

Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey

Oblates of Saint Benedict

July 2025

Volume 2 Issue 76

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

Dear Oblate Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Should you not have noticed that summer is here and so our lives will take a bit of a twist as the season changes? The temperatures rise and fall; the rains come and go, not at our whim, vacations are taken or not, and many people are out of school. Whatever your plans are, please be careful and mindful of what you do. Report only the sacred.

Something to consider this summer is to be mindful of your time. Time spent for a good cause is not wasted. Catching up on reading. Plan time for a quiet spiritual retreat, whether it be in your own solitude or some special place or retreat house, or journey. Plan in advance what you will do during that time. What is your goal when you get to that time or place? Are you taking someone with you and if so, do you have plans to be in solitude some of the time?

St. Benedict does not discourage monks and nuns from traveling so long as there are definitive purposes. Monks and nuns normally are expected to find solitude within the monastery, away from distractions. We are not to be so busy that we do not have the time to pray privately through Lectio Divina or other private devotions.

Today, many monastics circulate outside their monastery and become exposed to the dangers that are attractive to the human eye. Knowing to shun those dangers is a learning experience. There are obvious dangers, but the less obvious is a danger to all of us. St. Benedict tells his followers to not say anything about what they have observed while away, as these can lead to jealousy, envy, enticements that can lead us away from our purpose of living a Christian and Monastic life. Some monastics can't wait until they can take the next journey away. Here I question one's stability. Is it proper for me to be a travel agent for myself, finding the next getaway?

May you find the Peace of Christ wherever you find yourself this summer.

Yours in St. Benedict,
Br. Edmund, OSB

Expressions of gratitude and sorrow: I am humbled by those Oblates and friends who contribute to the Oblate Community in word, deed and financial help. Without your participation, however small or big, this community would be struggling to touch and spread God's love.

It is with sadness that those who promised God and community fidelity to Him and the community are out there struggling without the help of us as Community. Are you a missing piece to our puzzle? Contact me for we miss you.

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

One of George Gershwin's compositions begins: "Summertime, an' the livin' is easy..." The "easy" part would, I imagine, depend on who you were and what you were doing. The Pacific Northwest summers usually are especially beautiful, with an abundance of beautiful flowers and great weather. Flowers are one of God's many gifts to us and one of my great loves. Though not a gardener, I enjoy arranging flowers and wandering through others' gardens. Among the well-known gardens I've still to wander through is Vita Sackville-West's glorious Sissinghurst garden in England.

Summertime means that local flowers are once more available at Olympia's Farmers' Market. From about April through October, most of the flowers I use in the Abbey Church are from Ethel, Washington, and are purchased at the Market. For Pentecost, we usually have an arrangement of true-red gladiolus in the Abbey Church which come from our florist. Someone once remarked that the Pentecost glads seemed to be reaching for Heaven. In the language of flowers, the gladiolus is a symbol of "strength of character."

ABBOT MARION NGUYEN and the monastic community hosted the Archbishop of Seattle when the latter traveled to the Abbey for the ordination of **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH RAPPUHN** to the diaconate. It was the feast of Saints Philip and James, and the red flowers in the sanctuary included red gerbers. Music for the ordination Mass was provided by the Abbey Schola, supplemented by the voices of Andrew Moyer and Christian Marco. The Offertory piece was sung by the Mount Angel Seminary Choir, and accompanists at various times during the liturgy were Jaysen Gelssler, piano, and Philip Powell, organ. **BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH**'s parents, Keith and Teresa Forsyth, were presenters of the gifts at the Offertory.

BROTHER DAMIEN-JOSEPH is pursuing a theological degree at Mount Angel Abbey, Oregon. He is a valued member of the Saint Martin's Abbey Schola and a deacon at some of our community Masses by assisting at the altar and occasionally acting as homilist. Following the ordination, the monastic community hosted the attendees at a luncheon in the Abbey Courtyard.



