

Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey

Oblates of Saint Benedict

July 2024

Volume 2 Issue 70

A LETTER FROM THE OBLATE DIRECTOR — BROTHER EDMUND EBBERS, O.S.B.

Dear Oblates and friends of St. Martin's Abbey:

In May, our community held its annual retreat. We began with a little antiphon and song and likewise concluded the same way. Fr. Cyprian OSB, a Camaldolese monk, was our retreat master and one or two phrases stuck with me as he spoke to us.

Fr. Cyprian asked, "Whose feet have you washed today?" and "What does obedience look like to you?" I recalled Jesus saying, "What you do to the least one of my brothers or sisters you have done to me." These statements pack a punch to the soul and heart.

What is meant by washing feet is not just literal but symbolic. What have I done for my neighbor? Who have I acted charitably toward by giving them a hand? When someone has spoken to me in anger, have I returned a kind word? Have I visited the sick or elderly or homebound? Offered a smile to one who is grumpy? Have I offered to mow the neighbor's lawn or helped them with their garden without a payment?

The power of Christ is in every one of us. Be thankful that God has planted a seed in your mind and heart and jump right in out of obedience to Him. The power of Christ is not lording over others, but in serving one another. Feel the power and grace when doing an honorable deed. This is what Christ wants us to have. Christ is love, and that love is experienced when we give to one another, when we show compassion. Those seeds of power, grace, and love, when acted upon, become planted deeply in the soil within us and others. Those seeds cast out all fear.

So, keep your eyes peeled to see where you might find the next feet to wash. He or she may be the person you have never met or the person close to you. Share the fruits of the Spirit with your neighbor or stranger. Let us continue to build Christ's community of love and compassion among Oblates and wherever we find ourselves.

With Christian love I am,

Br. Edmund E., OSB

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

On the wall of my university office, I have hanging a set of several Jamaican postage stamps. They show a smiling young woman wearing a modified picture hat. The subject is the eldest daughter of George VI of Great Britain, who later became Elizabeth II. During the course of her long reign as queen, she celebrated many jubilees, like her father and grandfather before her. Jubilees can be the occasion of a joyful celebration of a special anniversary. This summer, at the end of the annual monastic retreat, the jubilees of five members of the monastic community were celebrated in the community. As is the case of the jubilees of Britain's kings and queens, monastic jubilees always include giving thanks to the Creator for the many blessings received over many years both individually and as a community.

ABBOT MARION NGUYEN was principal celebrant at the Mass of Thanksgiving. Following Mass, there was a celebratory dinner in the monastic refectory. Following dinner, **ABBOT MARION** recognized each of the honorees individually, gave each one a gift on behalf of the community, and invited each to say a few words.

