



OBLATE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2010

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY



Sister Patricia Schap

Dear Oblates,

Summer greetings to all! Our first Oblate meeting will be held Sept. 12 at Annunciation Monastery. We are pleased to welcome Brother Benet Tvedten of Blue Cloud Abbey, S.D., and author of the book, *“Be a Monastic and Not Leave Your Day Job.”* Last year, we enjoyed reading and discussing his book which offered practical ways to live the monastic life. Brother Benet will share ideas on daily prayer during this blessed time of learning, sharing and praying together.

Our Sept. 12 fall retreat schedule will be:

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| 10 a.m. | Presentation - Brother Benet Tvedten |
| 11 a.m. | Eucharist followed by lunch |
| 1 – 3 p.m. | Presentation - Brother Benet Tvedten
Closing prayer and refreshments |

Blessings to all and I look forward to seeing you in September!

Sincerely,
~ Sister Patricia Schap, OSB

OBLATE MEETING SCHEDULE

Our study for the year will be based on the book, *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* by Brian C. Taylor

October 3, 2010 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Oblation for Helen Geinert during Eucharist
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Preface/Intro, pp. 7-14)

November 7, 2010 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Oblation for Alvina Campbell and Craig Larson during Eucharist
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Stability, pp. 15-20)

December 5, 2010 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Advent Reflection
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Lectio Divina, pp. 64-70)

January 9, 2011 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Conversatio, pp. 20-24)

February 6, 2011 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Obedience, pp. 24-29)

Sisters Patricia and Stephanie enjoyed a meeting with the Jamestown Oblates.

March 6, 2011 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Lenten Retreat
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (The Self in Relationship to God, pp. 47-53)

April 3, 2011 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (The Self in Relationship with Others and Things, pp. 53-62)

May 1, 2011 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Reading: *“Spirituality for Everyday Living,”* (Life in Balance, Prayer, Study, Work, pp. 30-46)





A Letter to Our Oblates from Rosemary DeGracia



Rosemary DeGracia

Since my arrival at Annunciation Monastery last August, I have been asked many times, “Why would you leave family and friends (not to mention sunny California) to move to a monastery in Bismarck, ND?” Well, it didn’t happen overnight; it wasn’t just a whim.

First of all, I seek God within the Benedictine monastic tradition. This stage of my journey continues long-term connections as a very active oblate of St. Andrew’s Abbey, a Benedictine men’s community in the high desert foothills of southern California. Second, this is a stage of life when my years of wife, mother, career and ministry have evolved into a different call. My husband died seven years ago and my five children are grown and dispersing around the country. My work and active ministry roles have been transitioned to capable hands. Third, my geographical roots are in northern Illinois with weather not that different from Bismarck and with much of the smaller city appeal. I realized a few weeks ago that the city I left has nearly the population of the entire state of North Dakota.

Aside from these more factual reasons, my heart is at ease here. With senses honed for the felt presence of God, I recognize that presence in the sisters, the oblates, the simple beauty of the liturgies and the monastery, and the surrounding prairie landscape. I am falling into the monastic rhythm of Annunciation and its sponsored ministries. I was privileged to be asked to offer

two Lenten retreats--one general and one to the oblate community. Part of the monastic rhythm is being of service--offering hospitality. Routines such as dishes, errands or switchboard take on new significance when viewed as ministry. I have enjoyed getting to know you all and be part of your oblate meetings. I ask your prayers as I continue this journey. As an oblate, I performed volunteer service for the Abbey including working their annual Fall Festival, baking, preparing mailings, physical labor on grounds and facilities, and presenting retreats. I directed the formation of two oblates and served on the oblate formation committee for the Abbey. I was also exposed to monastic studies with some distinguished Benedictine scholars and will continue my love of learning in this area.

I entered the Postulancy on Aug. 5, 2009, and presented my request to enter the Novitiate to the community July 7. This has been a busy nine months for me--especially with anniversary celebrations of the University of Mary, St. Alexius Medical Center and the Diocese of Bismarck. In addition to entering into the life and ministries of Annunciation, I resumed study for an MBA degree. I had put this on hold about a year prior to leaving California in order to spend more time in prayer and discernment. Now, I’m almost done and will complete the degree the year following the Novitiate. I also was privileged to attend Sr. JoAnn Krebsbach’s class on the Eucharist at University of Mary and formation classes with Sr. Mariah, Sr. Agatha and Sr. Janet. I also am trying to revive long-dormant piano skills. I enjoy knitting and quilting, baking and long walks, exploring the North Dakota surrounding areas and getting to know my new sisters.

*Please keep Rosemary in your prayers on August 15 as she enters
into the Novitiate at Annunciation Monastery*