

Oblate Community of Saint Martin's Abbey

Oblates of Saint Benedict

March 2026

Volume 2 Issue 78

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

Dear Oblates and friends:

Before Christmas gets too far back in the rearview mirror, it would be helpful for us to take another look at the gifts we have received this past season. I am not talking about material gifts but the gifts that have come through the holy season of Jesus coming again to reignite the fire of love.

When we see Jesus passing through our lives once again, what are our thoughts about the great gift he has given us?

For me it has been 'my salvation' but then the gifts keep giving. It may take some work to see the many gifts that are mine and mine to be shared. Love is given in so many ways. The smile for a stranger, helping another in a store, striking up a conversation with a street person, giving a homeless person something from our grocery bag we wanted for our self but the need is greater for the other, knowing your neighbors and helping them when needed, contributing out of our wants to those in greater need. Attentiveness lifts the hearts and minds of others.

There are the personal gifts that Christ gives us, but we cannot see them. If our minds and hearts are open, these gifts will come regularly; what a great feeling of the presence of Christ it is. The gift may be an awesome thought or inspiration, something that was more successful than you hoped for, such as a person coming into your presence as a friend or helping you.

There are the gifts of nature, such as taking time to enjoy nature, which brings you into a state of well-being. Nature takes us out of ourselves and brings us to a space of peace and love. It is a wonder drug not used enough and mostly it is free for the taking. We glimpse another world that most of us do not live in daily, and we hear sounds which are normally drowned out by unnatural sounds. Breathe in the purer air that will clear your lungs and mind. Take note: your muscles will respond as you feel the gift of love.

Our Creator freely gives such gifts to nourish our soul and body. They make life easier for us and our neighbors. Spread the love.

Your brother in St. Benedict, Br. Edmund, OSB SMA Oblate Director

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 at Sunday Oblate meetings.

The current members are:

Bede Colvin, bede.orthodox@gmail.com

Bene Reece, benemareece@gmail.com

Joshua Roberts, oblate.joshuaroberts@gmail.com

JT Batstone, batstonejt@gmail.com

Patricia McClure, Ravenwings@comcast.net

Ron Fialkowski, ronaldbenny24@gmail.com

December Council Meeting

We did excellently with the Bazaar and made \$4000. This will help with our outreach programs and projects. We discussed what we need for next year, including more baked goods and a few more vendors.

We discussed our outreach and contacting of Oblates to find out what they need and we are collating the responses. We rechecked the calendar and made note of changes for Oblation; next year they will be in March and July.

We discussed who would be doing the August retreat and requesting more oblates to lead the formation talks.

January Council Meeting

We discussed the outreach program and plan to reach out to the Oblates we don't see with cards or phone calls. We are also updating the email list. We are satisfied with our current Oblate Sunday schedule.

Note that the formation group in May will meet on a Tuesday instead of Monday due to Memorial day weekend.

We discussed plans to get the Oblate office manned and organized.

February Council Meeting

We discussed updating our email and phone list. We will work on our budget, considering our charitable donations. There will be email sent for Holy Rule study leaders.

Notice that Brother Damien-Joseph Rappuhn's ordination will be 20th of June 2026 at 10:00am at St. James Cathedral in Seattle.

Oblate Community Sunday March 1st 2026

Join us at 3:00pm in the Abbey Church for a talk on the theological virtue of hope and the Eucharist given by Patrick Cooper. Then stay for evening prayers, investitures, oblations, and a social with the monks.

If we have missed someone who is ready for either investiture or oblation please contact Brother Edmund.
Contact information 360-438-4457 or at Br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Prayer Requests

Let the Director know when you need prayers.
Contact information 360-438-4457 or at Br_edmund@stmartin.edu

For Sister Sharon McDonald OSB healing prayers.

For Brother Nicolaus and his needs.

For Oblate Catherine Dorotich and her needs.

For Oblates David and Anitalane Blair and their needs.

For Oblate Lois Archer and her needs.

For Oblate Lydia Browne and her needs.

Vocations for the Abbey.

That St. Martin's University continues to build on its Catholic-Benedictine identity.

For those struggling with cancer and their support systems.

For the sanctity of life.

For the sick and homebound.

