



Saint Meinrad

NEWSLETTER FOR BENEDICTINE OBLATES OF SAINT MEINRAD

Benedictine Oblate

SUMMER 2009

VOLUME 15:3

Program invites men to learn about monasticism

To increase the number of monastic vocations, Saint Meinrad Archabbey has developed a monastic observance program. In this interview, Fr. Anthony Vinson, OSB, talks about the program and his role as director of monastic vocations.

How did you get involved with this unique approach of discerning a monastic vocation through a five-day experience of Christian living within a Benedictine community?

In 2005, Archabbot Justin DuVall, OSB, appointed me the associate director of monastic vocations. We have about 50 people who, on an individual basis, come to the monastery each year

to visit and see what Benedictine community life is like. We needed a program whereby individuals could come to the monastery in a small-group setting and live for a short time with the monks, praying with them and working with them.

What are your responsibilities concerning the monastic program of discernment for observers?

Our main focus is to continue to cultivate young people on campuses throughout the United States. We needed a program that would bring young people to the monastery to live our way of life as monks and enrich the discernment process. I travel to college campuses about 32 weeks of the year, and the remaining 20 weeks I work here in the office.

Who are the conference presenters who talk to the observers?

Monks give seven different conferences during the monastic observance program. The monks are chosen based on their experience with the topic and their ability to relate their focus of interest to the participants. We try to rotate the monks and get more of them involved with the program. For example, Archabbot Justin gave a talk on Christian life and discernment.

Previous evaluations indicated that the observers wanted to hear from the abbot himself, and he was well received. We had a panel of monks speak about their monastic discernment and “monk wisdom,” as well as field questions from the observers.

Do the observers fall into the monastic rhythm easily? Is the monastic rhythm of work and prayer made known to the observers?

The individuals who come to the program have done their homework. I have visited with them or they have made a visit to the monastery. The first few days are an adjustment,

see Program, p. 7

FROM THE RULE:

“If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts.”

Prologue, Verse 10



A monk enters the Archabbey Church for prayer.

Obedience: Listening and responding to the voice of God

In a world that is becoming more and more self-centered, St. Benedict tells us that our vocation as Benedictine oblates is one of service and love. Our focus this year on obedience reminds us, as our *Benedictine Oblate Companion* says, to be “committed to listening to the voice of God and then responding with a willing heart.”

Obedience is the foundation of Benedictine life. In Chapter 5 of his *Rule*, St. Benedict says, “The first step of humility is unhesitating obedience...” He cautions us later that this means no grumbling (even in our hearts), no putting off doing what we’re asked to do or finding excuses for not obeying.

Why does St. Benedict tell us that obedience is so closely linked with humility? Obedience comes from the Latin *ob-audire* (“listen,” closely related to our word “audience”), the first word of the Prologue. Taking time to listen to others’

needs can be a humbling experience. We aren’t a nation of good listeners.

Listening attentively means stepping back and allowing others to be the center of our attention. This active listening can be quite a challenge. But unless we are willing to do this, we cannot live what our faith and our Benedictine promise ask of us.

Obedience asks what Jesus would do in a given situation. Would He do things He didn’t really want to do? Yes. Would He put others first? Of course. Would He respond in a superficial way? No. Perhaps we can better live out our promise by trying to respond to others as Jesus would.

Fr. Cyprian Smith, OSB, in his book *The Path of Life*, writes that obedience is “love in action.” He tells us that it’s an attitude calling for a “radical change in our motivation.” It means doing what we know is right because of our love for God.

Every day we are in situations that call for us to listen and respond in obedience. There are laws and authority figures that we must obey, and family, friends and neighbors who ask for our help. Sometimes obedience simply means giving others the attention that they crave, especially when no one else seems willing to listen to them. It means being someone who cares and is alert to the needs of others. Obedience urges us to see the wisdom of obeying and to feel a responsibility to do what is asked of us, if we can, in good conscience.

Obedience should be automatic and immediate, not something that we do begrudgingly. Obeying simply because “we have to” is not what St. Benedict is talking about. He wants it to become a way of life, something we do because we know it is the right thing to do.

