



Oblates

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

April 2017

BE SALT! BE LIGHT! BE FULLY ALIVE!

Teaching by Sister Karen Joseph
Oblate Meeting, April 22, 2017



Oblate Stephanie Smith and Sister Karen Joseph smile for the camera as they are discussing Sister Karen's presentation.

What I really want to talk about with you today is our need to stay focused on what gives us life so that we can be what we are truly called to be: Christians, people who know how to “be kind!” Hence in looking at the Sermon on the Mount, chapters 5, 6, & 7 of the Gospel of Matthew, we hear strongly our call to Be Salt! Be Light! Be fully alive! You have an enormous impact on your family members, co-workers, friends, and neighbors in the way you live your daily life.

In our day, it is so easy to get consumed by the daily demands and our daily “busyness”. We also get consumed by our concerns for the family’s future: our finances, ours or our family members’ health, well being, our country and its safety and security. But, then, when has it ever been easy? Each generation has had its demands. And who says we can’t live with joy and hope in the process?

It is not enough to merely lament over the state of our lives and our society today. There has to be hope and joy. There has to be vision; there has to be a beginning. St. Benedict reminds us that we are really always “beginners” on the way. In fact, Benedict says that ours is really a Rule specifically for beginners, those always open to new beginnings, to beginning again, and again. (Conversatio=turning)

Each new generation needs not only economic plans but ideas to inspire, hopes to encourage, ideals to live by, and somewhere to start. This is, in some sense, what being a follower of Christ is really about. It is people living in practical testimony to the true nature of God and the true nature of humanity. It is people living in community, our Church communities, our neighborhoods, our families in peace and justice. It is people giving their service, giving themselves, for the good of others. It is people living in simplicity and faith. It is people living, with forgiving hearts, in lifelong faithfulness to our baptismal commitment, in steadfast loyalty and with joy.

It is a people on the way and a people of “the way”.

If you ask me what our Church needs now, what our world needs now, I would say resoundingly: solid Christian witness! Why? Because we have, inherently and instinctively, in the example of the way Christ lived what the Church and world need now more than ever! In a complex world characterized by mobility, consumerism, infidelity, fickleness, violence, fragmentation, individualism, prejudice, and idolatry, our Christian values and our Christian way of living offers a counter cultural witness of: stability, stewardship, faithfulness, an inclusive community of equals committed to non-violent ways of conflict resolution, sharing of common goods, a life of charity and service to others, and the worship of the one true God. Christian life is a blessing to be had; a blessing to be shared; we are, or can be, a blessing for our weary world. But what can inspire us to make sure that our ways “will be different than the world’s ways”, preferring nothing whatever to Christ’s love and way of loving? (RB 4) What is the real cost of being a “witness”.....a word actually meaning martyrdom, the giving of our life blood?

Turning to my own lectio divina and reading, I have found an answer in the Sermon on the Mount. So I would like to talk with you today about three basic themes: Being Salt and being Light AND Being Fully Alive....all of which makes us, as Christian women/men, women/men of prophecy in our times. Being “prophetic is NOT just the “job” of nuns, monks and priests! It involves ALL of us.



Oblate Mary Thale, Sister Eileen Reckelhoff and Oblate Arleta Weyer. Oblate Mary Thale presently lives in Arizona, but she stopped by the monastery to visit some friends as she was passing through this area.

The remainder of Sister Karen's presentation can be viewed on our website at www.thedome.org/get-involved/oblates.

Hospitality

Hospitality is a homespun virtue. Most of us learn it at home and, for the most part, we practice it at home. We learn that guests are to be welcomed and that we must be nice to them.

We also learn hospitality from the Scriptures. From the Old Testament or the Jewish Scriptures, as I believe it is proper to call these first books in the Bible, Abraham presents us with a classic story of hospitality. When Abraham welcomed the three travelers with freshly baked bread and a freshly killed and roasted calf, they told him the good news about the upcoming birth of his Son. Hospitality pays off. There are many other instances of hospitality in the Old Testament---Lot and Joseph, just to mention a couple.

