

Oblates of Saint Benedict

SAINT MARTIN'S ABBEY

Volume 2 Issue 30

April 2016

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

Dear Oblate brothers and sisters:

We have just celebrated Easter day and now Season of Easter begins. For those who have not been able to get into the Easter Spirit, there is still time. There no longer is a reason to procrastinate any further. What I am getting at is the idea of reconciliation. Regardless of the number of times we receive it through the year I believe around Easter is a good time to make an extra effort to clear our waters — soul.

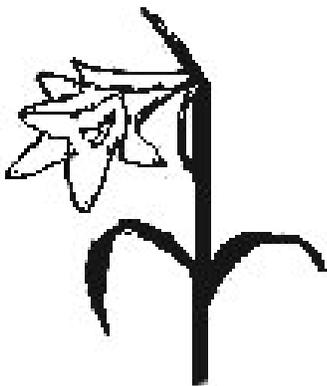
Guilt can be a good mechanism, if we have a developed conscience and not obsessive over our sin. Guilt reminds us “to get clean”, “to make it right with the Lord”. As frightening as reconciliation can be, try to remember the feeling you have when you come away from reconciliation, the “peace” that embodies you. Here I would like to use an analogy of a birthing mother. I hear when a woman goes into labor that her emotions run wild with varying degrees of fear to maybe anger. After the birth of the child, the mother's emotions often are replaced with great joy. This is the work of God's grace.

God is outrageously merciful to sinners and that means all of human kind. He knows that we are weak and fall frequently. Remember, He made us the way we are. The trick, if there is one, is try to avoid sin. When we fall, and pick ourselves up we need to say in humility something along the lines of the prodigal son, “Father I have sinned and am not worthy of your forgiveness.” Then we must proceed with life, trusting God has forgiven us. I believe we sometimes cling very tight to our sin thinking God will never forgive us. Maybe we desire to possess the sin as a keepsake? The sin instead will possess us and be our condemnation. If we believed that all things are possible for God then why is any sin impossible to be forgiven? God has more mercy, power, justice, and love than any of us can contemplate.

Oh, the amount of energy and life we waste by not allowing the grace of God to wash over us and cleanse us of the filth we have bathed in. God has given us so much of himself and we seem to be reluctant to be a part of Him. This Easter season give yourself a gift of life by partaking in reconciliation as often as possible.

May your Easter season be Blessed.

In St. Benedict and Our Lord I am, Br. Edmund E., OSB



Oblates of Saint Benedict

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

In this brief article, I would like to offer a few thoughts on *Benedictine spirituality*. I also realize that this is a very broad topic barely addressed in this brief article! Benedictine spirituality is strongly based on scripture, on leading a gospel life, and on listening. Our Christian life is bolstered by our vows or our Oblate promises to live life according to the Rule of Benedict and the teachings in Holy Scripture. This does not make us better than other Christians, but simply persons who have chosen to live our lives focused on the Rule of Benedict and guided by the Rule of Benedict.

As Benedictines, we join others in the Church who daily pray the psalms in the Divine Office. You might say that we are professional readers of poetry! The psalms lead us to Christ and open wonderful avenues of communication, worship, and thanks. And this is only one part of Holy Scripture that nourishes us.

You have all heard and read about *lectio divina*. Lectio insists that we find God in scripture because it is in scripture that we are nourished and led to closer union with the Lord. No matter how good some of the modern books on spirituality are, they cannot, in my opinion, compete with the vigor and life we find in scripture.

The Rule closely parallels scripture and is a practical interpretation of scripture. Or, perhaps better stated, the Rule is the solid application of scripture in Benedictine life. Because the Rule is so intertwined with scripture, it is the second most important book that nourishes and guides the spiritual life of the follower of Benedict.

When I was a novice, the novices were taught that meditation was very important, so we were given a book on meditation written by a Jesuit! At a later point, we were given a book by the late Benedictine Fr. Bernard Sause, OSB of Saint Benedict's Abbey. It really does not matter what method one uses as long as it works for you. The method of meditation is only the tool. In the end, we need some method to savor the word of God and apply it to our life and situation. Bottom line is that God speaks to us through the Word.

Most methods for lectio will encourage us to have a regular time for lectio. Our time does not have to be long. We might be distracted at times, but if we keep at it, the Lord will converse with us. We will be nourished through our lectio. And, we will have done a very monastic thing, and that is, we will have *listened* to the Lord.



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

August 24, 1955 marked the centenary of the American-Cassinese Congregation, currently listed with 721 members (2016 Ordo). There were 1200 priests, 300 brothers, 300 clerics and novices. St. John's Abbey in Minnesota had 348 monks and was by far the largest monastery in the world-a role now held by Saint Vincent Archabbey in Pennsylvania. The numbers would peak with a total of over 2,000 in the 1960's before deaths and departures accelerated a decline. Let us all pray for vocations!

