

Oblates of Saint Benedict

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



Dear Oblate brothers and sisters and friends:

Over time we put up walls, take on unnecessary baggage, cloak ourselves or parts of ourselves with some sort of shield, or bury deep a fault, sin or injury.

These not-so-healthy personality traits distort and mask our real selves, the person that God has created. Perhaps these unhealthy devices we have manufactured to protect ourselves, really are not so much protecting us but

creating a defense, which over time is harmful to the body and soul. Just as any physician of the body will tell you, infections rarely go away by themselves. So it is with sin, or whatever needs to be lanced by our willingness to expose it to the Divine Physician. Both the patient and divine physician need to work in tandem.

In our dining room, the monks have been listening to a book, written by a Jesuit. Apparently, the Jesuits use imagery of the scriptures for meditations. This imagery consists of putting one's self into the scripture by taking notice of where the action is taking place, what the people look like and are doing, and by asking questions about what it must have been like and what we would do under the same circumstance. I can see this being helpful when applied to our present circumstances. Take the story of Jesus and Lazarus. Jesus is told "the one he loves, Lazarus is very ill". Why does Jesus wait so long? What is happening with Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus? When Jesus goes to the tomb of Lazarus and calls him to come out, what are the people thinking, saying about this extraordinary act of Jesus?

We now turn to ask ourselves, what is God possibly trying to tell us with this teaching? Assuredly, God is communicating much from each teaching in the Scriptures. On our own let us pull it apart and see what God may be telling or offering us. There are some definite strong emotions represented in the story.

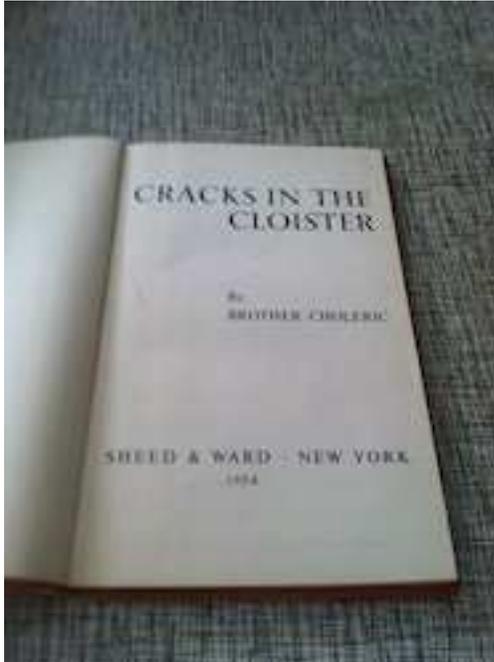
Let us consider Jesus putting off that Lazarus was very ill. I don't believe Jesus did not care because we read he did care! Maybe Jesus was already engaged in something important and maybe the time for a manifestation of his power was not quite ripe. If we look at Mary and Martha, they too were very emotional. After all, Lazarus was their brother. Was their faith in Jesus shaken? It seems so. It took a few moments for them "get a grip on themselves" and then they rallied quickly. Yet still not understanding fully why things were happening as they did. What might have been our response in such a situation?

Today people are so quick to blame another rather than seeing, this is just how it is. So what can I do with what I have been given? Also, what about the assertive call by Jesus for Lazarus to come forth? That power and authority he has and used. Jesus was bold to perform such a miracle, all the while knowing that some were threatened by his authority and were planning for his execution.

"If we had faith the size of a mustard seed", we too could do wonders. Where's our faith? Lazarus came out all bound up. Are we bound by sin or some other cloaking device that keeps us tied up and imprisoned, preventing us from being the real self that God created? If so, then we need to work with the Divine Physician to obtain healing. He alone can break down the walls or tenderly pull off the bandages protecting or preventing us from healing. Perhaps we can be bold enough to allow God into our lives to free us from our bondage. Let us pray that we can!

In Christ through St. Benedict, *Brother Edmund Ebbers OSB*

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



There is a humorous cartoon in Hubert Van Zeller's 1954 book, *CRACKS IN THE CLOISTER*. The cartoon depicts a Trappist abbess, crosier in hand, yelling at a nun, "I said 'in virtue of Holy Obedience' ...you heard." We don't quite operate that way in the monastery but an act of prompt obedience was what the ancients demanded of a monk when he had received a command. And Benedict certainly affirms this especially in chapter five of the Rule in the very first sentence, "The first degree of humility is obedience without delay." Ideally, the monk sees the command as a command from the Lord, thus the promptness. It is received in respect, faith, and fear of the Lord. Benedict cautions the monk to immediately leave what he is doing and respond quickly to the order. That means stopping, at times, in the middle of something, and perhaps getting one's self out of bed and not hitting the clock snooze button a second time. It means attending a meeting, going to work, mowing the lawn, taking care of the needs of a wailing toddler, or cooking a meal for the thousandth time. Finishing

what we prefer to do rather than being on time for a commitment, or arriving at an appointment or Mass on time doesn't cut it. Failure to obey gives the impression that the necessary activities of our life are less important than our own private preferred desires. Obedience without delay is a hard thing and something we deal with on a daily basis, not for just a while but for life.

