



+

THE SAINT VINCENT OBLATE NEWS

Saint Vincent Archabbey

300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650-2690



November, 2011 – January 2012

724-805-2291

Volume 64, Number 4

ON THE “DISCIPLINE OF THE RULE” AND THE DISCIPLINE REQUIRED FOR DISCIPLESHIP IN DAILY LIFE

Dear Oblates, Oblate novices, and Friends,

Preparing well for anything takes discipline. If I am going to preach at a Sunday Mass, I must discipline myself to spend some time almost every weekday to reflect on the Sunday readings, to jot down relevant thoughts, and eventually to organize them. If I am traveling to an unfamiliar destination, I must discipline myself to obtain good directions and to follow them. (Most of us probably know from experience that failure to do this can result in disaster!) Cooking a festive meal requires discipline to mix well and time well. Facing an athletic contest likewise requires much discipline if one expects to perform well. If I am facing death, then with whatever consciousness I have I should muster up some discipline to fix my thoughts on the God whom I am preparing to encounter in a new and dramatic way. (And are we not all preparing to die well?) If I am striving to be a saint (and is not sainthood the only worthy goal for every Christian?), then I had better discipline myself to use every tool possible to grow in the virtues that will render me more and more Christ-like.

The word “discipline” is related to the word “discipleship.” Both come from the Latin word *disciplina*, which can mean teaching, learning, science, system, or training. In his latest book, Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., writes, “The Latin word *disciplina* is built upon the underlying verb *discere*, which means ‘to learn.’ The acceptance of being under discipline is a sign of a willingness to enter into a process of learning. This means consenting to be instructed, guided, taught” (*The Road to Eternal Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), p. 161). The dictionary in my office includes under “discipline,” the meanings “training that corrects, molds, or perfects,” “punishment,” “orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior,” “self-control,” “a rule or system of rules governing conduct or activity,” and “field of study.” From a Christian perspective, all of these meanings are related. To be a disciple of Christ means to reject the ways of the secularistic world so that we can follow Him with every ounce of our beings. That takes discipline! It means that we must continually learn from Christ and the Church. It means that we must accept training from God and His representatives on earth to become more virtuous, more Christ-like, more loving. It means that we must welcome even punishment that

turns us away from sinful ways and redirects us on the path to holiness. It means that we should adopt a set of firm but flexible norms of prayer and activity that help us to conform our lives ever more closely to Christ. It means that the Gospel and its present-day implications must always be my “major field of study” and practice!

For us who are Oblates or monks, our “field of study” also includes the *Holy Rule*. The *Rule* is a discipline that has helped people on the way to holiness for some 1480 years. In a number of instances St. Benedict refers to a monk’s being “subjected to the discipline of the rule.” The first occurrence concerns a monk who fails to keep common utensils clean or who treats them carelessly without amending after reproof. In that case, “let him be subjected to the discipline of the rule” (*RB* 32:5). Other references to this phrase are *RB* 54:5, 62:3, 65:19, and 70:6. These passages deal with monks who fail to tell the abbot about gifts received (or who are distressed if the abbot gives them to someone else), priests of the monastery, priors who are problematic and do not heed verbal warnings, and monks who treat others violently or unreasonably. In most of these cases “discipline” probably refers specifically to the penalty of “excommunication,” i.e., separation from community meals and/or restrictions at community prayer. (In fact, *RB* 67 mentions that monks who talk about anything they saw or heard outside the monastery should be “subjected to the punishment of the rule” (67:6); so apparently “discipline” can be interpreted as “punishment” in the other situations.) However, we must remember that St. Benedict always meant that punishments should be therapeutic rather than vindictive or demeaning and that they should be administered with love and great concern for the spiritual welfare of the wayward monk. The specifics of “the discipline of the rule” are laid out in *RB* 26-30 and 43-46. The punishments specified in these chapters may seem harsh to our modern ears, but they were moderate for St. Benedict’s day. Furthermore, these were part of a whole system of teaching, learning, training, and loving correction. Through this whole process of nurturing ongoing conversion, the abbot is to deal with disorders with the “skill of a wise physician” (*RB* 27:2); he must see that the wayward brother knows that he is loved (27:4), has “responsibility to have great concern” for his flock (27:5), and “is to imitate the loving example of the

Good Shepherd” (27:8). In fact, if the abbot were not to exercise discipline toward monks who stray, then he would not be showing them paternal love but would be endangering the whole community by allowing evils to flourish.

The title for Chapter 19, “The Discipline of the Psalmody,” indicates that quite often praying the Divine Office is hard work. This fact should encourage us to persevere and not to give up. When we pray the Hours, we should prepare ourselves for spiritual battle! It often takes great self-restraint to recite in unison with others, to sing in tune (as much as possible), to be focused on the meaning of the words, and to dismiss distractions. Praying well almost always requires substantial discipline. When in *RB* 62 St. Benedict asserts that priests “may not ... forget the obedience and discipline of the rule, but make more and more progress toward God” (62:4), he seems to be referring to discipline as the training necessary for spiritual growth. No matter what our age or status, we who are baptized in Christ and who make a promise of *conversatio morum* need to persevere in adhering to a rule of life for prayer and work (with work seen as service and as a means to continue God’s creation) if we are to keep moving forward in our relationship with Christ.

The Bible, too, abounds in references to the necessity of discipline in Christian discipleship. The Letter to the Hebrews proclaims that discipline is a mark of a child of God. The sacred text exhorts us, “Endure your trials as the discipline of God, who deals with you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ... At the time it is administered, all discipline seems a cause for grief and not for joy, but later it brings forth the fruit of peace and justice to those who are trained in its school” (Heb 12:7,11). St. Peter urges us to accept the discipline that comes with suffering: “Blessed are you when you are insulted for the sake of Christ, for then God’s Spirit in its glory has come to rest on you. ... If anyone suffers for being a Christian, ... he ought not to be ashamed. He should rather glorify God in virtue of that name” (1 Pt 4:14,16). St. Paul often speaks of the salutary self-discipline he practices to remain steadfast in faith and in his mission, and he refers to his ongoing need to practice for the race leading to eternal life with Christ. “I do not run like a man who loses sight of the finish line. ... What I do is discipline my own body and master it, for fear that after having preached to others I myself should be rejected” (1 Cor 9:26-27).

On the other hand, we must realize that discipline in itself is not necessarily a virtue. Much depends on the motive and the goal. Tyrants and criminals have often been very disciplined in doing evil. The discipline of a Christian is meant to enable him to overcome vices, to develop virtues, to deal with suffering in a redemptive

way, and to surrender to God’s will ever more faithfully. It is a discipline of love. It springs from a faith which sees trials as providing opportunities for purification from self-will and containing hidden gifts from our all-loving God, who permits the trials for a greater good. It flows from faith and love because we come to know how hard it is to enter the “narrow gate that leads to life” (Mt 7:14) and, therefore, how much discipline it takes to stay on the path of life. It is the discipline we children of God practice with gratitude in order to return love to the God who first loved us.