In the New Testament, we also find countless examples of hospitality beginning with the Birth of Jesus, His presentation in the temple and continuing throughout His public life. Here we find the classic hospitality story of Martha and Mary where we learn that hospitality has at least two aspects---serving and listening. Again, there are too many examples to mention. After the Resurrection, Jesus shows hospitality by cooking breakfast for his disciples.

Teaching by Sister Helen Jean Kormelink
Oblate Meeting, February 18, 2017

St. Benedict also stressed hospitality in the Holy Rule. He is vehement that guests, whom he says “are never absent”, should be welcomed and treated as Christ throughout their visit. He states that no difference should be made between the treatment of the poor and the rich. All guests are to be made welcome whether they come during the day or during the night.

We closed the presentation by the reminder that hospitality is just one version of the Great Commandment...Love God, by welcoming Him into your heart, love yourself by taking care of your needs so that you can love others by welcoming them into your heart and into your home.



Sister Helen Jean Kormelink



Oblate Carol Dunn, Oblate Julie Beck, and Oblate Mary Eileen Fritz are examining our new polo shirts.

New Website for the Ferdinand Monastery

Dear Oblates,

I want to invite all of you who have access to the internet to examine our attractive, new website.

Simply go to www.thedome.org and a whole new world will open up to you. You will find a wealth of information about our monastery. I especially encourage you to click on the “Get Involved” tab and click on “Oblates.” There are pictures, schedules and past newsletters, to mention just a few items of interest. Our website is still in progress, so you need to check regularly for new additions.

Sister Briana Craddock, who works in our communications office, is the designer of our new website. She has spent countless hours on this project, working day and night. I personally want to thank her for sharing her skills and talents with all of us. We are blessed indeed.

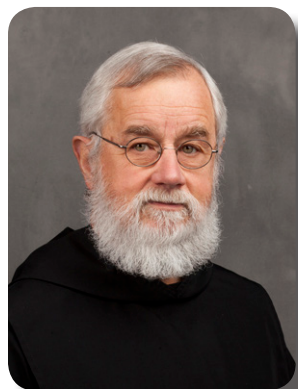
Gratefully,
Sister Brenda Engleman



Ferdinand Benedictine Oblates receive **10% off your entire order!** Make sure to let the clerk know you are one of our Oblates!

The Book of Glory: Reflections on John 13-21

Teaching by Father Eugene Hensell, OSB
March 18, 2017



Father Eugene Hensell, OSB

Father Eugene is no stranger to our Benedictine monastery here in Ferdinand. We are blessed to have him as one of our regular chaplains. In addition, he teaches Scripture to us at various times throughout the year. On March 18, Father Eugene presented a day of reflection to approximately 80 persons, including sisters, Oblates and other visitors. He is an outstanding teacher and shares his knowledge and wisdom with his listeners in an easy, understandable manner.

Father Eugene Hensell has quite a list of credentials. He received his PhD from St. Louis University in 1975. He is currently Associate Professor of Scripture.

Father Eugene is presently involved in full time retreat work, conducting biblical retreats and workshops for priests, religious, and laity throughout the country and in several foreign countries. He brings to this work over 30 years of teaching experience, as well as a strong sense of the Church's pastoral needs. With his wide contacts among clergy, religious and laity, Father Eugene brings to his students a deep and sympathetic understanding of the challenges facing many facets of life in the contemporary Church.

Reflections on John's Gospel 13-21

by Sister Linda Selaya, DHM

I had the opportunity to attend Father Eugene Hensell's presentation entitled, "The Book of Glory: Reflections on John 13-21" on March 18. I must say that his reflections gave me much to ponder both on that day and in the days that have followed. The Gospel of John is my favorite gospel and I have read many commentaries on this gospel. I especially appreciate how his presentation led to clarity of understanding that, although theological, speaks to the heart at a deep level.