Obedience means listening and being alert to life around us. *Lectio* teaches us to be better listeners so that we can live out our oblate promise more fully. As we still our mind and allow God to speak to us, we begin to understand the graces that listening offers us. “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). In prayerful silence, we discover where God is leading us. How ready are we to respond to that call?

*Marianna K. Neal, oblate
Fairborn, OH*

A POINT TO PONDER FROM THE RULE

“If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts.”

Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue, Verse 10

Adherence to obedience is often a difficult vow. As little children seeking independence, we often rebelled against parental authority. As adults, our independence also inhibits us from becoming obedient, and we view it as a detriment to success.

It was no different in St. Benedict’s time. Providing a biblical foundation for an instant and willing obedience, he quotes twice from Luke 10:16. Jesus applied this verse to his disciples, while St. Benedict applied it to his abbots and monks. Whoever listens to the abbot, listens to Jesus Christ.

As Benedictine oblates affiliated with a monastery, we, too, are subject to obedience to the abbot and, therefore, to Christ. The oblate is never excused from exercising the discernment of conscience toward a specific demand of authority. This can be interpreted as a sign of weakness to those who live solely in a materialistic world that governs their actions and goals.

The abbot, who is perpetuating the mandate of his office, does so with prayerful seeking of the will of God. He accepts the responsibility to God for his actions. As difficult as obedience is to an oblate, it is the first step toward humility.

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Editor: Mary Jeanne Schumacher
Designer: Jo R. Bishop
Oblate Directors: Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB
Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB

*Send changes of address and comments to
The Editor, Development Office, Saint
Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Dr., St.
Meinrad, IN 47577, (812) 357-6817,
fax (812) 357-6325 or e-mail
oblates@saintmeinrad.edu*

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OBLATE NEWS

Oblates blessed on feast day

The Bloomington, IN, oblates who attended the evening Mass at St. Charles Borromeo Church on February 10 received a nice surprise. Following Communion, Fr. Bill Stumpf invited them forward for a blessing, written by oblate Janis Dopp.

Perhaps other oblate chapters will want to use this prayer on Benedictine feast days or at chapter meetings.

Blessing of Oblates on Benedictine Feast Days

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Almighty God, the boundless source of all good things, we humbly ask that through the intercession of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, you pour out your blessings upon these oblates. May they always strive to perform good works, to be blessed by you with health of soul and body, for the grace of holy lives, and for remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.

May they also, with the help of your merciful love, strive to exercise true charity and justice toward all, so that one day they may appear sinless and holy in your sight.

Fill them with that same Spirit which animated St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, so that, filled with the same Spirit, they may strive to love what they loved and to practice what they taught.

This we ask, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Oblate's book listed on Amazon

Oliver Ogden of Silver Spring, PA, received notice on February 16 of the Amazon listing of his book, *New York Fifth Avenue Coach Company 1885-1960* (paperback). We wish him success with the sales of this historic account of

double-decker buses as part of early public transportation in New York City.

Oblates learn about *lectio divina*

Hosted by the Louisville Oblate Chapter at St. Joseph Home in Louisville, KY, 27 people attended a day of reflection on February 21 to hear presenter Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, speak on "*Lectio Divina: A Way into the Word.*"

He said *lectio divina* (holy reading) is an ancient style of praying with Scripture. It is a monastic practice, well over 1,500 years old, which encourages multiple encounters with the Word, uniting its participants in prayerful dialogue with God. Fr. Brendan focused on the four movements of *lectio divina*: *lectio*—reading the Word, *meditatio*—meditating on the Word, *contemplatio*—resting with the Word, and *oratio*—thanksgiving for the Word.

The all-day program included time for private prayer and Mass with the St. Joseph's residents and the Little Sisters of the Poor, who were celebrating the announcement of the canonization of their founder, St. Jeanne Jugan. The retreatants also enjoyed fellowship and

food prepared by oblates Laura Roberts and Carolyn Holman. Oblate Selma Steltenpohl handled the registration. Chapter Coordinator George Thompson worked with Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, to plan the event.

*Bob Hess, oblate
Louisville, KY*

Retreat inspires 92 oblates

The oblate retreat at Saint Meinrad Archabbey was blessed with inspired harmony as 92 oblates arrived for a weekend based on "Facets of Benedictine Spirituality," led by Fr. Prior Tobias Colgan, OSB, on March 20-22.