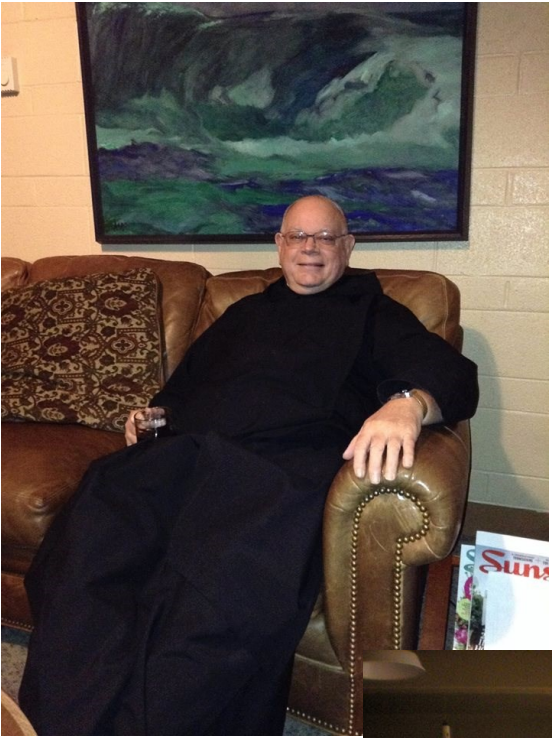


FATHER PAUL WECKERT took his monastic vows some 34 years ago, and this year celebrates his silver anniversary of priestly ordination, having been ordained on 5th June 1999, the feast of St. Boniface. A former pastor, **FATHER PAUL** now holds the positions of house Guest Master and Director of Vocations. He also is a special assistant to the abbot. **FATHER PAUL's** late father attended our schools, and **FATHER EDWARD WECKERT**, a renowned coach in Saint Martin's early days, was his great-uncle. **FATHER PAUL** is what the late **FATHER BEDE ERNSDORFF** always referred to as a good "community man."

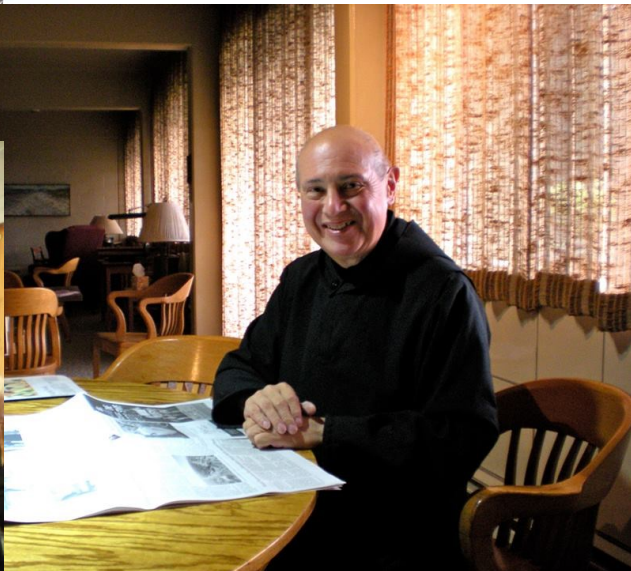
ABBOT EMERITUS NEAL ROTH celebrates his fiftieth anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. His ordination took place on a snowy December day in 1974. This past January marked his 65th anniversary as a vowed monk of the Abbey. **ABBOT NEAL** has done farm work, worked in the library, been Guest Master, been a teacher and a counselor, been a pastor in a parish, and served over a quarter of a century as abbot. At present, **ABBOT NEAL** is the Novice Master of the Abbey.



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



Three of our confreres are celebrating their sixtieth anniversary of monastic profession this year. **FATHER JUSTIN MC CREEDY** and **BROTHER RAMON NEWELL** mark this anniversary on 11th July, feast of Saint Benedict of Nursia, and this writer on 1st November, the feast of All Saints. **FATHER JUSTIN** has served the community as a teacher, a parish priest, prior, and as a member of the Abbey's Board of Directors and the University's Board of Trustees. He dedicated many years of his priestly ministry to the work of a hospital chaplain, working in that role both in the Archdiocese of Seattle and the Diocese of Yakima. At present, he is in residence at the Abbey. **FATHER JUSTIN** regularly offers Mass for the community of Saint Placid Priory and assists at parishes in our archdiocese. **FATHER JUSTIN** is a Latinist and is fluent in Spanish. Some of the hymns we use in our liturgies are his translations from the Latin.



BROTHER RAMON has served for many years as the Subprior of the Abbey, a position he still holds, and currently also is an appointed member of the Senior Council and Abbey Board Of Directors. He recently stepped down after thirty-three years as campus postmaster. As a young monk, he attended barber

college, and usually is available on Saturday afternoon to practice his skills on his confreres. He is an aficionado of Dragon Boats and participates in their local races and is a poet. Mid-summer, **BROTHER RAMON** will attend a workshop on monasticism at San Anselmo in Rome.