Father Eugene began by giving a recap of a previous presentation he had given on the first 12 chapters of the Gospel of John. A simple, but profound statement that he made is that the Gospel of John is summarized in verses 1 and 3 of the Prologue. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1) and, "All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being" (John 1:3). According to Father Eugene, the rest of the Gospel is just a commentary on who Jesus is. I had never looked at this gospel in this way, and it definitely provides a different lens for viewing the Gospel of John.

An important point that Father Eugene stressed is that the only way to know God is through Jesus and John 13-21 is about what Jesus does, thus revealing who God is. A major point that caught my attention was Jesus' commandment to love one another, and that, as Jesus loved the disciples, so must they love one another. This immediately led me to ask myself, "What is love?" and "How do I experience Jesus' love?"

The first question reminded me of the quote in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interest, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, and it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes



Sister Linda Selaya, DHM

all things, and endures all things. Needless to say, Jesus personifies in the gospels all that Paul states is love. This realization, in turn, has led me to consider the many ways I have experienced Jesus' love, and is a guide for how I can love others using Jesus as my guide.

Another idea that Father Eugene brought up is the deeper meaning of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. Father Eugene pointed out that the washing of the feet is all about radical service and that Jesus loves us as an equal. This is a strong invitation to treat others as equals, regardless of who they are. After all, Jesus washed the feet of all the disciples, including Judas, who betrayed him. Jesus was revealing the love of God and we are to do the same. A strong theme of Father's presentation is that we have no access to God if we do not love one another. It is by loving one another that we have a connectedness with Jesus, who in turn gives us a connection with the Father.

Although Father Eugene touched on many other points in John's gospel, the above comments are what spoke to me at the time and continue to be sources of reflection on a regular basis.



Oblate Barb Nonte, Oblate Sandy Turner, Oblate Marcia Brown, and Oblate Julie Beck are reviewing notes from the morning sessions.

Key Highlights of Father Eugene Hensell's Presentation On the Gospel of John

by Oblate Shirley France



Oblate Shirley France

In John's Gospel, Jesus Is Always in Charge.

How exciting this is to me! It is a whole new perspective of our Lord.

When reading the three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, the synoptics, Jesus is a surrendered, suffering Jesus. In John, however, Jesus runs the show from the beginning, when at the last meal with the disciples, to the end, when He decides to take His last breath on the cross.

He speaks with authority when arrested, leads the interrogation when before Pilate and even carries His own cross to Golgotha. This is a very different Jesus than portrayed in the other three Gospels. Scripture tells us that Jesus knew where he came from and where He was going. This confidence and encouragement live in each of us too. And... by the power of Christ in us, we are led by the Spirit to be strong and courageous. We are assured that Jesus knows everything, that he is always in charge and that He loves us.

The NEW Commandment Calls Us to Radical Service

Jesus did not merely tell us to live out the New Commandment of loving one another as He loves us. He showed us how. From the signs revealing how Jesus manifests the reality of God in the first twelve chapters, to washing of the disciples' feet, to engaging the woman at the well, and to greeting even Judas, the betrayer, as His friend. When we live this new commandment, we have a new identity too. We are also called, "friend".

Jesus calls us to relate to every person as an equal. We are called to do now what Jesus did when He was in our midst. If we don't do this, all the rituals, the prayers and the offerings, mean nothing at all.

Jesus asks us if we are willing to be servants, willing to wash the feet of anyone he puts in our path. Observing the New Commandment, Father Eugene explained that we



Oblate Dianne LeDuc, Candidate Reverend Faye Bilskie, and Oblate Stephanie Smith are sharing a lighter moment after discussing John's gospel.



Oblate Kathy Knust, Oblate Patti Schroeder, and Oblate Mel Schroeder are eagerly awaiting Fr. Eugene's afternoon session.

are in peace. We are complete. Father shared that the heart of Christianity is the unity of all believers. Living the New Commandment in radical service to one another is living the Gospel of Jesus.

