

# OBLATE NEWS

Queen of Angels Monastery  
Mt. Angel, OR 97362

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## Message from the Prioress

Dear Oblates, Candidates and Inquirers,

Fall is hurrying along and the trees are having trouble keeping up it seems. The leaves are still green on many as I write this message.

It just emphasizes in my mind the phenomenon of change. Change this year is the operative word as we approach Advent. As many of you know, the New Roman Missal changes in the Catholic Mass will be a challenge to the priests and the congregations. We look forward to these new ways to keep us alert and involved in the liturgies of Advent. Let us be grateful for the blessings and more appreciative of the liturgy as we become aware of the reasons for these changes.

May each of you be blessed and inspired once again by the readings and liturgies as you prepare for the celebration of the Birth of Our Lord.

May all the changes in your life be a blessing.

In St. Benedict and St. Scholastica,

*Sister Donna Marie*



Dear Oblates, Candidates and Inquirers,

Advent is a time of many images. Here in the northern hemisphere, and especially in more northern latitudes, our outdoor physical world changes drastically. We go from bright greenery to yellows, browns, and reds to bareness with only dark evergreens retaining their color, a sign of hope and expectation of things yet to come. Our days are cooler here in the Pacific Northwest and are filled with much grayness and darkness, a sign of quietness, waiting, and patience.

Our modern culture does not care for these images. Instead, it is artificially filled with many lights, noise, and distractions—signs of a world filled with impatience, self-deceptive expectations, and no real hope. Scripture reminds us that God is to be found in the quiet and silence within nothingness. That nothingness may be our Advent. Saint Benedict also reminds us that regular silence needs to be practiced and respected by all of his followers, for within that silence we wait for God.

Let us all take advantage of the season's changes to make this Advent a time of waiting for God's arrival into this world through Jesus Christ, our one and only hope and expectation for a full eternal life.

Blessings,

*Sister Robin Lynn*

Oblate Director





## “Oblate Musings”

Based on a blog by QAM Oblate Kate Kimball

Mourning is a solo ride. There can be no substitute passengers, no seatmates to make the ride easier. Around and around on the Ferris wheel of grief one goes. Sometimes there is a pause at the top and a view. More often, the wheel stops and we sit at the bottom with no view, no perspective, just swaying back and forth in a strange and dismal world.



Fortunately, for us, Jesus left rich wisdom for mourners. He raised his friend Lazarus from the dead and “set him free,” teaching us that freedom follows death. As a speaker said at friend’s memorial service, we need to be like the Emmaus travelers who suddenly recognized Jesus in his new form, and allow our loved ones to be “present to us in a different way.” Death can be the opening that frees the spirits of the living and the dead, if only we have eyes to see.



## TOWARD GOD VIA SPIRITUAL DIRECTION Or FINALLY I ASKED FOR DIRECTIONS

Submitted by QAM Oblate James Tyler

I had no idea where I was really heading when I retired from the POTS (plain old telephone service) company and telephone industry after a 38-year career. By then, it had turned into a PANS company (pretty amazing new stuff) and I was fed up, burned out, and overwhelmed. I was depressed but did not realize it.

Over the preceding ten years, I had gone to a spiritual director sporadically hoping to gain insight into where God was in my life. Turns out I was looking for certitude, that what I wanted was also what God wanted. Validate my desires God. That is what I was seeking at that time. God was always there, I just was not surrendering to God. I was looking for everything I wanted to be God-approved. “It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God”.<sup>1</sup> I had to surrender many years of accumulated baggage and the process is ongoing. Sometimes I felt angry, sometimes sad that I had waited so long. Now I am happy to be moving in the God direction. The spiritual direction training class at Shalom Retreat Center in Mt. Angel, Oregon was the perfect place for me to explore spiritual direction and my own true self.

The first day I woke up retired, I felt strange. I didn’t “have” to be anywhere or do anything, or so I thought. That was the start of letting go of doing and learning to be still, so I could just **be**. The popular term “I didn’t have a clue” was very applicable. I began to own my depression and learn to live without the comfort of my telephone man persona. Fortunately, I have a very supportive wife, Mary Jo, who, though understanding, does not put up with any moaning and groaning.

I had been retired for about six months when I started the fall 2009 spiritual direction class. By that time, the desire to restore a 1973 Jeep that had been sitting in my garage waiting for me to retire felt like an anchor around my neck. I had little interest in anything except reading science fiction

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<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 10:31 NLT 2007

and action novels, watching the stock market meltdown, and worrying. A 38-year pattern of ‘workaholic’ behavior was coming to the surface. The “work had to be done before you could have fun” pattern of my life had not prepared me to even know how to have fun.

