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OBLATES OF SAINT BENEDICT

Saint Vincent Archabbey

300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650-2690

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Please note forms for renewal of Oblation, celebration on March 21, Oblate *Directory*, and mentoring on fliers.

DETACHMENT: LEAVING BEHIND EVERYTHING IN ORDER TO GAIN EVERYTHING THAT REALLY MATTERS

Dear Oblates, Oblate Novices, and Friends,

Our materialistic world tempts us to acquire as many possessions and pleasures as we possibly can. Subtle but powerful psychological appeals urge us to become attached to particular brands of food, clothes, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and cars so that we may keep buying more and more, desiring more and more, and thus having no time or energy to ponder the deeper meaning of life. In contrast, Christ lovingly but sternly exhorts us, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and begin to follow in My footsteps. Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Mt 16:24-25). He likewise warns us, "None of you can be My disciple if he does not renounce all his possessions" (Lk 14:33). In St. John's Gospel Jesus summons us to detachment and renunciation in a more symbolic way: "I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. The man who loves his life loses it, while the man who hates his life in this world preserves it to life eternal" (Jn 12:24-25).

Christian detachment involves not only restraint on desires for material goods; it also applies to attitudes toward intellectual and spiritual goods. It must affect, for example, our approach to *lectio divina*; we must learn to accept even those words of Scripture that we find least appealing. In my personal cycle of readings for *lectio*, I recently turned to the Book of Numbers. Even in my better moments I was not especially eager to plow through lists of census figures and detailed specifications of the duties of Levitical clans. Nonetheless, I committed myself to struggle with all 36 chapters, with less time and energy, of course, devoted to the seemingly routine descriptions. As it turns out, I did find some gems amid the less attractive passages. When the twelve princes of Israel were preparing to make offerings to God to commemorate the consecration and dedication of the altar in the Dwelling, they apparently had

intended to bring their offerings all on one day. However, "the Lord said to Moses, 'Let *one prince* a day present his offering for the dedication of the altar'" (italics mine) (Num 7:11). There follows a long list of apparently identical offerings made by each of the princes, beginning with Judah's (Num 7:12-88). Pondering this call to distribute the offerings over twelve days, I was reminded of our need to offer ourselves to God over and over; one or two self-offerings a day will not suffice. A morning offering alone (although it is an excellent practice) will not suffice. God asks of us, in Christ, to be continual offerings of praise and thanksgiving. The offering that we make in the morning must be repeated often, especially when the demands of the day tempt us to give in to discouragement or self-will. Again and again, perhaps many times each day, we are to detach ourselves from self-centered impulses and reattach ourselves to God's will as we can best understand it. Thus, in communion with Christ, we regularly rededicate ourselves as "living sacrifices of praise."

Detachment and death to self, being essential to all Christian life, are also prominent in Benedictine spirituality. St. Benedict, knowing that we are creatures who tend to self-will, warns the monk against drifting away from God "through the sloth of disobedience" (RB Prol:2); only the "labor of obedience" will bring him back. The disciple must repeatedly detach himself from old, comfortable behavioral patterns, such as vicious talk, deceit, injustice, slander, readiness to be tempted, and self-satisfaction (see Prol:17, 26-29). Recognizing that we can become complacent about our faults, St. Benedict urges us to adopt "a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love" (Prol:47). The abbot, like any Christian, must continually detach himself from any attitudes and practices that keep him from Christ-like leadership. He is to avoid favoritism (2:16-22), must shun "too great concern for the fleeting and temporal things of this world" (2:33), and should regularly seek "the amendment of his own faults" (2:40). All the brothers are to keep from defending "their own

views obstinately,” from following their own hearts’ selfish desires (3:8), and from rashly deviating from the *Rule* (3:7). Everyone is to be on guard against wrongful thoughts, which, as soon as they enter one’s heart, are to be “dashed … against Christ” (4:50), who alone has the power to overcome them. Thus the basic thrust of spiritual detachment is to overcome and transcend self-will in its many forms. Acknowledging this, monks choose “to live in monasteries and to have an abbot over them” (5:12). The obedience that they offer must be “free from any grumbling or any reaction of unwillingness” (5:14) and “must be given gladly” (5:16); otherwise they are still fundamentally attached to their own wills. As an outward expression of inner detachment, a monk gladly rids himself of his possessions “without keeping back a single thing for himself” (58:24), and his being stripped of possessions and of worldly clothes symbolizes his commitment to make himself a total self-gift to Christ; in fact, “from that day [of vows] he will not have even his own body at his disposal” (58:25). Because the monk belongs totally to God, any attachment that impedes this complete commitment must be left behind. In place of former attachments he gains an eternal dwelling with God, even in this life, and he finds the deep and lasting joy of “preferr[ing] nothing whatever to Christ” (72:11).

In his book *Strangers to the City*, Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., treats “dispossession” as a key monastic value. He reflects on dispossession in terms of the categories material poverty, poverty of spirit, and the fragility of life. Referring to the trials of this life, he asserts, “It is eschatological hope that allows the monk to take present reverses less seriously and to hanker less intensely for the conveniences and gratifications that will last only for a time. This attitude derives not from a negativity about created reality itself, but from the recognition that when affections and desires become fixated at a level below the optimum, one’s whole personhood is devalued and one’s sensibility is debased. … Monastic tradition is formed around a firm faith that as human beings we are intended for union with God. Nothing else can fully satisfy us. To allow ourselves to be diverted by the pursuit of temporal realities in such a way that our spiritual energies are diminished is ultimately self-diminishing” (p. 89).