The retreat began with Eucharist in the Guest House Chapel and then First Vespers with the monks in the Archabbey Church. The highlight of the evening was a performance by oblate and concert pianist Diane Rivera. After Saturday morning Mass, everyone gathered in the Chapter Room for two investitures and nine final oblations.

Later in the afternoon, Fr. Prior Tobias shared with the oblates his understanding that, within everyday activities, there are many opportunities for

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Oblates on the March retreat pray Vespers with the monks in the Archabbey Church.

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spiritual growth, based in each person's own gifts and limitations. He described the process of *lectio divina*, whether through prayerful reading of a text or through life experience, recognizing that often the result of *lectio* is that one sings a new melody.

He defined accompaniment as an important facet of Benedictine spirituality, reminding the oblates that the root of "accompany" is *ad cum pane*, meaning "to share bread with." Thus we are called to move outward, toward others, not empty-handed, but with what we judge that person to need at the moment. Br. Maurus Zoeller, OSB, provided hospitality each evening with both refreshments and companionship. On Sunday, Fr. Prior reminded the oblates that the *Rule of St. Benedict* is a guide for all, and he encouraged us to use its wisdom to frame our lives. Throughout the weekend, the melody of Benedictine spirituality and the monastic way of life resounded through every liturgy and every conference, through every meal and every opportunity for individual reflection, and our voices were lifted in music and prayer, all for the glory of God.

*Catherine Byers, oblate
Nineveh, IN*

Oblate secretary offers thanks

I wish to thank all of the oblates and friends for the flowers, cards and letters



Oblate Diane Rivera entertains at a piano concert on March 20.

containing good wishes and, most especially, the prayers, following my hip replacement surgery on March 26. My progress has been very good with the fine care of the medical and health care professionals and the love and help of my family and friends. Again, I wish to express my appreciation for everyone's thoughts and prayers.

Oblate director celebrates birthday

Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, greatly appreciated the many birthday wishes that came by mail, through the efforts of Theresa Lin, in celebration of his 75th birthday on April 14.

Oblates continue generous support

The Oblate Finance Committee met on April 24 and reviewed the financial report for the eight months ending February 28, 2009. It was reported that gifts from two estates and several other gifts were received, and this revenue will be used to help defray the printing and publication costs of the *Liturgy of the Hours* book and the coordinators meeting that is scheduled for this summer. The members of the committee and Oblate Director Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, gratefully noted that, despite the economic climate, revenue from oblate renewals and *bona opera* had increased this year.

*Gerald Campbell, oblate
Chillicothe, OH*

Oblate Council learns of new projects

The Oblate Council met on April 25. Br. Francis Wagner, OSB, gave a presentation about a new publication of Abbey Press. The series, "Notes from a Monastery: The Sacred Way Every Day," features the artwork of Br. Martin Erspamer, OSB, and will be available beginning in August. Each booklet will focus on a particular topic related to the Benedictine way of life.

Oblate Albert Kovacs led a discussion on the topic of extending the opportunity of becoming Benedictine Oblates

of Saint Meinrad Archabbey to young adults. Council members and Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, realize this is a complex issue, including different segments of young adults. This discussion is a first step toward introducing Benedictine spirituality to these groups and addressing their needs. While challenging, it was agreed that this is a task to be undertaken.

Oblate John Pelletier presented an update on communications activities, including suggestions of enhancements for the newsletter, a proposal for developing more content for the Web site and activation of a communications advisory group. He noted the particular importance of the oblate newsletter for the oblate community and the special attention it will continue to receive.

Fr. Meinrad presented council members with proposed changes to the Ritual of Final Oblation, prepared by Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB. Fr. Meinrad also reported that Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, Br. Thomas Gricoski, OSB, and Br. Francis Wagner, OSB, will continue to assist with the Oblate Community. He discussed other items, including the implementation of the Oblate Community Philosophy and Vision statements and the guidelines for oblate chapters.

Oblate Chris Topa reported on new enhancements and security guidelines related to the Archabbey's computer software and hardware technology. A discussion was held about the continuing preparations for the chapter coordinators meeting this summer. Reports were received from oblate Jennie Latta concerning the *Liturgy of the Hours* book, oblate Gail Chambers concerning the customary and ritual book, the Finance Committee by oblate Gerald Campbell, ongoing formation by oblate Janis Dopp and the oblate video by oblate Dennis Skelton.