Sometimes we can give some rather lame excuses for not fulfilling our committed duties living in the family or in the monastic community. When we examine our conscience at the end of the day, we probably have not been disobedient in any major way, but have we slacked off?

Years ago, we monks received our assignments at retreat time. Often we were not consulted on that appointment. You would find a copy of all the assignments in your mailbox (the abbot would have left the abbey for a couple days!). It is the community or the family that calls us to service.

I very much like what Sister Joan Chittister writes about obedience. "We do what we are told, of course. We come to the meetings, keep the schedule, or go through the motions of being part of the community or part of the family or part of the staff, but there is no truth in us and we weigh the group down with our complaining. We become a living lamentation. We become a lump of spiritual cement around the neck of the group. This, Benedict says, is not obedience. This is only compliance, and compliance kills, both us and the community whose heart is fractured by those who hold theirs back. Real obedience depends on wanting to listen to the voice of God in the human community, not wanting to be forced to do what we refuse to grow from."

In short, Benedict sees the obedience of his followers as collaboration, in finding out God's will (in the community and in the family) and openly and generously following God's will.

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

The beginning of the fall semester (1955) at Saint Martin's College was marked by a revised edition of "Toward Correct Composition" by Professor Michael J. Contris, coming off the Saint Martin's press (run by **Father Sebastian Ruth, 1895-1958**) for use as a textbook in college freshman classes. ...On September 21, **Father George Seidel** left for Rome, where he would complete theological studies for the priesthood in 1958. ...On September 23, **Father Damian Glenn (1907-1986)** drove to Tacoma railroad station to fetch **Abbot Raphael Heider (1903-1971)**, returning from Helena, Montana, where he had attended the consecration of Bishop-elect Bernard J. Topel of Spokane. ...On September 26, **Father Damian**, as president of the college, addressed the Chamber of Commerce in Hoquiam, Washington to explain the work of the Association of Non-Tax Supported Colleges and Universities in Washington. ...On September 27, college students, under the leadership of **Father Bertrand Trautman (1918-1972)**, went to Saint Placid Priory in west Olympia to cut and split firewood for the Benedictine Sisters.

On October 7, Father William Dickerson, doing graduate work in clinical psychology at Catholic University in Washington DC, phoned **Abbot Raphael** and expressed greetings to the community. The long distance call (the Saint Martin's News hastened to add) was the gift of a friend of Saint Martin's. ...On October 11, the Saint Martin's Mothers Club of Seattle held their annual feast to initiate the work of the season and to welcome new and prospective members to the club. Present were **Abbot Raphael, Father Damian**, and high school Principal **Father Michael Feeney (1919-2000)**. Moderator, and **Father Alcuin Lawrence (1906-1984)**. ...On October 12, **Abbot Raphael** made preliminary inquiries of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in connection with the possible construction of some new housing facilities on the campus. On October 14, **Father Michael** and members of the high school student council travelled to Kelso for meetings.

In oblate news, Mr. Howard Hemen of East Wenatchee, uncle of **Father Christopher Abair (1924-1988)**, made a visit to Saint Martin's on October 30 and inquired about the possibility of starting up an oblate group in Wenatchee, where his wife's brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph L. Monda, were already oblate novices. Mr. and Mrs. Hemen had visited Saint Martin's on their honeymoon in September 1913 (when the latest college building — now the south wing of Old Main — had just been completed) to see Mrs. Hemen's brother, the future **Father George Monda (1893-1949)**. The Hemens had recently given the abbey a Roman missal in honor of newly ordained **Father Christopher**. Mr. Hemen died in June 1966, one month before his eldest grandson, now **Father Gerard Kirsch**, made first vows. In Port Angeles, **Abbot Raphael** admitted as oblate novices (among others) Mrs. Helen Malvey, mother of **Father Kilian**, and Mrs. Lucile Glenn, sister-in-law of **Father Damian**.

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

"Who would conceive this pink? And who would know that it collected in these umbels?"