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

At a Chapter Meeting following our May annual retreat, **BROTHER PACHOMIUS HAMOR** was accepted for Solemn Vows, which **ABBOT MARION** will receive at Mass on 11th July... **ABBOT MARION** is scheduled to preach several retreats this summer, and in mid-June, he and **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** will attend the General Chapter of our American Cassinese Congregation...**ABBOT EMERITUS NEAL ROTH** will direct **BROTHER PACHOMIUS'** retreat in preparation for his Solemn Vows. For this, the two will travel to Shaw Island in the San Juan Islands and be hosted by the Benedictine nuns there. **ABBOT NEAL** is Extraordinary Confessor for the Shaw Island Benedictines... **BROTHER EPHREM BENNETT** will attend a summer institute for Junior monks at St. Vincent Archabbey in Pennsylvania, our "grandmother" abbey. At the same time that our university was holding graduation exercises, our confrere **FATHER PETER TYNAN** was marching in graduation exercises at Mount Angel, and is now "The Reverend Dr." Warm congratulations...**FATHER KILIAN MALVEY** traveled to the state of Georgia this June with the dual purpose of spending family time with his youngest brother and attending some of the events honoring the late American writer Flannery O'Connor on this 100th anniversary of her birth.

Have a blessed and enrichingly safe summer!



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, oblite.joshuaroberts@gmail.com

JT Batstone, batstonejt@gmail.com

Patricia McClure, Ravenwings@comcast.net

Ron Fialkowski, ronaldbenny24@gmail.com

May council meeting

We discussed the new shirts for Oblates logo to be the medal and generic just Oblates of St. Benedict. Possible jackets too.

Balloons for Brother Joseph Damien's ordination gathering.

Oblate contact project what questions and form to use when contacting and updating our lists.

June council meeting

We discussed the logo wear and will see samples soon.

Bene and Br. Edmund let the group know that international oblate conferences in Rome are on hold until further notice. They are waiting to see if NAABOD will do something nationally.

Br. Mark is requesting help on 6/21 to deep clean the inside of the Lodge. Joshua is working on getting volunteers.

The Oblate contact and outreach project was discussed in depth. A template developed is suitable to everyone. Results to be typed before being turned into Br. Edmund. It was decided that the order of contact should be:

1. Phone (2-3 times at different times of the day if necessary)
2. E-mail
3. Phone again
4. Mail a card (JT will work on getting one designed)

The completed contacts and information gathered by 6/22 and turned in.

JT & Br. Edmund will vet the list one last time and then those doing the contacting will receive the oblate names and contact information. Each person will have approximately 15 people to contact.

Holy Moments by Oblate Kathleen Hystad

Matthew Kelly speaks of Holy Moments in his book, *Holy Moments*. These are what I call “little things.”

Throughout our day, many opportunities avail themselves to us to make an experience a Holy Moment rather than rushing, hurrying past meaningful encounters. Being fully present to a person when greeting with a hello, good morning or goodbye, instead of rushing by them with a greeting and being past them before they can respond. Greeting others as Christ throughout our days, embracing them with eye contact and full presence brings the wonder of God into our daily routines.

A little thing might be to do something, a surprise perhaps, then acting on it rather than letting it die. Or you might see an item on the floor in a store. Instead of stepping by it try putting it back where it belongs.

The mystery of life can be in a holy moment. Watch, seek, be aware, create something where there is a need. The little things (holy moments) can bring deep inner knowing of the presence of God into our daily routines. Little things can be memories that warm our hearts and other’s hearts for years to come.

In the alienation, prevalent loneliness, and isolation of our culture of today, holy moments (little things) could make a vast difference in creating community and connection. Sitting in silence with someone when what they need most is the presence of another. The discipline of being in the present to ourselves and others can unveil many unknown mysteries of life and rich encounters with God in otherwise routine or mundane daily activities. Listening with the ear of our hearts, deep, fully present listening to another is a rare and priceless gift. It has been said it is one of the highest acts of love.

When using something, put it back the way it was or as it should be when you are finished with it instead of leaving it in disarray. Leave it as if Jesus were to use it next.

In stopping for holy moments we worship God and give Him thanks for the precious life He has given us when we breathe into the very core of our being the delicious parts of our lives. In that way, we find the presence of God embracing us and others in the ultimate love, filling us with such ecstasy otherwise

unknown. Creating a deep inner joy that warms our soul daily, hourly, minute by minute.

We create community, connections, unity, and glorify God by accepting opportunities that are abundantly present all around if we are aware, see, listen, hear, and act. In this time, when an addiction to hurry by permeates our culture, holy moments (little things) can be a big thing to someone.

Winnie-the-Pooh said, “Sometimes it is the little things that take up the most room in our hearts.”