Saint Martin's High School opened on September 7, 1955 with 198 students -163 of them boarding students, which taxed residence facilities significantly, especially in the freshman-sophomore dorm. Of 241 college students, 118 were boarders. Such growth indicated the great need at Saint Martin's for more space: residence halls, abbey church, monastery building, and a proper athletic facilities.

It had been a busy summer. On July 16, **Father Prior James Piotrkowski (1897-1974)** completed a pipe railing for the west stairs. On July 20, bricklayers began work on alterations in connection with toilet facilities being built under the portico of the south wing; and tile workers began laying the floor in the same area on July 25. On August 11, Father Andrew McHugh returned from summer studies at Catholic University of America in Washington DC. On August 15, **Father Luke O'Donnell (1913-1999)** cleric master, took his charges on a 14-mile hike in the Weyerhaeuser forest.

Early September saw the return of many Fathers who had been away for the summer: **Father Denis Purcell (1902-1967)**, who spent the summer at Sprague as existing pastor; **Father Felix Wirth (1913-1984)**, who was acting pastor for the summer at LaConner; **Father Bede Ernsdorff (1909-1982)**, who spent the month of August as chaplain at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Yakima.

The dairy herd was increased in July by the purchase of ten Holstein cows of good quality. Better yet: cited by an agricultural expert, as one of the most beautiful little animals he had ever seen was Broad Back Duke Joel, purebred Holstein bull of Dunloggin breeding. Duke Joel, described as a friendly little fellow, born on 30 March 1955, was a gift of the Trappists of Saint Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts. He possessed many high-priced ancestors, one having sold for \$10,000. Saint Martin's in 1955 was striving to build up a high class dairy herd, and the acquisition of this purebred Holstein was an important step in that plan.

Five young men entered the Benedictine novitiate at Saint Martin's Abbey on September 13: **Frater Kieran (Patrick) Cunningham (1925-2005)**, Frater Anthony (Anthony) Frank, Frater Thomas James Wolford, and Frater Eric (Charles) Seitz, all studying for the priesthood, and Brother Christian (Paul) Pitney. **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903-1971)** officiated at the ceremonies, with **Fathers Placidus Reischman (1926 - 2000)** and **Clement Pangratz** as chaplains.

Sincere sympathy was extended to **Father Timothy Lamm** on the death of his father...to **Father Urban Feucht (1927-2013)** on the death of his mother...to **Father Daniel Regimbal (1910-1988)** on the death of his sister, Sister Virginia Marie, FCSP (now SP = Sisters of Providence)...to Br. Aloysius Graaff on the passing of his father...to **Father Bertrand Trautman (1918-1972)** on the death of his father.

Oblates of Saint Benedict

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

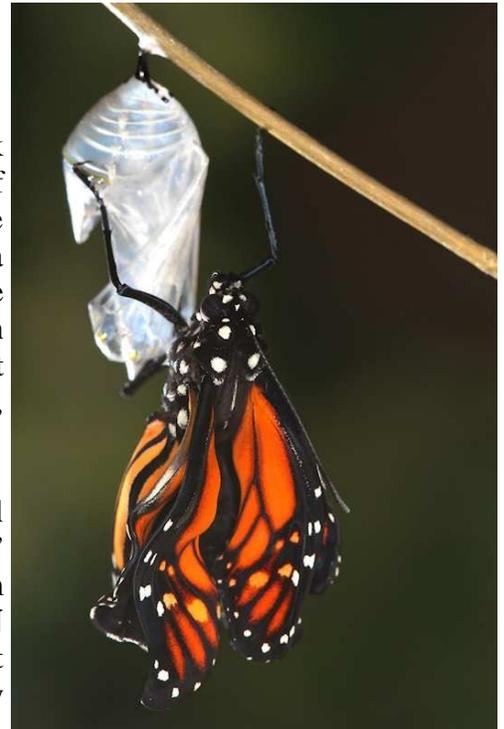
In our western hemisphere, there are two well-known butterfly preserves, one in Northern Mexico, and the other in Costa Rica. An artist friend spent time in the Mexican preserve and said that the sound made by thousands of butterflies flying is truly awesome. In the Spring of 1904, Yoshi Zo wrote:

Suddenly I heard someone approaching. I had been dreaming;
there were butterflies come from the midst,
and I was sleeping among the violets.
The evening sparrows were singing.

He wrote this as an introduction to a collection of woodblock illustrations by Kanzaka Sekka titled: "One Thousand Kinds of Butterflies." I have not slept among violets, but always enjoyed the patches of violet - colored violets in Sacramento gardens when I was a child, and look forward to the patch of white - colored violets in the Abbey rose garden each Spring. The butterfly is a long - time Christian symbol for the Resurrection, an appropriate symbol to think about during this time of Eastertide. As the butterfly emerges from the cocoon, so also Christ emerges from the tomb at Easter.

