

Benedictine Oblate



Richard Drake was among the Louisville oblates who joined the Saint Meinrad Day of Service on March 11. He folded donated clothing that will be made available for resettled refugees.

Serving with love

An oblate's vocation is rooted in Christian service

Although the *Rule of St. Benedict* does not specifically say that the most important role of oblates is service in love, that idea permeates every word of Benedict's writings. In Chapter 53, Benedict instructs: "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, who said: I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Matt. 25:35)."

Scripture underscores that instruction, as Peter declares that we must "maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins." Moreover, Peter says, we must "be hospitable to one another without complaining" and "like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve

one another with whatever gift each of [us] received ... Whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4:8-11a).

In this issue of the newsletter, we are featuring, through words and photographs, oblates of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in many different experiences of service.



A POINT TO PONDER FROM *The Rule*

“The brothers should serve one another. Consequently, no one will be excused from kitchen service unless he is sick or engaged in some important business of the monastery, for such service increases reward and fosters love.”

Rule of St. Benedict, 35:1-2

Humble service lies at the heart of the *Rule*. St Benedict echoes our Lord Jesus Christ, who tells us that no servant is greater than his master (John 13:16; 15:20). We are each called to take up the servant’s towel in humble, loving service, as Christ modeled for us. Perhaps “outdoing” one another in service becomes a noble goal.

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From Bloomington to Bangkok: A reflection on the least of the little ones

“*Sawatdee, kaaa!*” (Hello and welcome!) were the first words we heard from Prawina Sompong, whose beaming smile and humble *wai* (a bow with hands folded) put us in the presence of a most gracious host at the Human Development Foundation-Mercy Centre (www.mercycentre.org) in Bangkok, Thailand. This is where we served as volunteers, from early January to mid-March 2017, mostly teaching and contributing in any capacity we could.

Last year, on advice from a friend, we read about the work of Fr. Joe Maier, CSsR, a Redemptorist priest and founding co-director, who established this community of care 45 years ago among the poorest of the poor in the squatter slums of Bangkok, known as Klong Toey.

In those years, the center has grown to embrace a mission of educating children, reaching out to victims of AIDS, and rescuing abandoned children from the scourge of drug and sex abuse that plagues the back streets of the city.

“No matter what happens at home, you go to school!” (*Dhong bai rong rien hai dai!*) is the Mercy mantra Fr. Joe rehearses frequently with the young attending one of 26 schools he sponsors in the region, aided by many volunteer teachers. Inspired by what we heard, we applied and joined the effort.

We learned much about service from the Thai people we met there, including the power of community in their lives. Although possessing very little, their care for one another, grounded in humility, resilience, dignity and joy in the face of it all, overcame many obstacles. We witnessed this firsthand in our second week when a flash fire reduced some 30 homes to rubble and ashes, as happens tragically several times a year in the slums.

While the government was intent on moving the families affected to a distant site, it was the organization of relatives, neighbors and friends that began immediately the local rebuild of what had long been a thriving community. And so they did.



Carney Strange (back row) and his wife Dorothyann (wearing blue in back row) spent more than two months doing service work in Bangkok.

We found the *dharma* (divine law) of St. Benedict alive and well in this Klong Toey Buddhist community – stability, hospitality, and work and prayer ever present.

If you wish to learn more about this work, we recommend this book: Barrett, Greg (2008). *The Gospel of Father Joe*:

Revolutions and Revelations in the Slums of Bangkok. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Publishers.

*Carney and Dorothyann Strange, oblates
Bloomington, IN*



A teacher in Bangkok demonstrates a dance to her students with oblate Carney Strange.



Oblate Carney Strange tells a story with his guitar to a group of young Thai students.

OBLATES

In their own words

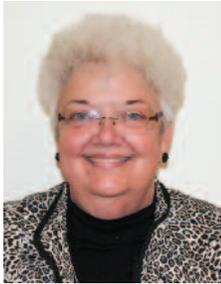


*Oblate Barbara Phillips
Indianapolis, IN*

“Being an oblate means to me that I have an organized, constructive prayer life that I practice on a daily basis. It means continuing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Being a part of the oblate community has given me an opportunity to know that I am praying along with oblates everywhere in the United States and around the world.”