*Gerald Campbell, oblate
Chillicothe, OH*

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Wedding bells

Congratulations and best wishes to oblate Rae Ann Reichert and James Panther, who married on May 16. Fr. Frances I. Kilcline of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Peru, IN, presided. ♦

INSTITUTES & OBLATIONS

February 1, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Robert Oda** of Albany, KY.

February 8, 2009, Investiture—**Mrs. Karen Ricketts** and **Mr. Patrick Ricketts** of Madison, IN.

February 14, 2009, Oblation—**Mr. Albert Augustine Frabutt** of Hymera, IN.

February 15, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Timothy Aubuchon** of St. Charles, MO.

February 22, 2009, Investiture—**Ms. Debbie Storer** of Hamersville, OH.

February 26, 2009, Oblation—**Dr. James Gregory the Great Albright** of Westerville, OH.

February 27, 2009, Transfer of Oblation from Our Lady of Grace

Monastery in Beech Grove, IN, to Saint Meinrad Archabbey—**Ms. Sherry Placid Alcock** of Nashville, IN.

February 28, 2009, Investiture—**Mrs. Margaret McCarthy** of Dayton, OH.

March 1, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Mark Windsor** of Plano, TX.

March 7, 2009, Investiture—**Ms. Marie Gilmore** of Farmingdale, NY.

March 9, 2009, Oblation—**Mr. Albert Thomas Meier** of Lancaster, PA.

March 13, 2009, Investiture—**Ms. Mary Elizabeth Murray** of St. Joseph, MI.

March 14, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Richard Kaiser** of Alexandria, IN.

March 21, 2009, Oblations—**Mrs. Catherine Rose Byers** of Nineveh, IN; **Mrs. Linda Elizabeth Gatwood** and **Mr. Noah Ignatius Gatwood** of Birdseye, IN; **Dr. Cynthia Sarah Clare Kinney** and **Mrs. Mary Ann Elizabeth Rahman**, both of Santa Claus, IN; **Ms. Lillian Faustina Pratt** of Glenn Heights, TX; **Mr. David Thomas Ruecker** of Ballwin, MO; **Mr. Mark Tarcisius Schipper** of Fishers, IN; and **Mr. Gregory Gregory Schwinghammer** of Jasper, IN.

March 21, 2009, Investitures—**Dr. Thomas Hubert** of St. Louis, MO;

Mr. Henry Powell of St. Charles, MO; and **Mr. Michael LaFlamme** of Asheville, NC.

March 28, 2009, Transfer of Oblation from Conception Abbey in Conception, MO, to Saint Meinrad Archabbey—**Mr. Robert Mace Jr.** of Seffner, FL.

April 4, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Joseph Wharton** of Stevensville, MI.

April 9, 2009, Oblation—**Mrs. Joan Scholastica Hilton** of Cincinnati, OH.

April 15, 2009, Oblations—**Mr. Bryan Thomas Crisler** and **Mrs. Cynthia Hildegard Crisler** with children **Miss Abigail Margaret Crisler** and **Mr. Noah Michael Crisler**, all of Muncie, IN.

April 18, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Ralph Smith** of Smyrna, TN.

April 23, 2009, Oblation—**Rev. Mark John Chrysostom McDaniel** of Bedford, IN.

April 25, 2009, Investiture—**Ms. Mary Ann McMullen** of Dayton, OH.

April 26, 2009, Investiture—**Deacon Jerry Etienne** of Hamersville, OH.

May 2, 2009, Investiture—**Mrs. Terry Kotas** of Nashville, TN.

May 4, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Jesse Leamon** of Greenwood, IN.

May 6, 2009, Investiture—**Mr. Brian Leo** of Frankfort, IL. ♦

DEATHS

Ms. Mary Ann Fortkamp of Kettering, OH, died on December 25, 2006.

Mr. William Gundelfinger of Lancaster, OH, died on February 15, 2009.

Rev. Patrick Foster of St. Louis, MO, died on April 9, 2009.