That as Oblates we work to develop a deep relationship with God by our saying yes.

That conflicts between countries and people are resolved with love.

Invitation to all to join us at the formation sessions. Once a month, we have morning and evening sessions. Please join us for deeper look into our Oblate life.

Please consider contributing your thoughts, insights or poems to the newsletter. Send them to Br. Edmund or Oblate Patricia McClure. Our emails are in the newsletter.

Deadlines for newsletter contributions are April 2nd, June 2nd, August 2nd, and Nov. 2nd.

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

The year of our Lord 2025 is now history, together with its joys and sorrows. We are in the first months of the new year of 2026, and can hope that this new year, this new beginning, will afford us more joys than sorrows. This month, in lieu of my usual column, I would like to offer for your meditation a hope-themed poem, written by the British writer Thomas Hardy (1840-1928).

The DarklingThrush

I leant upon a coppice gate
 When Frost was spectre-gray,
 And Winter's dregs made desolate
 The weakening eye of day.
 The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
 Like strings of broken lyres,
 And all mankind that hunted nigh
 Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
 The Century's corpse outleant,
 His crypt the cloudy canopy,
 The wind his death-lament.
 The ancient pulse of germ and birth
 Was shrunken hard and dry,
 And every spirit upon earth
 Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
 The bleak twigs overhead
 In a full-hearted evensong
 Of joy illimited;
 An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
 In blast-beruffled plume,
 Had chosen thus to fling his soul
 Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
 Of such ecstatic sound
 Was written on terrestrial things
 Afar or night around,
 That I could think there trembled through
 His happy good-night air
 Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
 And I was unaware.



Image found at needpix.com

Abbey Church Events

February 21st at 8:00pm Camerata Nordica Octet

Chamber ensemble violins, violas, cellos.

March 28th at 8:00pm

Laura Krumm Mezzo-Soprano

Robert Mollicone Piano

April 18th at 8:00pm

Shea-Kim Duo

Violin and Piano

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

More details can be found online at: <https://stmartinsabbey.org/news-and-events/abbey-church-events/>

Our Bazaar was a great success. We had fun pricing and stocking last minute donations. Wonderful sub sandwiches for lunch.

Music and laughter. We made new friends and welcomed back old ones. We hope you can join us this year in the volunteering to bake, stock, knit, craft, or set up.

Big thanks to all who made this event successful.

Mark your calendars and check each newsletter for changes. Note some of our Sunday meetings have changed.

A Moment of Reflection by Oblate Mary Randall

A priest recently said as he ended his homily on Luke 16:1-13, "You need to carry only two things in life: a compass that only points to God, and a scale that weighs right from wrong."

As we reflect on the times Jesus said to his apostles, disciples, and general crowds, "You can only serve one master, God or man," man refers to anything that is not God. What are the false idols that we get sucked into? Riches? Power? Titles? Control of our own destiny? Control over others? The list goes on and on.

Are we so different from the Israelites coming out of Egypt, who quickly forgot their 400 years of slavery? They wanted the fleshpots of Egypt as they faced the hot heat of the wilderness. They longed for the food and the culture that had infiltrated them in Egypt. They were facing the unknown. They had to trust God for water and food. And when they quickly turned to making a false idol in the golden calf, they faced the consequences of their actions. They wandered in the wilderness within a radius of one hundred and twenty miles for forty years. Two generations lived and died before they reached the Promised Land of milk and honey. This was their consequence for not believing in the one true God.

How many gods tempt us daily in everyday life? What can we do to avoid such evil? We can say and meditate upon the words of the prayer, the "Our Father."

"Our Father" (the one true God)

"Who art in heaven" (where God resides)

"Hallowed be thy name" (Praise to His holy name)

"Thy kingdom come" (Your kingdom is not of this world)

"Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (we can only be obedient to God through the words and action of Jesus, and those in authority be they our bosses, The Church, spiritual directors, and those who govern over us)

"Give us this day our daily bread" (The Eucharist, words of Scripture, devotional prayers, meditation, contemplation)

"and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" (we are reminded of His Divine Mercy that is unconditional, just as our mercy and forgiveness is called for seventy times seven to those who harm us)

"Lead us not into temptation" (we need you, Lord, to guide us every moment of every day)

"and deliver us from the evil one" (the words "the" and "one" were dropped years ago, but truly they refer to Satan, the evil one who tempts us daily, even hourly)

"through Christ, our Lord, Amen" (none of us have the power to fight the devil, only Christ does, but often our pride gets in the way)

So where does our compass point? Do we earnestly follow the Holy Rule of Benedict, as Oblates, according to our state in life? Are we close to the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation? Do we attend Eucharistic Adoration if it is available in our parishes?

