

July 2013



“...let us stand to sing the psalms in such a way that our minds are in harmony with our voices.”

—Rule of St. Benedict Chapter 19, 7

## Review of Input this Past Year

By Sister Anita Louise Lowe

We've come to the end of our year of reflection and discussion on the Liturgy of the Hours. I'd like to spend a few minutes reviewing where we've been over these past months. In September, we began by looking at the reasons for praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and we explored its history and development. You might recall that we looked at how the Liturgy of the Hours is intimately tied to time and seasons. The Liturgy of the Hours is a daily prayer: prayed in the morning, at midday, at evening, before bed, and in some places, in the middle of the night. The Liturgy of the Hours takes us out of “clock” time and places us into the eternal time of God. Through prayer, we mark that all time is holy, all time is of God.

We next considered how Christians have prayed from New Testament times through the ages. We find that morning and evening are considered privileged times of prayer, and that this prayer is composed of psalms, hymns, readings, and prayers of joy and thanksgiving. We learned that in the 4th century, the Liturgy of the Hours evolved in two different fashions: one way for the secular church and another for the monastics who went out into the desert.

*Continued on page 2.*



**Editor's note:**

*Sister Michelle Mohr was co-author for the lead article in the April 2013 issue of the Oblate newsletter. We are sorry for this omission.*



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When Constantine legalized Christianity and made it the official religion of the Roman Empire, Christians, for the first time, could gather publicly in large groups to pray, and they did so in “cathedrals” with the bishop presiding. This type of daily prayer became known as the cathedral office. It is the prayer of the secular church. As such, it is a prayer of praise and intercession.

The prayer that was developed by monastics in the desert was more of a group meditation, using psalms as the food for prayer.

In later centuries, we find that clergy living in both cathedrals and

country chapels lived a common life and celebrated the Liturgy of the Hours in common with the people of the parish. By the 13th century, though, more and more clergy were reciting the Office privately. The obligation to pray that used to be sensed as an obligation of all Christians had become the personal obligation of the clergy.

In January, Sister Michelle and I continued looking at the development of the Liturgy of the Hours by looking more closely at the development of the Roman and Monastic forms of this prayer. We then looked at the innovations of St. Benedict: he redistributed the psalms, eliminated repetitions, and introduced hymns. Benedict called for monastics to pray all 150 psalms in the course of a week and for the Our Father to be recited at both Morning and Evening Prayer as a daily sign of reconciliation. Most important for Benedict is the principle that our hearts be in harmony with our voices. As we pray the psalms, listen to scripture, sing hymns, and say the Our Father, we are to be open to be transformed by what we hear and say.

Then in February, Sister Michelle and Sister Briana began exploring the developments and challenges in praying the Liturgy of the Hours for Benedictine women in the United States, including here at Ferdinand. And they concluded that journey today.

### Call for Renewal of Liturgy of the Hours for the Laity

I'd like to take us back now to the Second Vatican Council. I mentioned briefly in September that a commentator has said that one of the most striking aspects of the liturgical renewal demanded by the Council has remained unperceived by the public at large: the resurrection of the Liturgy of



the Hours for the Christian people. The Council expressed the desire that the principal hours of the Divine Office — Morning and Evening Prayer — once again become the prayer of the whole church — of all the people of God. To do this, the Council asked that pastors ensure “that the principal hours — especially Vespers — be celebrated in

common in church on Sundays and on solemn feasts,” and stated that “the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office...”

The late Benedictine liturgical scholar Anscar Chupungco stated that the

Vatican II reform of the Liturgy of the Hours did not envision a form for private recitation but a public liturgy that belongs “to the whole Body of Christ.” However, he notes that the format issued is not user friendly. Chupungco and other liturgical scholars have called for a simpler format with a limited selection of psalms—probably more in line with what the early cathedral office looked like. In addition to format, another problem with the renewed call to extend the Liturgy of the Hours is that most people have not been catechized to understand that this liturgy is a form of worship that belongs to the whole body of Christ. They perceive it as a prayer of clergy and religious. But in truth, it is the gathering of the Church at prayer—no matter where it takes place: in a cathedral, a parish church, a religious chapel, a living room, or a meeting room.