The occasion of ultimate dispossession is one’s death, over which we have little or no control but in which we have a marvelous opportunity for total self-surrender to God. Of course, the better we practice surrendering

ourselves during daily life, the better we are likely to do it at death and the less purgation we are likely to require. The critical role of death in our surrender to God may explain why St. Benedict exhorts us, “Day by day remind yourself that you are going to die” (4:47). A healthy, Christ-centered outlook on death can help us to detach ourselves from relatively unimportant earthly concerns and to embrace the values that lead to everlasting life, which is a matter of relationships with God and with others who are in communion with Him. The death of a loved one can also reorient us to embrace that which truly lasts. As some of you know, my mother died rather unexpectedly on December 26. Previous to her death, I had been planning to work intensively on Christmas mail from December 26 to 29; instead I ended up being deeply involved with meetings (in conjunction with my sister) with a real-estate agent, an undertaker, and a lawyer; with efforts to clean the house and search through files; with arrangements for the funeral services; and with a rummaging through material things with some discernment about how to dispose of them. The disorientation that I experienced guided me to view all other projects in proper perspective and to cherish the lasting relationships with God and with fellow human beings that fueled me to enter into a series of unexpected tasks with relative peace. The marvelous kindness and generosity of people almost naturally came to the forefront of my mind. Most especially, the arrival of eight monks for the funeral (450 miles from the Archabbey) caused me to be overwhelmed with gratitude for God’s lavish love. What else matters, I realized, than that we hold on only very lightly to our plans and the things of this world and that we use all the gifts of God to hasten one another on to eternal life in Christ? What else matters than that we do everything with love and, therefore, detach ourselves from every less worthy motive?

Regarding death, Fr. Michael Casey comments that when we “turn our attention to the certainty of death,” we can see that “I had better hurry up and get started on doing the things that I want to have done during my lifetime. For the night comes when no one can do any work. And so, whether we voluntarily anticipate death by self-dispossession or whether we cling tightly until the last moment, at the end we are all called to detachment not only from material realities but from bodily instincts and eventually from the body and from life itself” (*Strangers to the City*, p. 88).

This coming Lent it might be a propitious time to examine our attachments and to ask the Lord to help us to be more detached so that we might have more room for our relationship with Him. Are we too caught up in buying, spending, and frantic working? Are we intent upon remaking other people according to our ideals? Are we so invested in plans for the future that we are would be inclined to despair should they fall through? Are we

overconcerned about our appearance or about food, clothes, and furniture? Are we driven to succeed at all costs in some realm of activity? As we examine where we need most to be freed from such attachments, let us remember that our baptism commits us daily to die to self and to rise with Christ. Let us recall that Benedictine life requires an ongoing denial of selfish impulses so that we can recommit ourselves to *lectio*, the Divine Office, acts of loving service, deeper personal involvement with others in community, and everything else that helps us to live in fuller communion with Christ. (A retreat or day of recollection can also do wonders to shake us loose of our attachments.) Like the monk who is “stripped

of everything of his own that he is wearing” (*RB* 58:26), let us ask for the grace to “put to death whatever in [our] nature is rooted in earth” (*Col 3:5*) so that we may clothe ourselves “with kindness, humility, meekness, and patience” (*Col 3:12*), “put on love” over all these other virtues (*Col 3:14*), and “put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the desires of the flesh” (*Rom 13:14*).

In the peace of Christ and St. Benedict,

Fr. Donald S. Raila, O.S.B.,
Director of Oblates

A MESSAGE FROM ARCHABBOT DOUGLAS

Lent, 2007

Dear Oblates and Friends,

On March 21 we will celebrate the Solemnity of Our Holy Father Saint Benedict, the founder of Western Monasticism, in the context of the Lenten Season. In Chapter 49 of *The Holy Rule*, Saint Benedict speaks of “the observance of Lent.”

Saint Benedict sees Lent as a period of prayer, penance and spiritual reflection in preparation for Easter. The truth for which Lent prepares us is the reality of God’s unconditional love for us as reflected in the death and Resurrection of Christ.

Through prayer and penance during the coming Lenten Season, we can come to see more clearly that the difficulties and challenges of this life are not cause for despair. As we grow in faith, we also grow in the awareness that there is more love in God than there is sin or evil in us or in our world.

Know that you and your family and loved ones are remembered in the prayers of the Benedictine Community as we look forward to the celebration of Easter.

Sincerely in Christ,

Archabbot Douglas

RENEWAL OF OBLATION AND KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE ARCHABBEY

All Oblates who do not have the occasion to renew their Oblation at St. Vincent or with local deaneries are encouraged to make the renewal privately on or about March 21 and to send a completed renewal form (see the flier) to the Oblate Office. It is helpful to know of your ongoing, active interest in the Oblate Program and your personal growth in Benedictine spirituality. Those wishing to make donations may write out checks to ST. VINCENT ARCHABBEY.

Also, if you are an Oblate novice or an Oblate who does not participate in a deanery and have not contacted the Archabbey for several years, please use the renewal form to express your interest in the Oblate Program. In particular, if you have been an Oblate novice for over a year, please remember that you are eligible to become a full Oblate if you fulfill the requirements in II. E of the *Oblate Formation Booklet*. In any case, it would be good to know if we at the Archabbey can help you in any way on your journey as an Oblate or as an Oblate novice. Also, if you are no longer interested in the Oblate Program and no longer wish to receive the newsletter, this might be a good opportunity to let us know your intention. Fr. Donald hopes soon to send letters to all those Oblates and Oblate novices who are not part of a deanery and who have apparently not been in touch with the Oblate Office for over three years. If you are genuinely interested in continuing your pursuit of an Oblate vocation, please make it a point to renew your Oblation in a living, self-sacrificing way!

SOLEMNITY OF ST. BENEDICT AT THE ARCHABBEY ON MARCH 21

Oblates from all areas are welcome to join Oblates of the Latrobe (St. Gregory) Deanery on Wednesday, March 21, to celebrate the Solemnity of the Passing of Our Holy Father Benedict with the monastic community and other guests. The schedule includes a festive Mass at 4:00 P.M., supper at 5:15 P.M. (in the Metten Room or the Assembly Room), Oblation ceremonies at 6:30 P.M. (in the basilica choir), Evening Prayer with the monks at 7:30 P.M., and a social at 8:00 P.M. Members of the Oblate Community and their guests who wish to attend should fill out the form on the flier and send it to Chris Karem by March 15. The cost of the supper is \$6.00. Checks should be made out to ST. VINCENT ARCHABBEY, and reservations should be made in advance in order to plan for the right number of people.

