


OBLATE NEWSLETTER

Spring 2015

Lifting Up Lent

Oblate Lenten Retreat

Our Merciful God



A packed Community Room greeted Sr. Susan Lardy, presenter of this year's Oblate Lenten retreat as she spoke on the topic of God's mercy. Centered on the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Sunday readings including the

Gospel story of the Transfiguration, she wove together scriptural sources and the writings of Pope Francis and Walter Cardinal Kasper, both of whom have spoken eloquently on the absolute necessity that we are called to show mercy and compassion as key elements of our common Christian calling.

She said, "Mercy expands our hearts, and bestows on us joy and hope. It is the God of mercy who wishes to be in relationship with us.

Pope Francis helps us come to a fuller realization of this merciful God when he writes: "...Jesus brings God's mercy and forgiveness. It is through Jesus we know the tenderness of the Father, who consoles, revitalizes, speaks. Jesus, in union with His Father and the Holy Spirit restores courage, re-entrusts responsibility and sends us out on mission, 'go and do likewise.'"

Time was allowed for reflection on Van Gogh's *The Good Samaritan*, and participants shared their insights.



The text of Sr. Susan's talk is available by contacting Sr. Patricia or by email to AnnunciationOblates@gmail.com.

Oblate Updates

Celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life

Annunciation Monastery continues the celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life throughout the Universal Church and the Bismarck Diocese. On Sunday, February 21, Annunciation Monastery held open house -- graciously assisted by ten of our local oblate community who provided hospitality and helped with our baked goods and craft sale. The event featured tours of the monastery, refreshments and

many reunions. We concluded with Evening Prayer. It was a day of Benedictine hospitality at its best. A huge thank you to all of you who made the day extra special.



Sr. Denise with oblates Claudia Dietrich and Alvina Campbell

Oblates Serve at The Banquet

On Thursday, February 26, Annunciation Monastery provided and served a warm meal to guests at The Banquet at Trinity Lutheran Church. A special thank you to those who could assist us on short notice. We served approximately 350 meals to guests on a very cold night. University of Mary students also joined the Sisters of Annunciation Monastery and our Affiliates Krista and Maria.

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BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY

A Message from the Director



Sr. Patricia Schap,
Oblate Director

Dear Oblates,

We began our Lenten Journey with St. Paul reminding us: *"In an acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you. Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."* Lent is our acceptable time. Lent is a season of being invited by God in a deeply personal way. *"Come back to me with all your heart,"* our Lord beckons. We respond, *"a clean heart create for me, O God, give me back the joy of your salvation."*

Lent isn't about simply giving up something. The real grace is when we recognize that Lent is a season in which God wants to give us something. He wants to help us transform our lives and to create new hearts of love for

him and for others. Let us gratefully receive God's gift of salvation and pray for each other on this pilgrimage to Easter joy.

God Bless your Lenten journey,

Sr. Patricia Schap

Announcements

ABA Monastic Essay Contest

The American Benedictine Academy presents awards for scholarly work on monastic topics. In addition to newer monastics, entries are also accepted from newer oblates. Please contact Sr. Rosemary for information (701)255-1520.

Monastic Institute

Each year St. John's University in Collegeville, MN, hosts Monastic Institute. The event runs from Sunday evening through Thursday and features monastic speakers on a variety of monastic subjects. This year's conference is 6/28-7/2 and is always open to oblates. Information is available at: monasticinstitute@csbsju.edu

Fall Newsletter

The fall oblate newsletter will honor our deceased oblates and highlight our many oblate volunteers.

A Period of Preparation



Sr. Rosemary DeGracia
Assistant Director

As many of you know, I am in the period of Initial Formation leading up to my Perpetual Profession this June 27. You are all invited!

Preparation for a major liturgical event is a time of excitement and planning— so many details to work through while attempting to stay grounded in the rhythm and tasks of daily life...prayer, work and many events on the monastic calendar as we celebrate with the Universal Church, the Year of Consecrated Life.

Shortly after my request for Profession was accepted by the community, I was advised to enter into the mystery of this time with deep prayer. Therefore, it is perfect that the season of Lent calls me and all of us to sink into prayer with

St. Benedict's reminder that our monastic lives should be a continual Lent. The question begs—How do we move toward that ideal in a mindful way, conscious of the daily lapses so much a part of the human condition? In the light of God's mercy, I derive comfort in my promise of conversatio—that I am an unfinished project driven by hope and the certainty of God's love to support me. May you be richly blessed.

In the Joy of Christ's Love — *Sr. Rosemary*

Spring Dates

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

March 29—Palm Sunday beginning of Holy Week

April 5 —Easter

April 12—Oblate Sunday

May 3—Oblate Sunday
(oblation renewals)

June 20 – Jubilees

June 27 —Profession