Dayton oblates join the Day of Service



Pat O'Malley

On March 11, 2017, five Dayton oblates and a prospective oblate joined with alumni and friends of Saint Meinrad from the

Dayton/Cincinnati area at the St. Vincent de Paul Gateway Shelter for Women and Children in Dayton for the annual Saint Meinrad Day of Service.

This was the first year the Dayton/Cincinnati area participated in the Day of Service, and we look forward to it being an annual event in our area. Taking part were oblates Marianna Neal, Pat O'Malley, Suzy

Kalmar, Ron Dallman and Candee Mackell, along with Laura Bridge.

We began the day by praying together the prayer provided by Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB. We then worked side by side with other volunteers and staff members, sorting donated clothes and laundering bed linens and blankets. We were surprised by the magnitude of this daily task. The openness and friendliness with which we were received into their current home impressed us and served as a beautiful example of how to welcome guests, no matter the circumstances.

We received a tour of the facility and information about the mission and services provided. The staff member who accompanied us shared her story. She and her son lived there several

years ago. Today, she and her husband both work at the shelter. He received his college degree, and together they are buying their first home.

This life story, together with learning just how many clients are served by the shelter, served to emphasize the needs in our community and opportunities to serve our neighbors.

The *Rule of St. Benedict* (Prol. 21) states, "Let us set out on his path with the Gospel as our guide." Jesus has made known to us that we are to love and serve each other. When we strive to live our lives with the Gospel as our guide, that is what we are called to do.

Pat O'Malley, oblate
Dayton, OH

Louisville area oblates help Catholic Charities



Sandra Duffee

Our program was simple: Prayer, service and fellowship.

On Saturday, March 11, 2017, oblates and their family members from Louisville

and surrounding areas participated in the Saint Meinrad Day of Service. Twelve adults and two teens took advantage of this first-time service opportunity at St. Anthony Church in downtown Louisville, KY.

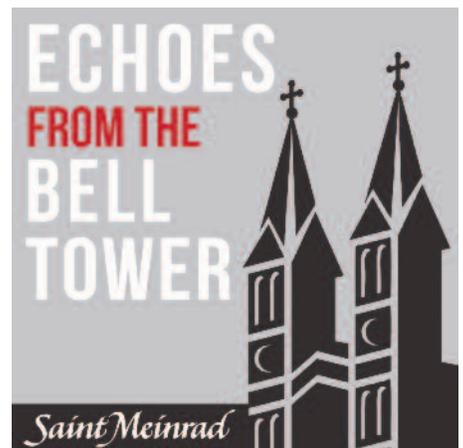
Our day began in the sanctuary with prayer led by Deacon Rich and Cherie Zoldak. Next, Catholic Charities gave a brief presentation about their mission to resettle refugees in the Louisville area. Because St. Anthony is no longer a working parish, the nave

of the church has been repurposed as a collection and distribution center for household goods and clothing.

Here is a sampling of our service day. In the donation room, the Zorn family (David, Anne and Izzie) helped restock toiletries. While Richard Drake folded clothing, Mary Drake assisted with data input in the office. Mike Ziemianski multitasked between moving storage bins and keeping track of volunteer t-shirts and sign-in sheets.

Our day wrapped up with a picnic-style lunch and fellowship. Our first year as part of the Saint Meinrad Day of Service will hopefully kick off an annual tradition.

Sandra Duffee, oblate
Jeffersonville, IN



Oblates join Saint Meinrad Day of Service



Saint Meinrad
DAY OF SERVICE

has been set for
March 10, 2018.
Watch for more details!



Photos, clockwise, from top left photo:

Members of the Louisville Oblate Chapter participated in the Saint Meinrad Day of Service by assisting at Catholic Charities in the former St. Anthony Church. A story appears on Page 4.

The oblates from the Dayton Oblate Chapter volunteered at the St. Vincent de Paul shelter for women and children on March 11. See story on Page 4.

The Zorn family – David, Anne and daughter Izzie – joined the Saint Meinrad Day of Service project with Catholic Charities on March 11.

Deacon Rich and Cheryl Zoldak, of the Louisville Oblate Chapter, helped to restock toiletries at a collection/distribution center.

