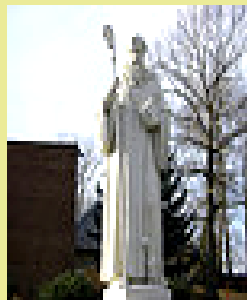
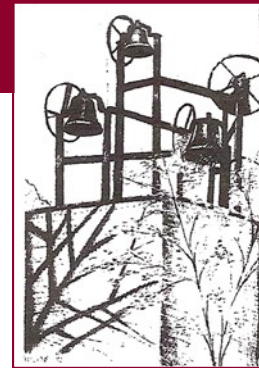


# OBLATE NEWSLETTER OF ST. MARY'S ABBEY

Summer, 2011 Volume 1, Issue 3



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## OBLATE RETREAT — JULY 9-10 2011

Over 30 Oblates of St. Benedict participated in their annual retreat which occurred on Saturday, July 9 and Sunday, July 10 at St. Mary's Abbey in Morristown, NJ. The retreat was an opportunity for the oblates to gather together, deepen their commitment to the prayer and works of the Benedictine community through shared prayer and conferences.

Fr. Hilary O'Leary, O.S.B., Oblate Director and Fr. Patrick Hurley, O.S.B. welcomed the oblates on Saturday morning after Lauds and outlined the activities for the weekend.

This year's retreat provided a rare opportunity to observe the sol-

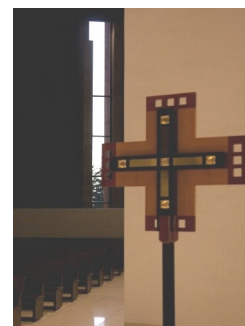
emn profession of monastic vows by Br. Kevin Tidd, O.S.B. Br. Kevin joined the community in 2008 and teaches at Delbarton School. Many of the oblates will remember Br. Kevin leading a wonderful conference during the 2009 annual retreat. Conferences this year were held in the Community Chapter Room in the Abbey due to repair of the stairs leading to the abbey which made travel from the Retreat House difficult.

Two conferences were led by Fr. Beatus Lucey, O.S.B. who provided terrific insights into the practice of *Lectio Divina*. Lynn O'Gorman-Latchford, ObIOSB led a conference on a

rare translation of the Rule of St. Benedict and provided an update of her present work in the Republic of Ireland.

The Oblates wish to thank Fr. Hilary, O.S.B. and St. Mary's Abbey for their generous use of the Chapter Room, Retreat House and wonderful food. The Oblates

also wish to thank Ana Lopo and Julian Malcolm for their generous gifts provided to the many retreatants.



## THREE NEW OBLATES

Following a year as Oblate Novices, Erin Lowe of Basking Ridge, NJ, and Charles and Nora Dingerdissen of Toms River, NJ made their Oblation as Oblates of St. Mary's Abbey be-

fore Abbot Giles Hayes, O.S.B. at the July 10th Mass. Oblates promise to lead a dedicated Christian life according to the Gospel as reflected in the Rule of St. Benedict. In this way

they share in the spiritual benefits with the sons and daughters of Benedict who are dedicated to the monastic life by vow. Oblates attend monthly meetings at the Abbey.



## FROM THE OBLATE DIRECTOR

August 20, 2011

Feast of St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Dear Oblates and Friends:

We are very pleased to introduce to you the first issue of the Oblate Newsletter of St. Mary's Abbey. It is our hope that along with the St. Mary's Abbey website it will provide us with a new source of information and guidance in living our lives as followers of St. Benedict. It is our intention to publish this newsletter four times a year with a variety of articles of interest to our readers: News from the Abbey; interviews with monks; recommended readings for Lectio Divina; profiles of oblates; book reviews; biographies of Benedictine saints; events for oblates and prayers requests for the living and deceased.

Sincerest thanks to oblates, Barbara Trimiglozzi, Giac Pagano and Tom Stiff for their many hours of work in preparing this newsletter. The newsletter would never have seen the light of day without their expertise and persistent efforts.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux, whose feast we celebrate today, once wrote, "We find rest in those we love, and we provide a resting place in ourselves for those who love us." May the remainder of your summer be restful and enjoyable.

Fr. Hilary O'Leary, O.S.B.

