



Oblate Letter

Reflections on the Rule of St. Benedict By Sr. Catherine Martinez, O.S.B., St. Joseph Monastery

Praying the Hours

*God come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.*

Community prayer throughout the day begins with this simple refrain every day.

It calls to mind the fact that it is only through God's assistance and God's ready help that we are able to even consider praying day after day. It is a reminder to me that without God even my best efforts often are mediocre and half hearted. It reminds me that there is a purpose greater than myself and my plans for the day.

May I always look toward God as the source of my comfort and aid.

Reflections on Order

Chapter 18 of the Rule spells out carefully the order in which the psalms are to be recited during the week.

I am not a person who is overly fond of order.... actually I am probably much more comfortable with chaos than order in my life. There is wisdom in placing a specific pattern and system to important activities, especially when working with a group.

I am reminded of an incident that happened during prayers a few years back. There was a slightly longer than usual pause one day between psalms. Everyone was waiting for the next psalm to begin. Sister Mary Louis, one of our elder Sisters, called out from her wheel chair, "Well, since no one seems to know what we are supposed to be doing, let's just end prayers right now and go to breakfast." This was a very unusual comment but it broke the tension and we all laughed as we continued our prayers.

In this instance, this unexpected comment called us back to the moment and lightened the tense awkwardness enough that we were grateful to Sister Mary Louis and still retell this story often.

Praying the Full Psalter

Above all else we urge that if anyone finds this distribution of the psalms unsatisfactory, he should arrange whatever he judges better, provided that the full complement of one hundred and fifty psalms is by all means carefully maintained every week, and that the series begins anew each Sunday at Vigils. For monks who in a week's time say less than the full psal-

ter with the customary canticles betray extreme indolence and lack of devotion in their service. We read, after all, that our holy Fathers, energetic as they were, did all this in a single day. Let us hope that we, lukewarm as we are, can achieve it in a whole week. (RB80.18.22-25)

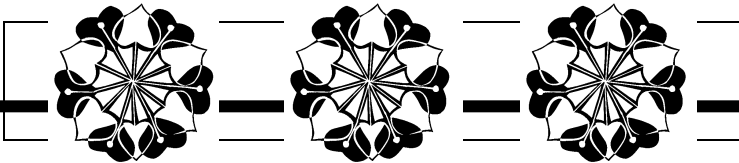
This passage from the end of Chapter 18 of the Rule is reminiscent of the concern many elders have about subsequent generations. Oftentimes, the elders among us lament the fact that the younger generations don't have the same energy, fervor or zeal as they had --sometimes forgetting that the same was said of them 50 or 60 years ago.

There is a sense in reading this passage from the Rule that Benedict is trying to encourage his followers to maintain the fervor, zeal and love for prayer, scripture and lectio that previous generations possessed. He points out that our monastic ancestors in the desert managed to recite the entire psalter in one day--we should at least be able to do this in 7 days.

Benedict is not so much promoting mindless recitation of prayers as he is emphasizing the spirit which needs to be present in disciples. He is

Continued on Page 3





ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 10th

**Feast of St. Lawrence,
Martyr**

Feast Day of
Abbot Lawrence Stasyszen

August 11th

Feast of St. Clare

Feast day of
Sr. Mary Clare Buthod

August 19th

**Feast of St. Bernard
Tolomei, Abbot**



*Please keep all of the
Sisters in your prayers
as they do for you.*



OBLATE MEETING

August 14, 2011

- **10:30 A.M. Mass in the Oratory—everyone is welcome**
- **12:15 p.m. Study Group will meet in the Monastery Library.**
- **12:15 p.m. Novice Study Group will meet in the Conference Room**
- **1:15 p.m. Vespers in the Marian Chapel**

Ordinary Things

Lord, Your glory's in the sunrise,
Your gentle touch is in the rain.
In the white hush of a snowfall
Is Your peace I can't explain.
Lord, Your beauty's in the rainbow
And the butterfly's bright wings.
Lord, I feel Your love surround me
In the Ordinary Things.

Ordinary Things
Can be special things.
When Your Spirit brings me
Close to You, I see
All Your tender care
Reflected there
In what seem to be
Just Ordinary Things.

When I hear a baby's laughter,
Or see the smile in Grandpa's eyes –
When a friend just says he under-
stands,
Lord, it's then I realize
that You've filled my life with loving
and the joy Your presence brings.
You let me catch a glimpse of heaven

In the Ordinary Things.