The Busy Benedictine: When God says, ‘Hey! Stop praying!’



Edward Castronova

When I first contemplated becoming a Benedictine Oblate, I wondered how someone with a job and little kids was supposed to pray

in silence five times a day. In our house, silence comes only when everyone is too exhausted to speak.

My spiritual mentor said that if you try to pray and a child comes along with a bloody nose, it is a sign from God that your prayer, right then, is supposed to take the form of wiping away blood and tears. Taking care of your kids is prayer, and God will send you a messenger to remind you.

About a month ago, our house was in its usual state at about 7 p.m., with stress levels rising as the conflicts over homework, bedtime and getting off the computer were coming to a head. My wife Nina typically handles these situations, because she has more patience with misbehaving boys. Yet I learned that day that her patience has its limits.

You see when 7 p.m. arrived, it occurred to me that it was time for Vespers. I hadn't said my Evening Prayer yet and so, in keeping with my pious commitment of fidelity to the monastic life, I retired to the master bedroom to take refuge in the peace and quiet conducive to a time of meditation and reflection.

Now, affairs elsewhere in the household were becoming somewhat noisy. Something about “Why does he

get to stay up and I have to go to bed?” “I’ve told you a million times to brush between the braces, too.” “I can’t get off the game; I need to finish this match.” “I said, ‘Take a shower.’”

The volume had risen to the point that it was disturbing my peace of mind – so necessary for prayer – therefore, I put a pair of plugs in my ears. Ahhhh! Silence. A deep breath, and then I began, “O God, come to my assistance”

About two minutes later, in the second Psalm, God sent me a messenger. It was my wife. Nina had come into the bedroom and was looking at me with a face, well, I can't quite describe it. But if you're a husband, you know it. I couldn't make out what she was saying, because I had the earplugs in.

When I took them out, I learned quite quickly that praying Vespers at that particular moment was an imprudent decision. Needless to say, I set my Saint Meinrad prayer book to the side (actually it flew off my lap as I bolted to attention) and went out to help with the boys.

When I try to reconcile oblate commitments with life in the world, I try to think of how a Benedictine monk would handle things if he were assigned to a hospital. I think he would do his best to pray along with his confreres, but he would give top priority to the needs around him.

*Edward (Ted) Castronova, oblate
Bloomington, IN*



Benedictine Oblates Ted and Nina Castronova and their sons, Malcolm and Luca.

Oblate life complements deacon service



Deacon John Huether

I made my oblate final profession on June 18, 2008. A year later, I enrolled in the permanent deacon formation program for the Diocese of Evansville, IN. I was ordained by

Bishop Charles Thompson on August 2, 2013. I am assigned to two parishes, where I assist at weekend Masses and preach one weekend a month. I have baptized, witnessed weddings and led prayer services.

The most important aspect of being an oblate that supports my ministry as a permanent deacon is prayer. The daily rhythm of Morning and Evening Prayer instills in me a strong commitment to making prayer an integral part of my life. The habit of daily prayer throughout the changing liturgical seasons of the Church year keeps me on

track, helps me to be open to the Holy Spirit and God's will, and enables me to face the daily challenges of life with greater confidence and trust.

As a deacon, I also share a ministry with my wife by bringing Communion to the residents of a nursing home every Sunday. This includes making room-to-room Communion visits and gathering a larger group to recite the rosary and conduct a Communion service.

Being an oblate of Saint Meinrad has brought me to a closer understanding of how I can apply the *Rule of St. Benedict* in a practical way to my personal life. When offering spiritual assistance to these elderly seniors, the *Rule* helps guide me. Certainly, being an oblate and applying the *Rule* to my personal life supports and enhances my call to be a deacon.

*Deacon John Huether, oblate
Jasper, IN*

'Why I am a Benedictine Oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey'

One of the treasures of my life in the Church is being a Eucharistic Minister in my parish. In this role, I am able to love and serve the Lord and his people.

I cherish being able to assist my pastor in the distribution of the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus at Mass and to bring Jesus to those unable to be with the community. As the years have passed, my love for the Eucharist has deepened.

I've experienced joy, awe, consolation, real presence, strength for the journey, and an infinite ocean of grace and mercy.

Every Eucharist is a gift with endless gratitude to a loving God.