This writer has been Abbey candlemaker, along with **BROTHER RAMON** and the late **FATHER CLEMENT PANGRATZ**. He has worked in the library and done several stints as Guest Master and Refectorian, has been Master of Ceremonies, and worked in the schools as an educator. At present, he teaches Spanish in the University, is on Abbey and University boards, works in the area of the fine arts, and is the Abbey's amateur Ikebanist.

AD MULTOS ANNOS! !! And may the Lord continue to confirm us in our resolution to seek Him through the living of our common life of prayer and work, unified in diversity in Christ.

Oblate Council's Corner

Current council members are open and ready to listen to your concerns and suggestions. They can be reached via email or on Sunday Oblate meetings. The current members are:

Bede Colvin, bede.orthodox@gmail.com

Bene Reece, anforait@yahoo.com

Ellen Borland, ejboblsb@yahoo.com

Joshua Roberts, oblate.joshuaroberts@gmail.com

JT Batstone, batstonejt@gmail.com

Patricia McClure, Ravenwings@comcast.net

Ron Fialkowski, ronaldbenny24@gmail.com

May council meeting

Budget has been approved for next year. We need to remind folks that as an organization we need to be financially self-supportive so donations are important.

NAABOD conference in Nebraska from July 5th to the 9th will be attended by Oblate Bede and possibly Oblate Ellen.

Garden: We as a community have been working at St. Placid to build a vegetable garden for the sisters. Thank you Oblates who have been able to help.

Silent retreat on Humility: This will occur in August and is now ready to be promoted. Flyers are made and ready for posting. Advertising is going out to various venues and parishes.

Rosaries: Oblate Joshua has been involved in teaching folks how to make corded rosaries. Oblate Loretta, our source for getting rosaries to missions may have to step down as leader in this. So, we are looking for someone to step into that role.

June council meeting

Retreat: Discussion included set up, nametags, presenters, and work on a table cloth for the registration table. We will set up the Oblate store that day. Location will be either in the alcove where we have socials or where we have our picnics. More brochures to be printed to hand out.

Oblate Informational Day: This out-reach day will be either in July or August after Mass to be able to answer questions. Location in the alcove we will have our store available along with brochures.

Rummage sale: Emails to be sent out and notice to start bringing items. Sept 7th from 9 to 3. Oblate Bede will be the contact person.

The North American Association of Benedictine Oblates 2024 Biennial conference scheduled for July. Theme: Carrying Wisdom Across the Threshold will be held at St. Benedict Center in Schuyler, NE. Our NAABOD representatives this year are Oblate Bede and Oblate Ellen who will report at a later date the wisdom they received.

Completed Oblate activities:

St. Placid Priory Garden, Pilgrimage to St. Peregrine Grotto in Portland, and Abbey Cemetery clean up.

Look what's been happening...

Being an Oblate of St. Martin's community means work and prayer. Here are some of the works we have been involved with and hope to see more of your presence. Don't miss the opportunity to be a part of the community. A **big thanks** goes out to all who have volunteered time and energy to the following projects:



The garden at St. Placid Priory.



Abbey Cemetery clean up.

OTHER HAPPENINGS



On the Ora side, several Oblates made a pilgrimage to St. Peregrine Giotto in Portland, OR.



Wood cutting and stacking. More help is needed with this since Br. Edmund's recent heart issues limit his manual labor ability. This project helps get wood to those in need.

Rosary makers: We continue to meet on the 1st and 2nd Saturdays of the month in the guest dining room. We teach you how and you can bead work or knots and it is a take home project. Remember the Ukraine rosary project? The Benedictine Nuns from the Ukraine who received our rosaries have expressed their thanks and appreciation.

Need more information on upcoming events, check the calendar or call Br. Edmund at 360-438-4457 or at Br_edmund@stmartin.edu

THE GIFT OF JOY BY OBLATE MARY RANDALL

A woman recently remarked that she would never feel joy until she reached heaven. Upon hearing this I was saddened and shocked. She attends Mass regularly, prays daily, and attends Scripture classes.

Why is she joyless?

