



Artist Oblate
Gavin Machutchin

Oblates of Saint Benedict

Saint Martin's Abbey

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A Letter from the Oblate Director - Brother Edmund Ebberts, O.S.B.

Dear Oblate brothers and sisters:

Lent is a good time to seriously recall and ask, "Why did I commit to the Oblate Program at St. Martin's Abbey?" Ask yourself, "Have I grown?" Or "Am I in the same place as I was before Oblation?" Then ask the question, "How did I make that happen?" Or for some of us, "Why haven't I made progress?" I hear excitement from Oblates and from others I hear very little or nothing at all. I enjoy hearing from the Oblates, especially when they tell me about how their Oblation continues to challenge and change their lives. When someone inquires about the Oblate Program, I ask them to give serious prayer and thought to what this lifetime commitment will look like in the future. This commitment may seem easy to invest in now but as time goes on it is easy to forget our initial enthusiasm and desire to be an Oblate.

Reading, praying the Divine Office, and active participation in the program are essential for continued growth in the spiritual life. Each Newsletter presents a list of books to broaden your scope of prayer. An oblate is part of two communities, a small one and a global one. In a community of like mindedness, such as the Oblates, we have support to push forward when our spirit is weak and wanting. With everyone working together as a team we move more swiftly than we would alone. We must know when and how to reach out to others for guidance or for a shoulder to lean on. Alone we are unable to shoulder the world's issues but as a unit, as a community, we can move mountains by bringing God's order and healing.

These past weeks in our dining room, the monastic community has been reading a book entitled, "The Boys in The Boat". It is about a USA rowing team from the University of Washington that went on to win the Rowing Team Olympics in the 1930's, prior to the outbreak of WWII. The book tells us what it took for the boys to come together as a team. These boys had to work in tandem. They learned to love one another, putting their differences aside, be caring and trusting. When it came to rowing it was vital that each person listen and respond as a teammate for success. The team became so integrated that each person in the boat was equally responsible for success or failure. I would like to think the Oblate Community here at St. Martin's could be so orchestrated and functional like those boys in the boat.

There are those who have age, illness and distance issues, which can't be helped, and as a community we join in prayerful support of them. But, I feel so many Oblates are not fully engaged, not integrated into the community. We need to change that. Your community misses you. Come and help us be more whole with your physical presence. Just like the rowing team each rower is important. We can't build our community without you.

Abbot's Reflection by Abbot Neal Roth, O.S.B.

Dear Oblates,

Our beloved Father Urban Feucht died December 7, 2013. When a monk dies, one of the things the abbot does is check the monk's room for any matter that may need attention such as Mass intentions that have not been offered or simply to collect a few mementos for family members. Fr. Urban was our good humored prior for about five years. During that period he gave me an article titled THINGS WE CAN LEARN FROM A DOG. The article was something I wrote for the May 1998 Oblate newsletter after reading THINGS WE CAN LEARN FROM A DOG. Fr. Urban had saved a copy of my modest efforts.



Father Prior Urban, a teller of humorous and sometimes sage tales, passed one on to me recently titled THINGS WE CAN LEARN FROM A DOG. Commandment number one states, *“Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.”* Another one suggests, *“When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.”* One of the commandments that caught my eye was, *“When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.”* Since obedience is the very heart of the monastic life, this would not be a good commandment for a Benedictine to follow. And how might a Benedictine Oblate view obedience? We see in the Prologue of the Rule that our way back to God is through obedience, just as our