DAY OF RECOLLECTION AT ST. EMMA, APRIL 22

A day of recollection especially for Oblates is scheduled at St. Emma Retreat House in Greensburg for Sunday, April 22, the Fourth Sunday of Easter. The schedule begins with arrival and confessions at 9:00 A.M. and continues until 4:30 P.M. (after Vespers at 4:00) or until 6:00 P.M. (after supper). The retreat master will be Fr. Maurus Mount, O.S.B. The cost is \$25.00, including one meal, or \$35.00, including the second meal at 5:00. For those coming to supper only the cost is \$15.00. For registration or further information, write to St. Emma Monastery, 1001 Harvey Rd., Greensburg, PA 15601, or phone 724-834-3060, or e-mail benedictinenuns@stemma.org. Note that the Latrobe Deanery's April meeting will be held at St. Emma at 6:15 that same evening. **Even if you are not attending the day of recollection, if you wish to come to supper before the meeting, please contact the sisters at St. Emma so that they will know the correct number of people coming for supper. Thank you.**

"OBLATE RETREATS," MAY 18-20 and JUNE 1-3

Oblates and others interested in Benedictine spirituality are invited to participate in either (or both) of this year's two retreats on Benedictine spirituality. Fr. Tom Acklin will direct the retreat from Friday, May 18, to Sunday, May 20, and Fr. Donald will direct the retreat from Friday, June 1, to Sunday, June 3; the latter will be a silent retreat. All those on the Oblate mailing list should have received a listing of retreats. Registration (and all other special arrangements) should be done through the St. Vincent Retreat Program, and not through the Oblate Office.

OBLATE DAY 2007, SEPTEMBER 23, & DAY OF RECOLLECTION, OCTOBER 20

This year's Oblate Day will be Sunday, September 23. Fr. Cyprian Constantine, O.S.B., is scheduled to be the guest speaker. The fall day of recollection is scheduled for Saturday, October 20.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Abbot Christopher Jamison, O.S.B., *Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps to Everyday Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006). **This books is available for borrowing from the Oblate Library.**

NEW BOOK ON BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY

- Fr. Albert Holtz, O.S.B., *Pilgrim Road: A Benedictine Journey through Lent* (Harrisburg, PA: Church Publishing Inc., 2006); Fr. Albert is the Director of Oblates at Newark Abbey, Newark, NJ.

PLEASE CHECK BOOKSHELVES FOR BOOKS MISSING FROM OBLATE LIBRARY

Despite efforts to check books out only through a librarian at Oblate meetings in Latrobe, some books continue to "walk away." The latest is the excellent volume *Listen, My Son*, by Dwight Longenecker. Please review the list of lost and missing books at the end of this newsletter, and see if you might have any of them on your bookshelves. Thank you!

C.D.'S OF FR. DEMETRIUS' PRESENTATION AVAILABLE

Oblate John James of North Huntington kindly made a number of compact disks of Fr. Demetrius' excellent presentation to the Latrobe Oblates last September 17 about his book *So We Do Not Lose Heart*. Anyone who would like one of these c.d.'s may request it from the Oblate Office. A donation for postage would be appreciated.

ST. BENEDICT/ST. SCHOLASTICA SCAPULARS AVAILABLE AGAIN

Thanks to Debbie Scott, who was invested as an Oblate novice last October 14, scapulars of St. Benedict/St. Scholastica are available for our Oblates. Debbie generously donated her time, energy, and materials to make several dozen scapulars for us.

OBLATE BOARD OF ADVISORS, Meeting on January 19

The Oblate Board of Advisors met on January 19. Among the items discussed were the Mentoring Program, the hope to establish an Oblate prayer chain in the Latrobe/Greensburg/Jeanette/ Ligonier/ Wheeling area, Eucharistic adoration for vocations, the writing of deanery histories, and the celebration of anniversaries of Oblation on July 11. If you would like a copy of the minutes, contact the Oblate Office. The next meeting will be on Friday, April 13, at 6:30 P.M. in Brownfield 203.

TWO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO ATTEND BIENNIAL MEETING, July 28-August 2, 2007

This year's biennial meeting of North American Oblate Directors will take place at St. Martin's Abbey and University in Lacey, WA, from Saturday, July 28, to Thursday, August 2. Any active, committed Oblate who would like to attend should contact the Oblate Office. Two Oblates from each participating monastery are invited to attend this event, which involves presentations by excellent Benedictine speakers. As an advance notice, the meeting in 2009 is likely to be held at St. Vincent Archabbey.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MENTORING PROGRAM: THOSE WHO WANT MENTORING AND THOSE WHO CAN MENTOR

Please fill out and send in the form from the enclosed flier if you are an inquirer or an Oblate novice (or even an Oblate) who would like to have an Oblate to help you on your journey in Benedictine spirituality. Likewise please submit the relevant form if you are willing to volunteer to serve as a mentor; if you do volunteer, you will receive a packet of information to assist you in your ministry.

OBLATE PRAYER CHAIN BEING PLANNED FOR THOSE IN THE LATROBE/GRENSBURG/ JEANNETTE/ LIGONIER/ WHEELING AREAS

If you would like to be part of a weekly prayer chain among Oblates of the Latrobe area, please complete the form on the flier and mail it in. Oblates Anthony and Donna Sunseri of Greensburg, who have experience with a prayer chain, are helping to organize this new one for the Oblate community.

OBLATES RECEIVE 10% DISCOUNT AT BASILICA GIFT SHOP

If you are shopping at the Basilica Gift Shop and are an Oblate or an Oblate novice, mention your affiliation with the Oblate community to the volunteers at the shop, and you will receive a 10% discount on your purchases.

PREPARATION OF DEANERY HISTORIES

Lay leaders and moderators of our Oblate deaneries are urged to consider writing histories of their respective deaneries, whether new or old. It would be best if the histories are as detailed as possible. There is no deadline, and thoroughness and quality will be valued over promptness of submission. For those deaneries that have been in existence for many years, older members might be interviewed or reached by letter for their historical input.

OBLATE DIRECTORY BEING PREPARED FOR SUMMER

A new revision of the biennial Oblate *Directory* is being prepared by Oblate Bill O'Neil of Pittsburgh. If you wish to be included and you were included in 2005 with currently valid information, then you need not submit an entry. If your data has changed since 2005 or if you were not included in 2005 and now wish to be included in the *Directory*, then please see the flier for the form to be sent by U.S. mail or e-mail to Bill O'Neil.

LENTEN PROJECT FOR 2007: REFLECTION ON MY FAVORITE VERSE(S) OF THE HOLY RULE

As a possible project or penance for Lent, you may wish to submit to the Oblate Office a reflection on a verse (or several verses) of the *Rule of St. Benedict*. The submitted reflections are not likely to be published in the immediate future, but they will be saved for a possible future publication. See the flier for the form for submitting an entry.