If we examine our daily lives, we shall probably recognize many areas where we already practice some healthful self-discipline in order to be conformed more closely to Christ. We shall probably also notice that there are areas where failure to discipline ourselves keeps us bogged down in disordered habits that tend to close us to grace. For Oblates and monks, it is important that we discipline ourselves to pray the Divine Office, to do *lectio divina*, to reflect regularly on the *Rule*, and ultimately to put God first in every situation. One Sunday, when I was pressed by various duties and was celebrating two Masses at a relatively distant church, I really had to discipline myself to make time for prayer. I was especially grateful that I found some time in-between the Masses to pray. As I prayed, however, a deacon approached me and told me that I was expected to baptize a baby during the second Mass and that the preliminary ceremonies were about to begin. Of course, I left my prayer quickly to perform my pastoral duty. I realized that while striving to make time for prayer was good, even better was practicing the discipline to surrender to God’s call at the moment, without fuss or murmuring. This is the ultimate discipline that we all need: to be attuned to God’s will at all times and to respond to His call with the fullness of love, without delay or grumbling. As Our Lord tells us, “Blessed are they who hear the word of God and act upon it” (Lk 11:28). This is the crucial discipline of love in response to God’s love.

Thus it takes discipline to be on time for an event, but it may take greater discipline to accept the humiliation of arriving late when circumstances prevent us from being punctual (without breaking the speed limit). It takes discipline to organize one’s day with time for everything important, but it takes greater discipline not to judge others who are poorly organized and who may get on our nerves. It takes discipline to be faithful to a regimen of prayer, but it takes greater discipline to welcome interruptions that are required by the demands of charity. We all need to learn the mostly interior discipline of love, which involves refraining from judging or gossiping and from making demands for perfection on ourselves or others. It prepares us to spend time and energy on unexpected guests, to avoid sulking when we fail to get

our way, and to be prompt to help someone in need even when we get no observable reward from our efforts.

As we age, we may be tempted to think, “I don’t need much discipline any more. I’ve formed my habits. I can’t really change very much. There are no big temptations in my life. I am now entitled to relax a bit and to maintain my prayer life without much struggle.” This is a dangerous attitude. In our later years we probably do not need the same type of discipline that we needed when we were younger. However, we may need more interior self-discipline to overcome thoughts of discouragement, tendencies to be complacent, or temptations to live in the past or to brood over our present difficulties with self-pity. It may be a greater challenge to live in continual thanks and praise, to pray without ceasing, and to focus on the graces that God is pouring out here and now, when it may be far easier to moan and groan over physical and mental decline. Until we die, there is no justifiable rest from the discipline that opens us to the love of Christ and that keeps us young in spirit, with eagerness to return that love to God and to extend it generously to others, perhaps largely in intense intercessory prayer.

In his book *Monastic Practices*, Fr. Charles Cummings, O.C.S.O., comments, “Self-discipline is the struggle to

liberate our deep inner self. Exterior self-discipline, if it did not go on to the stage of interiorization, would amount to nothing more than the substitution of a monastic for a worldly style of life. Putting on the monastic habit and acting outwardly as the rest of the community acts is not sufficient to transform the inner self. ... Monastic self-discipline involves the death of desire. Renunciation and self-discipline on the exterior level are meant to extinguish gradually our inordinate desires and appetites. ... Interior self-discipline grapples with our habitual, voluntary, inordinate loves and cravings, and gives us in their place monastic values: the love of silence, solitude, prayer, reading, manual labor, and simplicity” (page 125). Perhaps we could also add enduring joy. As we approach the season of Advent, a time of waiting in joyful hope for the fuller coming of our Savior, let us practice the discipline that will help us to die daily to self and to accept joyfully, in hope, the new life of self-emptying love that God has in store for us.

In the peace of Christ and St. Benedict,

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

A MESSAGE FROM ARCHABBOT DOUGLAS

Advent, 2011

Dear Oblates and Friends,

The Advent Season invites us to renew our baptismal commitment with undivided hearts as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The celebration of All Saints Day on November 1 sets the stage for the Advent Season. The saints remind us that it is possible, with God’s grace, to live with an undivided heart – to focus our hearts, minds, and souls on the reality that God is present to us at every moment. Satan, of course, is always there, tempting us to invest our hearts in those things that pull us away from God.

November also includes Thanksgiving Day in the United States – a day for us to gather as a nation, as a community of faith, and as individual believers to express gratitude to God for the blessings that we receive at every moment of life, particularly the blessing of God’s ever abiding presence through Jesus Christ: “Behold, I am with you always!”

After Advent, a season of hope, December brings Christmas, a season of hope fulfilled. God’s love is made visible in the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Gratitude and hope are gifts of the forthcoming seasons of grace. May God’s grace fill your heart with these wonderful gifts in great abundance.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Douglas R. Nowicki, O.S.B.
Archabbot of Saint Vincent

P.S.: Fr. Donald and Br. Jeremiah join Archabbot Douglas and the monastic community in wishing all Oblates, Oblate novices, and other readers of this newsletter a joyful Advent and a grace-filled Christmas Season.

OBLATE DAY 2011 – SEPTEMBER 25

Nearly 60 people, Oblates and family members and other guests, came to the Archabbey for our 24th annual Oblate Day. Archabbot Douglas celebrated Mass at 10:30 A.M. for the group and preached about the struggle to obey God by acting on our promises. Oblate Mary Ellen Lang of Lower Burrell graciously played the organ for the Mass.

After Midday Prayer, lunch, and some free time, Oblation ceremonies were held in the basilica at 1:45, during which Fr. Donald received the following:

Oblates: **Gerald E. Brennen** of St. Marys, PA
E. Ann Brennen of St. Marys, PA
Marcela M. (Juliana) Cordero-Garcia of Baltimore, MD
Cathy (Frances of Rome) Mayled of Ayr, Ontario, Canada
Julie K. (Bede) Sousa of Ayr, Ontario, Canada

Oblate novices: **Craig Callan** of Bethesda, MD
Marie A. Callan of Bethesda, MD
Robert W. Gerwing of Pittsburgh, PA
Judy Shutak of Greensburg, PA .

The Brennens and the Callans are married couples.

After confessions in the basilica, there was a social in the Parish Assembly Room. Then at 3:45 Oblate Deacon Michael Russo of Johnstown made a presentation about the Oblates' need for stability regarding their commitment to bring Benedictine values into the world. He emphasized that stability helps Oblates to be rooted in Christ, to make time for prayer amid busy schedules, and to save time for study and rest as part of a balanced life. Despite many demands in our lives, we can set aside time for prayer, rest, and recreation; then we can better adhere to the "little way" of finding God in every task and every situation.

Then the Oblates joined the monastic community for Vespers. The day's events ended with supper and the singing of the Benedictine "Ultima."

OBLATE DAY 2012

Next year's Oblate Day has been scheduled for September 23, 2012, since facilities will be available on that day.