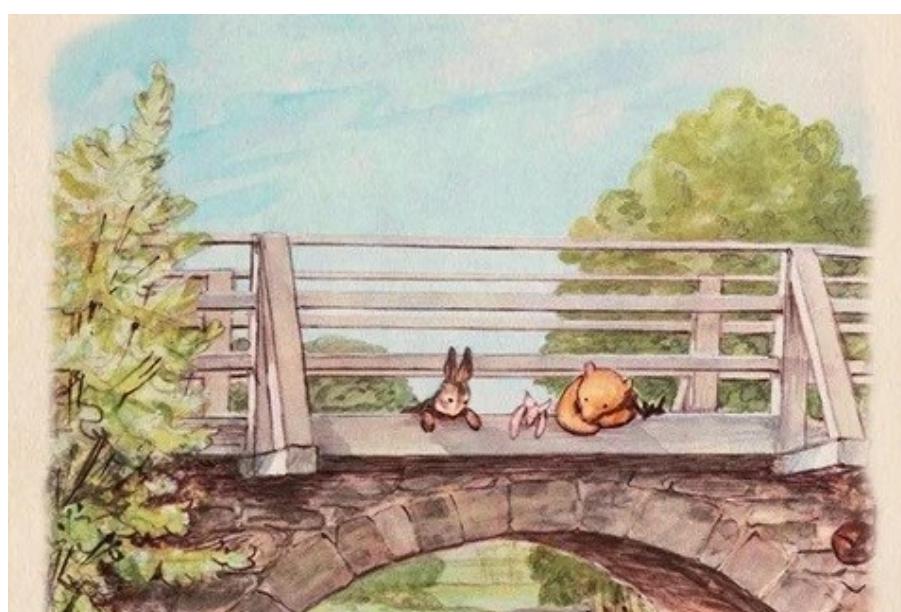


Image found in *The Complete Tales of Winnie-the-Pooh*.

HEALING METAPHOR IN THE RULE BY BROTHER PACHOMIUS HAMOR

The Rule of St. Benedict, written in the sixth century, serves as one of the foundational texts for Western monasticism. Unlike the monastic literature that preceded it, this is no mere guideline, but a structured way of life. Within its concise yet profound instructions, this *little rule* (RB 73) uses the metaphor of the ‘physician’ to not only to describe the role of the abbot but also the function of the monastic community itself. The abbot is not merely a disciplinarian or spiritual authority, but a healer of souls, a true father. This imagery reflects a theology in which spiritual and physical healing are intertwined, portraying the monastery as a hospital for both body and soul. This resonates with Jesus’ own healing ministry and that of his disciples articulated in the New Testament. This paper explores how medical terms as used in *The Rule of St. Benedict* symbolizes the holistic pastoral care which was developed within the monastic tradition.

The Rule of Benedict (RB), composed in the 6th century, portrays the abbot as a spiritual physician, emphasizing his role in guiding, correcting, and healing the souls under his care. A central passage in RB 27 states, “The abbot must exercise the utmost care and concern for wayward brothers, because *it is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick.*” This passage echoes Jesus’ own words in the Gospels (cf. Matt. 9:12), grounding the Rule’s spiritual framework in the scriptural tradition. The abbot is urged to model the compassion of Christ, to apply remedies with gentleness, and to avoid harsh judgment wherever possible. (cf. RB 64.)

Discipline within the monastery is also likened to medical treatment — necessary at times but always oriented toward healing rather than punishment. RB 27 elaborates this with striking pastoral concern: “*He should realize that he has undertaken care of the sick, not tyranny over the healthy.*” Physical healing is also addressed, particularly in RB 36 and 37, where the Rule mandates special care for the sick, the elderly, and children. RB 36 opens with the directive, “*Care of the sick must rank above and before all else,*” affirming the sanctity of bodily health as part of the monastic ethos. While the spiritual physician metaphor dominates, Benedict’s Rule does not neglect the physical dimension, affirming the unity of body and soul.

The abbot’s authority is not one of domination, but of healing and nurturing. This vision is further developed in RB 28, where Benedict uses explicit medical imagery to describe how the abbot should respond to a disobedient monk: “*After he has applied the compresses, the ointment of encouragement, the medicine of divine Scripture, and finally the cauterizing iron of excommunication and strokes of the rod, and if he then perceives that his earnest efforts are unavailing, let him apply an even better remedy: he and all the brothers should pray for him so that the Lord, who can do all things, may bring about the health of the sick brother.*” The progression from mild correction to stronger disciplinary actions is akin to a doctor’s escalating treatment plan. There are times when the cure can seem to be more harmful than the disease it’s meant to cure. This approach emphasizes the abbot’s pastoral responsibility to guide monks toward spiritual health, above all else.