BENEDICTINE OBLATE PROGRAM ON RADIO WEDO, 810 AM: This program, hosted by Oblate John James of North Huntingdon, is broadcast from 8:45 A.M. to 9:00 A.M., Monday through Friday.

OBLATE MEETINGS IN LATROBE

Oblates from all locations are welcome to the monthly meetings of the Latrobe Deanery of Oblates, mostly at 6:45 P.M. in seminary classroom Brownfield 202 on Sundays. The next four meetings will be on Feb. 18, Mar. 18, Apr. 22 (at St. Emma), and May 20. **Note that the meeting on April 22 will be held at St. Emma Monastery at 6:15; those wishing to come for supper at 5:00 (and Vespers at 4:00) should contact the sisters at St. Emma, as described above.** Those wishing to come early for Evening Prayer (at 5:00) and supper before the meetings at St. Vincent should phone Fr. Donald in advance. The direct lines for reaching Fr. Donald are (724) 805-2291 (Mon.-Sat.) and (724) 532-6709 (Sundays only).

EXPERIENCE OF BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY IN COTTONWOOD, IDAHO

The Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, ID, is sponsoring a week-long experience, July 1-7, 2007, entitled "Living in Community: Insights from the Rule of Benedict" with presentations by Sister Mary Forman, O.S.B. For more information contact Spirituality Ministry, Monastery of St. Gertrude, 465 Keuterville Rd., Cottonwood, ID 83522; (208) 962-3224, retreat@stgertrudes.org .

NEWS FROM OBLATE DEANERIES

Albion, PA (St. Paul Deanery) -- *monthly meetings at chapel in Albion*

Deacon leader Ralph DeCecco wrote on December 11. At the Mass for the Vigil of the Solemnity of Christ the King on November 25, Msgr. James Peterson and Deacon Ralph received the final Oblation of **Kevin (John of the Cross) Partello** of Albion, PA,

at the chapel in Albion. Msgr. Peterson preached about the importance of living one's baptismal promises and about Christ's ruling by serving rather than by being served.

Oblate James Knepp led the monthly meeting on November 27, which began with Vespers and ended with Compline. During the discussion period James posed three questions regarding humility: (1) What is your definition of humility? (2) Name a saint who you feel was humble and explain why you feel this way about him or her. (3) What can you do to become more humble?

Ann Arbor, MI -- *monthly meetings at Old St. Patrick's Church*

Lay leader James Durka wrote on November 6 and January 20. During the meeting in November there was an open discussion on obedience, which was seen as difficult in a culture in which self-motivation is encouraged regardless of authority. There was no meeting in December.

At the meeting on January 20 Jim Durka gave a presentation on praying the Liturgy of the Hours individually or communally. He used insights that he had received from Fr. John-Mary Tompkins, O.S.B. Jim also recommended as helpful the praying of the rosary and the Divine Mercy chaplet, and he suggested possible practices for Lent; the members were planning to write down their intended practices, put the written intentions into a sealed envelope, and then review them after Lent.

Annville, PA (St. Placid Deanery) -- *meetings at 3 P.M. on 4th Sunday of each month, St. Paul the Apostle Church, Annville*

Secretary Gabriele Terrill wrote on November 5 and December 2. At the meeting on October 22, after Evening Prayer the group enjoyed some snacks and exchanged updated information about deanery members. In response to one Oblate's question, a discussion arose about following the *Rule* and living in Christian obedience in the world. The *Rule*, it was concluded, can be a valuable tool to help devout Christians to simplify their lives, to spend more time in prayer, and to be counterwitnesses to our materialistic world. "First and foremost," commented Gabriele, "we have to love Jesus; He has to be first in everything that we do; He has to come before anything in our lives, and all we do has to be out of love for Him."

It was belatedly reported that on June 7, 2005, Fr. John Peck, moderator, had invested **Rosemary H. Palmer** of Palmyra, PA,

as an Oblate novice at her home.

At the meeting on November 19, after Vespers in the church, the group moved to a classroom to enjoy refreshments and to celebrate Oblate Lisa Kayser's birthday. Then they entered into a discussion about what the *Rule* says about simplicity and food and drink. They concluded that the *Rule* calls us to put Christ before everything else so that one can resist falling into the trap of materialism. One must respect the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, eat and drink only in moderation and for the sake of health.

Asheboro, NC -- *monthly meetings at St. Joseph Church about to begin*

Lay leader Doris Blase wrote on November 30 and December 13. On November 28, during Mass at St. Joseph Church in Asheboro, Fr. Francis T. Cancro, pastor, invested as Oblate novices

Lillian Hazelwood of Asheboro, NC

Robert J. O'Brien, Jr., of Asheboro, NC.

At the same liturgy Doris celebrated her 90th birthday and received the Anointing of the Sick. Our prayers and congratulations are with Doris at this milestone in her life.

On December 12 Fr. Cancro invested as Oblate novices in St. Joseph Church

James B. Smith of Randleman, NC

Michele H. Smith of Randlema, NC . The Smiths are husband and wife.

Baltimore, MD (St. Walburga Deanery) -- meetings at 3:00-4:30 on 3rd Sun. of each month, parish house, St. Benedict Church

Moderator Fr. Paschal Morlino, O.S.B., wrote on December 18. The meeting on December 17 included Vespers for Gaudete Sunday, during which

David (Bernard) Robeson of Columbia, MD,

made his final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Paschal and the gathered group. Dave is the brother of Oblate Brent Robeson of Harpers Ferry, WV.

Butler, PA -- monthly meetings at St. Fidelis Church

Lay leader Ethel Galli wrote on December 4 and 13. At the meeting on November 21, Fr. Brian Boosel, O.S.B., moderator, gave a teaching on *RB* 4, "The Tools of Good Works."

At the meeting on December 12, Fr. Brian gave a presentation based on *RB* 58, "The Procedure for Receiving Brothers." The group then enjoyed a pre-Christmas party.

In January a local newspaper, the *Butler Eagle*, published an article entitled "Benefits of Benedict: Philosophy takes root in Butler County," which was about the newly formed Oblate deanery in Butler. The article was based on the reporter's interviews with Oblates Barb Secunda, Matt Callihan, Ethel Galli, and Barb Kristufek as well as with Fr. Brian and Fr. Donald.