In the 1970s, liturgy professor William Storey wrote a series of articles on the Liturgy of the Hours. He stated, “The divine office is still an unknown quantity to 99% of the Catholic people. They would not recognize an office book if it fell on them and have never had a single opportunity to attend even one hour of the office.” He continued by stating that the vision of Vatican II was that devotional prayers are actually private practices while the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist are public, liturgical prayers of the Church. However, he recognized that removing public devotions without implementing parish Liturgy of the Hours would leave the people with an impoverished spirituality. He said, “It may be surmised that unless some rather serious and widespread revival of communal prayer reappears among us in the near future, the Catholic Church in America as a praying community will suffer irreparable damage.” Pretty strong words...

So, where are we today, 50 years after the call of renewal from Vatican II? How many of you have seen Liturgy of the Hours celebrated in a parish setting? There are a few instances...I know that the Evansville Diocese has offered Sunday Evening Prayer at the Cathedral during Advent and Lent. That's a start. I know that St. Ferdinand Parish has discussed the possibility of introducing an Evening Prayer once a week.

However, the reality is that we are a far way from seeing the full implementation of the call to renew the Liturgy of the Hours for the laity. While Storey's quote about 99% of US Catholics may no longer be true, I'm wondering what percentage of US Catholics today has experienced the Liturgy of the Hours. One blog suggested that perhaps 1% of US parishes have any celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours.

So, what are we to do? Some would say it's a lost cause, but I'm not willing to go there. I'd like to suggest some possible ways to move this renewal forward. First of all, the leadership of the Church needs to take this renewal seriously and put it into effect: The Pope praying Morning and Evening Prayer with his household (Given that Pope Francis has opted to live in community, this might actually stand a chance!), the Bishops celebrating daily Morning and/or Evening Prayer with diocesan staff. Most parish meetings begin with a prayer. Why not have that prayer be a shortened form of the Liturgy of the Hours — a hymn, a psalm, a short reading, the Magnificat, a couple of intercessions, and the Our Father? The night a parish has religious education could begin with all gathering for this prayer, and then the individual classes going off for separate instruction.

But what are we to do? In one of Storey's articles, he said that, while the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours states that bishops and pastors should ensure that the principal hours of Morning and Evening Prayer be celebrated in common in parishes at least on Sundays and solemn feasts, the reality will be that priests and bishops will probably resist that call for a number of reasons. One of those reasons is the continued emphasis on priests praying the Liturgy of the Hours privately — if they are unable to pray it in common. Rather than see this as a call to pray the Hours in common, most will take the easier route and continue what had become the standard mode of operation for too long — private recitation of the hours of the Office.

Storey continues by saying that the renewal of the Liturgy of the Hours will only become reality if it is a grassroots effort; that is, the people must call for it, must embrace it, and must promote it.



### Liturgy of the Hours as Oblates

As Oblates, you can play a role in helping promote the Liturgy of the Hours as the prayer of the “whole” Church. You can do this first by praying the Liturgy of the Hours yourself—perhaps praying it with your family, friends, other Oblates—and by encouraging others to discover or rediscover this daily prayer of the Church.

There are a number of resources to assist you.

#### Print Resources

1. *Benedictine Daily Prayer*, published by Liturgical Press, was put together specifically for Oblates as a complete yet simplified version of the Liturgy of the Hours.
2. *Magnificat* — a monthly periodical offers daily Morning and Evening Prayer as well as the readings for Mass. The Morning and Evening Prayer are shortened — usually having one psalm.
3. *Give Us This Day* — also a monthly periodical, is published by Liturgical Press. The content is similar to that of *Magnificat*, but has a bit of a Benedictine flavor to it.

#### Online Resources

1. [www.divineoffice.org](http://www.divineoffice.org) This site offers both text and a podcast of the Roman Divine Office for every day. If you have an iPhone, iPad, Itouch, there is an app available for about \$20; if you have a Kindle, the app for that device is about \$15.
2. [www.ebreviary.com](http://www.ebreviary.com) This website offers daily Liturgy of the Hours in Adobe pdf formats, including Morning Prayer, Daytime Prayer, Evening Prayer, Night Prayer and the Office of Readings.
3. [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com) The site offers a multi-year liturgical calendar, Liturgy of the Hours, and the readings for Mass. It's available free online or for a price as an app or ebook for use with Apple Apps, Google Play, or Amazon Apps.
4. Our monastery's church webcam. <mms://web-srv.thedome.org/churchcam> This address is private for use by our sisters, our family members, and our Oblates. It is not a public address, and we have discussed requiring an authorization — such as a sign in. If that occurs we would give a username (such as Oblates) and a password for you to use. In the meantime, you are most welcome to view the webcam, but please do not give the address out to others.