Once Resurrected, Historical Jesus is Gone

The Risen Lord is a new phenomenon who is only recognized by faith. Jesus did provide continuity between the Historical Jesus and the Risen Lord by showing the disciples the nail-scarred hands, feet and side. Once Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples did not see Jesus; they saw the Lord! He sent the Spirit to the disciples as He told them prior to the crucifixion.

This is the commissioning of the disciples. This is also the commissioning of us today! We receive the Spirit enabling us to live this New Commandment.

John, this book of glory, reveals that the only way to know God is to know Jesus.

The truth is that Jesus is the Risen Lord who is always in charge. He showed us how to live the New Commandment in radical service to be called His friend. And we today are commissioned by the Risen Lord and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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

Remembering Charlie Luebbehusen



On Tuesday evening, April 3, 2017, we Oblates lost an exceptional member of our program, Charlie Luebbehusen. Charlie died at the age of 75 in Ferdinand, IN. In 1962, he married Judy and they had 2 sons, Bryan and Chris. Bryan's wife is Diane and Chris' wife is Angie. Charlie especially loved spending time with his family which also included five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Charlie worked for 54 years as a project engineer at Kimball. Wow! That is quite a record. He definitely grew up in a German family who modeled a strong work ethic.

Charlie and Judy both became Oblates in 2010 and they made a great team. Actually, it is hard for me to talk about Charlie without also mentioning Judy. I met Charlie four years ago when I became director of oblates here at the monastery. He was always ready to help out wherever there was a need—here at the monastery, in his church and throughout the civic community. If Charlie were here listening to me compliment him, I am sure that he would be embarrassed. He didn't want any awards or special attention. He just did what came naturally to him.

Certainly the Oblates and all of those touched by Charlie's goodness will miss his physical presence among us. Yet we know he will continue to be very much alive in our hearts. Rest in peace, my friend.

Gratefully,

Sister Brenda Engleman



Oblate Elaine Baumgart and Sister Barbara Catherine Schmitz pause during a break in Fr. Eugene's presentation for a picture while talking about various happenings in their lives.

Alice Becomes an Oblate

Candidate Alice from the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW) will make her oblation on Tuesday, May 2nd. Sister Kathy Huber, as a representative of Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz, prioress, will officiate the ceremony. Sister Kathy has been Alice's companion throughout this journey of becoming an Oblate. We Ferdinand Oblates and sisters have gotten to know Alice more personally through Sister Kathy's many stories. Alice is indeed a spiritual, faith-filled woman who has been quite active in her Monastery of the Heart discussion group. This group was facilitated by our Oblate Shirley France and Jackie Burns, an Oblate of Erie, Pennsylvania. Jackie is also a retired prison chaplain and an Episcopal deacon.

After the oblation ceremony, there will be a reception for Alice. Staff members and participants of the Monastery of the Heart group will get to enjoy some of the tasty cookies from our monastery bakery here at Ferdinand.

An FYI:

Alice also wants to thank all of you sisters and Oblates for your continued prayers for her. She recently had surgery, but fortunately she is now pain-free.



Oblate Birthdays

May

6—Linda Doyle, 7—Barbara Poitra, 8—Mary Eileen Fritz, 10—Phyllis Claycamp, 17—Shirley France, 20—Sharon Kilpatrick, 21—Jean Siebelts, 23—Bridget Tierney, 27—Julie Beck, 28—Linda Begle, 31—Gail Trottier

June

6—Jeanne Zack, 7—James Werner, 8—Jim Goepfrich, 11—Diane Altstadt, 12—Karen Rexing, 15—Bernadette Heeke and Phyllis Jollie, 16—Rev. Earl Menchhofer, 20—Dayna Barlow and Joseph Marion, 21—Theresa Bauer and Anne Howerton, 24—Brenda De Motte

July

4—Elaine Baumgart, 7—Mary Lou Bassler and Mary Taber, 13—Dianne LeDuc, 17—Mary Lamberg, 20—Ed Brown and Sandra Turner

Oblates Ruth and Jim Goepfrich

The Path That Led Us to This Monastery

by Oblate Ruth Goepfrich

Looking back, the path that Jim and I traveled these past 45 years seems to have led us to this monastery. I grew up in St. Anthony, Indiana, which is just a few miles from Ferdinand. Unknowingly, I was fed a steady diet of Benedictine spirituality from my mother. Her aunt, Sister Frederica Dudine, was a sister at the monastery.