What is lacking? What is purposeful?

In the Spirit of Holy Father Benedict,

Mary Randall, Oblate

Eucharist by Oblate Kathleen Hystad

Eucharist
My Lord, my God
As I consume your body
What glorious ecstasy and delight fills my whole being.

Filled with your presence and love,
Words fail me
To describe this feeling
Of my soul reaching a depth out of sight.
And I am transformed
And in awe of the wonderfulness of you.



Image found at
[needpix.com](https://www.needpix.com)

On the Book Shelf

Have you read any of the books suggested in the Newsletters? Br. Edmund would like to hear from you and what if anything you learned. Write a brief summary and send it to him.

Why I Believe in God by Gerhard Lohfink
Formation of the Heart by Raymond Friel
Water Shaping Stone by Kathryn Lilla Cox

Book Recommendations By Oblate Leilani Roberts

The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry

By John Mark Comer

John Comer asserts that hurry and love are incompatible. Since the greatest commandment is to love, it is our Christian duty to eliminate hurry in our lives if we wish to advance in the spiritual life. Yet this is no easy task in our day. Comer breaks down the history of hurry in our world, going back to the sundial and the mechanical clock, and he ends with modern technology and all our “labor-saving” devices. In our digital age, the product being sold is our attention and the solution isn’t more time. The solution is to slow down and simplify our lives around what really matters. He gives us four practices to unhurry our lives. If you’re feeling too busy, this book is for you!