*Pat O'Malley, oblate
Dayton, OH*

Smugmug

*For more photos of
Saint Meinrad events, visit:*

<http://saintmeinrad.smugmug.com>

Enhancing the Oblate Library

Early this year, my friend Mary Campanelli, an oblate novice, and I were asked to work on the Oblate Library at Saint Meinrad. St. Benedict says if his monks have a craft, they are to work at them.

Mary and I are retired librarians, with a combined almost half a century of public library service. We are both excited to "work at our craft" as a way of giving back to the oblate community.

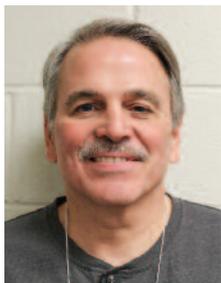
We have begun the process of updating the library by weeding the collection. Most of the books we weeded will be sent to Africa, where, we are assured, they will be much appreciated. Some we hope to replace, and some we have set aside for a future book sale open to oblates. Weeding gave us shelf space to display books we hope will be checked out.

We plan to have an open house for the library at the December oblate retreat. Before then, we have a long list of things to do: more weeding (an ongoing process, like washing dishes), create finding tools, set up additional display area and generally spruce things up.

So if you're at the monastery, take a peek at what we've done so far – remembering this is only the beginning. And while you're peeking, check out a book. We have lots of good ones.

*Ann Smith, oblate
Gabanna, OH*

Retreat sheds light on Passion narrative



Ed Karas

The Oblate Lenten retreat at Saint Meinrad Archabbey was a faith-filled experience with 90 oblates in attendance, representing 12 oblate chapters

from six states. The serene and peaceful setting, participation in conferences, prayers with the monks throughout the day, and the good food and hospitality of the staff lent itself to an opportunity for rest, renewal and reflection on our Lenten journey leading up to Easter.

The retreat on March 20-22 was enriched by the sacraments of Eucharist, reconciliation, and anointing of the sick. Sally Beale and Michael Gavin made their oblations during the retreat.

On Tuesday, we celebrated Mass on St. Benedict's feast day in the Archabbey Church. The homilist, Br. Linus Klucsarits, OSB, of St. Bernard Abbey in Cullman, AL, reminded us that change in our lives and the way we adapt to these changes should be viewed as a natural and necessary part of transformation in our faith journey. He pointed out that the Wright brothers did not invent aviation, but rather they learned how to fly by trial and error and making the necessary changes and adaptations to facilitate flight.

This theme of change was further articulated by our incoming oblate director, Janis Dopp, who, with our program chaplain, Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, addressed the oblates at the investiture and oblation ceremony.

They encouraged us, as a community, to adapt to this change by maintaining fidelity to the *Rule* and continuing to grow and develop the community given to us by our beloved Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB.

Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, was the retreat director, providing five informative conferences shedding light on the Passion of Christ from Matthew's point of view. Fr. Eugene explained the scenes of that time by describing the customs, the different gospel writers' perspectives, the fulfillment of prophecy and what the different characters in the Gospel were thinking.

As he spoke, we were transported to that time, giving us an opportunity for introspection and to ask ourselves what we would have done if we were in the shoes of the different characters in the scenes. Oblate Fr. Larry Jackson remarked, "As a retired Episcopal clergyman, the Passion narratives of St. Matthew were opened to me like I had never seen before."

Throughout the narrative, Fr. Eugene explained how Matthew was more interested in providing a story of faith, revealing who Jesus was and what He did, than a factual history, arguing that "truth" is much broader than "facts."

According to Fr. Eugene, the pivotal event leading up to the Passion was the cleansing of the temple, a symbolic action by Jesus to make clear that the days of the temple were coming to an end. To the Jewish authorities, this was blasphemy. And to the Roman officials, this action and subsequent repercussions were a threat to the public order. From this point forward, Jesus was targeted as a dangerous man.

Another more subtle, but equally important, event was Jesus' visit to Simon the Leper's house. While Jesus was at Simon's house, a nameless woman appeared with an alabaster jar of nard, and she promptly started pouring the ointment on Jesus' head. While this nameless woman was praised by Jesus, his apostles reacted with anger.