We spent many a Sunday afternoon visiting her there. The Benedictine sisters were also teachers in our school, and our parish had Benedictine priests from St. Meinrad.

I am the second of eight children, two boys and six girls. We grew up learning how to get along, to be happy with what we had, and to always be hospitable to whoever came to our home. There was always someone coming along who needed something and Mom and Dad were always helping. We shared what we had and others shared with us. We had to make do with what we had. We learned obedience. Since Dad worked in the factory during the day, my mom was in charge of us. I can still hear my dad telling me to obey my mom.

Jim grew up in Jasper in a family of 11 children, seven boys and four girls. His parents taught their children well. In a family that size, getting along was a requirement, not an option. The older ones took care of the younger ones. Jim is third oldest, so he spent much time helping his mother. As he helped alongside her, learning to cook, clean and care for the younger ones, he developed a deep faith and a strong work ethic that has carried him throughout life.

Our journey has taken us through many stages. We started our married life in Jasper. We built a house. We both had careers. We adopted our children. Our brothers and sisters married and started families. We moved to Ferdinand. Our parents' homes were always the center of the family.

Although I grew up with the sisters in my life, I didn't really know much about them. We found the sisters and Benedictine spirituality again not long after our granddaughter was born in 2008. She was in the neonatal unit at St. Mary's Hospital. A friend suggested blessing her with holy water from Lourdes. Not knowing where to find this holy water, I called the monastery for assistance. Sister Mary Roman took my call and gave me her bottle of water. We became fast friends and from there the Benedictine spirituality began to touch my heart and draw me in. I began to attend Saturday morning Mass with the sisters as I worked through my grief of losing our granddaughter. Sometimes Jim went with me. We eventually

grew to know the sisters as they reached out to us.

No one ever told me about the Oblates. I believe the Holy Spirit led me to discover them as I read on the monastery's website. After much reading, I contacted Sister Barbara Ann who was the Oblate director at that time. She was very kind

and invited me to attend an Oblate meeting as a guest. I did, and so the journey to becoming an Oblate began. I was accepted as a candidate in 2011. Sister Karen Joseph was my companion. On my Oblate journey I discovered that the values I had been taught at home mirrored the values in The Rule: community and hospitality along with sufficiency, humility and obedience. I made my Oblation in October 2012.

Jim also became interested in the Oblates and The Rule, and

sometimes he went to meetings with me. Because of getting to know the sisters,

other Oblates, and my commitment to The Rule, he was drawn deeper into his own spiritual journey. He became a candidate in 2014 and Sister Maura served as his companion. He made his Oblation in 2015.

As Oblates, our journey continues with a different outlook on life. We find ourselves looking for and finding God in the ordinary happenings in our lives day by day. On those days that we begin to worry about this or that, one of us will remind the other that we shouldn't waste today's graces on tomorrow's problems. Moment by moment we find Him right where we are.



Oblate Jim Goepfrich and Oblate Ruth Goepfrich

In Memoriam:

Oblate Joann Rubeck

Oblate Charlie Luebbehusen

Oblate Brenda Padget's father, Vernon Hunt.

Oblate Phyllis Jollie's sister, Yvonne Frederick.

For the Sick:

Oblate Julie Beck

Candidate Robin Dugan

Oblate Mary Metz

Oblate Elaine Nolan

Oblate Don Stanton

Monastery Moments and Oblate Offerings

Saturday, May 20, 2017

Mary-All Ways will be held in St. Gertrude Hall at 1:00 p.m. (ET)
Presenter: Betty Drewes, OSB

Friday and Saturday, June 2 and 3, 2017

Summer Social will be held on the monastery grounds. The social will run from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. (EDT) on Friday and from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday. Two concerts will be held on Friday night. A Color Run / Walk will be held on Saturday morning.