Mrs. Bonnie Berry of Bethel, OH, died on May 4, 2009. ♦



On March 21, oblations and investitures were held in the Chapter Room. From left are Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, Noah Gatwood, David Ruecker, Linda Gatwood, Gregory Schwinghammer, Cynthia Kinney, Henry Powell, Mark Schipper, Thomas Hubert, Mary Ann Rahman, Catherine Byers, Lillian Pratt and Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB.

Pray for vocations

Gift Shop offers year-round discount to oblates

The Saint Meinrad Archabbey Gift Shop is now offering Saint Meinrad oblates a year-round discount on purchases. Previously, the Gift Shop provided a discount on products bought by oblates only when they were at Saint Meinrad during the annual retreats.

Oblates will receive a 10 percent discount on books, CDs and DVDs; a 20 percent discount on general merchandise; and 30 percent off any Abbey Press items. The discount does not apply to items already on sale, café items and consignment items.

The new discount applies to purchases made while visiting the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Gift Shop and on orders phoned into the Gift Shop at (812) 357-8290. To receive the discount, oblates should simply identify themselves at the checkout.

Among the items found at the Gift Shop are food and gifts from Saint

Meinrad and other monasteries, including Abbey bread and cookies, oils, mustards, marinades, soaps and lotions, jams, honey and fudge.

Inspirational gifts include books, Bibles, jewelry, rosaries, crucifixes, and items to celebrate special occasions such as baptism, First Communion and Confirmation. ♦

VOLUNTEERS

Recent volunteers in the Oblate Office were Sandy Applegate, Julie Benton, Jerry Campbell, Gail Chambers, John Cislo, Paul Duke, Ray Emsweller, Br. John Glasenapp, OSB, Br. Thomas Gricoski, OSB, Barb Krick, Tom Lehr, Jerry and Mary Maillet, Tom and Joan Rillo, Jayne Sims, Dennis Skelton, Joe Teague, Chris Topa, Brian Ward, and Tim Wymore. ♦

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 17-19, 2009: The meeting of chapter coordinators and representatives, held every five years, will be at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, will be the presenter and facilitator. The topic will be "Looking to the Future: Leadership."

September 4-7, 2009: The New York Labor Day annual retreat will feature Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, presenting "Obedience: A Monastic Way of Living."

September 12, 2009: The annual day of recollection for the Lancaster, PA, oblates will be held at St. Joseph Parish in Lancaster. Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, will present "Obedience: A Monastic Way of Living."

November 29, 2009: The New York oblates will hold the annual day of recollection with Fr. Godfrey Mullen, OSB, presenting "Freedom in Obedience."

December 11-13, 2009: Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, will preside at the oblate retreat at Saint Meinrad. His topic is: "Listening With the Ear of Your Heart: Obedience in the Bible and the *Rule of St. Benedict*."

Three pilgrimages have openings

Br. Maurus Zoeller, OSB, is hosting three pilgrimages. Contact him at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad, IN 47577; (812) 357-6674 or e-mail: mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

Holy Land Pilgrimage, visiting Haifa, Tiberias, Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem, November 9-18, 2009.

Benedictine Pilgrimage to Egypt and the Great Nile Cruise, visiting Cairo, Mount Sinai, Luxor, Edfu, Kom Ombo, Aswan with St. Catherine's Monastery and Mount Sinai, March 9-20, 2010.

Benedictine Pilgrimage to Austria and Germany, visiting Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Munich, Rothenburg, and the Passion Play of Oberammergau, May 9-19, 2010. ♦

OBLATES: IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Kenneth J. Kirwin, Glendale, NY

"The psalms are so beautiful, and they are the way to pray. When the monks say them, I am inspired to pray in that way. I find it so much more meaningful. I would never have felt this if I had not been introduced to the Benedictines. The psalms would have been just a part of the Bible, and I would never have known how special they are."

Program from p. 1

although some know from the outset that this is where they want to be. After the first few days of the program, there are those who are excited and want to be here and those who are not quite as serious about the potential of a vocation.

The participants follow the daily *horarium* (schedule) of the monastery. They are told to bring a Bible, work clothes and business casual clothes with them, so they expect to work and pray. Work periods involve both outdoor labor and lighter indoor work. The physical labor involved is cutting and delivering firewood for our wood chop program that supplies wood for heating purposes to needy families.