It has been a difficult winter/spring for the monastic community. We all have been "hit" by one type of "bug" or another. Due to the "bug" **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** was unable to preside at the annual Palm Sunday liturgy in the Abbey Church. **FATHER MARION NGUYEN** filled in for the Abbot at his request. **FATHER MARION** has spent many years doing work in parishes, and has presided at Palm Sunday liturgies many times. It is a long-time custom at the Abbey to sing the Passion of Christ at both the Palm Sunday Liturgy and the Good Friday Liturgy. It is usually sung a cappella by three male voices. I can remember years ago listening to the late **FATHER PETER SAND**

singing one of the roles in his deep bass. Usually, the narrative is sung by **FATHER GEORGE SEIDEL**, who is currently doing research in Europe, residing at Saint Boniface Abbey, Munich, Germany. Incidentally, **FATHER GEORGE** did email us on Good Friday that Saint Boniface is indeed keeping the Lenten fast: their Good Friday lunch was baked fish with potato and green salads. In **FATHER GEORGE's** absence this Holy Week, **BROTHER AELRED WOODARD** took the narrative role and **BROTHER NICOLAUS WILSON**, neophyte singer when it comes to the Passion, though a veteran of the monastic schola, took the role of Christ and executed it very well. **BROTHER MARK BONNEVILLE** was Master of Ceremonies for all of the Holy Week and Easter liturgies, and **BROTHER BEDE NICOL** was kept extra busy as abbey sacristan making certain that all was ready as needed for all of the liturgies.



<http://activerain.com/blogsvie/4372758/change-and-transformation>

As this writer was among those stricken by the "bug" these remarks will be shorter than usual this issue. **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** continues to labor on his doctoral thesis. He did take a few days away from these academic labors this Spring. At the request of the University's Religious Studies department, **BROTHER LUKE** attended the Interfaith Youth Core Conference in Thousand Oaks, California. He reported it a very worth while experience. . .The monastic community continues to assist in work in Catholic hospitals and parishes in the Archdiocese. **FATHER GERARD KIRSCH** regularly says Mass at St. Peter Hospital and Saint

Placid Priory, Olympia. **ABBOT NEAL** and **FATHER BEDE CLASSICK** assist at Scared Heart Parish, Lacey. In addition to his many other duties at the Abbey and University, **FATHER PETER TYNAN** regularly assists weekends in archdiocesan parishes. **PRIOR JUSTIN MCCREEDY** also offers Mass in archdiocesan parishes. As he is fluent in Spanish as well as in English, **PRIOR JUSTIN** is able to be of special assistance to the Spanish speaking community in the archdioceses.

Warm good wishes for a blessedly joyous Eastertide.



<http://www.homedit.com/bring-the-backyard-back-to-life/>

Oblates of Saint Benedict

A Butterfly's Kiss

Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

“... the blue dome of the mountain sky was as pure as the Lord's pain...”

Peter Matthiessen

On television recently, there was a special on the Amazon and its multitudinous inhabitants both within and around its river banks.

The announcer was matter-of-factly showing us tapirs mixed with cockatoos, and even river creatures seen from underneath-something only a photographer would understand.

Yet as he droned on, and scene after scene paralleled, my mind wandered with him, but I never left the room. And then a most amazing thing occurred: he announced, much like the Archangel, that we were now seeing a butterfly kiss away the teardrops of a river-swimming turtle, and although he mentioned it was for the salt, my mind just soared away.

A river where a butterfly kisses turtle tears away was a special place found only in the kingdom of God where anything was now possible. Just imagine such a principdom-it boggles all thought where even prehistoric turtles would be sad for only a short time.

There the hurt would all be healed by one soft, tender kiss-butterfly implanted lips so soft you couldn't feel them, yet strong enough to suck away even your fear.

So here was a place, somewhere in Brazil, where, when I was really broken and feeling no hope, I could board a plane for Rio and have butterflies kiss my cheeks.

Now I know I'll never visit this jungle in Brazil, but at least I can hope that someday these creatures may migrate. And then walking down a street one morning, tears streaming from my eyes, a butterfly may swoop down and kiss my tear-stained face.



<http://designplx.com/photograph-shows-butterflies-drinking-turtle-tears/>

Abbey Church Events

<http://www.saintmartinsabbey.org/ArtsEvents/201516abbeyevents.pdf>

April 16th at 8:00 pm Borealis, string quartet

Events are not ticketed and seating is generally unreserved. Doors open one hour prior to starting time.

A freewill donation in support of Abbey Church Events is suggested.