SEVENTH FALL OBLATE DAY OF RECOLLECTION AT THE ARCHABBEY - October 15, 2011

Some 43 people, mostly Oblates, attended this annual event, with conferences in St. Gregory Chapel. Fr. Killian Loch, O.S.B., the retreat master, delivered conferences on every Christian's call to holiness and mission. He mentioned that the four pillars of community life in Christ – namely, teachings, communal life, the Eucharist, and prayers – are found both in the Bible and the *Rule*. Holiness, Fr. Killian stressed, is a matter of allowing ourselves to be loved by God; it is our response to the love of God for "me," which comes first. Just as the very beginning of the *Rule* invites us to listen to a Father who loves us, we can see the whole *Rule* as St. Benedict's effort to draw us out ourselves to make us more aware of God and others.

During ceremonies at 1:30 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel, Fr. Donald received as an Oblate novice:

Camille LaVoie of Shiremanstown, PA .

Camille is the mother of Rev. Raymond J. LaVoie, a priest of the Harrisburg Diocese.

DAY OF RECOLLECTION IN 2012

The October day of recollection for next year has been scheduled for October 13, 2012. Some of this year's attendees have already made guest-room reservations for the 2012 event!

Oblate Directory Delayed, Available, and Ready for Further Corrections

The 2011 version of the *Directory*, originally planned for last summer, was unavoidably delayed and then prepared in preliminary form just before Oblate Day on September 25. However, a number of errors were discovered, and a corrected version (without proofreading of e-mail addresses) was subsequently put together. If anyone who is listed in the *Directory* discovers any further errors, please report them to Chris Karem at 724-875-0285 or (by e-mail) at ckarem@comcast.net. Since almost all the listings include e-mail addresses, the booklet can easily be revised and reissued without much expense. Those listed who would like a paper copy may contact the Oblate Office.

RETREAT SCHEDULE FOR 2012

The retreats at St. Vincent for summer, 2012, have been scheduled. The retreats on Benedictine spirituality are to be held on May 18-20, 2012, and June 8-10, 2011. The first, to be directed by Fr. Jeffrey Nyardy, will probably include a

Mass for priestly ordination. The second, to be directed by Fr. Edward Mazich, will be a silent retreat.

BASILICA GIFT SHOP OFFERS 10% DISCOUNT TO OBLATES

Oblates who purchase items in the Basilica Gift Shop may receive a discount of 10% on all purchases, according to a policy continued by the store's current manager, Br. André Melli, O.S.B. Several sizes of statues of St. Benedict are available. To order, phone 724-532-5060.

MEETINGS OF OBLATE BOARD OF ADVISORS, August 19 and October 7, 2011

Members of the Board assembled for their 33rd and 34th regular meetings at 6:30 P.M. on August 19 and October 7 in Brownfield 203. The next meeting, barring inclement weather, has been scheduled for January 13, 2012. The meeting on August 19 discussed the Oblate Ongoing Formation Committee, the offering of St. Benedict statues by the Basilica Gift Shop, possible norms for the Board, and promoting the Oblate Program at St. Vincent College. The meeting on October 7 dealt with the possibility of an "Executive Board" with annual meetings, ways prod delinquent borrowers, the possibility of videotaping Sunday lessons in Latrobe, news from deaneries and prospective deaneries, and the possibility of having Oblates volunteer to visit the monastic infirmary.

E-MAIL ADDRESS AND WEBSITE FOR OBLATE PROGRAM

Oblates who wish to contact the Oblate Office by e-mail should use the address svaoblates@email.stvincent.edu . Br. Jeremiah will try to respond as best he can or give the messages to Fr. Donald. Both of us have much other work to do; so we cannot guarantee a quick response. Please be patient. The website for Oblates has the address <http://www.svaoblates.org> . Br. Jeremiah posts occasional blogs.

MENTORS NEEDED!

Several people who are Oblate novices or inquirers have requested Oblate mentors, but we have run out of Oblates who have volunteered to serve in this way. If you are a full Oblate and think that you could serve as a mentor for someone new to the program, please contact the Oblate Office.

ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE OBLATE OFFICE

- (1) pamphlet "God's Love for You" with subtle evangelization – free
- (2) booklet *St. Benedict for Busy Parents* – \$.40 each
- (3) booklet of Oblates' reflections on verses of the *Rule* – free or with donation for postage
- (4) booklet of deanery histories – free or with donation for postage
- (5) book *Lessons from St. Benedict* by Fr. Donald - \$10.00 each, only by personal pick-up (Otherwise order from Sacred Winds Press at www.sacredwindspress.com .)

A REMINDER: OBLATES SHOULD NOT USE INITIALS

Since Oblates of St. Benedict are a "pious association of the faithful" and not a canonical order of the Catholic Church, Oblates should not use such initials after their names as "O.S.B.Obl.," despite the fact that some Oblates have developed this custom. Using such an appendage is contrary to Catholic tradition and practice.

OBLATE LIBRARY: FEEL FREE TO USE IT WELL!

Members of the Oblate community are always welcome to borrow books from the Oblate Library, either by mail or by personal visits to the Oblate Office (or by attendance at Oblate meetings in Latrobe). Those who would like a list of books in the library are welcome to write to Fr. Donald. If you have any library books that you have had for six months or more, please return them to the Oblate Office as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDED READING (available for borrowing from the Oblate Library)

- Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., *The Road to Eternal Life: Reflections on the Prologue of Benedict's Rule* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011)
- Sister Mary Reuter, O.S.B., *Running with Expanding Heart: Meeting God in Everyday Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010)

NEW (OR NEWLY DISCOVERED) BOOKS ON BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY (also available from the Oblate Library)

- Fr. Terrence Kardong, O.S.B., *Pillars of Community: Four Rules of Pre-Benedictine Monastic Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010)

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.

THIRD WORLD CONGRESS OF OBLATES, OCTOBER 4-10, 2013

The next World Congress of Oblates is scheduled to be held in Rome from October 4 to 10 in 2013. Presuming that at least one of our Oblates will be invited to attend, I suggest that you consider whether you might be a candidate to attend. If you do not have the finances, assistance should be available. If you are serious about attending, please contact the Oblate Office at 724-805-2291 or svaoblates@email.stvincent.edu .

OBLATE GROUP IN CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA

Oblate Cathy Mayled reported by e-mail on August 7 and August 26 and by letter on September 26. Seven people attended the second monthly meeting on July 28 at St. Gregory the Great Church. The group had a vigorous discussion on the Liturgy of the Hours and the importance of the psalms. The meeting closed with Compline. The meeting in August attracted nine people, and the group continued to read the Prologue of the *Rule*. Several attendees shared about how they had come to have interest in the Benedictine way. The meeting again ended with Compline.

At the meeting on September 22, the group completed its discussion on the Prologue and decided to take up the book *Songs of the Heart*, a book of reflections on the psalms, as the next object of study. Well wishes and prayers were offered to the three members who would travel to the Archabbey for Oblate Day. They closed with Night Prayer.