In the Gospel of John, Our Lord states that you will have complete joy in Him if you keep the Commandments.

What is joy? How is it different from happiness? Bishop Robert Barron writes the following regarding joy using Thomas Aquinas as his source. In “Saint Thomas Aquinas’ treatment of human behavior, the first question raised is not about law or virtue, but rather joy,” Thomas continues with what is true happiness by saying, “The whole point of the moral life is to make us happy, and it is through the proper ordering of one’s desires, through learning, how to desire the right things and in the right way.” This is precisely what Our Lord commands us to do. We will find joy in keeping the Commandments. This sounds easy enough, however, the application can be grueling.

In the Burrowshire Podcast #030, Father Blake Britton from the Diocese of Orlando, explains in the podcast “Protecting Your Joy” with the following:

“Joy is not something that passively happens in you or to you. Joy is an act of the will. It is knowing we are loved and loving others. Pope Benedict XVI writes, “Joy comes from the mutual reception of Love from the Father, and then the exportation of this Love, if you will, this going out of this Love to others.”

Who can steal this joy from you?

The Pelagian idea is alive today with a false theory that we are the ones, the primary agents, creating our joy or suffocating our joy. But that is not the case. The world, the flesh, and the devil can steal this joy. As Oblates, we need to remain close to the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation for this joy to continue. We need to safeguard ourselves against post-modern society’s definition of joy as ego gratification. As early as the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas wrote, “Joy is not something we can manufacture or create. It is essentially a gift. It comes from another, not ourselves.”

In his writing about joy, Saint Thomas Aquinas does not mention pleasure. He does not mention comfort. He does not mention convenience. So to be pleased is not the same thing as being joyful. We can take lessons from Our Lord. Even though He experienced agonizing suffering on the Cross, He felt inner joy knowing He was doing His Father’s will. He knew He was loved by the Father, and He loved Him right back. Let us do the same.

So, what or who is stealing your joy? What step(s) can you take to avoid this thief?

Let us pray for those who have a joyless life, that they find joy in the Peace and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of the World.

In the Spirit of Saint Benedict,

Mary Randall, Oblate

by Brother Ramon Newell O.S.B.

We strive for the sun,
For the heavens.

Our eyes see their beauty
Their greatness
Their majesty
Their wonder.

We strive to get there by our own
power,
But we fall tumbling toward earth.

I looked within and journeyed there.

Instead of exultation,
I am humbled.

O Great paradox!