Director of Oblates

## CHURCH CALENDAR

### AUGUST

20. St. Bernard, *memorial*

**21. Twenty-first Sunday of the Year**

22. Queenship of B.V.M., *memorial*

24. St. Bartholomew, *feast*

27. St. Monica, *memorial*

**28. Twenty-second Sunday of the Year**

29. Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist,  
*memorial*

### SEPTEMBER

3. Gregory the Great, Pope & Doctor,  
*feast*

**4. Twenty-third Sunday of the Year**

8. The Birth of Mary, *feast*

9. St. Peter Claver, *memorial*

**11. Twenty-fourth Sunday of the Year**

13. St. John Chrysostom, *memorial*

14. Triumph of the Cross, *memorial*

15. Our Lady of Sorrows, *memorial*

16. Sts, Cornelius, Po & Cyprian,  
*memorial*

**18. Twenty-fifth Sunday of the Year**  
Oblate Meeting—Vincent House

23. St. Pio of Peitrelcina, *memorial*

**25. Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year**

27. St. Vincent de Paul, *memorial*

29. Sts. Michael, Gabrirl & Raphael,  
Archangels, *feast*.



## LECTIO DIVINA—A STUDY

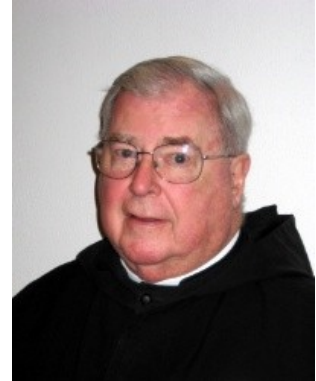
Fr. Beatus Lucey, O.S.B. led the Oblates in two conferences of Lectio Divina during their retreat. Lectio Divina is Latin for *divine reading*, spiritual reading, or "holy reading." It is a way of praying with Scripture that calls one to study, ponder, listen and, finally, pray and even sing and rejoice in God's Word, within the soul.

Daily life in a Bene-

dictine monastery consists of three elements: liturgical prayer, manual labor and *Lectio Divina*. This slow and thoughtful reading of Scripture, and the ensuing pondering of its meaning, is their meditation. Saint Benedict in his Rule (chapter #48) stipulated specific times and manners for *Lectio Divina*.

During the first conference, Fr. Beatus

used as an example, John 1: 1-18. We heard the words: "In the Beginning was the Word" and "Light." We then listened to a reading of Genesis 1:1-8 where we heard: "God spoke", "in the beginning" and "light." We continued with a 2nd conference after some "homework." The conference teachings were powerful and insightful to the participants.



## JOHN BAIER ORDAINED DEACON

John Baier, OblSB, was ordained a Permanent Deacon for the Archdiocese of Chicago by Cardinal Francis George, OMI, on May 15, 2011.

John and his wife, Joan belong to Immaculate Conception Parish in Highland Park, IL. John and Joan have been active oblates at St. Mary's Abbey, com-

muting from Illinois to our meetings here. John says he plans continued work with liturgy, especially liturgy of the hours" and wants to continue teaching classes on the Bible. Joan said, "the Deaconate program has led to John and I having had many wonderful experiences both together and with others as we

try to discern God's will for us."

We celebrated with John and Joan during our June Meeting on June 25, 2011. John served as Deacon at the 11:00 Abbey Mass with Abbot Giles. A generous reception followed in the Estabrook Dining Room.

Congratulations to John and Joan.



## TWO NEW JUNIOR MONKS

On Monday, August 15, during Mass for the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Abbey Church, Novices Joseph Voltaggio and Demetrius Michael Thomas, O.S.B. stood before Abbot

Giles and in front of the monastic community of St. Mary's Abbey and declared their intentions. Then during an age old rite, the two professed their Simple Vows and these two

novices became Junior monks.

They had just completed their year as Novices in the largest class of Novices at St. Mary's Abbey in many years.