One of these apostles, Judas the Iscariot, an ideologue, concluded that Jesus was not the Messiah that the Jewish people were awaiting and he ultimately betrayed Jesus.

Jesus shared one last Passover meal with his disciples, commemorating the exodus and liberation of the chosen people and allowing participants to enter into the past. With this Passover meal, Jesus was leaving, yet giving his followers a way to be with Him always through the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Throughout his Passion, Jesus was faithful and obedient to God the Father. This faithfulness is a major theme in Matthew's gospel, and yet, even with these earth-shaking events and the resurrection of Jesus, the apostles still had doubts, just as we often do today.

Fortunately, Fr. Eugene assured us that our faith will always have an element of doubt, but the nature of faith is not to provide certitude. We need to be able to accept our doubt if we are going to be followers of Christ.

*Ed Karas, oblate
Bloomington, IN*

Oblates celebrate 50th Anniversary

Congratulations to oblate John and Judy Lehner of South Bend, IN. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 1, 2017.

Chapter Notes

Bloomington Chapter

Fr. Meinrad presented a final conference to the Bloomington Chapter on April 6, 2017. He stressed that each of us is called to be holy. Holiness consists of being faithful to the ordinary, everyday tasks and aspects of our vocation. That vocation includes our state in life as married or single, our household responsibilities, and our responsibilities to family, colleagues and Christ.

The chapter continues to expand its ministry to the homebound chapter members, with more requests for visits coming in.

In February, the chapter began reciting Vespers every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. in St. Charles Church, encouraging regular shared prayer as a community. So far, it has been a small but faithful group, with some parishioners joining in the prayer.

Our planned gatherings include:

July 11: A carpool trip to Saint Meinrad for the feast day of St. Benedict

Date in July TBD: A July social at co-coordinator Diane Rivera's home.

August 24: Annual chapter evaluation meeting, including a mini-refresher course on chanting Vespers in the manner of Saint Meinrad Archabbey

September 7: Regular chapter meeting

October 5: "Invite a Friend" chapter meeting

November 2: Chapter meeting, with remembrance of deceased chapter oblates and monks who died during the current year

Ongoing activities: Quarterly group meetings of novice mentor Susan

McNamara with novices, plus individual meetings if requested.

Cincinnati Chapter

The Cincinnati Chapter hosted the Ohio Day of Recollection at the Milford Spiritual Center on Saturday, May 20. The presenter was Br. Francis de Sales Wagner, OSB, speaking on "The Heart of Benedictine Spirituality."

Louisville Chapter

The Louisville Chapter will hold meetings at the following locations:

September 17: Little Sisters of the Poor

October 15: Little Sisters of the Poor

November 19: Potluck at the Zoldaks

January 21: Usually the Epiphany gathering, possibly at an oblate's house

February 18: Little Sisters of the Poor

April 14: Day of Recollection on "Reading the Bible" at Little Sisters of the Poor

May 20: Little Sisters of the Poor

Oblate Advisory Council hears about leadership transition



William H. Wilson

Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, joined the meeting and greeted the members; the abbot offered some remarks and entered into some discussion with the councils before leaving to participate in the deacon ordinations in the Archabbey Church.

The Oblate Advisory Council held its 37th meeting on April 20. The meeting began as a combined meeting with the Oblate Finance Council.

Discussions during the meeting were significant because of the transition of the oblate director. It was the last council meeting under the leadership of Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, who has served as oblate director for 22 years. Since January 2017 and the appointment of Janis Dopp as the oblate director, the past months have been a transition of responsibilities.

Janis assumes full responsibility as oblate director in June 2017. Fr. Meinrad and Janis have been visiting all of the chapters together since January. Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, was welcomed to the council as a new member upon his appointment by the archabbot as oblate chaplain. Becky Boyle of Bloomington, IN, also was welcomed as a new member of the council.

Bill Wilson was named the new chairperson of the council by the oblate director and archabbot. He succeeds Janis Dopp, who had been chairperson since the council was established in 2004. In Bill's absence at this meeting, Pat Phillips chaired the meeting as Bill participated by phone.

Financial reports were presented by Mike Reffett; appreciation was shared for the support of the oblates and the good work done by Mike and the members of the Finance Council. Major work and discussion during the meeting focused on plans for the 2017 Meeting of Chapter Coordinators (MCC 2017) to be held June 23-25.