OBLATE GROUP IN FRACKVILLE, PA

Oblate novice Jeff McCaughtry of St. Dismas Parish has been working to inform others about the Oblate Program and, ultimately, God willing, to establish a deanery. In a letter of September 28, he reported on the first "Oblate meeting" on that day, attended by eleven inquirers in addition to Jeff and Deacon Mercado of St. Joseph Parish in Allentown. The meeting began with the praying of Vespers and the distribution of materials to inquirers. Jeff discussed the importance of *lectio divina*, with reference to John 11:24-26 and Acts 24:15, and the role of right conduct in our Christian vocation. Deacon Mercado explained the importance of listening and leading by example and also gave a teaching on the Trinity. Also, many questions were posed and answered. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and a closing prayer. Four of the inquirers completed applications.

Jeff also reported on October 18 and 19. A social which was held on October 12 drew 23 people and strengthened interest in the Oblate Program. Sixteen attended the meeting on October 19, which began with Vespers and prayers for the Oblate community and special intentions from the Archabbey. Inquirer Rich Walter and Jeff presented a lesson entitled "Obedience in Humility," with the use of *RB 7* and many Bible passages. Deacon Mercado offered ways of behaving humbly in everyday life. After Jeff suggested that each attendee reflect on his life regarding humility, there was a long discussion. Since the group ran out of time, they planned to study humility again during the meeting in November.

OBLATE GROUP IN PHILADELPHIA, PA

Fr. Vincent de Paul Crosby, O.S.B., having made acquaintance with some members of Saint Mary's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, invited some of the group to come to St. Vincent Archabbey several months ago. Those who came expressed interest in continuing to grow in appreciation of Benedictine spirituality. An introductory meeting was planned for Saturday morning, October 1, and all Oblates affiliated with the Archabbey living in the Philadelphia area were invited.

On October 10 Fr. Vincent reported on this meeting. Fifteen individuals met to discuss the formation of an "ecumenical deanery" of Oblates. Besides Fr. Vincent, the meeting drew four Oblates and nine inquirers, and the meeting began with Morning Prayer for the memorial of St. Thérèse. Then Fr. Vincent welcomed everyone and spoke briefly about the order of the meeting. At his request the Oblates each spoke about how they became interested in Oblate life, what led them to the Archabbey, and the meaning of Oblate life to them. The group found this very beneficial. After a coffee break Fr. Vincent spoke about what led to the formation of the group and what form it might take and then gave a more formal presentation on the origins of monastic life and its continued charism in the Church. Then there was a fruitful discussion, during which the group decided to spread news of its existence only by word of mouth, to meet every first Saturday of the month, and to pray the Liturgy of the Hours alternately according to the Roman Rite or the Episcopal Rite. There was a very good spirit among the group. **N.B.:** Please pray for the repose of Fr. Vincent's mother, Lucille Crosby, who died on November 3.

REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ITEMS FROM ST. JUDE AFRIKA CONVENTION IN NIGERIA

In a letter dated September 25, the St. Jude Afrika Convention, a Catholic organization based in Abuja, Nigeria, which works for the advancement of the Catholic faith and the promotion of socio-human peace, requested the sending of the following religious goods: rosaries, medals, stickers, posters, wall wrappers, frames, statues, crucifixes, holy water, healing oil, Bibles, devotional and inspirational books, documentaries and carols on VCD or DVD, incense. One can mail items to St. Jude Afrika Convention; #1, Judeac Hill, Mpape; P.O. Box 6154; Area 10, Garki; Abjua, NIGERIA. One may also contact Msgr. Jude Uzoeshi-Amatta (President/Founder) at jude.uzoeshi@yahoo.com .

OBLATE MEETINGS IN LATROBE

Oblates from all locations and their guests are invited to monthly meetings at the Archabbey. The forthcoming meetings will be on Sundays Nov. 20, Dec. 18, Jan. 15, and Feb. 19 at 6:45 P.M. in Brownfield Room 202. Those wishing to come early for Evening Prayer (at 5:00) and supper should phone Fr. Donald (724-805-2291) in advance.

CLASSES IN BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY AT ST. VINCENT

On the same days as Oblate meetings in Latrobe, classes in Benedictine spirituality are being held in Brownfield 202 from 3:00 to 4:25. They are taught by monks or Oblates. All are welcome to attend. The class on November 20, to be taught by Br. Albert Gahr, O.S.B., will address the topic "The Liturgy of the Hours," and the class on December 18, to be taught by Fr. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B., will be about "Poverty and Simplicity in Benedictine Spirituality."

ADORATION FOR VOCATIONS IN ST. GREGORY CHAPEL AND ON THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING

The Blessed Sacrament is generally exposed on Sundays from 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M. in St. Gregory Chapel. Oblates are urged to use these times for Eucharistic adoration, if possible, especially on the Sundays of Oblate meetings, to pray for vocations and especially for vocations to the Archabbey. **On the Solemnity of Christ the King, November 20, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed after the 11:30 Mass in the basilica, and adoration in the basilica (not St. Gregory Chapel) will end with Solemn Vespers, starting at 5:00 and ending with Benediction. All are welcome.**

NEWS FROM OBLATE DEANERIES

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

Moderator Ralph DeCecco reported by e-mail on August 16 and by letter on October 15. The meeting on August 13 began with the praying of the Liturgy of the Hours and continued with a lesson led by Oblate Carmen Musolino on the way we treat one another. The session ended with a prayer to Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. One inquirer was present.

Because of other activities there was no meeting in September. The five people attending the meeting on October 15 in the early afternoon prayed the Liturgy of the Hours and shared a lesson on forgiveness led by Oblate Michael Bolos. The meeting closed with a Litany of Humility.

Annvile, PA (St. Placid Deanery) -- *meetings at 3 P.M. on 4th Sunday of each month, St. Paul the Apostle Church, Annvile, or St. Joseph Church in Mechanicsburg or St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Mechanicsburg.*

Lay leader Gabriele Terrill wrote on August 1 and September 13. Fifteen people attended the meeting on July 24, which began with Evening Prayer. The session consisted of viewing the movie *Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer*, which lasted about three hours. There is an accompanying book with the same title, which is being passed around the deanery. Snacks were served during the viewing. Since the movie lasted so long, there was no time for discussion.

The meeting on August 28, held in Annvile, drew 13 people in addition to Fr. John Peck, moderator. After Evening Prayer the group enjoyed its annual picnic, which was held in the social hall of St. Paul Church because of the effects of a hurricane out of doors.

Asheboro, NC (St. Joseph / St. Gabriel Deanery) – *meetings at Lillian Hazelwood's home, 4th Sat. of month*

Lay leader Doris Blase reported on July 28. Doris and Oblate Lillian Hazelwood were hoping to speak with the new pastor of St. Joseph Church to determine if he would support the local Oblate program and perhaps serve as the deanery's moderator.