## Monastery begins Scrip program

Scrip is a fundraising program — offering gift cards from hundreds of merchants nationwide.

The Sisters of St. Benedict can raise money through Scrip by having their supporters purchase gift cards for gifts and for what they would normally buy anyway — like groceries, restaurants, books, clothes etc. The Sisters of St. Benedict initiated this program on July 1, 2013.

To find out more about this program or to see the list of merchants and the percentage they offer to the sisters go to scrippro.com on your computer. The program has no cost for the sisters and your card comes activated for the full amount you requested or ordered. When ordering please indicate merchant, number of cards and denominations desired. We need to receive payment before delivery of cards. Contact person: Sister Rosa Lee Koch – rtkosb@thedome.org

## Oblate Birthdays

### August

1—Paulette Campana, 5—Olivia Adler, 9—Craig Howerton, 10—Evelyn Berube, 14—Valerie Scott, 18—Dolores Webber, 19—Mary Agnes Willegal, 20—Mary Etta Kiefer, 21—Judy Luebbehusen, 23—Carolyn Kohler, 27—Theresa Walker, 29—Pauletta Adler Jeter



### September

2—Lee Garrity, 6—Barbara Nonte, 8—Christy Dumont, 9—June Goforth, Brenda Padgett, 12—Victor Begle, 15—Gloria Hasler, 18—Jane Ann Breen, 25—Shirley Azure, Sheila Walker, 26—Mary Metz, 30—Gary Adler

### OCTOBER

1—Mary Thale, Sharon Bittner, 5—Martha Hester, Rose Wilkie, 7—Jerome Schmitt, 11—Derrick Dixon, Clarice Kroll, Katherine Tennis, Donella Vondrak, 19—Reverend Gerald McCarthy, 22—Madeline Keplin, 23—Frank Keller, 31—Adelaide Trapp



### Visit For Heaven's Sake gift shop

For Heaven's Sake, the monastery gift shop, has a new book available, *Reaching for God/The Benedictine Oblate Way of Life* by Roberta Werner. The cost is \$19.95 (plus shipping when mailed).

Ferdinand Benedictine Oblates receive

**10% off**  
**your entire order!**

*Be sure to let the clerk know you are one of our Oblates!*

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[forheavensake.org](http://forheavensake.org)

**Pray for the deceased Oblates, Sisters, and relatives:**

**Sister Johnette Finis**

**Sister Margaret Carolyn Kissel,**  
*Sister of Sister Mary George Kissel*

**Harold Schnur,** *brother of Sister Mary Alice Schnur*

**Harold Weinzapfel,** *brother of Sister Agnes Weinzapfel*

**Dorothy Willett,** *mother of Sister Michelle Willett*

**Dale Howerton,** *father and father-in-law of Oblates Craig and Anne Howerton*

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Barbara Ann Offerman.

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You are invited to be in touch with the Sisters of St. Benedict in prayer. Use the following link:

[mms://web-srv.thedome.org/churchcam](https://mms://web-srv.thedome.org/churchcam)

# Monastery Moments and Oblate Offerings

## August 19

**Dome Golf Classic** The golf event allows women and men to come and enjoy themselves while raising money for the monastery. This year's classic will be at the spectacular Pete Dye Course in French Lick, Indiana.

## August 18

**Oblate Picnic** Oblates, candidates, and inquirers are invited to the annual gathering in St. Gertrude Hall. Picnic-style meal begins shortly after the regular monastery Sunday Mass. Meat and drinks provided by the sisters. All other participants bring a salad, vegetable, or dessert to serve 12 people. Reservations required. See reservation form in this newsletter.