In their first year as junior monks, they are typically assigned to teach at Delbarton School, or to some other suitable work in the monastery. A junior

*(Continued on page 6)*

## 2011 BIENNIAL NAABOD MEETING

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- > Initial Meeting convened August 30, 1948 at Conception Abbey, Conception, MO
- > The purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for Oblate Directors to share their concerns; and to obtain information useful to Oblate activities in each of the abbeys represented.
- > NAABOD met at St. Mary's Abbey in Morristown, NJ on June 14, 1972.
- > Current Mission "The Association is a non-profit association whose purpose is to provide ongoing formation for Directors of Oblates and a forum for discerning needs and issues that arise. Through the Association Directors are able to share information regarding their oblates at the biennial convention and provide clarification and mutual encouragement."
- > The next NAABOD meeting will meet in 2013. The location has not yet been announced.

The North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors (NAABOD) held their biennial meeting July 1-6, 2011 at St. Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, IN. We were graciously greeted on arrival by a team of red-shirted volunteers who welcomed us and were the quintessence of Benedictine hospitality during our entire stay. So were the monks of the Abbey. The saying is "He who sings prays twice," but when monks, directors of oblates and oblates pray, work and recreate together, it is a taste of the heavenly banquet.

On Saturday evening, after Compline with the monks in the Archabbey church, we were treated to a magnificent concert followed by a social in the guest house. On Sunday we departed for the Monastery Immaculate Conception in nearby Ferdinand, IN.. We prayed and dined there with the sisters, toured the beautiful church and gift shop before returning to St. Meinrad Archabbey.

The theme of the Conference this year was, "Embracing Crea-

tion with Reverence and Hospitality: Listening to Scripture and Rule Speak". The three speakers were excellent in their presentations each addressing the topic from different vantage points and awakening us to the challenges we face each day to maintain the gift of this earth that God so graciously created and has given to us. As pilgrims on our earthly journey we have the responsibility to be good stewards of the earth.

Sr. Kathryn Huber, OSB, of the Monastery Immaculate Conception, was our first key-note speaker. Sister told us that "We are all a part of the great creativity of our universe". Sr. Kathryn grew up in a very large family who lived and worked on their farm so she spoke from real life experience about the care and nurturing of the earth. She stressed that we must be stewards of the earth and the world. Sister noted our interrelatedness, not only in an earthly way but spiritually as well. She went on to site examples in the Rule of Benedict and the gospels that

speak of creation and tell us to listen with the "ear of the heart". She stated that the cornerstone of caring for the earth is the intentional and intense living of Christian spirituality.

Our second speaker was Mr. Kyle Kramer whose topic was "Sustainability and Spirituality - Lessons from the Benedictines". He is a young man, who with his wife and children, live on and work a 26 acre organic farm in Indiana. Kyle is also the Director of Lay Degree programs at St. Meinrad's School of Theology. In his very well ordered presentation, Kyle identified key themes from the Rule which related directly with the rhythms of the earth: stability, obedience, poverty, prayer and work, hospitality and conversion. Kyle stressed that these are an ongoing process. His delivery of this information was spell-binding. It made you feel a new closeness to the earth that God has gifted to us. It became holy ground and I, for one, felt in a new way a deep responsibility to preserve and cultivate our

*(Continued on page 7)*

## FALL LECTURE SERIES

Mark your calendar for the fall series of evening lectures at the Abbey. This fall the following individual programs will be offered:

***Monks, Nuns & the Making of Medieval Culture:*** This program will be presented by Fr. Gabriel Coless O.S.B. on three Tuesday evenings (Oct. 11, 18, 25).

***Dorothy Day: An American Pilgrimage:*** This

program will be presented by Mr Giac Paganò, ObIOSB on three Wednesday evenings (Oct. 12, 19, 26).

***The Age of Spirituality:*** This program will be presented by Fr. Beatus Lucey, O.S.B. on three Wednesday evenings (Oct. 12, 19, 26).

***The Fathers of the Church:*** This program will be presented by Fr. Basil Wallace, O.S.B. on

three Thursday evenings (Oct. 13, 20, 27).

