

OBLATE NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014

Living Lent

Oblate Lenten Retreat

Praying with the Penitential Psalms



This retreat will be held from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on March 2.

Guests are welcome !!

This Lent, draw closer to God in both personal and communal prayer through these psalms, and gain insight into the inspired message they carry for you and for all the People of God.

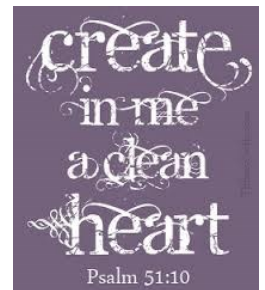
Sr. Madelyn holds a Masters degree in Theology from the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in New York. She serves in ministry as Director of Accessibility Services at the University of Mary. She has also taught theology courses for the University, sings in the University Concert Choir and enjoys piano.

This year's Lenten retreat is presented by Sr. Madelyn Loutitt, OSB.

Sr. Madelyn invites you to explore the richness of the Penitential Psalms as they lead you to discover God's merciful, forgiving love.

No matter how great the burden you carry, God is always there to listen, to understand, and to forgive.

The monastery gift shop features items made by various sisters and will be open for your convenience.



Oblate Updates

Ixcán Ministries Event a Huge Success

Thanks to the generosity of Marilyn and Larry Suchy, approximately \$500 was raised to support women and families of Ixcán, Guatemala.

Larry and Marilyn opened their home on a blustery day- December 3, to host about a dozen friends and oblates.

Rhonda Schaeffer, representing the ministry, told how the ministry began through the work of our oblate, Kathy Snider of

Mandan. The display of hand woven scarves, jewelry, rosaries, place mats, and table toppers were made by the Guatemalan women to feed and educate their families. Proceeds from the sales are given directly to the Ixcán women.



Serve at The Banquet

On Thursday, February 27, Annunciation Monastery will provide and serve The Banquet at Trinity Lutheran Church. If you would like to help us in this community service, please call or email us.

Volunteers prepare and/or serve the food and greet guests.

701-255-1520 or

AnnunciationOblates@gmail.com

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BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY

www.annunciationmonastery.org

A Message from the Director



Sr. Patricia Schap
Oblate Director

Dear Oblates,

At this time of the year we begin to look forward to spring with its warmer and longer days. The days of Lent are a part of our spring. As a preparation for this holy season, I invite you to read and

ponder prayerfully Chapter 49 of the Rule of St. Benedict on the Observance of Lent. One of the noticeable signs that Benedict makes in this chapter is the communal aspect of Lent. His point is that we need each other; we cannot go to God on our own. We don't take up Lenten practices for ourselves alone. Lent is the time when we clean out the cobwebs and scrape off the rust of our souls; in other words, we do the spring cleaning of our souls.

Benedict writes "we urge the entire community to keep its manner of life most pure and wash away the negligence of other times. Our relationship with God is never only vertical, that is between God and me. It is also horizontal, which means that we are in this together, and we support each other as we go to God. As you live the Oblate way of life, may you always be aware that community is an

important dimension of your commitment. For Oblates, community can be family, spouse and children, a parish/church community, an Oblate group, or a prayer group.

In addition to Chapter 49 of the Holy Rule, much benefit can also be gleaned from the prayerful reading of Chapter 7 on Humility as well as Chapter 4 on the Tools of Good Works. What could be better Lenten reading!

God Bless your Lenten journey,
Sister Patricia Schap, OSB



Hope Springs Eternal



Sr. Rosemary DeGracia
Assistant Director

our lives gives us grounding in emerging life. We brace ourselves to experience the passion and death of Christ against the backdrop of our knowledge that he has risen and lives among us.

The beginning of each new year and the promise of Spring lead us softly into the season of Lent with hope and a desire for renewal. The link between our New Year's resolutions and the promise of the Lenten reformation of

Early in January, I found a reflection by the late Sr. Jeremy Hall, OSB, of St. Benedict's Monastery. Sr. Jeremy was a dear friend of our Sr. Helen Kilzer, one of our remaining founders. Sr. Jeremy lived in a hermitage on the St. Ben's grounds and from silence and solitude wrote profound text. In this reflection published in "Give Us This Day" she distinguishes between repentance and remorse.

Remorse, she says, lingers in guilt and the doubt that we have been truly forgiven by God; while repentance leaves joy and the restoration of relationship that leaves no "unfinished business." Repentance signals healing as we move on with our lives to live in the shadow of God's love.

Lent can be a "stripped down" season of simplicity and appreciation of the growth around us. It urges us to set aside time for the traditional three legs of the Lenten stool: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

In the monastery we designate our alms to a mutually chosen cause, we keep silence on Friday evenings and schedule extra times for prayer and reflection such as the Stations of the Cross. Know that we will be



praying for you, and may your Lent be a graced time of renewal.

In the Joy of Christ's Love—

Sr. Rosemary

Remembering Oblates Jeffrey Wachter 1946-2013

Jeffrey L. Wachter, 67, Bismarck, died Dec. 12, 2013, at a Bismarck hospital. A memorial service was held Dec. 16, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Bismarck, with the Rev. Steve Sathre officiating. Burial was held at the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery.