One day I decided I would go to Shalom and talk to Sister Joan Pokorny about spiritual direction training. A couple of times before I retired, I had considered attending the spiritual direction program. I thought it might give me a better idea of what it was Mary Jo found such great joy in doing. Maybe I was jealous or envious. Mary Jo had told me that since people found it so easy to sit and talk with me maybe I had some kind of calling in that direction. I was a bit skeptical but I went anyway. After talking to Sister Joan, doing some praying, more talking with Mary Jo, and a stab at discerning, I could not find a good reason not to give it a shot. At the end of the first year, I was skeptical about returning for the second year. After more prayer, more talking, and a gentle nudge from Mary Jo, I returned for the second year and am glad I did.

My first year in spiritual direction led me on a very difficult journey into my interior self. What I acknowledged and expressed in writing my spiritual time line was very healing for me. The Sequoia Room upstairs in the retreat center became my sanctuary for three hours each Tuesday when class was in session. The people I met there are very dear to me and I am still in contact with some of them through a spiritual direction peer group. The prayer time with classmates and the sharing after presentations were times of growth and joy for me. I am less rigid and more open to others’ opinions and perspectives. Part of the training was to engage in individual spiritual direction myself. I entered into it this time with an open mind and open heart. I discovered how it feels to sit in a sacred space, two people and the Presence (God, Holy Spirit, Higher Power, Yahweh, and many other names). The names are many, the Presence just is.

I finished spiritual direction training in April 2011. I received two wonderful gifts from God, time and the right place. Retired, I was free to attend the training at the right place for me, Shalom Retreat Center. The whole experience was in a sense an extended two-year retreat with time away for holidays and summer. Now I am back living in

the real world waiting for God to help me use the gift of spiritual direction for others.



## *The Gift of Time* James Tyler



*God has given me through his blessings this great gift of time.*

*I do not know how to accept it.*

*Until I retired, work was what structured my day.*

*Now I have to structure my day.*

*What is it that makes me come alive?*

*How do I access what lies within, covered with shoudas, couldas, and other life-killing messages?*

*My desire is to root it out, but my fear of what I will have to sift through holds me at the edge—looking in.*

*What is stopping me? “What ifs?”  
God has given me this wonderful gift of time.  
I desire to accept it and find what lies within.*

*It is time for me to accept and embrace God’s gift of time, to live and share, this gift of time.*



## SOME THOUGHTS ON OLD AGE

Submitted by QAM Oblate Florence Bobleter

Old age has a way of sneaking up on a person. When I celebrated my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, I thought, "Well, I guess old age isn't all that bad. I can still do most of the things I always did. Maybe I don't walk as fast, and my energy level might not be as high as it once was, but still, I don't feel all that different."

However, by the time I reached my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday (you will note that I do not use the word "celebrate"), I was beginning to wonder if perhaps I had reached the "best if used by..." date. My legs sometimes did not feel like my own. I thought twice about driving at night. Grocery shopping and doing laundry took more energy than in earlier days.

Old age does have some compensations. I feel no guilt about not serving on committees. If I decline an evening invitation, I am not pressed to reconsider. I find that old friends have become even more precious. Too many from earlier days are no longer alive. My religious faith seems to become even more important and comforting with the advancing years.

In the meantime, I try to focus on making full use of what still works well, of not lamenting what I can no longer do. I can still attend the twice-monthly meetings of the Spanish Club at the senior center and have a presentación prepared. I remain an active member of Y.L.I., the Catholic Women's organization. I can still attend the weekly women's Bible study at my parish church, and complete the lesson assignments.

It is true that I do not feel up to overseas travel these days, nor would I now drive down to Southern California by myself as I did in the past. However, I have no problem driving to Mt. Angel for Oblate meetings.

I often think of the words of the popular song of the 1940s—"Accentuate the positive; eliminate the negative." I think I can do that by doing as much as I can while I can for as long as I can.



**Editor's Note:** Florence became a Queen of Angels Oblate in 2000, and for many years, she served as Secretary of the QAM Oblate Council.

Florence spent four years at our monastery as a live-in volunteer (1994-1998). From 1989 to 1994, she was part of the Lay Mission Helpers of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, serving in Papua, New Guinea.



### Silence Again, Naturally

Submitted by QAM Oblate Kate Kimball

Quiet days are the harbor I steered my life into by choice. I am happy that I am nestled here, and thrive on the different ebb and flow to my days. The phone no longer rings with urgent demands for either of us, and that is in itself a kindness.

It's hard not to be aware that most of the people we know don't live like this. Most of the US does not live like this. The contrast sets my head spinning. Last week a friend commented that I acted as though being quiet in the morning was an unnatural choice of mind. In her experience, talking at 7 a.m. is the unnatural act. She has a point. I tend to think my swimming-upstream ways warrant an apology, acknowledgment that we live as a privileged minority. Literally, my husband and I have, bought our own silence.