Three of the four programs will run from 8–9 p.m. in the Kountze Room, Old Main; the fourth (Fr. Beatus) will run in the Fine Arts Center. The donation for each series is \$10. For information and registration, call Fr. Bruno at 973.538.3231 [ext. 3002] or e-mail [Bruno@delbarton.org](mailto:Bruno@delbarton.org)



## BOOK REVIEW: SACRED READING—THE ANCIENT ART OF LECTIO DIVINA

If you wish to read a book on *Lectio Divina*, [Sacred Reading—The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina](#) by Michael Casey is a good book to start with. This work offers an introductory entry point providing a history of the Western tradition of *Lectio Divina* and the contemplative approach to sacred writings. Casey provides some simple and practical ideas on how to practice *Lectio Divina* such as: preparing a place to read sacred readings, when to read, how to avoid drowsiness and using

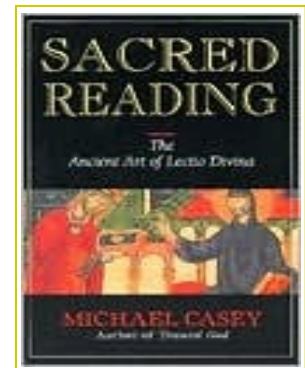
the correct posture. He suggests that some sort of ritual is helpful to begin meditation and sacred reading, and provides some methods to do so. He writes about how to turn the theory into practice and what to do when God seems silent. Casey also provides some insight on the writings of the early church fathers and their value as the roots of Christian tradition.

*Lectio Divina* is a relatively new adventure for me in my life. I

was encouraged to learn from this book that lectio divina is an element in the lifelong process of turning toward God. I realize now after reading this book, not to expect any instant gratification, but know that this is the beginning of a lifelong journey into a deeper expression of prayer.

I found Michael Casey's insights to be useful in my search for continued formation as an Oblate. I would recommend this as a tool for others to use.

*By Tom Stiff, ObIOSB*





## TWO NEW JUNIOR MONKS

(Continued from page 3)

monk may perceive that he is receiving a call to serve God and the Church as a priest or as a brother. In consultation with the formation director and abbot, the junior monk, may enroll in a program of studies in

seminary, usually in his second year.

However, at the end of August, these newly professed Brothers will begin studies for the priesthood at Immaculate Conception Seminary in South Orange, NJ.

At the close of temporary vows, if he wishes, the Junior monk may choose to renew his vows for a period of time, or to be admitted to solemn profession. Solemn profession binds him to the monastic commu-

nity for life.

Please pray that God's blessings continue to be upon these new Junior Monks as they continue their journey in the Lord's service.

## A STUDY IN THE PROLOGUE OF THE RULE — AN UPDATE FROM IRELAND

Lynn Latchford, ObIOSB, doctoral candidate at Trinity College in Dublin returned from Ireland to attend the Oblate retreat. She shared an early translation of the Prologue of The Rule during our last Conference. This translation was from a copy of the Rule from St. Gall Monastery in Switzerland. The Swiss copy is an earlier translation of the original Latin Rule. Lynn shared some thoughts on this translation of the Prologue and on the early history of the Rule. This prologue was written for beginners in the Rule calling their attention to *ad deficum lumen*, the deifying light of God as their guide. It is the beginning of the journey toward the light and conversion to Christ.

She taught about the early origins of the Rule, about the journey of St. Mark to Alexandria, the Essenes, the ancient Jewish sect who lived a communal life dedicated to poverty, total dedication to God, and abstinence from worldly pleasures. Lynn talked about the desert fathers and mothers in Egypt whose ascetic lifestyle contributed to the origin of the monastic way of life.

Lynn continued noting the contributions to the rise of monasticism of the early Church fathers: Evagrius Ponticus, John Cassian, Sts. Basil, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory the Great who wrote the biography of the life and miracles of St. Benedict of Nursia. St. Benedict's

Prologue to the Rule is an invitation to listen and to a lifelong journey of learning.

Lynn also updated the Oblates about her life and work in The Republic of Ireland. She is continuing to work on her doctoral studies and the Archdiocese of Dublin. She is part of the Eucharistic Adoration Committee for next year's 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress and works as a Child Protection Representative for the Church in Ireland. She is working with those individuals in the Church and civil society to establish a National Child Advocacy Center.

Lynn asked the Oblates to pray—pray for the people of Ireland and for the renewal of the Church in Ireland.