The theme of the meeting is "On the Good Zeal of the Chapter: Building Benedictine Community." Jennie Latta, who chairs the planning team, and other team members outlined the schedule. The council asked questions and discussed the logistics for the meeting.

Fr. Meinrad expressed his gratitude for the wonderful transition; Janis Dopp shared some of her vision for the Saint Meinrad Archabbey oblate community; and Fr. Joseph, who has been associate director for 15 years, expressed his appreciation for the sharing of talent among the oblates and said he looks forward to working with the council and the oblate community as chaplain.

Other areas of discussion and planning at the meeting included future investitures and oblations to be done by the archabbot; leadership development throughout the oblate community; a process for forming new chapters; establishment of an editorial staff for the newsletter; editorial updates of our oblate handbooks and manuals; establishment of a mission statement for the Oblate Library; and oblate community representation at the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors and the World Congress of Benedictine Oblates.

*William (Bill) H. Wilson, oblate
Huntington, WV*

Finance Committee reviews year-end results



Mike Reffett

The Oblate Finance Committee met on April 21 to review financial results for the six months ending December 31, 2016. Revenue continued at the same level as prior year giving.

Expenses were at customary levels, except for minor expenses associated

with a regional oblate meeting held at Saint Meinrad. This meeting involved oblate communities from the Midwest.

Expenses will increase beginning with January due to the naming of Janis Dopp as oblate director. Ongoing revenue should cover any additional expenses for this new position.

Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, and Janis expressed their gratitude for the financial support of the oblates.

*Mike Reffett, oblate
Evansville, IN*

INVESTITURES

February 18, 2017 – **Martha Seibert** of Chesterfield, MO

March 29, 2017 – **Thomas J. Mehigan** of McLean, VA

April 6, 2017 – **Edward Eckerly** of Columbus, IN

April 7, 2017 – **Constance Anders** of Pendleton, IN

April 8, 2017 – **Orval P. Schierholz** of Fishers, IN

April 12, 2017 – **Michael Speck** of Winona, WI

April 16, 2017 – **Chaplain Robert S. Mortenson Jr.** of Fort Wayne, IN

April 27, 2017 – **Derek Abrajano** of Reynoldsburg, OH; **Marian Prentice** of Pataskala, OH; **Abraham Reshad** and **Lisa Reshad**, both of Lancaster, OH

April 29, 2017 – **Margaret Mary Murphy-Koss** of Memphis, TN

May 5, 2017 – **Joseph T. Farrell** of Brandenburg, KY

May 10, 2017 – **Deacon Stephen B. O'Connell** of Salem, VA

May 13, 2017 – **Jody Burks** of Thorntown, IN; **Anne F. Hall** of New Palestine, IN

May 20, 2017 – **Terry Starr** of Memphis, TN ♦

OBLATIONS

February 25, 2017 – **Ray Anthony Gambrel** of Centerville, OH

March 3, 2017 – **Nora Rose Frey** and **Lorraine Bernadette Ruiz**, both of New Providence, PA

March 21, 2017 – **Sally Ann Maurus Beale** of Muncie, IN; **Michael Boniface Gavin** of Warsaw, IN

March 24, 2017 – **Christine Teresa Hoffer** and **Paul Pio Hoffer**, both of New Franklin, OH

March 29, 2017 – **Christopher Joseph Wolanski** of Pocatello, ID

April 6, 2017 – **Susan Mary Gertrude Campbell**, **Nina Maria Dymphna Castronova**, **Susan Francis Doorlay**, and **Mary Josephine Meinrad Sorrells**, all of Bloomington, IN; **Catherine Monica Funkhouser** of Richmond, IN; **Deacon Michael Stephen Checkley** of Bimini, Bahamas

May 8, 2017 – **Robert Rupert Bindley** of Newburgh, IN

May 9, 2017 – **Michael Gregory Nolen** of Springfield, VA

May 13, 2017 – **Bradley Polycarp McDivitt** of Indianapolis, IN; **Cheryl Annette Teresa Mullins** of Noblesville, IN