Carrolltown, PA (Sacred Heart Deanery) -- monthly meetings at St. Benedict Church, in the church and/or a meeting room

Laraine Farabaugh has taken the place of Mary Catherine Hoover as deanery secretary. We thank Mary Catherine for her several years of faithful service.

Laraine reported by phone on December 6, and Mary Catherine on January 10. At the meeting on November 6, after Vespers in the church, the group moved to the Boniface Wimmer Room to continue discussing the book *Cherish Christ above All*. In reviewing Chapter 8, "Discipline," they concluded that discipline is needed for spiritual growth.

On January 9 the meeting took place in the Sacred Heart Annex. Fr. Vincent Zidek, moderator, announced four recent deaths in the Benedictine and Oblate communities and asked for prayers. Then there was a lively discussion of Chapter 9 of *Cherish Christ above All*. For the February meeting the group planned an excursion to the Archabbey for Evening Prayer and supper.

Johnstown, PA (St. John Gualbert Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd Monday of each month, 6:30 P.M., St. Benedict Church in Geistown section of Johnstown.

Lay leader Carl Motter wrote on November 15, December 21, and January 16. At the meeting on November 15, after Evening Prayer Oblate Mike Russo gave a video presentation on the 2005 World Congress of Oblates. A few guests from the parish were present. Msgr. Michael Becker, moderator and pastor, has continued to promote the Oblate Program and to explain Oblate life in the parish bulletin.

The meeting scheduled for December 7 was canceled because of inclement weather. However, the group gathered at St. Benedict Church on December 20 for Mass followed by a pre-Christmas party. Msgr. Becker suggested that an article about the Oblate Program be submitted to the local newspaper.

At the meeting on January 15, the group continued to discuss the book *How to Be a Monastic and Not Leave Your Day Job*, with focus on the chapter "A Life of Relationships." In Christian community, the group concluded, all should be treated equally but with respect for individual needs and weaknesses.

Latrobe, PA (St. Gregory the Great Deanery) -- meetings usually on 3rd Sunday of month, 6:45 P.M., Brownfield 202

Br. Shawn Matthew Anderson, O.S.B., a deacon, served as the guest speaker on November 19. Reflecting on the topic "The Holy Spirit in the Rule of St. Benedict," he emphasized that monastic life is an intense living out of baptism and that the Holy Spirit motivates monks and Oblates to live in community, to use their gifts for

the good of others (as Christ did), to pray intensely, to accept trials with humility, and to give witness to their faith.

At the meeting on December 17, Helene and James Paharik of Greensburg served as guest speakers. They made an oral and power-point presentation on the planned Beit Benedict Interfaith Peace Academy at Dormition Abbey on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. When the Pahariks made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2005, they had a taste of the terrible conflict there and heard about Dormition Abbey's Abbot Benedikt's desire to promote peace by concrete initiatives. On their return to the U.S., they decided to start a foundation to tell people about the building of a peace academy and to raise funds for this project. Anyone interested in supporting Beit Benedict may contact:

Helene Paharik, M.A.
124 Hilton Rd.
Greensburg, PA 15601

hpaharik@gmail.com or write to the Oblate Office for a brochure.

After the presentation the group proceeded to the basilica, where Fr. Donald invested

Louisa D. Dieck of Greensburg, PA,

as an Oblate novice. The praying of Compline ended the evening. (*continued*)

On January 21, despite a snow fall, some 12-15 people came to discuss the final chapter, "Listening Again," from the book *Benedict's Way*. Emphasis was given to the difficulty of listening to God's word and the need to persevere in listening always and everywhere. The deanery was hoping to establish a prayer chain for interceding for local Oblates' families and friends.

Minersville, PA (St. Malachy Deanery)

Lay leader Paul Mangiardi reported on November 5, 21, and 29, and January 9. At the meeting on November 29, attended by six members, the group read from *RB* 43-47 and prayed for all those in the Oblate community requesting prayers.

The meeting on January 9 began with prayer, including intercessions for monks, Oblates, and their families. Paul read letters from Fr. Donald. Then they reviewed their sessions since August and decided to go through the *Rule* and the *Oblate Formation Booklet* again. The meeting closed with prayer and a Litany of St. Benedict.

Niagara Area, Ontario, Canada (St. Henry/St. Gertrude Deanery) -- meetings on 4th Friday of each month, St. Patrick's Church, St. Catharines, Ont.

Secretary Trudy Bretzler wrote on November 21 and December 13. The meeting on October 28, attended by nine people, began with the rosary and Evening Prayer in the church. Then the group made plans for the Advent day of recollection on December 2; a notice publicizing the event was later sent to the diocesan newspaper. Also, a pre-Christmas party was planned for December 13. Then Fr. Charles Gagné, moderator, led a discussion based on an article "Who Are the Oblates of St. Benedict?" and the first Oblate lesson, "Holiness and Being an Oblate of St. Benedict."

At the meeting on November 24, after prayers in the church, lay leader Brian Chisholm reminded the group of the pre-Christmas celebration and of the plan to make donations to a children's Christmas charity instead of having an exchange of gifts among the Oblate community. Then, in response to some talk about attendance at meetings, Oblate Lily Bos volunteered to phone each member before every meeting. There were also reports about those needing prayers. Copies of the book *The Rule of Benedict for Beginners*, by Wil Derkse, were distributed. Fr. Gagné urged the attendees to read the *Rule* regularly in-between meetings, and Brian encouraged them to do daily *lectio divina*. Finally, Fr. Gagné gave a brief history of St. Benedict and the *Rule*, and a discussion followed.

On December 2 the Advent day of recollection was held from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. at St. Patrick's Church. During the event Fr. Gagné invested three people as Oblate novices:

Gertrude Bretzler of Welland, Ont.
Ted Hopgood of St. Catharines, Ont.
William Soper of St. Catharines, Ont.

The pre-Christmas dinner, held at a restaurant in St. Catharines, was attended by Fr. Gagné and 10 members, and the event provided an evening of pleasant fellowship.

Pittsburgh, PA (St. Peter Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd or 3rd Wed. of each month, Our Lady Queen of Peace Worship Site

Lay leader Bill O'Neil wrote on December 15 and January 19. The meeting on December 13 was a pre-

Christmas party. Fr. Ralph, moderator, and his pastoral assistant, Sr. Alice, were visiting Fr. Benjamin, senior priest at St. Peter Church and former moderator of the Johnstown Oblates. He died the following morning at 3:15 A.M.