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

Secretary James Wells reported by e-mail on May 23, August 4, September 5, and October 6 and 7. Fr. Paschal Morlino, moderator, led the meeting, attended by 18 others, on May 22. First he introduced the new book *Lessons from St. Benedict* and made copies available; all were sold. Then prayer intentions were mentioned. In a presentation about Easter, Fr. Paschal offered thoughts about carrying the paschal candle into the world and using the Easter fire to dispel darkness. He referred to an article by Sr. Lenora Black, O.S.B., of Clyde, MO. Finally, Fr. Paschal gave a reflection on the women at the tomb that could be summarized as, "Roll away the stone and see the glory of God. ... God continually moves toward us, greets us, and rolls away the stone that is in our way." After some discussion the group prayed Vespers at 5:00 P.M. The group decided not to meet during June, July, or August, and a Labor Day picnic was scheduled for September 5.

That annual picnic attracted 27 people (Oblates, Oblate novices, friends, and inquirers) in addition to Fr. Paschal. The picnic began at 4:00 P.M., and Vespers was prayed out-of-doors at 6:00 P.M. The group was not deterred by heavy rain, and they continued to enjoy the food and fellowship for some time after Vespers.

The meeting on September 18, which drew 23 people, was led by Fr. Thomas More Sikora, O.S.B., the presenter. After the addressing of administrative matters and the announcing of forthcoming events, Fr. Thomas More spoke about work and *RB 48*, with references also to Chapters 31, 32, 57, and 7 of the *Rule*. He emphasized the importance and dignity of work along with the need for balance between work and prayer in the life of a Benedictine. After questions and a discussion, the group went to the church for Vespers at 5:00 P.M.

There was a special meeting on October 6 at 7:00 P.M., attended by eleven people besides Fr. Paschal and the guest speaker, Mr. Richard Bingold, who is a Catholic lay evangelist. He shared the testimony of his conversion and of his experience with spiritual and physical healings over many years of worldwide travel in his ministry. Richard prays over people with a relic of the True Cross and the "Miraculous Pilgrim Rosary." He offered the relic for veneration, and some questions and discussion followed his presentation. Although the formal meeting ended at 8:30 P.M., Richard stayed longer to talk with those who were especially interested. The next meeting was scheduled for November 20.

Butler, PA (St. Hildegard Deanery) -- monthly meetings at St. Fidelis Church, generally the 3rd Thurs. of month

Oblate Eugenia Schweikart wrote on August 5, and lay leader Ethel Galli wrote on August 8 and September 12. At the meeting on June 29, after the praying of Vespers, Eugenia gave a reflection on Chapter 6 of the *Rule* (on silence), with the help of *Preferring Christ* and *The Path of Life*. In the discussion it was emphasized that we need silence, especially in our culture with so much noise in the environment, so that we can hear the voice of God.

On July 28, which also began with Vespers, the Oblates welcomed as a guest speaker Dennis Johnson, author of the book *Your Connecting Flights to Heaven*. Seventeen people attended. In an introduction to the speaker, it was mentioned that there is a connection between St. Benedict's teaching on humility and the way in which our Blessed Mother lived her life. Mr. Johnson spoke about his relationship with Mary, which led him to go on pilgrimage to Medjugorje and to write a book concerning heaven, hell, and purgatory. In the book he uses teachings of the Catholic Church and revelations from approved apparitions. He learned from the Blessed Mother to think about what he says when he prays and to remind people about the reality of eternal life, along with the need to pray for the souls in purgatory.

Fr. Nathan Munsch, O.S.B., was the presenter at the meeting on August 25. He reflected on *RB* 4, "The Tools of Good Works." He referred to the Scripture verses used, the influence of St. Augustine, and the effects of the "Pelagian controversy" that was prominent in St. Benedict's time. He also mentioned that St. Benedict used about 40% of the *Rule of the Master*, and modified many passages so as to make monastic life according to the *Rule* viable.

On September 10 the deanery sponsored a day of recollection held at Ethel Galli's home. In the morning Sister Marian Senish addressed the topic "Who is God to each of us?" and used various passages of Scripture to show the traits of God. In the afternoon Sister Rosalyn Soller, O.S.B., spoke about *lectio divina* and listening, with examples of good listening techniques and with an exhortation to "listen with the ear of the heart" to welcome God to change our lives. The group then visited Oblate Robert Zera's home and viewed his collection of icons and relics.

Carrolltown, PA (Sacred Heart Deanery) -- monthly meetings at St. Benedict Church, in the church and/or a meeting room, on Sunday evenings at 6:00.

Lay leader Mary Catherine Hoover reported by phone on August 23. There was no meeting in August because of conflict with other local events. A number of the Oblates attended Oblate Day at the Archabbey on September 25.

Charleston, SC -- monthly meetings at Cathedral of St. John the Baptist: Vespers in upper church, 6:30, meeting in cathedral hall at 7:00.

There was no report.

Chincoteague, VA (Our Lady of Guadalupe Deanery) -- monthly meetings at St. Andrew Church.

Lay leader Mary Hoffken reported on August 15. Seven people joined Fr. Richard Chirichiello, pastor, for the meeting on July 12. After an invocation to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the group continued a discussion of the *Rule* by reflecting on the ninth step of humility (*RB* 7:56-58). Comments were made about how and why to control the tongue, about the importance of not feeling compelled to talk or to need to be heard or noticed, and about the value of feeling comfortable with silence as an opportunity to converse with the Lord. The meeting concluded with the praying of the Lord's Prayer. (*continued*)

Four people joined Fr. Richard for the meeting on August 8. The tenth step of humility, which concerns the need to avoid ready laughter, was discussed. After some exchange the group concluded that one should pay attention to laughing and reflect on one's motive. Is it a matter of avoidance of some issue? In a community that values silence, too-ready laughter may not serve the neighbor or foster true fellowship. The meeting concluded with the praying of Vespers.

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

Lay leader Carl Motter wrote on August 10, September 23, and October 13. At the meeting on August 8, after Evening Prayer led by moderator Deacon Mike Russo, the group enjoyed a corn-and-wiener roast. They enjoyed the event so much that they were even able to be grateful for the rain since it was really needed.

At the meeting on September 21, after the praying of Evening Prayer, Deacon Michael gave a presentation on some of the changes in the Mass that will be implemented beginning this Advent. He reviewed the history of the Mass and explained why the new translation was being introduced with the third edition of the *Roman Missal*. A number of Oblates from the deanery attended Oblate Day on September 25, at which Deacon Michael was the speaker.

At the meeting on October 10, after Evening Prayer, Deacon Michael showed a video on the liturgy of the Eucharist, including the history of the Mass and an exhortation to rekindle a sense of reverence at Mass.

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

On August 21 some 20 people gathered for a discussion based on Chapters 2 and 3 of *St. Benedict and St. Thérèse*. There was reference to the “littleness” of the *Rule* and St. Thérèse’s “little way.” Both point to the spiritual meaning of events in everyday life. Even the miracles in the life of St. Benedict are “ordinary” in the sense that miracles are an ordinary part of religion. We modern people need to learn to be “little” in order to accept miracles and St. Thérèse’s style, which is not always “tasteful.” At the same time we must witness against the “false,” secularized world of our time in order to embrace the profound but simple plan of God for us. During the meeting and the preceding 3:00 class a collection was taken to relieve someone in great financial difficulty, and a total of \$523.00 was collected. Thank you, all who contributed, for your generosity!