Simple things I take for granted
Can be seeds of grace You've
planted,
When I take the time to notice. –
Thank you, Lord, for all the Ordinary
Things.

*by Leda Diedrich,
Oblate of St. Joseph Monastery*



**"Is there anyone here
who yearns for life
and desires to see
good days?"**

-Prologue,
Rule of St. Benedict



Prayer Intentions:

We pray for the repose of the soul of:

Jadon Conger,
great nephew of Sr. Veronica Sokolosky

We pray for abundant healing of:

Fred Segura,
husband of Marta Segura, Oblate

Don and Sally Laden, Oblates

Paul Buthod,
father of Sr. Mary Clare Buthod

David Reagan,
brother of Sr. Scholastica Reagan

Si Dorado,
brother of Sr. Jacinta Dorado



Prayer of Saint Benedict

We pray, Lord, that everything we do may be prompted by your inspiration, so that every prayer and work of ours may begin from you and be brought by you to completion.

Prayer based on the Prologue of Saint Benedict's Rule

Continued from Page 1

promoting us taking the psalms so seriously that in a sense we become a living "scripture" through the continued recitation, prayer and encounter with the sacred texts.

There is a saying that states that I might be the only version of the scripture that others encounter today. What is the message that I am giving others? How am I reflecting God's word to others today?

Harmony of Mind and Voice

And let us stand to sing in such a way that our mind is in harmony with our voice. (Benedict's Rule: A Translation, Terrance Kardong, OSB, 19.7)

I enjoy music and I like to sing--not always on key but usually pretty loud. It is much harder for me and others around me to produce a pleasant sound when I happen to be distracted. This distraction could be the pain in my left toe, the conversation I have running around my head in stereo, the "to do" list that I am mentally rewriting, or re-enactment of a difficult interaction earlier. Any of these could easily derail me if I am not watching--and most do on some days.

Chapter 19 of the Rule ('The Proper Manner of Singing the Psalms') invites me to leave my distractions at the door of the oratory--to be totally present to this moment of prayer. I am called to place my concerns and worries in God's hands for at least these few minutes so that I can fully participate in the task at hand. I am encouraged to bring my whole self to prayer each day so that I may truly enter into the mystery of God's life with my mind and voice in harmony.

Humility in Prayer

When we wish to propose something to powerful people, we do not presume to do so without humility and reverence. How much more should we petition the Lord God of the universe with great humility and total devotion. (Benedict's Rule: a Translation, Terrance Kardong, OSB, 20.1-2)

When talking about addressing the powerful (the rich, a ruler, a king) and prayer, Benedict considers humility and reverence/total devotion to be essential elements. I am reminded of the story from the Gospels of the publican (the righteous one) and the tax collector (the sinner).

In this periscope, the one who felt virtuous thanked God in prayer for making him so superior to others--he focused on all of the good that existed in him. The other person, meanwhile, stayed towards the back asking God's mercy on his sinful situation. The second person through his humility received what he asked. By acknowledging the need for God's grace within his life, he received that mercy he desired.

When I pray, I need to remember that I do not have an automatic ticket to heaven because I am a member of a religious community. It is the daily choices that I make--my living in the present moment and my conscious life choices that prepare me for heaven and for eternal life.





BENEDICTINE OBLATES OF
SAINT JOSEPH MONASTERY

CONGREGATION OF BENEDICTINE SISTERS
OF THE SACRED HEARTS INC.
2200 SOUTH LEWIS AVENUE
TULSA, OK 74114-3117

Monastery Summer Schedule

2011

*Oblates & Friends of the Benedictine Sisters are invited to join them in
praying the Liturgy of the Hours at St. Joseph Monastery*

Morning Prayer: Monday—Friday—7:45AM / **Eucharist** at 8:15AM
Saturday—11:00AM / **Eucharist** at 11:30AM
Sunday—8:15AM / **Eucharist** at 10:30AM

Midday Prayer: Monday thru Friday—11:45AM, followed by lunch

Vespers: Monday—Saturday—5:00PM
Sunday—4:00PM (1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th Sunday of the month)
Oblate Sunday—2nd Sunday—1:15PM followed by an Oblate Meeting—all are welcome

*****be sure to call to verify schedule for the day you plan to come,
because at times it does change.*****



Watch the website grow: www.stjosephmonastery.org