The observers awake with the monks for Vigils and Lauds, followed by breakfast. Next, a period of *lectio divina* is prayed, followed by the celebration of the Mass. After Mass, the observers do physical labor. After noon prayer and lunch, the afternoons are set aside for the conferences delivered by the monks. After Vespers, the observers participate in Compline, a time for reflection that includes a roundtable discussion that I host. The observers certainly do get the feeling of the monastic rhythm of work and prayer.

Do you feel the five-day experience is adequate in length?

Yes, I do feel that it is adequate. We conduct the program over the weekend so that the observers can be involved in the Sunday liturgy and since they would be free for two days of the weekend anyway. This year there were nine observers who arrived the day after Christmas. Three were enrolled in college and six were teaching or working on graduate degrees or working in jobs. All were practicing Catholics and had been visited by myself or another staff person from the office. Some had actually been to

the monastery. They must be Catholics to participate in this program of discernment. If they are not Catholics, I send them to the Oblate Office for other information.

How do you evaluate the observer discernment program?

I have an interview with each participant. Also, there is an evaluation for each individual to provide comments on the weekend, and evaluation forms are handed out at the end of each conference talk. Through these evaluations, the program can grow with more effective results.

Certainly, the priority is getting more and more young men to commit to a monastic vocation, and especially to Saint Meinrad Archabbey. The observers also have an opportunity to interact with the presenters at the end of each talk. I ask the presenters to talk for 30 minutes and to use 20 more minutes for question-and-answer discussions.

What changes would you make to the program?

There are some other things that we do that might bring more young men to the monastery. Each summer, we conduct a program for high school youth, both boys and girls, from all over the United States. Over three weeks, 400 high school youth converge on the campus.

The emphasis of this program is on the liturgy. It is a program of theory and practice and more theory and practice, until they walk away with a definite skill. The youth are exposed to the monastery and to the School of Theology. They are also involved in work projects and a dramatic production.

I think the use of Compline as a reflective tool and the discussions following it are a valuable experience for the monastic observers. The question I ask of them is, "Where did you see

God today?" It is my opening question following Compline.

Has this program changed you in any way? Has your perspective on working with young people changed?

I would have to say that it has. The monastic life affords each one of us an opportunity to be formed by our prayer and work. To uncover this great gift, the monk must take time to reflect on how this has changed the *conversatio* in his own life. I am confident that I have been changed through my interaction with those in discernment, by meeting humanity seeking the divine.

*Thomas J. Rillo, oblate
Bloomington, IN*



Oblate Gregory Schwinghammer signs his oblation chart with Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, witnessing.

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Reading Room

The Oblate Life (The Liturgical Press, 2008) is Fr. Gervase Holdaway's handbook on how oblates can live by the *Rule of St. Benedict* and live fully the life to which Christ calls them. Fr. Gervase is a Benedictine monk of Douai Abbey, Berkshire, England. He spent a sabbatical at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in 1995-96. Since then, he has been oblate director and director of his abbey's retreat programs.

As the book's editor, Fr. Gervase has brought together a group of excellent contributors with expertise in various areas. He endeavors to show oblates how they can be mutual blessings for the vowed monastics living within the walls of a monastery.

The handbook is divided into three parts: The first part focuses on the Benedictine world, dividing it into the four sections of Benedictine Family, Discerning Your Call, The Foundations of an Oblate's Life, and the Essentials of Benedictine Spirituality.

The second part is called Living the Oblate Life, with sections on The Oblate in the World, The Oblate in the

Church, and The Oblate in the Home. These topics address issues that many oblates face in the secular world, such as serving the local Church, marriage and family, and aging and death.

Part three of the handbook includes resources for oblates. The appendices include brief biographies of the contributors, as well as a list of selected Benedictine monasteries with oblate programs, including those in Great Britain and Ireland. There is also an excellent bibliography of resources, an appendix on the medal of St. Benedict and a glossary of Benedictine terms.

This is one of the best books written about the oblate life. The contributors are well chosen, and many of their names will be familiar to the oblate. Some have written commentaries and interpretations about oblation and the *Rule of St. Benedict*. The handbook focuses on the oblate, and only on the oblate, in living a life in rhythm with the *Rule of St. Benedict* and monasticism.

*Thomas J. Rillo, oblate
Bloomington, IN*