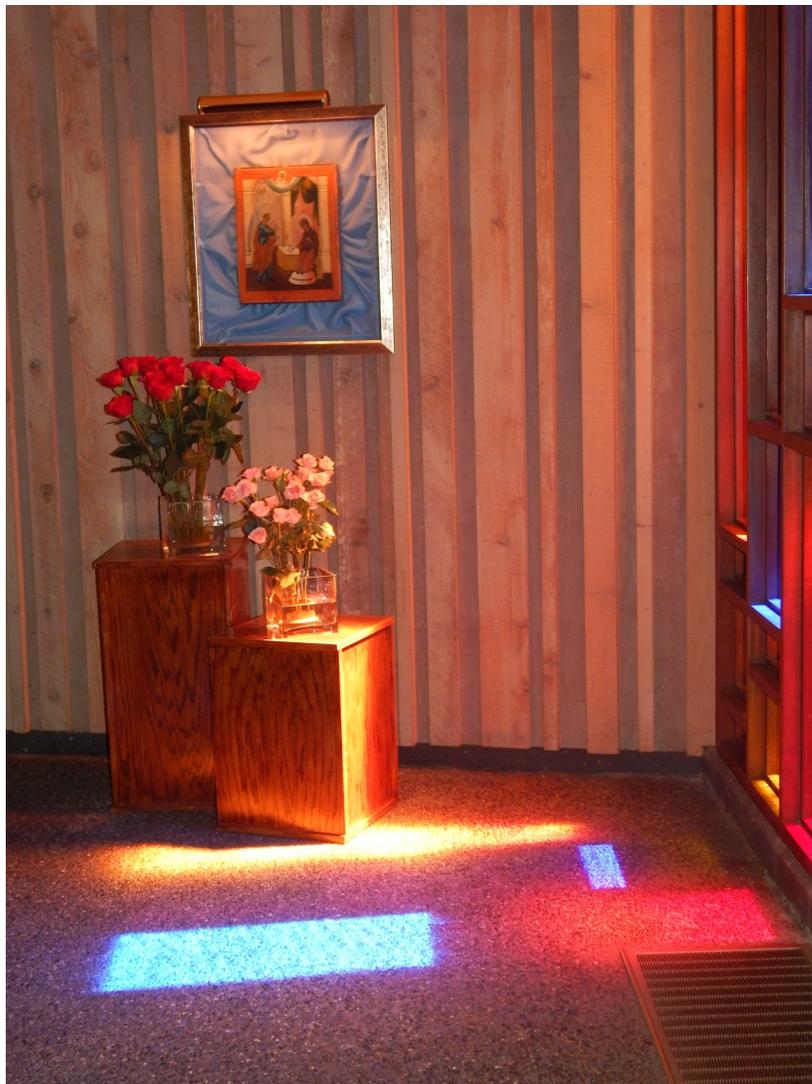
Dilexiti Te

By Pope Leo XIV

In his first apostolic exhortation, Pope Leo XIV focuses on Christ’s preferential love for the poor, confirming the dignity of every human being. Charity is not optional, and he considers meeting the poor as a privileged way to encounter God. He tells us we must “allow ourselves to be evangelized by the poor and acknowledge the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.” Through their hardships, the poor have learned many things that the privileged have not. The poor are not only those lacking material goods but also includes prisoners, the uneducated, migrants, and those without a voice. By using examples from scripture, Church tradition, and the lives of the saints, Pope Leo reminds us that the poor are an essential part of the body of Christ. And let us not forget that Christ himself was among the poor.

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

Roses before a 17th century Russian Icon by Br. Ramon Newell OSB



Pink roses before a 17th century Russian Icon
in the abbey church.

Bathed in the radiant sunlight
coming through a stained-glass window,
Brought from a field that God has blest,
To a sacred and consecrated place,
Where people feel God's presence
a little more closely.

You honor the scene of the Angel Gabriel
Announcing to the Blessed Virgin Mary
That God the Father
Wants her to be the Mother
Of the Promised Messiah.
Your beauty contributing
To the Great and Wonderful Moment!

O Wonderful Iconographer!

O Wonderful Flowers!

O Lovely Roses

So simple and humble

You add much to what I see!

OBLATE COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2026

Rosary Making: normally but not always at 1:30pm –3:30pm in the guest dining room on the first two Saturdays of the month. Please call Br. Edmund at 360-438-4457 to confirm.

February

2nd articles for newsletter due.

6th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

8th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm Zoom.

23rd Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room. Topic Ora et Labora et Lege.

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

March

1st *Oblate Community Sunday 3:00pm Investing and Oblations and Evening Prayer with the Monks.*

6th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

28th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: History of Saint Martin's Abbey.

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

April

2nd articles for newsletter due.

10th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

12th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm Zoom.

25th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Oblates worldwide and Oblate Congress.

27th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room.

May

1st Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

3rd **Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Abbey Church.**

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

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

June

2nd articles for newsletter due.

5th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

7th Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm Zoom.

27th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Liturgy, Prayer, Music.

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

July

3rd Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

12th **Oblate community Sunday 3:00pm Investing and Oblations and Evening Prayer with the Monks.**

25th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: St. Benedict and Holy Rule Introduction.

27th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining

August

2nd articles for newsletter due.

1st Silent Retreat 8:00am - 5:00pm on Humility.

2nd Holy Rule Study 1:30pm - 2:30pm. Zoom.

7th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

24th Formation meeting at 10:30am - 1:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Oblates and Monastic communities

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

September

4th Oblate Council meeting 9:00 am Zoom.

5th Annual Rummage Sale 9:00am — 4:00pm

6th Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Abbey Church.

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

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

October

2nd Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

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

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

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

November

2nd articles for newsletter due.

6th Oblate Council meeting 9:00 am Zoom.

8th Holy Rule Study 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm Zoom.

19th Bazaar set up at the TUB.

20th-21st Bazaar.

28th Formation meeting at 3:30pm - 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Prayer and Spirituality.

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

December

4th Oblate Council meeting 9:00am Zoom.

6th Oblate Community Sunday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Abbey Church.

19th Formation meeting at 3:30pm- 6:30pm guest dining room. Topic: Hospitality, Humility, Charity.

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

If a donation has not been made in the past year, one would be appreciated at this time.

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

Renewal of Oblation 2026

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: _____

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.

Contact information for 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