breaking away from God is the result of disobedience. We live in a world of materialism, weak morals, and instant satisfaction a world that extols much that is in direct opposition to a Christian way of life. I think we must stop and remind ourselves that obedience to the gospel is every Christian's obligation, opportunity, and goal. On last Ash Wednesday we were all signed with ashes and perhaps heard the words, *“Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel.”* The Latin word for obedience is **obedire** (derived from **audire** meaning **to listen**). We listen to and follow those who have legitimate authority over us. More important than this, we listen to the One who is over all creation-God. With baptism we become members of the Body of Christ; we receive “built-in” directions to the Father. This journey is lifelong and requires, in faith, a constant monitoring of the soul (turning away from sin) and a vivid recollection of the obedience of Christ (being faithful to the gospel). This means loving one's neighbor (another “dog commandment” applies here- “Avoid biting when a simple growl will do”) beginning in the family, and then out to others, living a sacramental life, seeing viewpoints other than one's own, being honest and yet charitable. It means submission to the will of God by actually handing one's life over to God, allowing God to use you while you are forever endeavoring to be alert to the will of God. It can make life very hectic at times, but the reward is a life that is loving, peaceful, and joyful. And finally, bear with me for just one more doggie commandment, “If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.” Amen!

In the Beginning...by Father Gerard Kirsch, O.S.B.

On September 1, 1954—always a date to indicate the beginning of a new school year—**Father Luke O'Donnell (1913-1999)**, novice and cleric master, and the clerics returned from a Mount Rainier outing. On September 3, **Father Placidus Reischman (1926-2000)** left for Seattle to take up residence at Assumption parish and to do work in biology at the University of Washington for the year....On September 4, **Father Felix Wirth (1913-1984)** returned from summer school at Iowa State College in agricultural economics....On September 7, **Father Bertrand Trautman (1918-1972)** returned from two years at Harvard University where he had completed his course work for the doctorate in political science....On September 8, **Fraters Valerian Grubb (1932-1979)** and **Kevin McStay** made their first vows.

September 9, found high enrollment at 187, a 16% increase over the previous year. On September 15, college students began classes....On September 16, **Father William Dickerson** left for Catholic University in Washington, D.C. for advanced work in psychology....On September 18 Frater **Maurus Keller** was ordained subdeacon at Saint James Cathedral....On September 19, the cleric-theologians **Fraters Urban Feucht (1927-2013)**, **Christopher Abair (1924-1988)**, **Thaddeus Arledge**, **Nicholas Rausch (1928-2003)**, **Frederick Theiss** and **Maurus Keller** left for Mount Angel to continue their studies....On September 21, the Saint Martin's High school students spent the day at Western Washington Fair at Puyallup....On September 27, Brother postulant **Walter Spencer** returned from Yakima with a Guernsey cow, a gift of the Berthon family....On September 28, **Father Walter Hellan (1920-1968)** drove to Mabton, Washington to purchase potatoes for the near 400 eating daily at Saint Martin's.

On October 2, **Father Bede Ernsdorff (1909-1982)** returned from the hospital following emergency surgery for a perforated ulcer, and spent the weekend recuperating at Lambert Lodge with **Fathers John Raymond (1911-1974)**, **Bertrand Trautman**, and **Brother Joseph Crowley (1884-1973)**....On October 4, **Brothers Norbert Nicklaus** and **Walter Spencer** returned from Yakima with a truckload of potatoes....On October 15, **Fathers Michael Feeney (1919-2000)** and **Andrew McHugh** returned from a hunt with a 72- pound bear shot by **Father Andrew**.

The November 1954 issue of the Saint Martin's News also gave a historical retrospective of key events for the institution in the month of November: 1901: 30 students with a faculty of six; 1913: the dedication of the south wing of the Main Building by Bishop Edward J. O'Dea of Seattle; 1923: installation of a 60,000 gallon water tank (dismantled in 1994); 1931: a new church at Saint Edward's, Shelton; 1939 (November 27): a 3 to 4 rated earthquake; and 1941: the beginning of Saint Martin's night classes in the Olympia High School building.

From the Hill... by Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.