On September 18 over 20 people gather to reflect on most of Chapter 3 of *St. Benedict and St. Thérèse*. The sessions at 3:00 and at 6:45 began with an expression of thanks by Oblate Lawrence Cuda for the Oblates’ prayers and financial support during his recent trials and with his description of God’s subsequent wondrous workings. The discussion from the text involved the themes of littleness, childlikeness, and the image of father as used by both St. Benedict and St. Thérèse. There was also some discussion about our society’s downgrading of fatherhood and childhood because of the negative influences of secularism, materialism, and radical feminism. It was also emphasized that the way of Christ, the Lamb, is a way of sacrifice and of the Cross; hence we can expect suffering in our witness against the hedonistic tendencies of our culture, and we may find ourselves to be “innocent victims” along with Our Lord and such others as aborted babies.

On October 16 the meeting began with Oblate Joyce Collins’ giving a presentation on her experience at the NAABOD meeting at St. Meinrad Archabbey last July. Then the 15 or so people present continued a discussion of the text, with comments on the need for sacrifice in Benedictine life, the connection between obedience and spiritual “littleness,” and the role of instant obedience in the ongoing battle against the forces of self-gratification in our culture.

Lessons in Latrobe at 3:00 P.M. before Oblate Meetings

On August 21 Fr. Jacques Daley gave a teaching on the Eucharist to about 26 people. He emphasized that we get from the Eucharist what we put into it; there are many graces available, but if we are not ready for them, the Eucharist will have little or no effect on us. The Eucharist is meant to convert us into Christ, to overflow into our doing of God’s will, and to help us to do everything in union with Christ – with charity. Preparation is very important. We should think about Whom we are receiving and take time in adoration before or after Holy Communion to get to know our Eucharistic Lord more intimately. The Eucharist also helps us to battle against temptations and to overcome them. Christ in the Eucharist helps to guard our peace, to redo our past, and to protect us from attachment to the sinful dimension of our human will.

On September 18 Fr. Thomas Hart gave a presentation on “Prayer in Benedictine Spirituality” to a full classroom of 24 people. He began with the question, “Do we experience the joy of God’s presence at every moment of every day?” Fr. Tom then referred to Pope Paul VI’s letter “On Christian Joy” and to the genuine joy that is a gift from God and a fruit of the Holy Spirit and which does not depend on circumstances. Ideally, prayer should bring us into the joy of God’s presence. Then he defined and described kataphatic prayer (involving the active use of the mind and images) and apophatic prayer (informal prayer, of “the naked awareness of God’s presence”). When St. Paul asks us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17), he is calling us to engage in apophatic prayer throughout the day. Those in attendance then offered many ways of “praying always,” that is, to try to live constantly in the presence of God and to do His will. Such an endeavor is in accord with St. Benedict’s reminder that “the divine presence is everywhere” (*RB* 19:1) and with the strong monastic tradition of trying to live constantly in God’s presence.

On October 16 Fr. Stanley Markiewicz gave a talk about “Work in Benedictine Spirituality” to some 20 people. He stated that while the Greeks and Romans looked down on manual labor, hard work is an important part of Benedictine life. According to the *Rule*, work is a means of accomplishing God’s will and need not be obviously productive. All that we do, he said, should be a continuation of God’s work on this earth. (*continued*) Our first “work” is to pray the Opus Dei, which stems from the Jewish practice of praying for the well-being of the world. Work can also include study, helping others, or earning a living; all of these can be sanctifying if our attitude is one of self-offering and love. Fr. Stanley then explained the spirituality of work as reflected in St. Benedict’s degrees of humility and in the role of the cellarer. The atmosphere of work in a monastery or among any Christians should be a countercultural witness against our culture’s notion of working only to seek selfish advantage.

Minersville, PA (St. Malachy Deanery) – *monthly meetings at the chapel in Minersville*

Lay leader William Sedoma reported on September 6. The meeting on September 6 was incorporated with a bi-weekly rosary gathering, which drew 21 people. Those who were not Oblates or Oblate novices were introduced to the Oblate Program, and some were given application forms. Bill showed interested persons the newsletter and explained the meaning of Oblation to them. The group also discussed the good-will program and prayed for the intentions from the Archabbey and for those involved in the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Rev. Robert J. Potts, pastor of St. Ursula Church in Fountain Hill, PA, who has been celebrating Mass at Minersville for almost 20 years and who has been performing Oblate ceremonies, has agreed to serve officially as moderator of the St. Malachy Deanery.

Niagara Area, Ontario, Canada (St. Henry/St. Gertrude Deanery) -- *meetings on 4th Friday, meeting room of St.*

Thomas Aquinas Church, St. Catharines, Ont.

Lay leader Brian Chisholm phoned on October 29. The meeting on October 28 was attended by six people, including one new inquirer. Besides the usual prayers, the group expressed hope of finding a priest-moderator, discussed use of a Novena to St. Benedict, and made plans for an Advent day of recollection, to which members of other parish groups would be invited. Also, Brian has offered a number of spiritual books and D.V.D.'s for borrowing by others, so that, in effect, the deanery now has a lending library.

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

Lay leader James Perini reported by phone and by e-mail on August 14. The Oblate group enjoyed an annual picnic during July. As of August 6, Fr. Vincent Zidek became pastor, replacing Fr. Ralph, who had been the deanery's moderator for some years and who was going to graduate school in spirituality in Ireland. Because of the new leadership at St. Peter Parish, the group decided not to schedule meetings for a while. We are grateful for Fr. Ralph's years of faithful service as moderator of the St. Peter Deanery.

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

Secretary Peggi Gabler wrote on August 8, September 5, and October 12. On August 4 the group began its session with Vespers and Benediction. Ten people attended, including a new inquirer. Then the minutes from the previous meeting and a letter from Fr. Donald were read, and the attendees alternated in reading from the *Rule's* Prologue. Orders were taken for *Lessons from St. Benedict*, and prayer intentions were brought forth. The meeting ended with the "Oblate prayer."

At the gathering on September 1, Fr. Daniel Wolfel, O.S.B., led Evening Prayer and Benediction, and then lay leader Ben Hoffman presided over the meeting, which was attended by ten people. The group recited the prayer to St. Benedict and prayed for the repose of the soul of recently deceased Sr. Jean Marie, O.S.B., of St. Joseph Monastery. After a reading of minutes and a letter by Fr. Donald, the group read Chapter 1 of the *Rule* and discussed it. Then they read the first two pages of *Lessons from St. Benedict*, with some reflection on the need for good order in one's prayer life, balanced by solicitude for the needs of family and friends. The meeting ended with the "Oblate prayer."

The meeting on October 6 attracted eight Oblates and began with Evening Prayer and Benediction. A final Oblation was planned for November, with the suggestion that it be followed with a social with refreshments. Jerry and Ann Brennan spoke about their final Oblation at the Archabbey on Oblate Day. Then the group read Chapter 2 of the *Rule* and pages 2 and 3 of *Lessons from St. Benedict*, with a brief discussion. The session closed with the "Oblate prayer."