So Rainer Maria Rilke begins one of his hydrangea poems. Flowers have always been an intimate part of my life, and I've always lived where one could enjoy the hydrangea. I love the hydrangea in spite of the fact that my Victorian era book of flowers opines that they are symbolic of "a boaster" and "heartlessness". In the early part of this summer, I much enjoyed watching the blossoming of a large hydrangea bush, recycled from one of the Abbey Church's Easter flowers of several years back, adjacent to the Church's rose garden. It began with a mere suggestion of a bloom, and soon the bush was covered with large flowers of several different colors - all on the same bush. It is the contents of the soil in which it grows that affects the color of the flower.



On July 11th, the feast of our patron Benedict of Nursia, **ABBOT NEAL ROTH** received the solemn vows of **FATHER MARION NGUYEN** in the presence of a large gathering of his confreres, family and friends. **FATHER MARION** was raised in the "soil" of a very Catholic home, and his monastic vocation was further nurtured by his life in community at the Abbey, praying and working together with

his confreres. **FATHER GEORGE SEIDEL** - recently returned from a sabbatical in Germany - preached the occasional sermon, and **BROTHER AELRED WOODARD** and the monastic schola provided the music. The sanctuary was adorned with our festive reliquaries, fresh lavender, roses, and Casablanca lilies. A reception followed the Mass of Profession. **FATHER MARION** will spend part of the summer enrolled in a language school before beginning a doctoral program in the area of monastic studies in Rome. As **FATHER MARION** had been a priest of the Archdiocese of Seattle prior to entering the Abbey, a large number of his former colleagues con-celebrated the Mass of Profession and wished him God speed in this new life to which God has called him.

FATHER PAUL WECKERT has returned to the Abbey after several years of being assigned to a diocesan parish. **FATHER PAUL** will serve as the Abbey's Director of Vocations and also Guest Master... retired **ABBOT ADRIAN PARCHER** is spending most of the summer at Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, South Dakota. He is serving as chaplain to the Benedictine Sisters there, whose chaplain is away... **BROTHER LUKE DEVINE** traveled to Ferndale, Indiana, to attend a meeting of the American Benedictine Academy, of which he is a member. Come Fall, **BROTHER LUKE** hopes to defend his doctoral dissertation to which he has dedicated long hours ... **FATHER PETER TYNAN** addressed the Oblates on "Mercy in the Rule of Benedict" at their summer meeting. He later traveled to Portland, Oregon, to attend the annual meeting of college librarians... **PRIOR JUSTIN MC CREEDY** and **SUBPRIOR RAMON NEWELL** recently visited our nonagenarian monk **FATHER CLEMENT PANGRATZ**. They shared with him the news that he's not forgotten in his home town of Port Angeles. In a "looking back" column in a recent edition of the Port Angeles newspaper, the 1941 monastic profession of Herman E. Pangratz (now **FATHER CLEMENT**), son of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Pangratz of Port Angeles is duly noted. **FATHER CLEMENT** still retains a knowledge of the sign language he learned to communicate with his sister, as well as Czeck.

Our late confrere, **BROTHER LAWRENCE VOGEL** has been honored posthumously. The president of Saint Martin's University has established a quasi-endowment fund to support staff development in the University. The fund is to be called the Br. Lawrence Staff Development Fund and the monies generated from the fund will be used to support university staff members in various professional and vocational efforts. **BROTHER LAWRENCE** had a very close relationship with the staff, dating to the time when he was Director of Plant and Grounds for Saint Martin's College.



Enjoy God's gift of a Pacific Northwest summer, and the beauty of the multicolored blooms of the hydrangea!

JULY MAGIC BY Father Benedict Auer, O.S.B.

The stars drop down from the sky tonight,
and permit me
to walk among them
as they play
in the uncut grass pretending to be
Italian lights on a Venetian canal
or precious stones reflecting a full
moon's glow.



A Vermont mountain surrounds itself with
steamy vapor
as I wander a fogged alpine fantasy
clouds touch my feet and play with my toes.
I am sky-walking.

A scientist might explain:

"When humidity reaches a certain level of saturation in higher altitudes,
fireflies hover closer to the ground."

But I believe that in July magic comes to Vermont,
sky replaces earth
for one summer month.