Sunday, June 11 to Sunday, June 18, 2017

Private/Personal Retreat will be held in Kordes Hall. Begins at 7:00 p.m. (ET) on June 11 and ends on June 18 at 10:00 a.m. This retreat is for those who like the retreat atmosphere of quiet, meals and prayer without a director.

Friday, June 16 to Friday, June 23, 2017

Preached Retreat. Details will follow at a future date.

Saturday and Sunday, June 24 and 25, 2017

Academy Alumnae Reunion will be held in Monastery Event Hall and the surrounding area. Saturday activities begin at 1:00 p.m. and conclude at 7:00 p.m. Monastery Event Hall opens on Sunday at 8:00 a.m. The Alumnae dinner follows Morning Prayer and Mass.

Sunday and Monday, July 2 and 3, 2017

Monasticism in the Twenty-first Century: A View from the Trenches will be held at the monastery. Presenter: Father Michael Casey. Father Casey is a prominent writer and speaker from Australia.

Saturday, August 12

Centering Prayer Workshop will be held at the monastery. Presenters: Sister Kathy Bilske and Sister Celeste Boda. More details to follow.

Sunday, August 20

Oblate Picnic will be held at the monastery. Details to follow at a later date.

Friday, September 8 to Friday, September 15, 2017

Directed Retreat will be held in Kordes Hall. Begins on September 8 at 7:00 p.m. (ET) and ends on September 15 at 10:00 a.m. This retreat provides the participants the opportunity to focus on their relationship with God and to meet six times with a spiritual director.

Father Michael Casey to Speak at Ferdinand Monastery



Father Michael Casey, OSCO

On July 2 and 3, 2017, our Benedictine monastery here at Ferdinand will be hosting renowned writer and speaker, Father Michael Casey. Father Casey is a monk and scholar from Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia and has authored numerous books that some of you Oblates may have read or heard about. He turns to particular Benedictine values like silence, leisure, reading, chastity and poverty...all of which he considers most urgent for Christians to incorporate into their lives today. A couple of the popular books that we have used here at Ferdinand are *Seventy-four Tools for Good Living* and *Strangers to the City*. If you go onto the Internet, you will be able to find many more of his books.

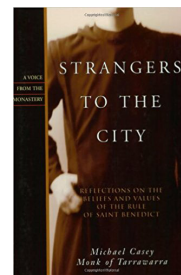
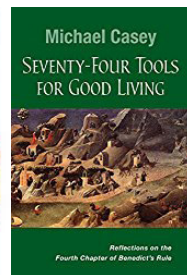
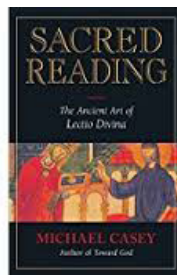
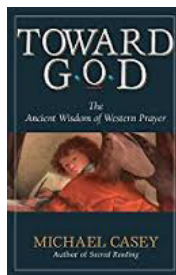
I would like to invite you Oblates to consider joining us on one or two of these days to hear Father Casey speak and share his wisdom and experiences. If you possibly would be interested in coming, would you contact me? We are attempting to get an accurate number of possible attendees.

Father Casey is speaking at two other monasteries while he is here in the area and we are sharing the expenses. As you might expect, hosting him will be rather expensive. So we are asking for a free will offering.

At this time, we hope to have available housing for those who may wish to attend.

Sister Brenda

812-367-1411, ext. 2827 • bengleman@thedome.org





SISTERS OF ST. BENEDICT
FERDINAND, INDIANA

Oblates

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

“*Listen readily to holy reading and devote yourself often to prayer.*”
—Rule of St. Benedict 4:55, 56

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.



From L to R: Reverend Earl Menchhofer; Inquirer Gail Burke; director of Oblates, Sister Brenda Engleman; and Deacon Tom Burke are certainly having fun as they pose for the photographer.