Saint Vincent College (Mary, Mother of Wisdom Deanery) – monthly meetings during the school year, usually in Mary, Mother of Wisdom Chapel The Oblate Program in the college was reorganized and sought new members by having a booth at an "activities fair" in September and by holding an "Information Night" on October 9 at 9:00 P.M. in Prep Hall. A number of students inquired at the former, but only one student attended the latter.

Savannah, GA (St. Katherine Drexel Deanery) -- special monthly events at Sunday Vespers at Benedictine Priory

Fr. Ronald Gatman, moderator, reported by e-mail on September 21. The Oblate Council joined the Benedictine community for Vespers on August 9 and September 13. Afterwards the group made plans for the coming school year, including Masses on September 25, November 20, and January 29; a presentation by Fr. Chris Ortega on October 30; a pre-Christmas party at the priory on December 16 (with hopes to invite the newly ordained bishop of Savannah); and Oblate Council meetings on October 11, November 8, and January 10. Also, the Council chose St. Katherine Drexel as patroness of the deanery.

Scranton, PA (St. Boniface/St. Lioba Deanery) -- monthly meetings on 3rd Fri. at Immaculate Conception Church

With the help of Fr. Killian, O.S.B., in early September Msgr. Vincent G. Grimalia of the Scranton Diocese agreed to serve as moderator of the deanery. Msgr. Grimalia is chaplain at St. Luke's Villa in Wilkes-Barre, PA. We are grateful for his willingness to assist the deanery.

Lay leader Gretchen Meyers wrote on August 21, September 21, and October 25. Three people, including an inquirer, attended the meeting on August 19. The group continued a discussion from the previous meeting. Gretchen mentioned that the diocesan store where she works has statues of St. Benedict available. The web site is www.shoptheguild.org.

Four people attended the meeting on September 16 and continued a discussion of obedience. The one inquirer expressed interest in being invested as an Oblate novice.

Three people attended the meeting on October 21. There was a continued discussion of obedience, this time on the relationship of obedience and authority. In November there were plans to discuss an article on "monastic distinctiveness," and Msgr. Grimalia was to attend.

Selingsgrove, PA (St. Anselm Deanery) – monthly meetings at 2 P.M. on 2nd Sundays at St. Pius X Church in Selingsgrove

Secretary Marcia La Bant reported by e-mail on August 15 and October 14. The meeting on August 14, attended by nine people, began with the playing of "Ave Maria" and the praying of Vespers in the chapel. The Oblates included in their prayers the repose of the soul of Irene Sager, Oblate novice Bob Sager's mother, who had died on August 11. Vespers

was followed by veneration of a relic of St. Benedict, which had been recently been donated to the group by Fr. Ted Keating, the moderator. Fr. Keating then came to invest as an Oblate novice

Patricia Davis of Northumberland, PA.

Then the group went to the library for discussion. Three attendees reported about their visit to the Archabbey on July 11, and Pastor Doug Shader spoke about his final Oblation there on August 6. Teresa Warlow spoke about the healing properties of Gregorian chant. Bob Sager brought several copies of a book *The Devotions of St. Anselm* to share with the group. The meeting ended with a closing prayer.

The meeting scheduled for September 11 was cancelled because of heavy flooding in the area. Eight people attended the meeting on October 9, which began with Vespers and a prayer for the repose of the soul of an inquirer's mother, along with veneration of a relic of St. Benedict. The group discussed having a more organized format for meetings, and then there was a reading from the Prologue followed by discussion. The attendees decided to begin reading and discussing *Lessons from St. Benedict* at the meeting on November 13. Three members of the deanery attended the Oblate day of recollection at the Archabbey on October 15.

Southern Pines, NC (St. Ephrem the Syrian Deanery) – *monthly meetings on 2nd Thurs. of month*

Secretary Laura Lowder sent a report by e-mail on August 12 and a letter on September 3-4, and she phoned on October 13. Five members of the deanery met on August 11 at Pat Kassebaum's house since she was recovering from foot surgery. The group prayed Evening Prayer and then had a discussion on a section of the *Rule*, with references to *Lessons from St. Benedict* and some conversation about St. Clare. The group also spoke about promoting the Oblate program in local parishes, perhaps with a session just for information.

On August 14 at St. Nicholas Greek Catholic Mission in Raleigh, NC,

Fr. Deacon Daniel (Ephrem) Dozier of Southern Pines, NC,

made his final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Deacon Stephen Dozier, his father. Fr. Deacon Daniel is the moderator of the Southern Pines Deanery.

Laura wrote about being in touch by phone with Doris Blase and Lillian Hazelwood of the Asheboro Deanery, and there were hopes that the two deaneries could meet together in the near future.

The meeting on September 7, with four people attending at Pat's home, began with Vespers in anticipation of the Nativity of Our Lady. During a brief business meeting the group planned to arrange a date for visiting members of the Asheboro Deanery and discussed needs for the coming year. They also agreed to continue to meet on fourth Thursdays for potluck meals, fellowship, and prayer. They also agreed to renew contacts with local parishes by means of bulletin announcements. Then the group continued its reading and discussion of the *Rule*.

There was no meeting in October because of illnesses. However, the Oblates from Southern Pines were to visit the Oblates in Asheboro on October 29 for a joint meeting.

State College, PA (St. Joseph Deanery) -- *meetings on 2nd Monday of each month, Our Lady of Victory Church, Activity Center.*

Secretary Kay Tittmann wrote on September 13 and October 11. The meeting on September 12 was attended by eight Oblates, two Oblate novices, and two inquirers besides Fr. David Griffin, moderator. After the praying of Evening Prayer, the group began a series of discussions based on the book *Benedict's Way*. The value of making retreats was emphasized, and the attendees were encouraged to make the day of recollection at the Archabbey on October 15. Fr. David pointed out that the psalms provide words for every possible emotion and that they are a good source of prayer. After prayer, the singing of the "Ultima," the reading of a thank-you note, and a treasurer's report, the meeting closed with a prayer for several intentions that were voiced. (*continued*)

The meeting on October 10, led by Fr. David, attracted eight Oblates, one Oblate novice, and three inquirers. After Evening Prayer, the group began a discussion based on the first four chapters of *Benedict's Way*. They reflected on "listening" with the need to be silent to hear God's voice; on the need for "prayer" to be short and pure; on the challenge to regard work as a holy endeavor, with respect for the human body; and on the connection between "stability" and commitment, which requires effort. The meeting closed with a prayer, the "Ultima," and some prayer intentions. The next five chapters of the text were to be discussed on November 14.

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

Lay leader Dee Pauls wrote on September 12. The meeting on September 7 drew eight members and an inquirer in addition to Fr. Michael Gabler, moderator. The agenda for the coming year was set as going through the whole *Rule*, passage by passage. Fr. Michael explained each of the first seven verses of the Prologue. He stated the purpose of St. Benedict in writing the *Rule*, mentioned that much of it consists of quotes from Scripture, and asserted that many passages, such as Prol:5-7, come from the *Rule of the Master*. The first verses remind us that the love of God dwells in His children's hearts and that the Spirit makes us fellow heirs with Christ. Then there emerged a discussion about the forthcoming changes in the translation of parts of the Mass.

