

# Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey

Oblates of Saint Benedict

Sept 2022

Volume 2 Issue 61

A LETTER FROM THE OBLATE DIRECTOR — BROTHER EDMUND EBBERS, OSB

Dear Oblate brothers, sisters and friends:

I have heard priests say how difficult it is to come up with something new to talk about in sermons, and that is how I feel this time. As I continue to learn new things, I like to change things up. I keep reading and listening to others and hoping for something new to spin out. I often think about Benedictine poverty. Did you know Benedictines do not take an explicit vow of poverty? That is because ours is an implied vow of poverty. I will try to explain here.

We all know what poverty looks like. Probably none of us are in poverty. We may be poor, but poor is not necessarily poverty. In being poor, I visualize having very little possessions. Poverty is greater than being poor. Poverty is having nothing, no home, clothing, food, money, and a loss of self-value. Today we are seeing a greater amount of people in poverty. It is everywhere.

Older generations saw this during the Great Depression, which many of us have only heard about. St. Benedict did not legislate poverty for his followers. What he wrote in his Holy Rule was frugality. He talks about the proper amount of food and clothing and necessary items. The vow of “Conversion of Morals or Life” takes into account that monks are living a life of constant conversion. Conversion to what? A conversion to a simpler life which is mindful of other’s needs and what is enough for number one. We all have needs and wants. What do I need to live a life of value as a human being and that enables me to do the work asked by the creator?

There is work clothing and the Holy Rule speaks of having better clothing to wear when we go outside the monastery than what we normally wear at home. And before the clothing is too worn out, it should be donated to those in need.

Then there is the question of the food. Sufficient food is to be provided without wastefulness. The food is to be nourishing. Wine was the drink of the day, and the proper amount was to be supplied. St. Benedict did not like excessive eating or excessive fasting. Here at St. Martin’s, we get ample food and clothing. No one leaves the table hungry or at least should not except for maybe during lent. The Abbot and Prior see that each monk has what they need and sometimes want. I believe we certainly get more than monks of the previous ages had. Of course, the finances and size of the community make a difference in what each monk may be able to have.

Last, there is the part about ownership: no monk owns anything. Benedict would go further to say, “not even his own body.” All things are held in common in Benedictine communities. Monks often will ask another for an item and if we have it, we surrender it – it’s community property. Sometimes monks will just want to borrow something and if it is available, we ought to loan it out. I remember a confrere, who if you complimented on an item he had, he would come back saying, “Do you want it” and try to hand it to you. We had to be careful with our compliments. Generosity in community is a gift that keeps giving and lifts the spirits of others. Remember, sharing what we have will always give us more than what we gave. May God, bless you with giving heart.

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

This summer, we've been experiencing some unusually high temperatures in the Pacific Northwest- temperatures almost unpalatable to those of us used to experiencing mostly moderate summer temperatures. Growing up in Sacramento in an un-airconditioned Queen Anne Cottage, hot summers were an everyday part of my childhood experiences. A positive highlight of summers was the bowl of fresh figs from the ancient tree in the garden which my European born grandmother would have waiting for my breakfast. One of her first questions each morning usually was: "what are you going to do today?"

I grew up in a structured and very diverse world. Perhaps that prepared me, in some ways, for the life I would live as an adult: one governed by fixed monastic and school schedules and almost often peopled by a diverse population of confreres, colleagues, students, and friends. As monks, we live with a fixed schedule, with some variables, and we have a variety of backgrounds, talents, proclivities, and ages. "Unity in diversity in Christ."

We hear the Rule of Benedict read several times each year in the Monastic Refectory. A recent addition to our monastic schedule is a weekly conference on the Rule of Benedict by **ABBOT MARION NGUYEN** on Saturdays after conventual Mass. **ABBOT MARION** usually speaks on the section of the Rule that would be read on that day in the Refectory.

At the 54th General Chapter of our congregation of monasteries, attended by **ABBOT MARION** and **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH RAPPUHN** in June, **ABBOT MARION** was part of a panel presentation titled "What have we learned from the pandemic and what is the new normal?" At that same Chapter, he was elected a member of the Abbot President's Council. On their return to the Abbey, **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH** presented a report to the monastic community.

The late **ABBOT DUNSTAN CURTIS** used always to refer to Independence Day as "the glorious 4th." This year, as in many years past, the monastic community lunched at the Abbey's cabin retreat on the Sound. **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH** and **BROTHER PACHOMIUS HAMOR** were in charge of the menu and food preparation. After praying the mid-day Office, the community enjoyed a delicious meal, which included a hot and mild version of house-made "guacamole." In the evening, there was a BBQ on the back lawn of the monastery, prepared by our food service under the direction of our refectorian, **BROTHER EDMUND EBBERS**.