As a child growing up in Sacramento, I was part of a very large extended family, with three living grandparents, many aunts and uncles and first cousins, as well as great aunts and uncles and first cousin of my parents. There were also my maternal grandmother's brother and sisters and their offspring who lived in far-off Europe. Excepting some members like my Great Aunt Toni, most family lived in Sacramento. Aunt Toni lived in the nearby country town of Bryte. A very shy woman, she was most at home speaking in her native German. My childhood was a mix of American and European customs and foods. One custom was visiting the cemeteries. We always put flowers on the grave of my maternal grandfather, for who I was named, and much later, on the grave of my Mother's older brother Bill. As a monk, I visit the Abbey Cemetery to pray and to visit friends, such as **FATHER JOHN SCOTT**. **FATHER URBAN FEUCHT** is the most recent resident of our cemetery. His grave is especially well cared for by some thoughtful friend or family member. There are flowers. There is a pole with a lantern. Around Saint Patrick's Day, there was a green "garland" of shamrocks adorning the pole.



Many years ago, many of our vocations were products of either our high school or our college. One of these vocation was George Wolfe, SMC 1953, who passed to God this Spring. A one time aviator, George was know as **Frater Ralph** during the few years in the late 1960's when he tried his monastic vocation with us. May George, **FATHER JOHN** and **FATHER URBAN**, and all our recently deceased, rest in the Lord's peace!



At present, our vocation team is headed by **FATHER PETER TYNAN**. In reaching out to those being called by God to the monastic life, the team regularly makes use of social media, and is considering the production of a video on the community. **FATHER PETER** also works in the University's Campus Ministry and is Special Collection Curator in the O'Grady Library. He recently enjoyed a little R&R by participating in a Frisbee gold tournament in Port Orchard.

BROTHER LUKE DEVINE, currently in a doctorate program in Berkeley, is a gifted artist. He has studied at the Chicago Art Institute, and has done book illustrations, and the art work for a Abbey Christmas card among other projects. Recently, one of his works, "Come to the Table", with the theme of hospitality, was accepted to be part of a traveling exhibit sponsored by C.I.V.A. (Christians in the Visual Arts). Congratulations!!!

Blessed Eastertide

From the Hill... by Boniface V. Lazzari, O.S.B.

ABBOT NEAL ROTH attends many meetings, both on campus and beyond. Recently, he returned from a meeting of Benedictine superiors at Saint Bernard's Abbey, Alabama... Our postulant, **GUS LABAYEN**, long has been integrated into the Abbey Schola, directed by **BROTHER AELRED WOODARD**. **GUS** also works with **NOVICE MARTIN DINH**, **BROTHERS EDMUND EBBERS**, and **MARK BONNEVILLE**, and others. **GUS**, **BROTHER MARTIN**, and **FATHER MARION NGUYEN** are monks in the first stages of monastic formation... **FATHER CLEMENT PANGRATZ** is a long – time Abbey musician. On Sunday evenings, **FATHER CLEMENT** faithfully accompanies us on the piano for our hymns at monastic Compline. When the monastic Chapel was in Old Main, **FATHER CLEMENT** regularly accompanied the community at Mass and office.

Trees and flowers are in bloom.

Spring has arrived.

This is the season when we especially remember the Giver of Life to All.

Urbanic Joy by Wally McClure

Abbot Neal mentions in his reflections this issue the responsibility he bears to enter the cell of a departed community member to see what might be left behind. It is his additional responsibility, then, to decide what to do with what he finds. When a friend passes on, I always wind up rooting around in my rather disorganized mind to see what is left behind as well. In Father Urban's case, I find a great deal of joy. Two instances in particular stand out.

So here I am, a random student on campus. Perhaps Urban has seen me at Mass or working at the switchboard. He wanders up to me, I think because I'm handy, with his persuasive grin and his pervasive eye-sparkle. "Come see what I have," he tugs verbally at my curiosity. So I follow him – I don't remember if I was on my way to work or to class – up the stairs of the monastery and into one of the cells. And there were the trees – dozens and dozens of saplings, filling a tabletop in his cell. I cannot recall what he told me about the trees. I cannot recall what I said in response, though I most likely tried to reflect his enthusiasm. But I recall the joy: immense and unshakable.