Jeffrey L. Wachter was born Aug. 20, 1946, in Bismarck, to Paul H. and Charlotte (Sathre) Wachter. He grew up in Bismarck and attended Bismarck schools, graduating from Bismarck High School in 1964 and Bismarck Junior College in 1966. Jeff enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1966. He served 25 years in the Army Special Forces (Green Berets) and was a staff sergeant (E6) at the time of

his retirement in 1991. Jeff served in the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 19th and 20th Special Forces Groups as a demolition specialist.

Upon his retirement from the Army, he began a career in real estate development and was one of the major developers of the Cottonwood Development in Bismarck.

Jeff was active in numerous civic projects and a member of the Elks, American Legion, VFW, AMVETS, Lions, Optimists and Knights of Columbus. He was a life member of the Special Forces Association and the Special Operations Association.

Jeff is survived by his mother, Charlotte,

Bismarck; his brothers, Paul "Kip" (Valerie), Scottsdale, Ariz., and Lance (Gail), Bismarck; a niece, Lisa Wachter; his nephews, Chad (Stacy) and Kris Wachter; and five great-nieces and great-nephews.

We will remember Jeff for his years as an oblate and particularly for his faithful assistance this past summer at the NAABOD conference. Although he was concerned by his mother's health at the time, Jeff attended consistently and befriended many visiting oblates.

Jeff made his oblation
July 7, 1982

... and Lucy Hager 1928-2014

A mass of Christian burial was held Jan. 11, 2014 at St. Cecilia's Catholic Church in Towner for Lucy Lillian Hager, 85, of Rugby—formerly of Towner. Fr. Michael Schommer officiated.

She died Jan. 7 at the Heart of America Care Center in Rugby. Burial will follow this spring in the church cemetery.

Lucy was born June 16, 1928 in her parents' rural Berwick home, a daughter of Alexander and Barbary (Gaffrey) Hager. She attended a country school near her home, and graduated from Towner High School in 1947. She completed her education at the North Dakota School of Science in Wahpeton, where she earned a degree in business.

After college, she lived in Bismarck, and for 34 years, worked in the accounting department at First National Bank. In 2011, due to declining health, she moved to her sister's home in Towner, and later moved to the Haaland Estates in Rugby. She resided at the Heart of America Care Center since February 2013.

Lucy was a faithful member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Bismarck and the St. Alexius Medical Center Auxiliary. At St. Mary's Lucy was noted for her reverence and respect for others. She was known to greet Fr. Charlie Heidt with a small bow signifying "the Christ in me reverences the Christ in you."

Lucy is survived by her sisters Bregetta Jorde, Towner; Dorothy Zantner, Bismarck; Cecilia Smith, Rapid City, S.D.; Alysce Oliver, London, England; brothers Francis, Columbus, Indiana; Joseph, Yuma, Arizona; 40 nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends including oblates and sisters of Annunciation Monastery.

Lucy made her oblation May
21, 1958 and was active
with the oblate community
for many years.

Meet the Oblates—Postulant Idelle Badt

Idelle is a Postulant at Annunciation Monastery. She grew up in Sidney, Montana, and is currently working as an advisor in the Student Success Center at the University of Mary.

Idelle's coworkers value her ability to relate to students and her passion to contribute to their success in college. They are already concerned about what they will do without her when she enters the Novitiate and will not be working for a year.

Idelle has a bachelor's degree in vocal music and previously worked for a county Retired Senior Volunteer Program in



Montana, where she helped elders give back to their communities.



Idelle loves to spend time with the older members of the Annunciation Monastery community, sharing stories and memories and activities. She is also a very talented cook, singer, and creative artist (her latest project is making rosaries from melted down rose petals.) And she just has a very generous heart which has endeared her to the monastic community.

Spring Dates

February 10— St. Scholastica

March 5—Ash Wednesday

March 9— Commemoration of Frances of Rome, Patron of Oblates

March 21—The Passing of St. Benedict

March 25—Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord the monastery's patronal feast

April 13—Palm Sunday beginning of Holy Week

April 20—Easter



Learning and Living Lectio

One of the first experiences a woman has when making a "Come and See" visit to the monastery is a short exposure to the monastic practice of lectio divina. Along with the communal praying of Psalms at the Liturgy of the Hours, this form of prayer most readily defines us as Benedictines. Postulants meet periodically with other sisters who share the richness of lectio divina—cited by St. Benedict as absolutely necessary to the health of any monastic community. During the novitiate, even more time is set aside each day to savor the scriptures in lectio as well as to read a series of monastic authors on the history and practice of lectio.

As we have been reading the Rule of St. Benedict this year in the lectio workbook *Preferring Christ*, oblates come to appreciate both the proliferation of scripture throughout the Rule, as well as permission to use lectio for sacred texts that are not specifically scripture. We also get a vivid sense that lectio is not Bible study—although study



the scriptures certainly informs and enriches time spent in lectio.

A short list of a few gems is included for those who wish to learn more about lectio divina.

Casey, Michael, OCSO. *Sacred Reading*.

Dysinger, Luke, OSB. *Website-Accepting the Embrace of God*.

<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>

Stewart, Columba, OSB. *Prayer and Community*.

Tasto, Maria, OSB. *The Transforming Power of Lectio Divina: How to Pray with Scripture*.

Vest, Norvene. *Gathered in the Word*.

Sr. Maria's book is new and a wonderful basic resource which is practical as well as academic. There are many more resources on Lectio Divina—just ask us.