HEALING METAPHOR IN THE RULE BY BROTHER PACHOMIUS HAMOR CONTINUED

As evidenced above, for Benedict, obedience and discipline are forms of medicine administered by the physician. Benedict consistently affirms the purpose of correction is not punishment, but restoration. The monk who disobeys is likened to one who is spiritually ill, and the abbot's task is to heal, not condemn—that is not his role to usurp. Benedict instructs the abbot to use Scripture, encouragement, and if necessary, the more severe tools of excommunication or expulsion. These are described as cauterization or surgery—the last resort for healing. This therapeutic model situates monastic discipline within a broader framework of mercy and transformation. The goal is not compliance for its own sake, but the healing of the soul and restoration of communion with the community and with God, the body of Christ through loving obedience. This compassionate care extends to all aspects of monastic life—from the diet prescribed for the infirm to the roles of the cellarer and infirmarian. The physical and spiritual dimensions are never divorced; instead, they reflect a unified vision of the human person as an incarnate soul. By treating the sick with dignity and love, the monks embody Christ's healing ministry.

In *The Rule of St. Benedict*, the metaphor of the physician reveals a profound theology of healing. The abbot's role as a doctor of souls emphasizes the pastoral and restorative nature of monastic authority. Discipline is not for punishment but for healing, and care for the sick demonstrates the community's commitment to truly holistic well-being. The Rule envisions the monastery as a hospital—a place where wounded souls and bodies come to be made whole. This vision remains relevant today, inviting both monastic and lay communities to recover a model of leadership and community life rooted in compassion, discernment, and healing.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Oblate Francine Mastini as she approaches the gates of heaven and for her husband Oblate Thom Ryng for his peace and comfort.

Oblate Patricia McClure healing.

Brother Aelred healing and peace.

Sister Marie Ciaran OCD healing & learning to live acute allergies.

Vocations for the Abbey

Sanctity of life.

For the homebound.

Brother Edmund's sister Margaret health struggles.

For the aged to be vibrant with love.

WHAT DOES GODLY MEAN? BY OBLATE MARY RANDALL

I recently encountered a woman who said the following: "I am not godly enough."

She was referring to a recent encounter where she felt not qualified enough for a position she was wanting.

When working for the Church, I used to use the following quotation a lot with parish ministries: "God does not call the qualified but qualifies the called."

Think of the twelve Apostles. They were a motley crew. Yet, Our Lord picked them to head His church on earth. He said, "Come and see," when He was asked where He stayed, what He taught, what He ate. They had to learn a whole new way of thinking using the Sermon on the Mount as their manifesto.

A person usually picks a Rabbi and follows Him. However, in this case, Jesus picked them. He saw great strengths within each of them, despite their never-ending thoughts that Jesus's kingdom would include annihilating the Romans. They were hoping beyond hope that His kingdom, not of this world, would extend to the earthly wants of the Jewish people.

Oh, what the Apostles learned listening to their Master daily, never knowing what each day would bring. But then do we who really surrender to our Lord know what each day brings? How much does it really work when we try to control our destiny, or even one day?

A story to make this point:

"Say you were driving along a road and in the distance, you saw a hitchhiker. As you got closer, you recognized the hitchhiker was Jesus. Some would just drive by not recognizing Him for who He is. But you stop and you open the passenger side and say, "Hop in." But then Jesus throws a curve ball. He says to you, "Why don't you sit on the passenger's side, and I will be the driver?" How would you respond? Would you say, "No thanks!" Or would you be willing to see where He leads you?"

None of us are godly. However, we can work on becoming righteous like St. Joseph, Abraham, and Job. Like the Apostles, let us be with our Lord each day, spending quality time with Him. How you choose to do this is up to you. You may even try the passenger's side of your car.

In The Spirit of St. Benedict,

Mary Randall, Oblate

Flying Geese by Brother Ramon Newell O.S.B.

Flying low in the sky traveling to your summer home,
Your journey is not always easy.
You face many troubles and dangers.

How my life is something like yours at times.
I fear on my journey that
I will become lost and lose my way.

Unlike you

I do not have an aerial view.
My roads are not always straight.
I cannot always travel in a straight line like you,
But I must travel over my own
Hills and flat lands
Mountains and valleys
Deserts and forests.



The way is not always clear
And the fear of taking a wrong
turn
And becoming lost comes over
me.