## From the Hill continued

**BROTHER AELRED WOODARD** introduced a newly printed psalter and office book for “Ordinary Time” this summer. Among others, he was assisted in preparation by **PRIOR NICOLAUS WILSON** and **BROTHER SIMEON GOODSON** ... **PRIOR NICOLAUS** and **BROTHER PACHOMIUS** represented the Abbey at the University’s annual golf tournament in early August ... **FATHER PAUL WECKERT, ABBOT MARION,** and **BROTHER PACHOMIUS** have been participants in several “Vocation Discernment Nights” within the Archdiocese ... **BROTHERS DAMIEN-JOSEPH, PACHOMIUS, ABBOT MARION, PRIOR NICOLAUS** and other monks took part in a vocation discernment weekend at the Abbey in mid-July ... **BROTHER MARK BONNEVILLE,** who always has many projects in the works, has been spending time working on the irrigation system of the Abbey Church gardens ... **ABBOT EMERITUS NEAL ROTH, FATHER KILIAN MALVEY** and this writer spent a lovely summer day at Lambert Lodge. **FATHER KILIAN** was dinner chef and prepared a delicious meal of angel hair pasta and sauce.

The Rule of Benedict says that guests are never lacking in a monastery. True. **BROTHER BEDE NICOL** and **FATHER PAUL** are primarily responsible for our guests, among their other duties. **BROTHER BEDE** also has extensive work in another job he does so well and faithfully, that of Abbey Sacristan ... The 2022-2023 Abbey Church Events brochure will be mailed in late August.

As I write these lines, there is a massive arrangement of ivory colored lilies there to greet guests in the Abbey Church atrium, all from the garden of Thu-Trinh Pham, an avid gardener.

May God continue to bless you and your summer.

*A Poem by Brother Ramon Newell OSB*

*"But who can detect all his errors  
From hidden faults acquit me."*

PSALM 19:13

I am as one blind to my hidden faults.

There are scales on my eyes.

Come physician anoint my eyes.

The balm is painful and causes

me anguish,

but it burns clean.

The balm brings

Healing...

Light...

Awareness...

Growth...

Forgiveness...

Moments of suffering

A better person.

*An invitation from Oblate Kathleen Hystad*



Image found at needpix.com

You are invited  
to join the  
“Thank You Note Club”

What it is:

Every month write a thank you note to someone. This could be anyone that you would like to thank. A relative, spouse, friend, neighbor, store associate, doctor, priest, or nurse. The list is endless. One, two or three sentences or longer if you like. It only takes minutes to compose, but may linger in a heart for many years. Focus, a minute or two on the person before you begin to write. Speak from your heart. Don't fret about your handwriting. Don't expect a response; however, if you receive one, enjoy the wonderful surprise. I hope you will join me on this adventure. We can put some positive vibes out in the world and we rarely know how our words and actions touch others, but the more positive the letter.

Blessings,  
Kathleen

## THE ANGELS BY OBLATE MARY RANDALL



Image found at needpix.com

In a recent talk to the U.S. Air Force Academy, Bishop Robert Barron gave a variety of thought-provoking ideas about the Angels. Here are but a few of his thoughts and images.

Did you know that references to the Angels are mentioned 273 times in the Old and New Testaments?

The Angels are creatures of God but far superior in stature to human beings. In fact, when Angels communicate to humans as they did, it was like a parent kneeling down to be eye level with a three or four year old child. Their thought process is intuitive and immediate. They are spiritual beings created for the purpose of adoring and praising God, Our Creator, and to be the army for Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

When we read in Scripture how a legion of angels surrounded Our Lord, that translates to 1,000 angels.

In the book of Revelations where it reads “a myriad of myriad of Angels” this means a trillion times a trillion of the heavenly hosts. We cannot begin to comprehend or fathom how these spiritual creatures of God work daily for Him both in heaven and on earth. When Saint Pope John Paul II once addressed the Communist leaders of Poland, he said, “We have more on our side than you do.” He was, of course, referring to the heavenly hosts of Angels.