The other happened while the entire monastery was in retreat. He came up to me during a break in the retreat, and was compelled to share with me something he'd heard earlier that day. "You know why the gospels don't tell us about Jesus laughing?" he asked. A riddle, and one I'd pondered occasionally as part of my misspent youth. I didn't know and told him so. "We laugh when we're surprised," he declared, "and you can't surprise God." I laughed, despite my desire to be cool and wise. There was that joy again.

I'm forty years or so older now. I've known so much great joy of my own, though it comes and goes. I've seen joy in the faces of my children and grandchildren. But when I look for the epitome of joy in my cerebral encyclopedia, it is Father Urban that comes to mind first.

The Nirvana Sutra on the Banks of the River by Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

“The nature of the mind of beings is like a pearl that falls into the water.”

By a river, I stand having found the pearl of great price.
But I cannot hold it for it weighs as much as myself.
It falls from my hand into the water that swims by.
But the pearl falls to the bottom a gem among the stones.
A white pebble that fish play with as they go by.

“The water is muddy so the pearl becomes hidden.”

Children are swimming in a pool formed of the river.
They unsettle the bottom sending muddy water past my feet.
The pearl is lost among the twirling torrent.
All is unclear.
I must wait until the bottom settles down so clarity can return.

“When the water is pure, the pearl is revealed.”

The water has cleaned itself, the mud settles.
The pearl is still seen between the pebbles on the bottom
It is a moon on the floor of the river.
Silver.
Diana’s orb it make the river seem night.



Image found at
<http://www.pearldistributors.com>

LIVING BRIDGES by Oblate Bill Lagreid

An E-mail story arrived the other day titled Living Bridge. It was about a place in India where a bridge was built from the roots of the trees in the forest that stretched across a deep canyon with a wide river flowing below that drained the monsoon rains away from the village. The ingenious natives had created a bridge by connecting the living roots of trees from each side of the canyon allowing people to cross over all year long. Maintaining the physical integrity of the living bridge was a full time job for one man. The program showed him teaching and showing the coming generation of people how to care for the roots and the life of the living bridge.

The living bridge enriched the lives of the community on both sides of the canyon by sharing resources, talents, skills, tradition and celebration of their religious, cultural, history and values. The bridge took regular attention to maintain its function and one person did it one day at a time.

Like that living bridge in that forest, we as Christian Benediction Oblate men and women living in a world threatened by economic, political and moral unrest in a climate of social permissiveness. We have just cause to be concerned about our future and the future of our families, associates and younger generation.

With the Rule of St. Benedict as our anchor points, that are in many ways counter cultural, we can be a bridge over our cultural divides to those we work and live with. We are committed to daily lives of prayer and religious practice, being living witnesses to an alternate life style to our coworkers, family members and the younger generation to help them live through their social and cultural monsoons.

Like the bridge minder in India we oblates make a contribution to our world one-day, one act, one person, and one prayer at a time.



Photo: Amos Chapple/Getty Images

The Eucharist, the Center of our Lives by Oblate J.J. Nugent



Image found at <http://thecatholicspirit.com>

I was in communion line the other morning waiting for my turn. Then it struck me. I was going to meet with the real Jesus in just a few moments. It was not some symbol but the real deal.

He the Son of God, savior, infinitely powerful ruler and final judge of all, was just seconds away.

At that moment I realized how small I am in the grand scheme of things. I actually started to tremble in fear. Then, I realized that this same Jesus loves us with His infinite heart and all was well.

I bowed with an extra reverence that morning and took communion with my mouth and my heart. It seems that the older I get, the more I understand the awesome importance and place of the Eucharist in our lives.

On the Book Shelf

Please check out the Oblate Book Cart for reading material, in the cafeteria on Oblate Sundays.