The meeting on January 17 began with Evening Prayer led by Fr. Ralph. Then the 11 people present continued a discussion of the *Rule*. It was determined that some of the attendees were not receiving the Oblate newsletter.

St. Marys, PA (St. Maurus Deanery) -- meetings on Thurs. before 1st Fri. of month, 7:00 P.M., St. Mary's Annex

Secretary Peggi Gabler wrote on November 7. The meeting on October 5, led by lay leader Ben Hoffman, drew only a small number of people, partly because of the "Why Catholic?" program scheduled at the same time. There was a report about the positive experience of the eight Oblates and three guests who had accompanied them at Oblate Day at the Archabbey. The group read *RB* 1 in turns and then prayed Vespers. They decided not to meet again until February 1 because of "Why Catholic?" meetings and because of possibly inclement weather. There were suggestions about asking Fr. Frank Ziemkiewicz, O.S.B., and Fr. Michael Ferrick (pastor of Queen of the World Church) to lead some meetings. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and a blessing.

Savannah, GA -- special monthly events at Sunday Vespers at Benedictine Priory

Moderator Fr. Jude Brady wrote on November 6, January 15, and January 22. During Evening Prayer at the priory on November 5, Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B., of Belmont Abbey gave a presentation on *The Life and Miracles of St. Benedict* by Pope St. Gregory the Great. Some 35 Oblates and Oblate novices attended. After Vespers they gathered for supper in the priory dining room and bade farewell to Br. Francis, who was soon to depart for the Archabbey to begin seminary studies.

Oblates were invited to attend the prep school's Advent/Christmas Choral Program, which was presented in the context of a prayer service on December 15. Some 45 members of the Oblate community attended.

The Oblate Advisory Council met at the priory on January 16. The council joined the monks for Evening Prayer and then had a meeting over supper at the priory's library.

The guest-speaker series continued on January 21, when the Oblates met for Evening Prayer at 4:00 at the priory. For the second reading Dr. Paul Thigpen, an accomplished author and a professor of theology at St. Leo University in Florida, gave a reflection entitled "The Virtue of Humility." Some 25 from the Oblate community attended, and Vespers was followed by a covered-dish supper in the school cafeteria. On February 25 Sr. Lourdes Sheehan, R.S.M., was to reflect on "The Vow of Obedience," and on March 25 there was to be a celebration for the Solemnity of St. Benedict with Oblation ceremonies.

Scranton, PA (St. Boniface/St. Lioba Deanery) -- monthly meetings at Immaculate Conception Church, Scranton, or in Dunmore

Moderator Fr. John Kita wrote on November 16 and January 2, and Oblate novice Michele Fitzgerald wrote on December 14 and January 18. The monthly meetings have been fruitful. Oblate novice Gretchen Meyers was chosen to serve as lay leader. In October the group discussed the importance of the Liturgy of the Hours in an Oblate's life. In November the topic of discussion was the Eucharist. There were plans to send out bulletin announcements about monthly meetings to neighboring parishes.

The meeting on December 15 was held at a parish in Dunmore. Fr. Kita was unable to be present; so Gretchen gave a presentation on the Benedictine attitude toward work.

It was announced in January that Fr. Kita would soon be transferred to a parish in Towanda. We thank Fr. Kita for his initiative in founding the deanery in Scranton, and we hope and pray that a new moderator can be found.

State College, PA (St. Joseph Deanery) -- meetings on 2nd Monday of each month, Benedictine residence

Secretary Ashley Leggett wrote on November 16, December 19, and January 10. At the meeting on November 10, ten Oblates, one Oblate novice, and six guests gathered together with Fr. Boniface, moderator, and with Oblate Jonathan Engle, whose presence was a welcome surprise. (He was back in the U.S. briefly from his new job in Marseilles, France.) The discussion arose from Chapters 5 and 6 of *Strangers to the City*. Regarding "Chastity," the group concluded that community support can help a person to stay on the road indicated by Christ. Regarding "Dispossession," they reflected that our society makes it easy to acquire things and difficult to dispose of them. Having too many toys, for example, can be a problem for children. We may learn to dispossess naturally with the physical decline of old age.

The annual meeting for renewals of Oblation took place on December 18 at Our Lady of Victory Church

during a Mass celebrated by Fr. Boniface, who received the following:

Oblate: **Joel (Basil) Moore** of State College, PA

Oblate novice: **Phyllis Austin** of Bellefonte, PA .

Twelve Oblates also renewed their Oblation during the Mass. Then the group went to the Benedictine House for a potluck dinner. With several spouses and other guests attending, some 20 to 25 people participated in the Mass and dinner.

The meeting on January 8, attended by 13 people, began with the usual prayers. Then Fr. Boniface reported about his pilgrimage to Italy after Christmas with Fr. Fred, Fr. Brian, and a group of young men discerning their vocations. Along with descriptions of the Benedictine sites that were visited, Fr. Boniface read excerpts from Pope St. Gregory's *Life and Miracles of St. Benedict*. Oblate Jon Engle had been among the pilgrims.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada -- monthly meetings at St. Clare Church, Toronto

Lay leader John Kelly phoned on November 21. The group's second meeting took place on November 20, and four people attended in addition to Rev. Ernest DeCiccio, pastor of St. Clare Church. They prayed Evening Prayer, and then there was some discussion about how to pray the Divine Office from a breviary. Fr. DeCiccio suggested ways to promote the Oblate Program in the parish.

Virginia Beach, VA (St. Scholastica Deanery) -- meetings on 1st Wed. of month, 7 P.M., Computer Library, St. Gregory the Great School

Lay leader Delina Pauls wrote on November 20 and January 13. At the meeting on November 20, attended by 10 Oblates and a guest, Fr. Cristiano, moderator, spoke about monastic history, with focus on the Cluniac reform and the Cistercian movement, 1000-1130 A.D. The guest, Fr. Donald Moss, a Navy chaplain, talked about the Benedictine influence on agriculture, the preservation of books, inventions, education, devotion to Mary, and architecture. He then showed part of a film on the Cathedral of Chartres, France. Then the group went to the chapel, where Fr. Cristiano invested

William E. Gallop, Jr., of Virginia Beach, VA,
as an Oblate novice. The meeting closed with Night Prayer.