Unlike human beings who are tested in this life to be with God in the next, the Angels were given an immediate choice to be with either God or to perish to damnation. Like humans, they, too, have a free will, nor did their powers cease to be when the fallen angels were driven out of Heaven. They are a powerful source seeking the ruin of souls. However, the gates of hell cannot prevail against the power of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

A powerful prayer we can recite daily is this:

“I renounce Satan and all his evil doers in the name of Jesus Christ right now. And I place them at the foot of the Cross for Jesus to deal with as He wants.” Amen.

The Angels are harmonious in their singing and praising God, which is why at every Mass we pray to be joined with them in praise and glory to God. When a person sings solo, he or she can be easily recognized as having a good voice or not! But when fifty people are singing together, a more harmonious sound occurs. It becomes much harder to single out who the good singers are.

Why can Angels fly? Because they take themselves so lightly! Whereas humans take themselves too seriously. Let us take heart and smile more in honest humility when we commit foibles.

As Oblates, may we continue to praise God as the good Angels do, singing His praises daily through our prayers and good works.

## OBLATE COMMUNITY SUNDAY SEPT 11TH

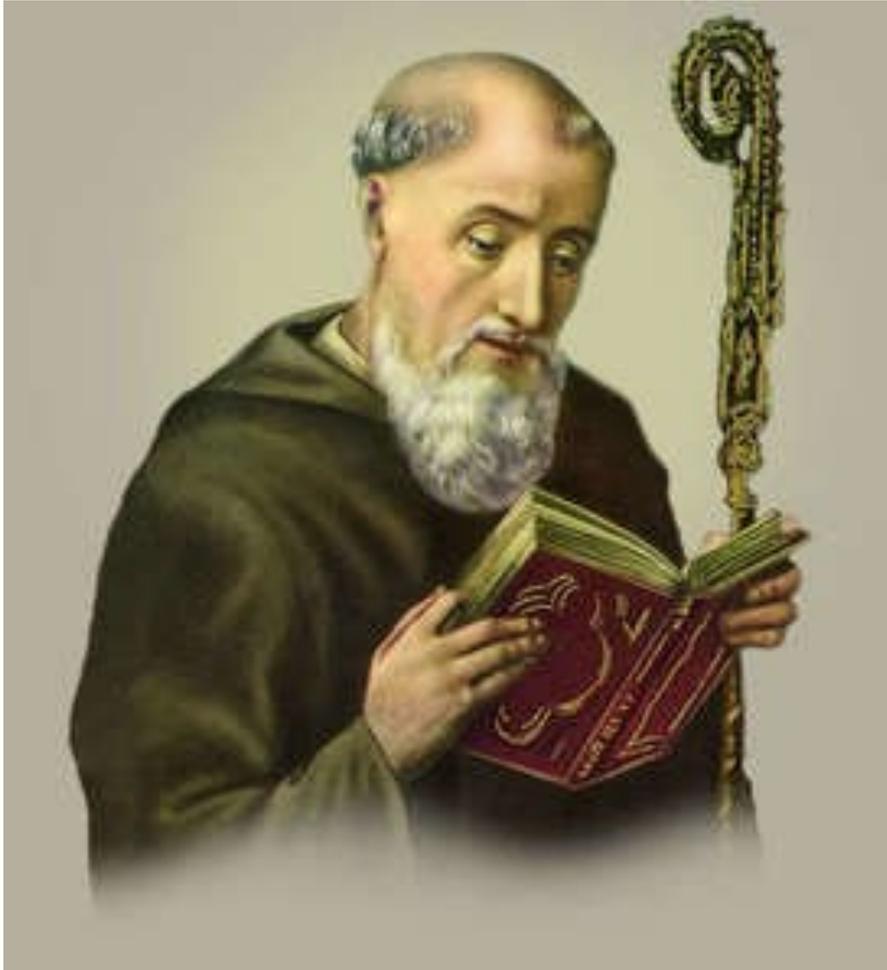
Join us in the Abbey church for a talk by Father Peter and evening prayer with the monks.

Remember that our September 11th has a different schedule. We begin the conference at 3:30. At 5p.m. is Evening Prayer with Investiture and Oblations taking place during Evening Prayer.

Guests are always welcome. If you know of someone interested in the Oblates bring them along or let them know they are welcome. If you are interested in beginning as a Novice or are planning to make your Oblation, make sure Director Brother Edmund knows in advance to get your name on the list.



