



Oblates

Newsletter for Oblates of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana
January 2016

Chapter Seventy-Two of the Holy Rule

Teaching by Sister Betty Drewes
Oblate Meeting, January 17, 2016

The Good Zeal of Monks

Sister Betty Drewes began her presentation on “Good Zeal” (Chapter 72 of the Holy Rule) with the following questions. Do you want to expand your heart? Do you yearn for life in abundance? Are you aware of the Good Zeal in Benedict’s Rule? If you can answer “Yes”, then you are in the right place HERE! You have the right time.....NOW! You are with the right people.....OBLATES of MONASTERY IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

Benedict found through his lived experiences and put into words his inmost desire for himself and the community. This ardent good zeal is the most important factor in monastic life. It is the key to personal happiness and community peace.

Benedict says that we are to prefer nothing to the love of God. We need to be open to love others unconditionally. Simply put, it is the Two Great Commandments, “Love God and love others as you love yourself.” Our goal then as Benedictines and Oblates is to grow daily in our relationship with Christ and to respond to Christ’s presence in the midst of one another and in every relationship. This means that we need to engage, to expand and to enlarge our hearts.

The good zeal of St. Benedict takes place daily through prayer. Some of the ways to love God are the following. Pray unceasingly. Seek God in humility. Be faithful to personal lectio and communal Liturgy of the Hours. Pray with our families. Continue spiritual reading. Plan retreat days.



Sister Betty pauses for a photo during her presentation.

As we go our separate ways today, let us ask ourselves, “What ways do we grow in greater love of God? How do we express daily the invitation to prefer nothing to the Love of Christ?”



Oblate Candidate Marcia Stroud shares with her sister companion, Sister Betty Drewes, after the meeting.

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communal Liturgy of the Hours. Pray
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Oblate Meeting

January 17, 2016



Oblate Phyllis Schmits and Oblate Mary Ann Littlefield are sharing during the break.



From left to right: Sister Elnora Shidler, Oblate Lynn Steiden and Oblate Theresa Bauer (front table) and other Oblates respond to Sr. Betty's humor.

“...Let monastics prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may Christ bring us all together to everlasting life.

—Rule of St. Benedict 72:11-12”



Sister Mary George Kissel, Oblate Elaine Baumgart and Oblate Dave Richards smile for the photographer.



Oblate Marcia Brown and Oblate Patti Schroeder are enjoying a final chat after the Oblate meeting.

Oblate Reflections

A Reflection

by Oblate Carolyn Kohler



Oblate Carolyn Kohler

My heart has heard you say, “Come and talk with me.” And my heart responds, “LORD, I am coming.” Psalm 27:8

By God’s Grace I was led to this monastery. I reflect often on what I find so endearing and so compelling about my journeys to the monastery. There is an uneasy truce between my being an Oblate and my life in a profane world. I much prefer one over the other. However, I have my children, grandchildren and many friendships that are rooted in a shared faith that would be difficult to leave, even though I desire to spend an inordinate amount of time at the monastery.

Learning to Listen!

The monastery is my spiritual home. The most resonate Benedictine rule for me was learning to listen and to embrace silence. Without understanding the purpose of silence and solitude, I would not have been able to access that location within me that belongs entirely to God. I come from an incredibly noisy world. Even though I go to Mass daily since my conversion, the true peace and depth I was seeking with Christ eluded me.

My first experience with seclusion at the monastery was a week-long retreat on

the master of solitude, the late Thomas Merton. It was during this enlightening experience I came to recognize, in that silence, in the deepest recesses of my heart, is where I discovered the essence of God. That was what was missing, that dedicated, silent, sacred time.

Silence and solitude are the quintessential precept of Benedictine spirituality because it is where God’s serenity, peace and grace reside in each of us. The more time I spent at the monastery in silence the more I realized I cannot experience that mystical union with Our Savior unless I divest myself of distractions and clutter. Herein lies the greatest treasure, in solitude and silence, in our center, where one can accept God’s divine invitation to rest in His presence and listen to His voice. This was missing from my life and what I had been spiritually seeking. I have endeavored to make that time to balance my life between the sacred and the profane, always with the spirit of the monastery and the nuns ever-present in my heart.