The regular December meeting was canceled because Fr. Cristiano had to teach a Confirmation class. However, a number of Oblates attended the class and heard him teach about the meaning of Advent and the end of the liturgical year. The Oblates also took part in the discussion that followed Fr. Cristiano's presentation.

At the meeting on January 3, Fr. Moss was back to describe the influence of Benedictine monasteries during the Middle Ages, with a focus on agriculture, literacy, metallurgy, water power, and (most importantly) the notion of constant prayer. Then Fr. Moss showed the conclusion of the film about the Cathedral of Chartres. After Night Prayer the group gathered for refreshments to celebrate the New Year. They especially enjoyed the presence of William Gallop's little daughter.

Williamsport, PA -- meetings on last Sunday of each month, 1 P.M., St. Boniface Church (or rectory) meeting room

Lay leader Ted Richardson wrote on November 14. There was to be a meeting on November 19, with a discussion of Chapter 23 of *Benedict's Way*, "Lectio Divina." The subsequent meetings were to be on December 10 and January 28.

Various Locations

On November 4 in the Archabbey Basilica, Fr. Donald invested

Charlotte M. Kuehn of Marietta, OH,

as an Oblate novice. Charlotte had been affiliated with the Oblate program of St. Meinrad Archabbey. Also present for the ceremony were Oblate novice Christine Karem and her daughter Samantha, a junior Oblate novice.

On December 12 during Mass in the chapel at Pelham, GA, Rev. Michael Smith, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Moultrie, GA, invested

Philip E. Stephens of Pelham, GA,

as an Oblate novice.

On December 20 in the Archabbey Basilica, Fr. Donald invested

David A. Burak of Peckville, PA, and

Joseph J. Filler of Wyoming, PA, as Oblate novices.

On January 7 Deacon Ralph DeCecco, deacon leader of the St. Paul Deanery, visited the community at

Mercer, PA, in the chapel there. Msgr. Charles S. Murcko celebrated a Mass for the Solemnity of Epiphany, during which he and Deacon Ralph received the following:

Oblate: **Jody L. (Silvester) Bish** of Mercer, PA,

Oblate novice: **Miguel Such** of Mercer, PA.

Deacon Ralph preached the homily, and Msgr. Murcko encouraged the congregation to consider embracing Benedictine spirituality.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On January 21 during Mass in the chapel at Huntingdon, PA, Rev. George Koharchik invested as Oblate novices:

Kenn Chase of Huntingdon, PA
Robert M. Cole .

Chincoteague Island, VA

Fr. Paschal Kneip, O.S.B., has been encouraging his parishioners at St. Andrew Parish in Chincoteague Island to consider the Oblate Program. Several have become Oblates and Oblate novices, and a ceremony is planned for February 10. It is also hoped that monthly meetings will begin soon.

SICK & INFIRM MONKS

The following monks of the Archabbey have been hospitalized or otherwise especially ill during the past three months and could use our prayers: Fr. Brinstan Takach, Fr. Omer Kline, Br. Nicholas Nicol.

DECEASED MONKS

Please pray for the repose of the souls of the following members of the St. Vincent monastic community who have died since the last newsletter: Fr. Benjamin Walker, O.S.B., 76 (December 14); Fr. John Erickson, O.S.B., 81 (December 26); Fr. Reginald Bender, O.S.B., 74 (January 8). The Oblate community is especially appreciative of the service of Fr. Benjamin, who founded the St. John Gualbert Deanery in Johnstown in the 1980's and continued to drive to Johnstown for monthly meetings for years even when he was stationed in Pittsburgh and was in poor health.

OBLATES AND OBLATE NOVICES WHOSE ADDRESSES HAVE BEEN LOST

Following the sequence in the previous issues, the list below is part of a large file of names of Oblates and Oblate novices who are no longer on our mailing list. If anyone knows the current whereabouts of any of the people listed or the dates of death, please contact the Oblate Office. Such information will help us to update our files, which include hundreds of "lost" people. Thank you.

Name	Last Known Location	Date of Oblation	Date of Last Contact
Cerqua, Louis P.	Clairton, PA	07/18/1964	-----
Cerra, Michael	Pittsburgh, PA	07/19/1969	-----
Cerrone, Benjamin F.	Braddock, PA	07/20/1957	-----
Cetro, Ralph	Brownsville, PA	07/15/1958	-----
Chaney, John R.	Georgetown, PA	08/10/1985	-----
Chase, John	Turtle Creek, PA	07/17/1954	-----
Chekosky, Peter P.	Greensburg, PA	07/11/1959	-----
Chesher, Joseph C.	Pittsburgh, PA	07/16/1955	-----
Chiarelli, Joseph	Jeannette, PA	03/21/1964	-----
Chicklo, Michael B.	Jeannette, PA	08/15/1953	-----
Chong, Moses	Malaysia	Oblate Novice	02/1999
Chonka, John	Duquesne, PA	07/28/1935	-----
Chortes, Charles	Elizabeth, PA	07/21/1956	-----
Chrestay, James G.	New Kensington, PA	10/02/1969	10/1990
Ciccone, Nick	Pittsburgh, PA	07/29/1950	-----
Ciccozzi, Orazio T.	Monaca, PA	07/25/1959	-----
Cicklo, Michael	Jeannette, PA	08/15/1953	-----
Cik, Stephen	Pittsburgh, PA	08/08/1936	-----
Cinciripini, Joseph J.	North Braddock, PA	07/16/1960	-----

Cinciripini, Robert	Philadelphia, PA	07/16/1960	-----
Cislak, Henry D.	Monongahela, PA	07/02/1955	-----
Citti, Irene	Williamsport, PA	05/24/1968	-----
Clark, Henry G.	Youngwood, PA	08/02/1952	07/16/1965
Clarke, William F.	North Braddock, PA	08/04/1929	-----
Clay, Robert	Erie, PA	11/22/1959	-----
Cleary, Edward	McKeesport, PA	07/23/1949	-----
Clovis, Jeff	Trego, MT	03/22/1999	05/2004
Coccaro, Anthony B.	Braddock, PA	07/17/1954	-----
Coccioletti, Vincent	McKeesport, PA	07/31/1954	-----
Cochran, Clyde	Claирton, PA	07/20/1957	09/20/1964
Coffey, Ann Marie	Pittsburgh, PA	03/21/1955	-----
Cofrelli, Albert, Jr.	Ambridge, PA	08/01/1959	-----
Collins, David F.	Brownsville, PA	03/25/1955	-----
Columbia, Mrs. John	W Brownsville, PA	07/06/1963	-----
Columbia, Michael	W Brownsville, PA	07/13/1963	-----

OVERDUE OR MISSING LIBRARY BOOKS: PLEASE RESPOND!