Williamsport, PA (Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus Deanery) -- meetings on last Sunday of each month, 1 P.M., St. Joseph the Worker (*Mater Dolorosa*) Church, meeting room in former school

Oblate Sue Wykoff reported by e-mail on August 30, with a welcome to all members of the deanery concerning monthly meetings, to begin on September 25, with a plan to finish a series of discussions on *The Path of Life*.

Sue also sent an e-mail message on October 8, regarding the meeting planned for October 23, with the possibility of meeting at St. Boniface Church. Sue also enclosed a guide for reading through the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Various Locations

On August 6 in St. Gregory Chapel at the Archabbey,

The Rev. Dr. Jeff Loach of Nobleton, Ontario, Canada, and

Pastor Douglas (Benedict) Schader of Selinsgrove, PA,

made their final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Donald. Also present were their wives and Doug's two daughters. Jeff is pastor of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Nobleton, and Doug is pastor of the United Church of Christ in Selinsgrove and belongs to the St. Anselm Deanery in Selinsgrove.

On August 19 in the Archabbey Basilica,

Richard T. (Henry) Rutkowski of Erie, PA,

made his final Oblation in the presence of Fr. Donald. Also witnessing the Oblation were Rick's wife, Dorothy, and members of the Oblate Board of Advisors, who had just completed their August meeting.

On August 30 at the chapel in Pelham, GA, Rev. Eric Filmer, pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Moultrie, GA, invested as an Oblate novice

Harold K. Masten of Pelham, GA.

On August 31 in Alaska, Fr. Andrew W. Sensinig, O.M.I., invested

Deacon Richard D. Ernst of Soldotna, AK,

as an Oblate novice. Deacon Richard is originally from Pittsburgh but now serves as a deacon for the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska.

On September 15 in the crypt of the Archabbey Basilica,

Sr. Marie Teresa (Scholastica) Tellier, C.H., of Cumberland, MD,

made her final Oblation before Fr. Donald and Oblate Peg Palfy. Sr. Marie Teresa is a consecrated hermit living at St. Gemma's Hermitage.

On September 27 at the chapel in Pelham, GA, Rev. Eric Filmer invested as an Oblate novice

Thomas King of Pelham, GA.

On October 11 at the chapel in Morgan, GA,

John C. (Francis DeSales) Evans of Morgan, GA,

made his final Oblation in the presence of Rev. Stephen Pontzer, parochial vicar at St. Teresa Church in Albany, GA. Fr. Pontzer is an alumnus of St. Vincent Seminary.

On October 17 at St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Church in Harrisville, RI, Rev. Gerard J. Caron, pastor, invested

Wayne A. Trudelle of Pascoag, RI,

as an Oblate novice.

On October 20 at St. Joseph Church in Lancaster, PA, Rev. Tariq Isaac invested as an Oblate novice

Linda "Linette" Schreiber of Ardmore, PA.

Linette's investiture was part of the monthly meeting of the Oblates in Lancaster.

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. Sebastian Samay, Fr. Gilbert Burke, Br. Edward Grinder, Fr. Stephen Honeygosky, Fr. Vincent Zidek, Fr. Lee Yoakam, Fr. Cuthbert Jack .

DECEASED MONKS

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Wilfred Dumm, who died on September 23 at the age of 91. Please also remember Fr. Adalbert de Vogüé, O.S.B., well-known monastic scholar and author, who died about October 14 at the age of 87. A monk of Abbaye de la Pierre qui Vire in France, he died in the woods after he had apparently become lost during a walk.

OVERDUE OR MISSING LIBRARY BOOKS AND TAPES: PLEASE RESPOND!

During the past several years a number of books from the Oblate Library have been found to be missing, presumably because people withdrew them without signing them out. Others were admittedly lost by their borrowers. **Please check your bookshelves to see if you have any of the missing books.** Thank you!

- Fr. George A. Maloney, S.J., *The Jesus Prayer* (pamphlet)
- Fr. Guy-Marie Oury, O.S.B., *A Monastic Pilgrimage: Following the Footsteps of St. Benedict*
- Abbot David Parry, O.S.B., *Household of God*

Several books have been out of the library for three years or more. I list them here as an incentive for their borrowers to return them as soon as possible:

- Fr. Peter Damian Belisle, *The Privilege of Love*
- Esther de Waal, *Lost in Wonder*
- *The Holy Rule of St. Benedict*, ed. by the monks of St. Meinrad Archabbey
- Fr. Terrence Kardong, O.S.B., *Benedictine Rule: A Translation and Commentary*
- Fr. Thomas Keating, O.S.C.O., *Intimacy with God*
- Rachel M. Srubas, *Oblation: Meditations on the Rule of St. Benedict*

Poem by Oblate Elmer Furman of East Pittsburgh, PA, June, 2011

To the Glory of God:
Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica

She sat erect in a prominent spot,
Filled with wonder and awe, dazzling red
In the bright sun which quietly moved in the sky
And left its shade, then shone again, then repeated again.

Come, sons and daughters, savor its elegant beauty;
The best man wants to offer not only now,
But down through the years, the exquisitely obvious,
The intelligent impress of proud beholders.

From humble beginnings of great faith, daring men
Inspired in the depths of their hearts made desire and love kiss
And breathed His breath that strengthened them to do
What on their own they could not do all by themselves.

This truly beautiful basilica passes the test of time.
Its huge doors lock not men out but proudly bid them in.
Its cavernous inside yearns to be overflowing with love
With giving hearts, now reflecting an emptiness to be filled.

The magnificent altar (*ad privilegium*) symbolized
By Old Testament sacrifice, now once and for all offered in blood,
Is eternally offered but made present in remembrance
By divine command: "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Now, let us go out from this beautiful edifice on fire with love,
Temples of the Holy Spirit Who changes us, instilled
With His abiding presence for us to behold and adore
To take with us wherever we go as a sign we truly love Him.

OBLATES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND CAMERATA CONCERTS

Oblates are welcome to attend two concerts offered by the Saint Vincent Camerata in December. The first, at 2:30 P.M. on Sunday, December 11, at the Archabbey Basilica, will include ***MAGICAL* a capella** choruses by Giovanni Gabrieli, Henryk Górecki, and Francis Poulenc and **Chichester Psalms** by Leonard Bernstein. Tickets cost \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door.

The second concert will be offered at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, December 16, at Holy Trinity Church in Ligonier, PA. It will include *a capella* "Lessons and Carols" by the Saint Vincent Camerata Scholars and Gregorian Chant, Renaissance *Laude Spirituali* motets and carols by Palestrina, Victoria, Vaughan Williams, and Poulenc. Admission is free.

RECENT PRAYER REQUEST

Early in November an earthquake inflicted significant damage on St. Gregory's Abbey in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Please pray for the monks of the abbey and for the students and staff of their college. St. Gregory's Abbey is a monastery of our American Cassinese Congregation.