**“Listen carefully, my child, to your master’s precepts, and incline the ear of your heart. Receive willingly and carry out effectively your loving father’s advice.”**

## BROTHER KEVIN TIDD PROFESSES VOWS

Brother Kevin Tidd, O.S.B. professed final vows in St. Mary's Abbey during Mass on July 10, 2011. The Mass was attended by his confreres, family, friends, many students of the Delbarton School and oblates.

Br. Kevin grew up in Norristown, Pa. He graduated from La Salle College High School in Springfield, Pa., and

earned his bachelors degree in European history from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1995 he earned an M.A. in theology from La Salle University and in 2001 he completed an Ed. D. in private school administration from the University of San Francisco, in California. From 1992-2003, Br. Kevin taught at eastern Catholic boys schools.

Prior to coming to St. Mary's Abbey, he served as the academic dean at Salesianum School in Wilmington, Del and taught social studies at Marmion Academy in 2007– 2008.

Br. Kevin teaches History at The Delbarton School and is the Moderator of the Forensics Society.



## NAABOD

*(Continued from page 4)*

earth. The earth became for me a chapel where God's presence was seen and felt. Indeed we are all called to a new commitment to environmental stewardship.

Sr. Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick, OSB of Our Lady of Grace, Beach Grove, IN was our third speaker. She began by noting that we all have an intimate relationship with nature. Her intention was to focus on the interrelationship between nature and God in order to bring us to a deeper level of awareness of the effects of our choices each day and to see that our relationship with God is a covenant with creation. Sister concluded with

several ways in which we can all make a difference. Even if it is only one thing we can do we should be thinking globally and acting locally.

The oblate directors held two business meetings. The first one addressed two By-Laws changes. The second meeting addressed the election of new officers for the coming four years. Each candidate was given a few minutes to address the group. The results of the election were as follows: President - Sr. Bonita Gacnic, O.S.B. from Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, SD; Vice President - Fr. Paschal Morlino, O.S.B. from St. Vincent Archabbey, PA. They will both serve 4 year terms be-

ginning Jan.1, 2012.

The richness of this meeting was vast. It was a time to share our Benedictine heritage of work and prayer with fellow oblates, network with other oblate groups, and expand our knowledge of the interconnectedness we have with creation and the world we live in and are called to serve as stewards. It was a blessing for me to have the opportunity to attend this meeting as a representative of St. Mary's Abbey.

*By Barbara Trimiglozzi, ObIOSB*

**Please remember in your prayers the following:**

Joe Mackey and Nora Dingerdissen, who are recovering from illness, and

Matthew Richard Parisi, brother of Barbara Trimiglozzi, who has died.

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Oblates of St. Mary's Abbey

*The Oblates of St. Benedict are Christian men and women admitted into spiritual union and affiliation with a Benedictine community of monks, nuns, or sisters so that they may share in the spiritual life, prayers, and good works of the community.*

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**Find us on the web at:**  
**[www.stmarysabbey.org](http://www.stmarysabbey.org)**

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## OBLATE MEETINGS

Oblates generally meet on the third Sunday of every month after the 11 a.m. Mass at the Abbey Church, unless otherwise indicated. Meetings take place in the lounge of Vincent House, the building adjacent to the Abbey Church. Conferences, guest speakers, group discussions on recommended readings and reports from oblates on how they are following the Rule of St. Benedict in their daily lives, afford oblates the opportunity for spiritual growth and enrichment. Our meetings conclude with midday prayer in common.

Every year there is

a joint meeting with the Oblates of Newark Abbey, Newark, NJ and St. Walburga Monastery, Elizabeth, NJ, with a speaker provided by the host monastery. Every second year there is a national meeting of all Oblate Directors and Oblate representatives of North America. Every fourth year, one oblate from each monastery is selected to attend the International Meeting of Oblates in Rome. Reports from these meetings provide a great deal of information and inspiration for individual oblate communities. In July of each year there is an annual retreat for the Oblates of St.

Mary's Abbey, at the conclusion of which new oblates are invested and Oblate Novices and oblates make their Act of Oblation.

Meetings for the remainder of 2011 are scheduled for: September 18, October 16, November 20 and December 11.

The Abbey Bookstore located in the nearby Retreat House is usually open after the Oblate meetings, and is a great resource for books and gifts. Call Fr. Patrick Hurley O.S.B. at 973.538.3231 x2105 for hours and more information.