From the Oblate Store:

The following items are available for purchase.

Burial Smocks \$75, Jackets \$45-50, Polo shirts \$25, Rosaries, medals, scapulars, Divine Mercy Chaplets, and more.

Contact Oblate Director:

E-mail: br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Phone: 360-438-4457

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Contributions welcomed.

Prayer Requests

For those recently passed.

Oblate Dr. Ruth Berg

For our missing Oblates and those we have lost contact with.

For perseverance of all Oblates to Benedictine spirituality.

For our sick and infirmed Oblates.

For the aged oblates of our community.



May 1st Oblate Conference Sunday

Join us for Mass in the Abbey church at 11 A.M.

Followed by brunch, for purchase, in the student cafeteria (St. Gertrude's Hall).

At 1:30 presentation in the Abbey Church by Brother Aelred, on Liturgy and Architecture.

May 1st is the next opportunity to be Invested as a Novice or to make your Final Oblation.

Please let the Director know in advance of your intentions.

Oblation Renewals, though late, are still acceptable to be turned in at the next meeting or sent to the Director.

Those wishing to remember St. Martin's Abbey or University or Oblate program in their Will are encouraged to request more information, if needed. Your gift is not only immensely appreciated but entitles you to remembrance in our daily prayers.



Mark Your Calendars

Oblate Sunday Conferences 2016

July 10th (annual picnic) and conference with Father Marion.

September 4th.

December 4th.

NOTE THE CHANGE

Oblate annual retreat. Aug 13th.

Meet for Mass at the Abbey church. We will carpool to Lambert lodge and return back to the abbey around 3pm. This is a potluck event.

Oblates of Saint Benedict

Searching for a MEANINGFUL gift?



Oblate Bene Reece asks that we all ask permission to post this information in our parish bulletins. Or at least pass on the information for those looking for gift ideas.

Here are suggestions to celebrate First Communion, Confirmation, birthdays, holidays, weddings, anniversaries, and any special day:

Rosaries and decade bracelets, made by one of the monks at St Martin's Abbey.

Call Br. Edmund Ebbers at 360-438-4457 for more information.

Local honey, homemade items from Africa and felt dolls made at the Priory.
Call St Placid Priory at 360- 438-1771.

Are you ready?

Holiday/Christmas Bazaar is being planned for November 18th, 19th 20th 2016. Please start thinking about what you can bring and contribute. All you crafty Oblates, there is the time to create something beautiful to share with others. Feel free to use your imaginations. We are looking for items for children as well as for adults. Needle work, jewelry, wood, ceramic handcrafted items would be appreciated . Those wishing to contribute baked items please hold off until the date of our fundraiser is set some time in Nov. 2016. Non-perishable items can be brought to the Oblate office at any time. We plan to have the bazaar in the guest dining room over a couple days so we can reach more folks and include staff and students. We also will be asking volunteers to set up and take down and to be available to operate the display.

Good Works

April 9, Saturday Lambert Lodge:

COME and join us for Lambert Lodge Cleaning / Work day.
Begin about 10 a.m., break for noon prayer and lunch and then work until about 3 p.m..
This is also a Potluck lunch.
Come and join us for fellowship and labor.
Pray for fair weather!

For more details
Contact: Brother Edmund 360-438-4457; br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Next cleaning day is Oct. 8th

We really need your help! Rosary Work.

First Saturdays of every month (except August) from 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. Come tie a knot with us.

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.

Oblate Advisory Meeting:

Saturday at 10 AM in St Gertrude's Hall.

April 30th, July 9th, September 3rd, & December 3rd.

Gardening and Wood:

Saturdays 1:00pm to 3:30pm
Gardeners and wood workers are appreciated during the summer and winter. Please call Br. Edmund to make arrangements.

Brother Edmund 360-438-4457;
br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Oblates of Saint Benedict

On the Book Shelf

Instead of suggested books I offer the following study courses - Information for printed material or On-Line is available as it says on the form. If you choose to use the materials please let the Oblate Director know your opinion regarding the study.

FORM:

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS RELIGIOUS INFORMATION BUREAU
CATHOLIC HOME STUDY SERVICE
P.O. BOX 363
PERRYVILLE, MO 63775-0363

Enroll Online: www.amm.org/chss

(Online enrollment is faster and helps us reduce costs)

I am not able to enroll online. Please send me the following course. Check only one.
(Allow 3-6 weeks for delivery.)

- "We Believe..."
- We Worship
- We Live
- We Pray
- The Search For Happiness
- A Catholic Guide to the Bible
- Christ's Mother and Ours
- The Privilege of Being Catholic
- The Catechism Handbook

I will send my workbook answers: over the Internet (Preferred) by mail

Name (circle one) _____ (Please Print)

MR MRS MISS MS _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____