September by Oblate Bill Lagreid

The month of September marks both the end and a beginning; the end of a hot dry summer vacation and the beginning of a new school year for many teachers, professors and students. It also marks the change in the seasons of nature. The changing of seasons is the beginning for regeneration and rejuvenation of our lives both physically and spiritually. Our students begin anew their academic year each fall. It is a time for their discovery about themselves through their exposure to new knowledge, time for reflection, sharing ideas with creative energy for production that reflects their understanding

We are blessed that our liturgical and spiritual needs are also reflected and nourished according to changing seasons. Our rhythm of summer life and relaxation gives way to a different routine. Fall is also a good time for pruning the old growth of our lives and to stimulate new growth. A

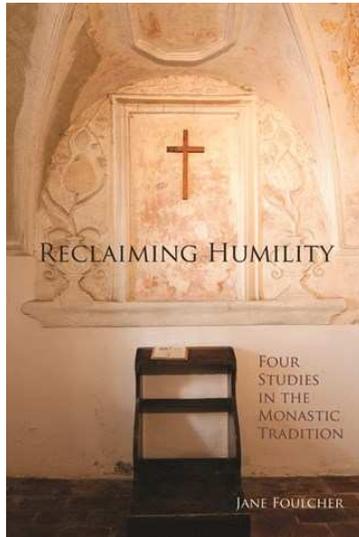
time to plan, reflect and celebrate our Thanksgiving and new life with Christmas and New Year celebrations.

We as Oblates are once again challenged to follow the pattern of nature's renewal. No matter our age, we do not know it all, not yet. As much as we may think we know it all we are still a part of recycling and development. We need to rake some of the mental and spiritual old leaves from under the bushes of our lives and fertilize the ground beneath our feet and our recommit to our promises.

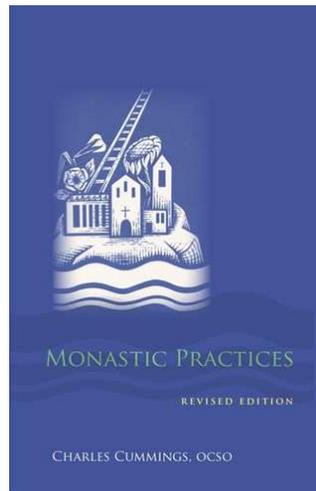
Looking ahead to springtime when the snows of winter stop falling and begin melting to rejoin the rivers as they continue rolling down the hillsides to the oceans, it will be time for the birds to return and build new homes in trees and nesting boxes. We will be ready then for the next cycle of warm summer air and longer days of sunshine, and can look forward to the time when colorful flowers will bloom again.

On the Book Shelf

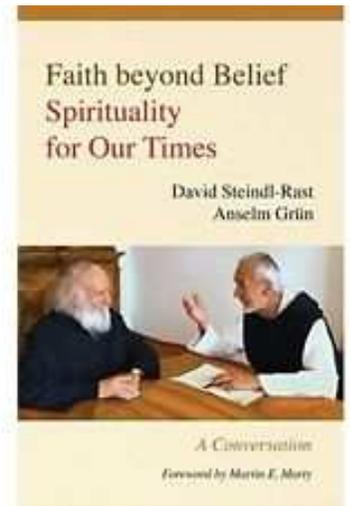
FAITH BEYOND BELIEF Spirituality for Our Times A Conversation by David Steindl-Rast and Anselm Grün



RECLAIMING HUMILITY Four Studies in the Monastic Tradition by Jane Foulcher



MONASTIC PRACTICES
by Charles Cummings, OCSO



BE WITH GOD AND FOR GOD! PRAY LIKE A MOUNTAIN!

“You are a rock and on this rock I shall build my church” – Matthew 16:18

“Yes, truly be there. Have you ever talked with someone who was with you bodily, but not present to you with attention and heart? God soaks our entire being and entire universe with His creating, divinizing presence - God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Be aware of God’s loving presence in all around you.” - Fr. Nigro

How does a mountain pray? Simply being there, with all its weight bearing witness of existence, withstanding the changing winds and rains, stable and silent. The image of the mountain evokes timelessness, stability, reliability, and vicinity of God.

“One morning, fervently practicing it, he spontaneously understood what “meditating as a mountain” meant. Suddenly, he felt his whole weight; he was perfectly motionless, as if he had extremely deep and strong roots in the ground. Time acquired new meanings and for the first time he ecstatically intuited that mountains had another time and a rhythm of their own, in reality. To sit perfectly motionless means, actually, to always have eternity in front of you.” - Fr. Leloup

THE BIG EVENT is coming.

Oblate Holiday Bazaar is set for November 18th -20th.

Times will be confirmed as the day approaches.

Please sign up for shifts to manage during the hours of operation.

The location selected will be the Guest-Dining room on the lowest level of "Old Main".