During the past year a number of books from the Oblate Library have been found to be missing, presumably because people withdrew them without signing them out. Below is a list of such books, as well as others that have been lost by borrowers. Please check your bookshelves to see if you have any of the missing books. Also, if anyone would like to donate a copy of any of the lost books, such a donation would be welcome.

Missing books

- Roberta C. Bondi, *To Pray and to Love*
- Rev. William Burk, *Protect Us from All Anxiety: Meditations for the Depressed*
- André Gozier, O.S.B., *Fifteen Days of Prayer with Saint Benedict*
- Richard J. Hauser, S.J., *Finding God in Troubled Times*
- Dwight Longenecker, *Listen, My Son: Saint Benedict for Fathers*
- Guy-Marie Oury, O.S.B., *A Monastic Pilgrimage: Following the Footsteps of St. Benedict*
- Abbot David Parry, O.S.B., *Household of God*
- Basil M. Pennington, O.C.S.O., *Lectio Divina: Renewing the Ancient Practice ...*
- Pseudo Macarius, *The Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter*
- Marsha Sinetar, *Ordinary People as Monks and Mystics*

Lost books

- Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works*
- Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., *Toward God*
- Anselm Grün, O.S.B., *The Challenge of Silence*
- Thomas Merton, O.C.S.O., *Praying the Psalms* (small booklet)
- Michael Scanlon, O.F.M., *Let the Fire Fall*

OBLATE PROJECT FOR LENT, 2007

A suggested project for Lent, 2007, for Oblates affiliated with St. Vincent Archabbey is to make a written contribution to a possible future book of reflections on the *Rule* of St. Benedict. During Lent, if you are a full Oblate (or hope soon to make final Oblation), you are invited to submit a reflection with the theme “A Reflection on One [or Several] of My Favorite Verses of the *Holy Rule*.” The length of the reflection is to be fewer than 250 words.

If you are making a written contribution, you are welcome to use the back of this form. There is no deadline, but we would appreciate your making a submission by April 30, 2007. Please make a copy of your submission since the original cannot be returned. You may remain anonymous if you do not wish your name to be included with your entry.

RELEASE:

Date: _____

(Please sign.)

I, _____, give my permission to the Oblate Office to publish my reflection (enclosed) in a future book or booklet. I understand that my reflection may be edited for grammar or length.

Anonymity:

- I would be glad to have my name included with my reflection.
- I prefer not to have my name printed with my reflection.

DIRECTORY OF OBLATES: PREPARING FOR THIS SUMMER'S REVISION

If any Oblate or Oblate novice who is currently listed in the *Directory* wishes to report a change of address, phone number, or e-mail address, please contact Bill O'Neil, who keeps a current listing of the *Directory* on computer. Likewise, if you are not included in the *Directory* but wish to be included in the next revision, please send the information that you wish to be printed to Bill. The *Directory* is revised about every two years, and copies are sent only to those who wish to participate. The next revision is to be issued this summer. Bill's e-mail address is:

boneil2@peoplepc.com

One can also write to Bill at William O'Neil, 4122 Beehner Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15217-2811, or phone him at 412-422-1313.

RESERVATION FORM FOR CELEBRATION OF ST. BENEDICT DAY ON MARCH 21

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I plan to attend the dinner for Oblates at St. Vincent on Wednesday, March 21, 2007, along with ____ guests; I enclose _____ (\$6.00 per person; make out checks to **ST. VINCENT ARCHABBEY**. An additional donation for the social would be welcome).

I plan to be invested as an ____ Oblate, ____ Oblate novice on March 21. On becoming a full Oblate, I plan to take the Oblate name _____. (*application form required*)

Please send this form to: **Mrs. Christine Karem, 2012 Souli St., Greensburg, PA 15601 (phone: 724-216-5830).**

RENEWAL OF OBLATION

Peace! In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I, (name), renew my Oblation and offer myself to Almighty God, through the Blessed Virgin Mary and our holy Father Benedict, as an Oblate of Saint Vincent Archabbey, and I promise again, before God and all the saints, to dedicate my life to the service of God and neighbor according to the *Rule* of St. Benedict, insofar as my state in life permits.

"Sustain me, O Lord, as You have promised, that I may live, and disappoint me not in my hope" (Ps 119:116 & RB 58:21).

Name _____

Address _____

Date of Renewal _____

Please detach and return to:

Director of Oblates
St. Vincent Archabbey
300 Fraser Purchase Rd.
Latrobe, PA 15650-2690

Volunteers for Mentoring Program

If you are willing to be a mentor to assist inquirers or Oblate novices in their exploration of Benedictine spirituality (or would like to think about the possibility), please complete the form below and send it to the Oblate Office. You will then be sent a packet of information about serving as mentor, and if you are willing, you will be put in touch with people who request mentoring. Please send this form to: Oblate Office, St. Vincent Archabbey, 300 Fraser Purchase Rd., Latrobe, PA 15650-2690. Thank you.

I would like to serve as a mentor for people in my deanery.

I would like to serve as a mentor for people in remote locations.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail address _____

Oblate novices or inquirers who would like to have a mentor

If you are an Oblate novice or inquirer (or even a full Oblate) who would like to have a mentor in your exploration of Benedictine spirituality, please complete the form below and send it to the Oblate Office. You will then be put in touch with someone who has volunteered to serve as a mentor. Please send this form to: Oblate Office, St. Vincent Archabbey, 300 Fraser Purchase Rd., Latrobe, PA 15650-2690. Thank you.

I would like to be guided by a mentor in my exploration of the Oblate Program and Benedictine life.

I would prefer my mentor to be in a certain location or to communicate with me in a certain way. (*Please specify preferred conditions on the back of this sheet.*)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail address _____

Application for joining the proposed prayer chain for Oblates and Oblate novices in the Latrobe area

As an Oblate novice or Oblate of the Latrobe/ Greensburg/ Jeannette/ Ligonier /Wheeling areas, I am willing to contact one other person once a week to pass on prayer requests.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ e-mail address _____