It is inwardly and humbly
That we truly reach the heavens

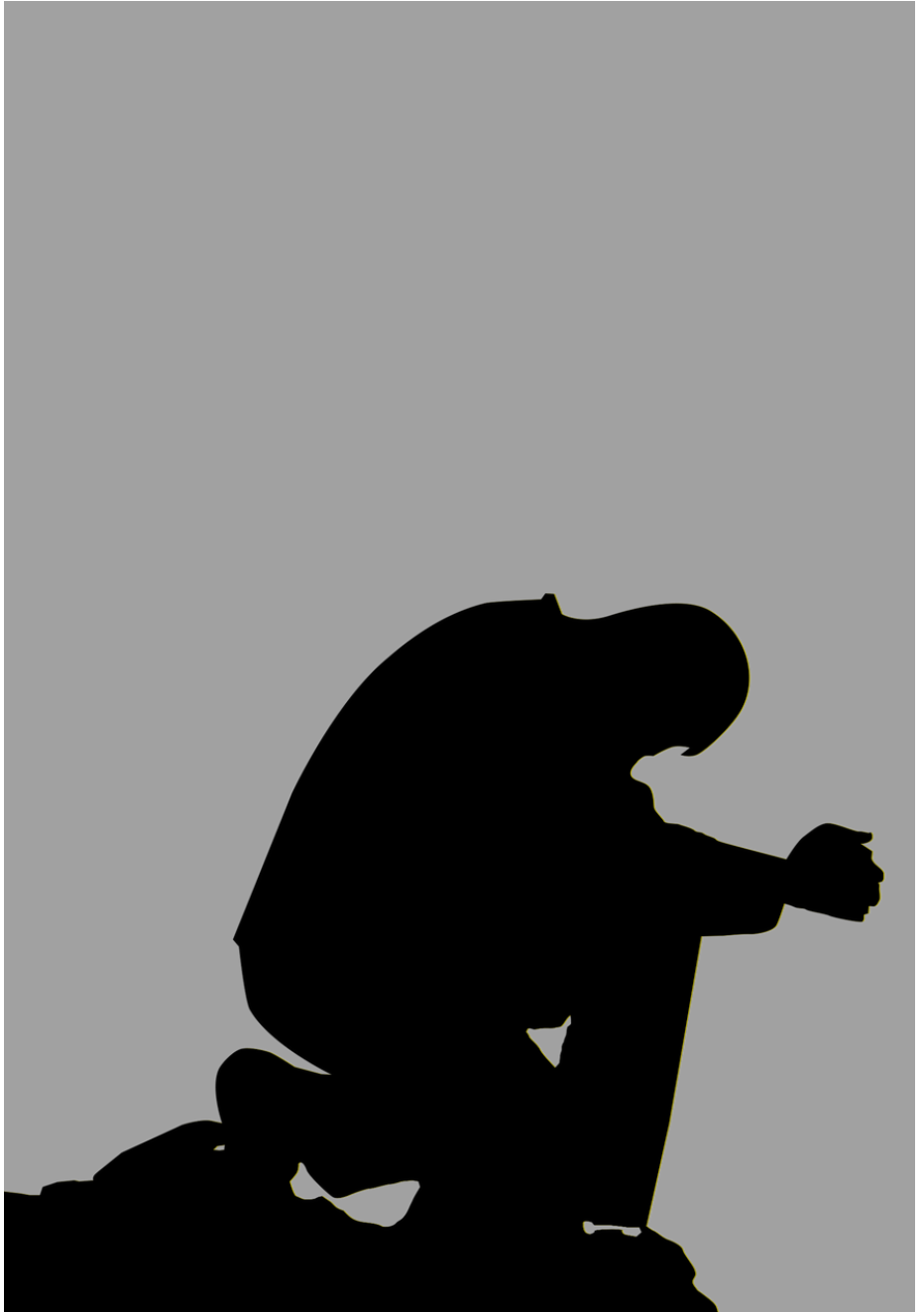


Image found at needpix.com

WELCOME

Novices Claire Santiago, Kim Shelstad, and Sid Ortigoza.

Congratulations and welcome Pamela Colvin, Lanna Moore-Duncan, Ed Glidden, and Anthony Schmitz who made their final Oblation.



OBLATE COMMUNITY SUNDAY JULY 9TH

Please join us for Mass at 11:00 am in the Abbey Church. Our annual potluck picnic has returned, we will gather on the balcony of Old Main after Mass. Please bring a dish to share. Tableware and drinks will be provided.

We will meet in the Abbey church at 1:30 p.m. for a talk by Sr. Laura Swan OSB on Desert Ascetic and Oblates today.

Opportunities for Growth.

Below are upcoming events you might be interested in attending. See the flyers on the following pages for more information.

Those who wish to participate in the annual retreat on August 10th can register at this link.