But we have a guide to watch
over us
Do we not my winged friends.

The one who watches over you
Also watches over me.
He assures me...
(The one of little faith)
That he will watch over me
And bring me back to the right
course
If I stray.

Thank you, my winged friends.
Thank you, that your journey
Has taught me a lesson about my own journey.
May you and I
Arrive safely at our destinations.

WELCOME

Congratulations

Welcome and congratulation to those made their final Oblation. Hector Santiago, Cecelia Brennan, Kim Shelstad. May you continue to grow in the Benedictine life.



OBLATE COMMUNITY SUNDAY JULY 13TH



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 on humility and intimacy with God by Sister Laura OSB. This will be a 90 minute talk.

Those who wish to participate in the annual retreat on August 2nd can register at this link.
Retreat Registration Link

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

Oblate Retreat

SAINT MARTIN'S ABBEY - LACEY, WA

AUGUST 2ND

8AM-630PM

SAINT BENEDICT'S 12 STEPS OF

HUMILITY

RETREAT SERIES

PART III

SELF-ABASEMENT - PRUDENCE - SILENCE

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>

STMARTINSABBNEY 360.842.2557 WWW.STMARTINSABBNEY.ORG



ON THE BOOK SHELF

If you read an inspiring book please share with us.

The Preaching of Pope Francis by Gregory Heille, O.P.

Reading, Praying, Living Pope Francis's The Joy of Love by Julie Hanlon Rubio.

History of Theology Volume II The Middle Ages by Giulio D'Onofrio & translated by Matthew J. O'Connell.

What's the Smoke For and other Burning questions about the Liturgy by Johan Van Parys.



BOOK REVIEWS BY OBLATE LEILANI ROBERTS

A Song for Nagasaki

By Paul Glynn

A Song for Nagasaki tells the story of Takashi Nagai. The story begins with his early and ordinary life in Japan as the son of a doctor and follower of Shinto. Takashi Nagai was drafted into service in Japan's war with China twice. Both experiences were life changing and led to his conversion from Shinto to atheism, and from atheism to Catholicism as he searched for the deeper meaning of life and death. Along the way, he became a doctor, a scientist, a husband, and a father. In 1945, he survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. His unwavering faith and selfless love for others in times of such devastation are simply beautiful. I highly recommend this book!

Where There is Love, There is God

By Mother Teresa

In this collection of writings and teachings by St. Teresa of Calcutta, we learn some of the simple, but profound lessons she gave to her sisters. She shares her wisdom on the Trinity, the Holy Family, love, joy, and faith in action. Love is the foundation of all these writings. This is a wonderful book to sit and quietly reflect. It can be read cover to cover or in random order.

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.



Rosary Makers:

We need rosary makers! We supply materials and you supply the fingers/hands and brains. Bring your friends as well. Meetings are first and second Saturday of the month at 1:30 in the guest dining room on the first floor/basement by the monk's refectory

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 2025

June

14th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
28th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room Topic: St. Benedict and Holy Rule introduction.
30th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

July

5th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
12th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
11th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.
13th *Oblate Community Sunday 1:30 pm - 4:00pm Annual Potluck Picnic. Topic: Humility and Intimacy with God.*
26th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Monastic & Secular Communities.
28th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining

August

1st Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.
2nd Silent Retreat 8:00am - 6:30pm on Humility.
3rd Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm. Zoom.
25th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Introduction to Lectio Divina
30th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

September

6th Annual Rummage Sale
5th Oblate Council meeting 9:00 am Zoom.
13th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
14th *Oblate Community Sunday 3:00pm -6:30pm with Investing and Oblations, Evening Prayer with the monks. Topic: Rule of Benedict and Innovation in Religious Life.*
27th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Oblation Promises
29th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

October

3rd Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.
4th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
5th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm Zoom.
11th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
25th Formation meeting at 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm guest dining room. Topic: Prayer and Spirituality.
27th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

November

1st Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
2nd Holy Rule Study 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm Zoom.
7th Oblate Council meeting 9:00 am Zoom.
8th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
20th Bazaar set up
21st-22nd Bazaar.
24th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Hospitality, Humility, Charity, and Service.
29th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room.

December

6th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
13th Rosary Making 1:30pm –3:30pm guest dining room.
5th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.
14th Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Abbey Church.
TBA Formation meeting at 3:30pm- 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Spiritual Friendships.
TBA Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm in the guest

*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/>