It is with the deepest gratitude that I thank the Sisters of St Benedict for sharing your monastic sanctuary and your extraordinary journeys with me. I, in turn, am able to bequeath this light of Christ to others, in the expression of humility, loyalty, abundant love and listening to others. I now plan my next journey to the monastery, where I am always filled with so much gratitude to God for calling me to come and speak with him.

Every sister has a very special place in my heart because without their collective spirit, the monastery’s charism would not resonate as powerfully. You have each been blessed with special gifts that make your heavenly purpose so evident. I also want to offer my blessings and love to Sister Mary Victor Kercher for inspiring my Benedictine journey beyond my imagination and to Sister Jane Will for her loving exposition of monastic life and

The Rule of Saint Benedict during my formation as an Oblate.

2016 Hopes and Prayers

by Oblate Candidate Jeanne Zack



Oblate Candidate Jeanne Zack

- To wake up each morning with a joyful heart
- To take time each day in the presence of God; meditating on His word
- To be fully present (mindful) in conversation with people
- To have a teachable spirit
- To be a sheep in the Shepherd’s Garden of Life humbly doing God’s work
- To forgive even myself
- To sing with spontaneity
- To be flexible on the journey
- To love unconditionally, because this is Christ’s love for me
- To have gratitude for at least one thing each day
- To give abundantly with no strings attached
- To see the world with the eyes of a little child
- To have compassion for others, since I do not know the details of their journeys
- To be transformed each day knowing with God all things are possible

My Prayer for 2016

by Oblate Candidate Marcia Stroud



Oblate Candidate Marcia Stroud

The year 2015 was an amazing journey, far beyond my expectations, after my return to the Catholic Church in October, 2014. From this experience, my desire for 2016 is to evangelize and reach out to other fallen away Catholics. I also hope to inspire others to develop a closer relationship with God. My prayer is to place my trust in God because He knows what is best for me in my life. I want to accept His will. The Book of Proverbs, Chapter 3, says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; on your own intelligence do not rely. In all ways be mindful of Him, and he will make straight your paths." This is what I seek.



Oblates is published four times a year under the leadership of Oblate Director Sister Brenda Engleman.

Send comments to the Oblate Office

Monastery Immaculate Conception
802 E. 10th Street • Ferdinand, IN 47532
oblates@thedome.org
Sister Brenda: 812-367-1411, ext. 2827

In Memoriam

Rest in Peace, Olivia



Olivia Adler, one of our dedicated Oblates, died on November 17 at the age of 98. Olivia made her oblation in June, 2008. She is survived by one son and four daughters; in addition, she had 15 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Olivia was a loving wife, mother and grandmother. In addition, she was an active member of Holy Redeemer Church in Evansville. As I think back about my visits with Olivia, I remember her sincere smile and gentle, caring ways. She was indeed a people person and never seemed to meet a stranger.

Olivia became an Oblate in 2008, which was a wonderful fit for her. From my contact with her, I know that she was a deeply spiritual lady who was close to her God. A year or so after Olivia's oblation, her son Gary, his wife, Carolyn, and Olivia's granddaughter, Pauletta, all followed in her footsteps and began their Oblate journeys as well.

Certainly, we will miss Olivia's presence among us here on earth. Yet, our faith assures us that she is living in God's presence and surrounded by her loving family members who went before her. She is indeed resting in peace.

Sincerely, Sister Brenda

We Remember in Our Prayers:

John O'Grady—Oblate Candidate Jeanne Zack's father

Dave Richards, Jr.—Oblate Dave Richards' father

Stan Schroeder—Oblate Mel Schroeder's brother

Rest in Peace, Judy



On January 20, Oblate Judy Powers went to heaven. She lived in Cottleville, MO, which is in the St. Louis area. She is survived by 7 siblings. One

brother recently died.

Judy made her oblation in October 2013, along with her good friends, Jean Siebelts, Joann Rubeck and Lynn Steiden. To say that she loved being an Oblate here at Ferdinand is certainly an understatement.

