializing. It will be in a binder so we can add or change parts as needed. We plan to make it very user friendly with tabs and most everything you will need to know about the Oblate program.

## GOOD WORKS

An Oblate some years ago told me, (Br. Edmund), that he bought gift cards and pass them out to the poor. These days there are so many people that suffer more than us. If possible give to the poor. Buy a meal or a meal card from fast food provider such as McDonald's. During Lent this would be a great act of charity to the poor

### Newborn Hat Project for Tanzania Rosary Makers

The Oblate Director is still collecting Rosaries and infant blankets, hats and booties. The group is not meeting during COVID but these can be mailed or delivered to the Information/Security Center in Old Main or the Main entrance of the Monastery (by the Arch) with Br. Edmund written on the items.



Here is a photo an orphan with the baby hat. These are from an orphanage in Uganda. Many of your rosaries have gone to the parishioners.

Oblate Loretta has learned that not only do they need infant items but also items for toddlers. In her recent correspondence she writes, "What I learned and now pass on to you is that not only will they be more than happy to receive the blankets we can make, but they also make available other types of clothing for babies and for older children in a family. They told me that sometimes a family feels they cannot afford to have the new baby because they are having a hard time even providing clothing for the older children in the family. So, what I saw hanging on a rack, for example, was a little dress probably for a toddler's size. They have clothing for mothers to select for their boys and girls of various young ages... let it be known that the pregnancy clinic can use little children's clothing besides hats and blankets and booties. Some people may want to make a layette or a sacque or a little sweater or whatever."

**The call is out, knitters, those gifts could be a wonderful Lenten good work for Oblates.**

Contact information for events:  
 Brother Edmund Ebbers OSB  
 Saint Martin's Abbey  
 5000 Abbey Way S.E.  
 Lacey, WA 98503  
 Phone: 360- 438 - 4457

**Oblation Renewals:** Attached is the renewal form. Please fill out and return to the Oblate Director with your sacrificial offering.

If you don't normally make a contribution during the year, this would be a fine time to make an offering.

Mail your form and offering to

Oblate Director Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.  
St. Martin's Abbey  
5000 Abbey Way SE  
Lacey, WA 98503

Many Oblates are NOT renewing their Oblations. Br. Edmund and Council do not know what to think of this trend.

We are curious as to why this is happening.

Lent is the best time to reflect on Christian and Benedictine ideals to keep from going astray. Am I living my life as an Oblate reflecting Benedictine values?

### Renewal of Oblation

I renew my oblation as an Oblate of St. Benedict of the community of St. Martin's Abbey. I promise again to serve God and all people according to the Rule of St. Benedict.

Let us Pray:

God, most compassionate and loving, strengthen me in my commitment to follow you in the way of St. Benedict. Through my daily prayer and work may I be inspired to live in Christ and to bring His love to the world and His peace to all hearts. I make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Oblate Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Saint Martin's Abbey**  
**5000 Abbey Way S.E.**  
**Lacey, WA 98503**

**Return Service Requested**



### **Oblates Mission Statement**

**St. Martin's Abbey Oblates are people who earnestly seek a more deeply spiritual life rooted in God according to the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. The Oblate lives and works in the secular world guided by the wisdom of Benedictine life.**

We can be found on the web at [www.saintmartinsabbey.org](http://www.saintmartinsabbey.org)