## *Study the Rule of Saint Benedict*



All oblates and friends are invited to come and journey with Br. Edmund and other oblates in discovering the importance of the Holy Rule and how it guides and influences our journey in life. We walk through the Study Guide by Abbess Emerita Mother Maria-Thomas Beil, OSB. This a Zoom meeting so it comes to you in your home. Be not afraid. Join us at anytime since we send out the section of the Rule we are studying ahead of time so you can prepare and reflect on what you have discovered. All ideas are

welcomed. Come and share the treasures you hold in your heart

October 2nd at 1:30

November 6th at 1:30

## *Prayer Requests*

Oblate Patricia McClure - healing from cancer.

Oblate Michael Wilson - mental health issues.

For Pat Classick RIP twin sister of late Father Bede Classick.

Employment for the unemployed.

Placement for the homeless.

For the home bound.

For the sanctity of life.

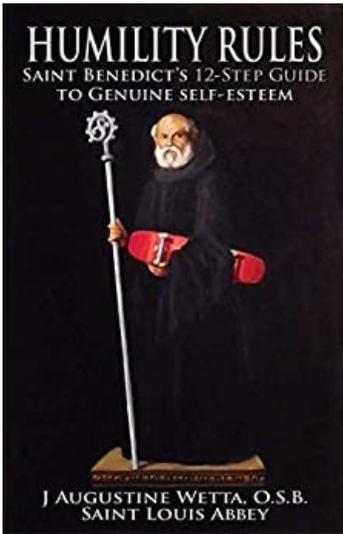
For the safety of women and children.

For an end to the war in Ukraine and other nations in turmoil.

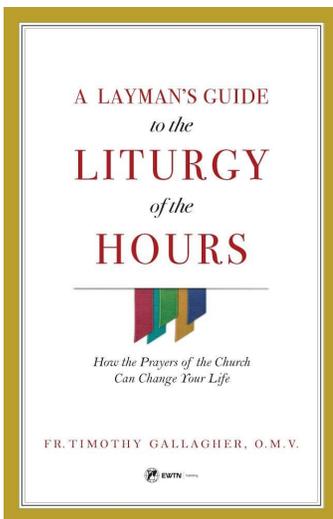


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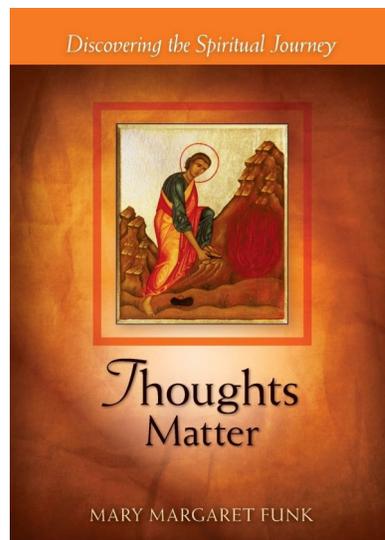
## ON THE BOOK SHELF



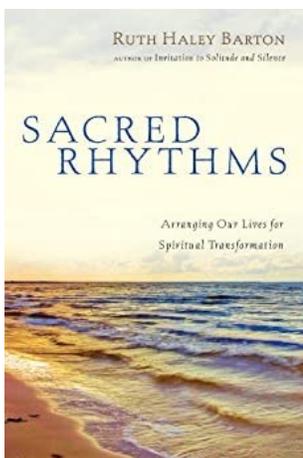
Books for the Reading: Humility Rules Saint Benedict's 12-step Guide to Genuine Self-Esteem by J. Augustine Wetta, OSB of St. Louis Abbey.



A Layman's Guide to the Liturgy of the Hours by Fr. Timothy Gallagher, OMI



Thoughts Matter by Sr. Mary Margaret Funk, OSB



Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton

# GOOD WORKS

Calling Artisans:

We need clothing for very young children, blankets for children and adults and rosaries and medals. Some of these items may go to poor countries and others go to homeless and pregnancy clinics.

Knitting of booties, and hats for infants is an on going charity.

Rosary making material, are available. Just contact Br. Edmund if you need cord or beads.

Email: Br. Edmund Email: [br\\_edmund@stmartin.edu](mailto:br_edmund@stmartin.edu)

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

Phone :360 - 438- 4457

## Oblate Community Dates

### OBLATE COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2022

Note the changes in time for some of these meetings.

**Sept. 11** Oblate Meeting 3:30 Evening prayer with monks and investitures/oblations of new Oblates.

**October 2** Holy Rule Study 1:30 Zoom

**Nov. 6** Holy Rule Study 1:30 Zoom

**Nov. 17 and 18th** Bazaar

**Dec. 4** Oblate Meeting 1:30 Talk by Oblate Roman Lazarrage

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

*Return Service Requested*

**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 <https://smartinsabbey.org>