May 20, 2017 – **Evelyn Frances of Rome Googe** of Farmingdale, NY ♦

DEATHS

February 13, 2017 – **Jay Rush** of Shelbyville, IN

February 14, 2017 – **Racine O'Connell** of Jasper, IN

March 1, 2017 – James E. Robertson of Ramsey, IN

March 7, 2017 – Elsie Jacobi of New Albany, IN

March 8, 2017 – Floyd Wiley of New Castle, IN

March 18, 2017 – Helen Haggard of Corydon, IN

March 29, 2017 – Ann Geraty of St. Louis, MO

April 7, 2017 – Larney Greenwood of Tell City, IN

April 29, 2017 – Mary Agnes Gehlhausen of Jasper, IN (oblate for 72 years)

May 10, 2017 – Fr. Bernard Head of West Terre Haute, IN (oblate since 1945)

May 17, 2017 – Rosemary Conrad of Cincinnati, OH (co-coordinator of Cincinnati Oblate Chapter)

May 31, 2017 - Donald J. Becher of Mt. Vernon, IN ♦

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 1-3, 2017 – New York Labor Day weekend retreat with Fr. Raymond Studzinski, OSB

September 9, 2017 – Lancaster, PA, Day of Recollection with Fr. Luke Waugh, OSB ♦

VOLUNTEERS APPRECIATED

Recent volunteers in the Oblate Office included Barbara Kammerlohr, Dennis Skelton, Peter Manninen, Mike Reffett, Mike Edwards, Sandra Duffee, Novice Joseph Wagner, OSB, Ed Wells, Elizabeth Wourms, Ann Smith, Mary Campanelli, Pat Reckelhoff, Maureen Reichardt, Marie Kobos, Candidate Fr. Noel Zamora, Cathy Russell, Cathey Byers, Julie Wilberding and Ed Karas. ♦



Saint Meinrad Archabbey hosted a retreat at the Guest House April 17-19 for eight retreatants from the Illinois Great Rivers Chapter of the Order of St. Luke in the United Methodist Church. The retreat was led by Br. John Mark Falkenhain, OSB. Oblate Mick Laflin (far right) of Oblong, IL, serves as the sub-prior (vice-president) of the Illinois chapter.



Oblate Director Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, at the head of the table, gives a conference at the Memphis Oblate Chapter meeting this spring, April 29, 2017.



Dan Richards reads a Scripture passage during the March Oblate Retreat at Saint Meinrad, where Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, talked about St. Matthew's Gospel on the Passion.

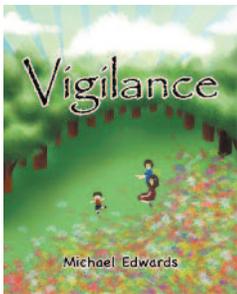


200 Hill Drive
St. Meinrad, IN 47577

Return service requested

Reading Room

Vigilance. Michael Edwards. Christian Faith Publishing, 2016.



Vigilance is a beautiful collection of poetry and scripture. It parallels many of the challenges we face in our daily life with the teachings of Christ found in scripture. It is the creation of Michael Edwards, who found the inspiration he needed to write this book through the practice of *lectio divina*, a deeper understanding of scripture through

four intentional steps: reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation.

Edwards had written some poetry over the years, but it wasn't until his relocation to southern Indiana and his association with Saint Meinrad Archabbey that he was moved to write more extensively. The Archabbey was extremely supportive of him at the time of his wife Rosemary's death; therefore, he moved to be near the Archabbey.

During the last four years, he began to see a connection between his poetry and some biblical references. Edwards found this spiritually helpful and thought others might as well. In writing this book, Edwards poses an honest question, "Are you as vigilant about the condition of your soul as you are about the condition of your body, your house, your bank account or a myriad of other earthly concerns?"

Vigilance contains many inspiring poems, provoking thoughtful contemplation by the reader. The sacred writings following each poem offer an opportunity to delve deeper into scripture while relating it to tangible occurrences. Each poem has a message and a deeper meaning that is uncovered by praying *lectio divina* with the scripture provided. This unique collection of poetry moves the reader to contemplate beyond a variety of circumstances.

Oblates and others who enjoy poetry may find this illustrated book to be an enjoyable addition to their library.

*Michelle Blalock, oblate
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