Retreat Registration Link

<https://form.jotform.com/saintbenedictoblates/humility>

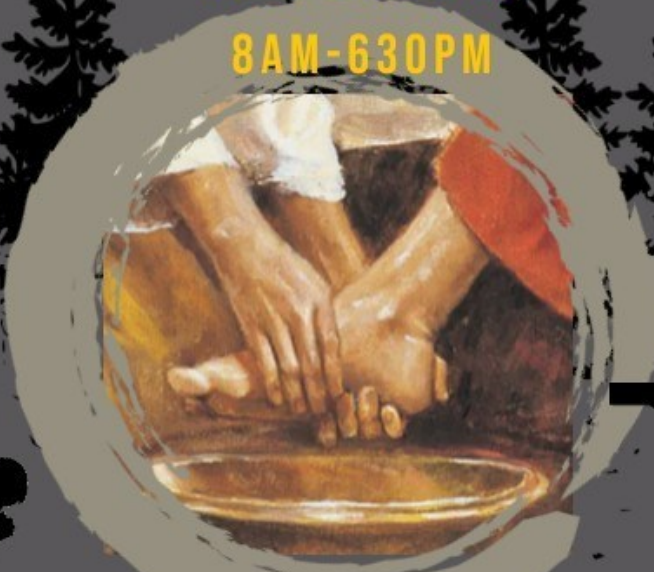
Fr. Ron Rolheiser will be at St. Michael's parish 1055 Boundary St. SE in Olympia on September 21 from 10:am to 1:00pm.

Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, is a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He is President Emeritus of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, and a professor of spirituality there. Prior to this present position, he taught theology and philosophy at Newman Theological College in Edmonton, Alberta, for 16 years, served as Provincial Superior of his Oblate Province for six years, and served on the General Council for the Oblates in Rome for six years. He has been at Oblate School of theology since 2005.

He will be giving a talk on A Spirituality of Grieving. Grieving through the lens of our Catholic faith. Question and answers will follow the talk. The talk is free and open to all.

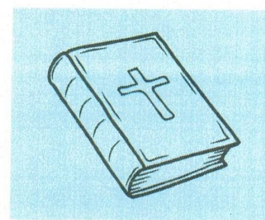
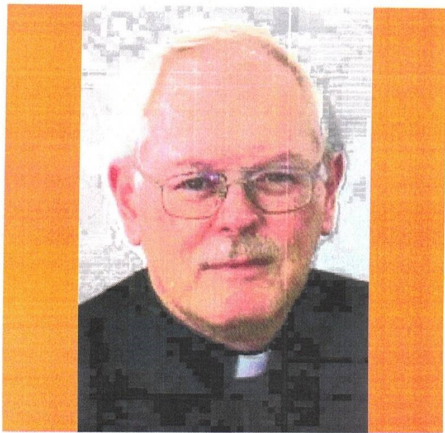
Oblate Retreat

SAINT MARTIN'S ABBEY - LACEY, WA
AUGUST 10TH
8AM-630PM



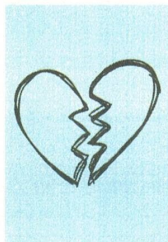
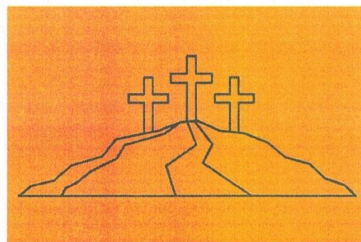
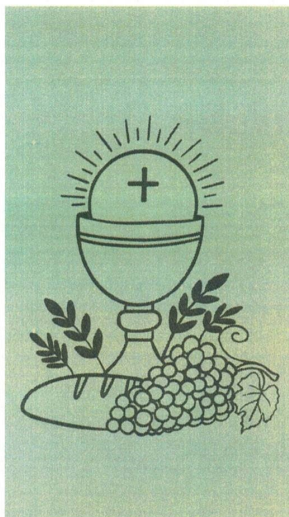
SAINT BENEDICT'S 12 STEPS OF
HUMILITY
RETREAT SERIES
PART II
PERSEVERANCE - REPENTANCE - SERENITY
HOSTED BY OBLATE COMMUNITY OF ST. MARTIN'S ABBEY
PRAYER • REFLECTION • SILENCE • MEDITATION
"THE FIRST DEGREE OF HUMILITY IS PROMPT OBEDIENCE" ~ ST. BENEDICT
<https://form.jotform.com/saintbenedictoblates/humility>
f STMARTINSABBEY WWW.STMARTINSABBEY.ORG

Saint Michael Parish Pastoral Care Presents



A Spirituality of Grieving

with Fr. Ron Rolheiser



Saturday
21
September

Mass: 9am
Talk: 10am - 1pm

Join us for a free presentation by Fr. Ron Rolheiser, Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate and Professor of Spirituality, on grieving through the lens of our Catholic faith. A Q&A session will follow the talk.