Judy was a pastoral associate for many years in St. Joseph Parish, which is a large, thriving parish. Fortunately, Sisters Mary Claude Croteau, Barbara C. Schmitz, Teresa Gunter and I were able to attend her funeral on Saturday, January 23. Over 500 people attended the funeral. The congregation filled the church with its lively and spirited singing and praising of God. What a wonderful tribute to Judy. She will be missed, but never forgotten. We love you, Judy. Sister Brenda

A Noble Woman Indeed

by Sister Mary Claude Croteau

Oblate Judy Powers, who recently passed into eternity, was a noble woman. Having dealt with serious life problems—struggling with long-term dyslexia, remaining in a difficult marriage until her husband's death, overcoming a serious gambling addiction, and dealing with the medical horrors of this past year—Judy breathed her last with acceptance, peace, gratitude, and a great love for God, family, and friends. May Judy rest in peace.

Sister Mary Claude served as Judy's companion during her formation year prior to becoming an Oblate.

Belcourt Oblates

Thoughts and Goals for 2016

by Phyllis Jollie, Director of Oblates,
Belcourt, North Dakota

We will continue to study and discuss Sister Joan Chittister's book, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*. Through our study, we hope to live the Benedictine way of life as fully as we can with the grace of God. We want to be more supportive of our fellow Oblates since we have members who are aging and dealing with various medical issues. We will strive to see Christ in everyone we meet. Last, but not least, we extend many wishes to all of you at Ferdinand for good health, prosperity and happiness for the New Year.



Phyllis Jollie



Oblate Special!

Get your own copy of *A Transformed Life* by Sister Maria Tasto at a discount! The special 3-DVD set and guidebook usually sells for \$94.99, but we are offering all Oblates the chance to buy the complete set for only \$45.

We will have copies available at the February Oblate meeting for you to purchase. You can also order online through our Monastery Gift Shop: www.monasterygiftshop.org. Use promo code ATLOB2016 when ordering.

In six 45-minute conferences, Sister Maria Tasto guides you along the path of becoming who God created you to be. Using the lens of Scripture and inspired by the work of Father Thomas Keating, she shares what she has gleaned from years of walking with others on the spiritual journey and from her own remarkable path.

With profound insight and compassion, Sister Maria helps you to recognize your false self, transform your attitude and responses, deepen your relationship with God, and come into the fullness of life, where true happiness lies.

Oblate Directory Information

As most of you already know, we are in the process of designing and printing an Oblate Directory. You will find specific information on the enclosed flier. We do hope that many of you will join us in this good work.

You may email pictures to me or send hard copies through the mail. On hard copies, don't forget to put your names on the back of the pictures. Please let us know what information you want us to put in the directory. We are choosing not to use emails. Please tell us if you do NOT want your phone number, address, etc. publicized. We will abide by your wishes. Also, all pictures should be in a JPEG file. We need to have all pictures sent to the editor by March 15.

The directory team is as follows:

- Sister Brenda is the director of the project. Basically, all pictures and information will be sent to me in the Oblate Office. Oblate assistants will help me track all information, send emails and make phone calls. I will oversee sending final copies of the directory to the Oblates. I live here at the monastery. Please send all email to this address: bengleman@thedome.org
- Candidate Dianne LeDuc is designer and technology assistant. She is making black and white copies of all colored pictures and emailing them to the editor and me. She has already set up excel forms to facilitate the tracking process. Dianne lives in Washington, D.C.
- Oblate Joann Rubeck is the editor of the Oblate Directory. She will choose the final paper, design & lay-out for the directory. She will type, print, and compile all information and pictures. She will assemble all directories. Joann lives in Metropolis, Illinois.

Again, thank you ahead of time for your participation in this project. So far, there seems to be much excitement and enthusiasm for this endeavor. *Sister Brenda*

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Ferdinand Benedictine Oblates receive

10% off
your entire order!

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



MONASTERY
GIFT SHOP

Monastery Moments and Oblate Offerings

Saturday, February 13, 2016

Forgiving What You Cannot Forget will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (ET) Presenters: Sister Jane Becker, OSB and Sister Jane Will, OSB

Saturday, February 20, 2016

Day of Reflection will be held in St. Gertrude Hall from 9:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (ET) Presenter: Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, from St. Meinrad Archabbey

Saturday, February 27, 2016

Never Despair of God's Mercy will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (ET). Presenter: Sister Karen Joseph, OSB

Saturday, March 19, 2016

Loss and Grief: Why Didn't They Tell Me It Would Hurt Like This? will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (ET) Presenter: Pat Evans

Saturday, March 19, 2016

Oblate Retreat* will be held in St. Gertrude Hall from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Presenters: Sister Kathryn Huber, OSB and Oblate Shirley France