Camerado, I Give You My Hand by Maura Poston Zagrans

Where Justice and Mercy Meet edited by Vicki Schieber, Trudy Conway, and David M. McCarthy

Pleading, Cursing, Praising God by Irene Nowell, OSB

May I Hate God by Pierre Wolff



Image found at www.dreamstime.com

May 4th — Oblate Recollection Sunday — May 4th

Join us for Mass in the Abbey church at 11AM.

Buy your lunch in the student cafeteria connect with fellow Oblates.

1:30 presentation in the Abbey Church by Father Marion Nguyen, O.S.B.

Are you planning to make your Investiture or Oblation on May 4th? Please make sure you are on the list with the Oblate Director Br. Edmund. Letting him know at the Lunch is okay.

Mark your Calendars

July 13, 2014 Annual Picnic with discussion on How we can carry out the *labora* of being a Benedictine Oblates.

Aug. 9, 2014 Oblate Retreat DVD presentation by Br. Joachim on *Labora* and Br. Jeremiah on monastic poverty and simplicity.

Sept. 7, 2014 Presentation by Sr. Laura Swan, O.S.B.

Dec. 7, 2014 Presentation by Br. Aelred Woodard, O.S.B.

Mark your calendars and spread the word, Archdiocesan Events in coming months:

July 31 - August 3, Youth Conference, *Ignite Your Torch NW*, Live out the Culture of Life !

At St Martin's Abbey/University in Lacey. More information at www.ignitenw.org

Prayer Requests

Oblate Chi Chi Nwankwo - illness

Paul, son of Oblate Leona Handley - car accident and in rehab.

Oblate Michael Roberts – illness

All Oblates in need of healing and support

Here are a few items that are available that support our Oblate program

Bene Reece's packet on the World Congress of Oblates
2014 Benedictine Calendars - now \$6.00
Old Psalters used by the monks
St. Meinrad formatted Divine Office for Oblates - binders
Black Polo Shirts - \$25
Black Fleece Jackets - \$45
Grocery Bags - \$6 - coming soon
Papal Exhortation Book - \$10

If you are interested these are available at our Oblate meetings or you can contact Brother Edmund and make other arrangements.

Oblates

Good Works

Labora

Lambert Lodge:

1pm to 3:30pm.

Please help with the indoor cleaning and exterior work as well. Join us in a day of potluck and work to spruce up our retreat lodge and grounds. Contact Brother Edmund for details.
360-438-4457;
br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Oct. 18, 2014

Gardening and

Wood:

Saturdays 1:00pm to 3:30pm
When rosary making isn't in session come join us in the dirt.
Wood workers are needed for piling, cutting, loading, delivering.

Rosary Work.

Saturdays, 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.
Meet in the Guest dining room of Old Main across from the Monastery refectory.
Rosary makers and twine cutters are needed. Our rosaries go to the military and missions.

May 3, June 7, July 12, Aug. 2, Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, and Dec. 6.

Prison Ministry: If you are interested in being a Pen Pal to a prison inmate please contact Brother Edmund. This ministry can be as simple as mailing a card of encouragement and prayers.

Time to renew your Oblation.

Send this form and your offering to :

Brother Edmund Ebbers OSB
Saint Martin's Abbey
5000 Abbey Way S.E.
Lacey, WA 98503

Or bring this with you to the next meeting.

If you don't normally make a financial contribution to the Oblate Program this is a good time to send in a good-will Lenten offering to assist the works of Oblates.

RENEWAL of OBLATION

I renew my oblation as an Oblate of St. Benedict for the community of St. Martin's Abbey and promise again to serve God and all people according to the Rule of St. Benedict

Let us Pray:

God, most compassionate and loving, strengthen me in my commitment to follow you in the way of St. Benedict. Through my daily prayer and work may I be inspired to live in Christ and to bring His love to the world and His peace to all hearts. I make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Oblate Signature: _____

Date of Final Oblation: _____

E-mail: _____