Downtown Sanctuary: 1055 Boundary St SE Olympia, WA 98501

ON THE BOOK SHELF

Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading by Paul Saenger

The Joy of God by Sr. Mary David, OSB

Grief on the Way to Emmaus by Beth I. Hewett

If you read an inspiring book please share with us.

BOOK REVIEWS BY OBLATE LEILANI ROBERTS

The Confessions of Saint Augustine

By St. Augustine

In this classic autobiography, St. Augustine shares his story of lifelong conversion to God. From the joys and challenges of his childhood to the restless yearnings of adulthood, he is always in search of the truth. The culture that surrounds him keeps telling him to seek after worldly truths, pleasures, and accolades. Yet God continually calls to his restless heart. As St. Augustine's heart opens to the truth of God, he ponders and praises the incredible goodness of God.

Strangers to the City

By Michael Casey

Michael Casey is a Cistercian monk of Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia. In this book, he shares reflections on the Rule of St. Benedict that are both practical and relevant for modern times. He writes on the necessity of asceticism, leisure, chastity, dispossession, community, and perseverance for all Christians. His reflections are challenging and inspiring and will give you a deeper understanding of St. Benedict's Rule as it applies to those living in monasteries, as well as those of us living in the secular world. **A must read for Oblates of St. Benedict!**

Our oblate library is full of wonderful books just waiting to be read by you! It is available to browse online at <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/OblateLibrary>. You can even put a hold on books to pick up at the next oblate meeting. You will need to email the librarian for initial access by clicking on the "Ask the Librarian" link at the bottom of the Oblate Library page or by emailing directly to OblateLibrary@gmail.com.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Remembering those in need of prayer:

Oblate Patricia McClure – receiving chemo-therapy – for remission from cancer.

Oblate Michael Wilson – scheduled for external heart pump.

Br. Edmund is grateful of the prayers for healing of ailments.

Continue to pray for the unborn, homeless, abused, home-bound and infirmed among us.

Oblate Formation meetings are open to all Oblates who feel they want more out of their promises of being an Oblate of St. Martin's Abbey. So whether you are just beginning or been an Oblate for years, please join us on the appointed times and dates.

Mentoring is a great way to strengthen and rejuvenate your Benedictine journey. It builds a stronger community bond. If you feel the spirit calling you, contact the council and sign up to help another discover the joys of Benedictine living.

OBLATE COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2024

June

24th Formation meeting at 11:00 am - 1:30 pm guest dining room.

29th Formation meeting at 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm guest dining room.

July

6th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

12th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

13th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

14th Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Annual Potluck Picnic.

27th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

29th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

August

2nd Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

3rd Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

4th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:00pm Zoom.

10th Silent Retreat 9:00am - 5:00pm On Humility.

26th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

31st Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

September

6th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

7th Rummage sale 9:00am - 3:00pm

14th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

15th Oblate Community Sunday 3:00pm talk on monks in Trinidad and the Bahamas by Dr. Ramon Luzarraga. Investing and Oblations, Evening Prayer with the monks.

28th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

30th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

October

4th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

5th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

6th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:00pm Zoom.

12th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

26th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

28th Formation meeting at 10:30 m - 1:30pm guest dining room.

November

2nd Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

8th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

9th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

10th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:00pm Zoom.

21st Noon set up for the Bazaar.

22nd – 23rd Bazaar.

25th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

30th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

December

7th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.

13th Oblate Council meeting 9:00 m Zoom.

14th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

15th Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Abbey Church.

16th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

*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://stmartinsabbey.org/news-and-events/oblate-newsletter/>