## August 20

**Founders Day** The sisters will celebrate the founding of the Monastery in 1867.

## August 24

**Golden Jubilee** Sisters Mary Philip Berger, Anna Marie Brosmer, Mary Judith Fleig, Dorothy Graf, Elnora Shidler, and Mary Ann Verkamp will celebrate 50 years of monastic profession. There will be a Mass of celebration with the religious community and family. A public reception will be held in the afternoon.



Sister Mary Philip



Sister Anna Marie



Sister Mary Judith



Sister Dorothy



Sister Elnora



Sister Mary Ann

## September 13

**Sacred Music Concert** The Notre Dame Folk Choir will present a concert in the Monastery church at 7:30 p.m. The concert is open to all.

## September 15

**St. Hildegard Dinner** This dinner honors members of the St. Hildegard Society who have named the sisters in their wills, life insurance policies, or other estate planning.

## September 21

**Oblate Meeting and Reception of Oblate Candidates** After the brief Rite of Reception to welcome candidates, Sr. Anita Louise Lowe will begin our year of study of the Holy Rule with a an Overview of Benedict and Scholastica. This meeting is on Saturday and will begin at 1:00 p.m. in St. Gertrude Hall. Reservations required.

## October 5

**Perpetual Monastic Profession** This is the date for Sister Gail Hamilton to make her perpetual monastic profession. A public reception will be held in the afternoon.

## October 20

**Rite of Oblation and Renewal of Oblation** Oblate Candidates will profess their Oblation during Morning Prayer in the monastery church. Prayer will be at 9:45 a.m. Mass is at 10:30 a.m., with dinner to follow. No Oblate meeting in the afternoon. Reservations required for services and dinner.

## October 27

**Diamond Jubilee** This celebration honors Sisters Assunta Highbaugh and Dolorosa Hasenour for 80 years of monastic profession; Sisters Adele Weyer and Mary Esther Steckler, for 75 years; Sister Marilyn Market, for 70 years; and Sisters Mary Karen Hill and Geneva Stumler, for 60 years. The celebration is for members of the religious community only.

## November 15–17

**Christkindlmar** Plan ahead to work with the sisters during this annual holiday festival. Call or email the Oblate directors to volunteer. Simply Divine Bakery would also appreciate volunteers from early November through the Christmas holidays. Contact Sister Jean Marie Ballard to help in the bakery or the bakery booth.

## Oblate Meetings in 2014

### Saturday, January 18

2–4 p.m., The Prologue, Presenters: Sisters Rose Wildeman and Anita Louise Lowe

### Saturday, February 15

2–4 p.m., The Prologue (continued), Presenters: Sisters Rose and Anita Louise

### Sunday, March 16

1–3 p.m., Retreat, Presenter: Sister Karen Joseph

### Saturday, April 26

2–4 p.m., Kinds of Monks, Presenters: Sisters Rose and Donna Marie Herr

### Sunday, May 18

1–3 p.m., Qualities of the Abbott, Presenter: Sister Jeana Visel (chapters 2 and 64)



Sister Assunta



Sister Dolorosa



Sister Adele



Sister Mary Esther



Sister Marilyn



Sister Mary Karen



Sister Geneva

SISTERS  
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FERDINAND, INDIANA

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## *Oblates*

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## Sisters of St. Benedict Spirituality Ministry

The sisters' Spirituality Ministry offers a buffet of nourishing, enriching, and tasty food for your soul and spirit. Check out these three upcoming programs, and invite a friend to join you at Kordes Center on the hill. For more information visit the sisters' website at [thedome.org/programs](http://thedome.org/programs) or phone 812-367-1411, ext 2915.

- **August 31, 2013** — Compassionate Healing

Learn to be a compassionate presence in a world that pulls us in many directions. Topics will include healing in Scripture and in the Benedictine tradition, tracing the heritage of healing, and practicing compassionate healing.

- **September 7, 2013** — Introduction to Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a quiet, reflective prayer form grounded in the Christian tradition. It is a way of praying based on the wisdom saying of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: "When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you." (Mt. 6:6). Centering Prayer prepares our faculties to receive the gift of contemplative prayer. The workshop will provide a brief explanation of the method of Centering Prayer and an opportunity to practice this way of praying.

- **September 13–20, 2013** — Directed Retreat

The Directed Retreat provides you with an opportunity to focus on your relationship with God, especially your experience of God in prayer and in life's events. You will have the opportunity to meet daily with a spiritual director.