Sunday, March 20, 2016

Oblate Retreat* will be held in St. Gertrude Hall from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Presenters: Sister Kathryn Huber, OSB and Oblate Shirley France

** Oblates are invited to attend the retreat on either afternoon or both afternoons. Each day will have different input.*

March 24-27, 2016

Triduum Retreat will be held in Kordes Hall from 3:00 p.m. Thursday to Easter Sunday morning (ET). Presenter: Sister Betty Drewes, OSB

Saturday, April 2, 2016

Unwrapping God's Gift From the Sea will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. (ET) Presenter: Sister Mary Ann Verkamp, OSB



Saturday, April 9, 2016

Healing and Music will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (ET). Presenter: Ruth Stanley

April 15-17, 2016

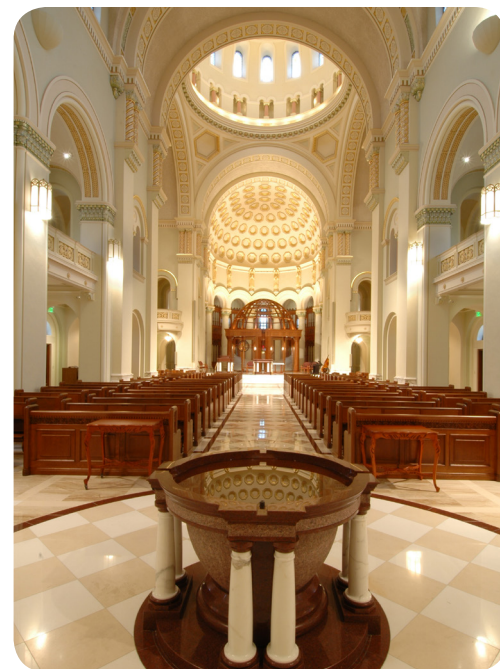
Weekend Away Retreat will be held in Kordes Hall from 7:30 p.m. Friday to 1:00 p.m. Sunday (ET). Come away to a retreat atmosphere of quiet, meals and prayer with the sisters in the monastery chapel. You may request spiritual direction for an added cost.

Saturday, April 16, 2016

Psalms: Prayers of the Heart will be held in Kordes Hall from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. (ET). Presenter: Sister Louise LaRoche, OSB

Sunday, May 15, 2016

Prayer According to The Holy Rule will be held in St. Gertrude Hall from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (ET). Presenter: Sister Jane Will, OSB



Oblate Birthdays

February

7—Lynn Steiden, 11—June Berg, Richard Huggins, and John Wallace, 15—Mary Ann Stoll, 16—Carol Dunn, 18—Caroline Deutsch and Rita Kohl, 21—Linda Selaya, 24—Carolyn Adler, 26—Patti Schroeder, 29—Mary Martha Salas



March

2—JoAnn Desjarlais, 12—Scarlett Winters, 15—Shirley Demuth, 17—Patty Allery and Kathy Dixon, 22—Verna Jeanotte and Ruth Keethers, 25—Denise Leinenbach, 29—Gary D. Pope

April

4—Sharon Cavanaugh, 7—Judy Bueckert, 28—Shirley Stern, 29—Marcia Brown and Carole Swim, 30—Ron Allery and Leeny Hardesty

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>

You can also download a liturgy schedule from the Oblate page:

thedome.org/oblates

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Friday, Feb. 12
(The First Friday of Lent)

4:30 to 7:30 p.m. EST

**Monastery Event Hall at the Sisters
of St. Benedict, Ferdinand**

Meals available to all ages in center

**St. Benedict's Brew Works beer
on tap and available by growler**

Oblates

**Monastery Immaculate Conception
802 E. 10th Street • Ferdinand, Indiana 47532-9239**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“And finally, never lose hope in God’s mercy.”

—Rule of St. Benedict 4:74

Share the Joy of Being an Oblate of St. Benedict

We encourage all Oblates and Oblate candidates to share their joy of being an Oblate with others. Talk about your Oblate experiences with your friends, relatives and members of your church. Be on the lookout for persons that might be fine Oblates. Give Oblate brochures to interested persons or invite them to attend an Oblate meeting. We welcome those who want to learn more about the Oblates to contact Sister Brenda Engleman. Contact information can be found on page four of this newsletter.

