



Oblates of St. Benedict Belmont Abbey

March-April, 2008



As We Begin

As I reflect on our last meeting I cannot help but think about who was missing, Fr. Raymond Geyer. His support and guidance of the Oblate program will always be remembered. But I wonder how many of us really appreciate his work and sacrifice over the years? He has been a model of Benedictine hospitality and showed us how to live the Rule by his example and humility. Please keep him in your prayers and please, from time to time, remember to thank him for all his work.

But now we turn a new page. Abbot Placid has given me the honor of following Fr. Raymond and I assumed the position with some trepidation. But your warm wishes and the outpouring of support I have received from many of you gives me more confidence that the program can continue. How we can develop the program I left open to you at the February meeting. Since then I have asked Andrea Whiting and Rev. Jeff Patterson, both Oblates and one novice, David Povinelli, to advise me on how we proceed. In addition, I have asked Marilyn Martin-Schwan and Jim Day to create a formation team with a monk from the Abbey who will be appointed by Abbot Placid. I ask for your patience while the formation program is developed. It should be ready by the fall meeting.

Next Meeting

Since the next meeting falls on Passion Sunday, we **will not meet again until April 20, 2008.**

Subjects for Future Meetings

In addition to the formation program, outlined below is a series of talks that will take place at the monthly meetings which will include:

- Lectio Divina (April 20),
- Liturgy of the Hours (May 18),
- Introduction to Gregorian Chant (June 15),
- Benedictine charisms
 - obedience,
 - hospitality,
 - stability,
 - ongoing conversion, and
- Introduction to Benedictine traditions.

Mass at Future Meetings

There is one other matter I would like to address at this time. There is another gift Fr. Raymond was able to give that

I cannot. Fr. Raymond was able to celebrate mass at each Oblate meeting. This has been a long-standing tradition, a tradition dear to many of you. The Abbot has made it clear that he cannot guarantee having a priest available for mass and would prefer we attend mass in our home parishes. After discussing the matter further with Abbot Placid, he still believes it is best for all concerned that mass not be a routine part of the Oblate meeting, that it be reserved for special occasions and that the time be spent on programs unique to Benedictine life. He is strongly encouraging us to maintain the custom of attending Vespers.

I know that for some of you this is a disappointment but I ask you to trust Abbot Placid's wisdom in the matter and, even if you disagree, accept this decision in charity and obedience.

Prayer for Vocations

Enclosed is a prayer card with two prayers on it. One is the Oblate's Prayer and the second a prayer for Vocations. It is the custom of the monks to pray for vocations each Wednesday just before Vespers. I thought this would be something that the Oblates could also do and this was warmly received at the last meeting. Therefore, all Oblates are asked to pray the enclosed Prayer for Vocations at Vespers each Wednesday.

Future Newsletters

This will be the first issue of the newsletter that is emailed. Last month I sent a survey checking the information that was on file. I have still not heard from many of you. Please mail the survey back and let me know if you would prefer receiving the newsletter by email.

It is my hope that many of you will be open to sending in articles, thoughts, suggested readings, or other items of interest for future newsletters. There is also a great deal of information on the World Wide Web. I am sure many of you have found sites that have been useful. Send them to me with a short description of what you like about it and we will share it in future newsletters.

The Ordo

With this newsletter I will begin a regular feature, the Ordo. There are differences between the universal calendar of the Church and the Benedictine community. We will reprint the solemnities, feasts and memorials that are obligatory observances. *Please note some important changes.* The

remembrance of the **Dedication of Belmont Abbey** has been moved from March 28 to April 1. The **Solemnity of the Passing of Our Father Benedict** has been moved from its traditional date of March 21 to April 2 because of Good Friday. Finally, the Solemnity of the **Annunciation of the Lord** has been moved from March 25 to March 31.

MARCH

- 9 Fifth Sunday of Lent.
- 15 Joseph Husband of the Virgin Mary (Transferred from March 19). Solemnity.
- 16 Passion Sunday- **No Oblate Meeting**. Please Make an Effort to Attend the Easter Triduum in Your Parish.
- 20 Holy Thursday.
- 21 Good Friday.
- 22 Holy Saturday. Compline is said only by those who do not participate in the Easter vigil.
- 23 Easter Sunday. Solemnity with an Octave: "Regina caeli" is sung after compline throughout the Easter season. "The first eight days of the Easter season make up the octave of Easter and are celebrated as Solemnities of the Lord" (General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, No. 24).
- 30 Second Sunday of Easter (Mercy Sunday).
The Second Week of the Psalter Begins March 31.
- 31 Annunciation of the Lord. (Transferred from March 25). Solemnity.

APRIL

- 1 Anniversary of Dedication of Belmont Abbey Church (Transferred from March 28). Solemnity.
- 2 Passing of Our Holy Father Benedict, Abbot (Transferred from March 21). Solemnity.
- 6 Third Sunday of Easter
- 7 John Baptist De La Salle, Presbyter, Religious Founder. Memorial.
- 11 Stanislaus, Bishop, Martyr. Memorial
- 13 Fourth Sunday of Easter.
- 19 Third Anniversary of the Election of Pope Benedict XVI. Please remember the Holy Father in yours prayers today.
- 20 Fifth Sunday of Easter.

I hope you and your family have a blessed Easter. I look forward to hearing from you. If you need to reach me please write to:

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