Help is requested to set up on the 17th.

Your contributions are important for the success of this event.

This Oblate Holiday Bazaar will raise funds for continued support of Oblate Activities. **Thank You.**

REMEMBER TO RETURN YOUR FILLED BIN WITH GOODIES FOR THE BAZAAR.*WHERE DOES OBLATE MONEY GO?*

Some Oblates rightly ask and I am glad to answer.

First, this year is the first time we will be investing some of the Oblate income. The Director was approach by the Abbey Treasurer to consider this. There is still enough for us to run our yearly expenses.

Money is sent to AIM (Alliance of International Monasticism) who support 3rd world Benedictine Community works.

There are dues for membership to the National Association of Oblate Directors.

Money is sent to support education at San Anselmo for 3rd world religious.

Money spent to send attendees to participate in the Regional Oblate/Directors meetings every other year.

Participation of one Oblate to the World Congress. As Director of Oblates, I may join our representative Oblate Bene Reece in November 2017.

Lastly, printing the newsletters, office supplies, restocking items in the Oblate store.

Regional Oblate & Directors Meeting to take place August 26 – 28th at St. Gertrude's in Cottonwood, Idaho.

Br. Edmund, Patricia McClure, Carmen Hertel and Craig Nelson are planning to attend and learn more about Oblate leadership.

Pray for us as we travel and learn new things.

September 4th 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).

1:30 presentation in the Abbey Church.

Brother Nicolaus —"Stability and Charity in the Monastic Tradition"

Oblate Sunday Conferences 2016

December 4th Deacon Joe Nicholas.

Prayer Requests

RIP Oblate John Oliver, prayers for his family

Oblate Suzanne Rothwell - health issues

Oblate Carmen Hertel whose father recently passed.

All other ill Oblates - healing



REMEMBER THE OBLATE RETREAT AT LAMBERT LODGE August 13, 2017. Mass will be held at the Abbey at 8:00 AM and afterwards those present will head to Lambert Lodge. We will begin as soon as retreatants settle in. Hoping to finish by 3:30pm. I have two DVD's: one on the Eucharist and another "Holiness and Benedictine Spirituality". We will see how much time we have. This is a Potluck lunch.

GUIDE TO LAMBERT LODGE: Address 6525 Belle Vista St. Olympia, 98502.

Two ways to go: Take I-5 south take US 101 N to Evergreen Pkway, go to Cooper Point Rd NW Turn left. Go to 67th Ave. NW, There is a large ship anchor on the left. Now follow 67th down the hill to Belle Vista Street which curves to the left. Go to the very end and when the pavement ends drive on the dirt road through the Pipe gate.

2nd way is through Olympia: leave the abbey turn left on Martin Way, continue through Olympia on state ave NE up the hill second round about onto Harrison and rt. onto Cooper Point Rd. Follow to 67th and turn left. There is a large ship anchor. Now follow 67th down the hill to Belle Vista Street which curves to the left. Go to the very end and when the pavement ends drive on the dirt road through the Pipe gate.

Invitation:

There is an Oblate group at St. Andrews Parish. 1401 Valley Ave. in Sumner, Washington 98390. Phone: 253-863-2253. They meet the 2nd. Wed. of the month at 6:45 pm right after Mass at 6:00 pm.

Good Works

Contact Brother Edmund at 360-438-4457

Email: br_edmund@stmartin.edu

Correspondence:

Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.

St. Martin's Abbey

5000 Abbey Way SE

Lacey, WA 98503



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.

Rosary Work

First Saturdays of every month expect August 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.

Lambert Lodge: 9:30 to 3:30.

Please plan to assist in the cleaning and sprucing up of Lambert Lodge on Oct. 8th

This is a Potluck day so bring something to share.

For more details

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

Helpers are always appreciated in making Rosaries and staking fire-wood.

2016 Oblate Advisory Meeting: Saturday at 10 AM in St Gertrude's Hall.

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.

Editor: Oblate Patricia McClure
E-mail:Ravenwings@comcast.net
Contributions welcomed.

Saint Martin's Abbey
5000 Abbey Way S.E.
Lacey, WA 98503

Return Service Requested



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Newsletter online at www.stmartin.edu/abbey/Oblates/index.htm

Contact Oblate Director:
E-mail: br_edmund@stmartin.edu
Phone: 360-438-4457
Correspondence:
Brother Edmund Ebbers, O.S.B.
St. Martin's Abbey
5000 Abbey Way SE
Lacey, WA 98503

*Editor: Oblate Patricia McClure
E-mail: Ravenwings@comcast.net
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