My friend was aiming not so much at privilege—for silence cannot be bought or sold—as to the natural flavor of silence. It is the warp and woof of our lives. It is free. Anyone can make the choice to be quiet, no matter how hectic the schedule. I think back to the busiest time of my life. From that period, I have journal entries from times when I was sleeping 4 hours a night and working the remainder. Every morning, I hauled myself out of bed, made a cup of (increasingly strong) tea and sat in silence for some minutes. Then I wrote in my journal. I had a sense that I could not do what I

needed to do at work without this oasis of silence. Living alone made this easier.

Fortunately, silence is not a commodity, although the privileged tend to live in quieter neighborhoods. Silence is something one shapes into one's life, like a potter shapes clay on a wheel. It has to be sought, demanded, and insisted upon. It would be easy, even in this log oasis, to forgo silence and quiet, to skitter through my days with teas in town, going to a gym and volunteering for a worthy nonprofit. I have done all of that in my time, but at the end of those kinds of days I feel an emptiness churning inside. I find myself feeling recharged not by busy-ness but by expected, and unexpected, places of silence. Silence has brought me otherwise unlikely company. My life is richer for it.

Many days would benefit from more time on the meditation cushion, the place where the world stops spinning on the axis of "I" and reverses course to orbit around "you." Meditative silence is where I give back, where I acknowledge my smallness and breathe to heal the world. It's not that my conscious breathing instantly makes life easier for the suffering of others around the world. It is merely what I can do now.

Some days the silence comes on walks in the woods. A grateful meander through the first bloom of flowers this spring works well. Today we took a quiet walk and saw fairy slippers showing off, trillium singing, and heard two male forest grouse huffing and puffing their air sacs to attract a mate. I don't know what that does for the female grouse, but Bob and I were pretty interested. Last year in the same spot, we heard one bird. Now there are two grouse on opposite slopes above a stream invisibly strutting away. It is encouraging to think that the grouse missed the memo telling them their habitat is being destroyed, as well as the climate.

The world is changing. It is more than wishful thinking that the old is giving way to the new, although I may not live to see the transition. The only way I know to navigate the shift is through steady doses of silence. It's as natural as breathing, if I let it be.



The same letters that are in the word "silent" are also in the word "listen."

Source unknown



## BOOK NOOK



Submitted by QAM Oblate Sue Vignos

I have just finished reading Sister Elizabeth A. Johnson's book, *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God*, by The Continuum International Publishing Group, London, 2007.

If you decide to read this excellent book, I suggest you read it all the way through. The last chapter, about the Trinity, is my favorite, perhaps because that chapter was truly enlightening for me. Plow on through this book. It is worth the effort.



## QUEEN OF ANGELS ANNUAL OBLATE RETREAT



## ***2011 Oblate Retreat***

Submitted by QAM Oblate Carla Moberg

This year, the Oblate Council decided to use *The Spirituality of Creating* as its theme. The Council also decided to ask the sisters to participate by sharing their creative endeavors. It was an enriching experience to learn more about the spirituality of the sisters of QAM.

**Sister Susan Casey** uses photography and making cards as a practical way of spirituality. The fruits of her work are used for persons who need special prayer, or to acquaint others with Queen of Angels Monastery through pictures. She finds that interacting with nature and creation supports her alone time with God.

Sister Susan likes to use the seasons—spring, summer, fall, and winter—to represent the life cycle. From the green of spring with its promise of new life and beauty through the brown of fall offering a dying to the world, her photographs portray the paradox of seeding to death played out in nature.

She also believes that this art form is truly interpreted in the “eye of the beholder”. We all view the world through our personal perceptions and she certainly finds the beauty within and captures it with her camera.

Her cards can be purchased at the Shalom Prayer Center.

**Sister Hilda Kleiman** is an iconographer. She began her study at the Iconography Institute, which is held every summer at QAM. The Institute began 25 years ago and continues to transform Agatha Hall into an icon studio for many students. Two icons in the chapel were written (the correct term instead of painting) for the community by the instructors and students of the Iconographic Arts Institute; one is the Transfiguration and the other is The Protecting Veil.

Sister Hilda related how the process of iconography is both an external and internal process. It is an intentional form of Christian art depicting Christ, Mary, the saints, and biblical accounts. The person pursuing iconography must also have a spirit of discernment because the process is prayer; an entering into heaven and letting heaven enter into the present.

She also told us that one must be brave to enter into the technical canon required for iconography, as well as spirit-led. When someone requests that she write an icon, it gives her a chance to pray for that person and to discern God’s leading.

While the Gospel comes to us in words, it can also come to us through icons. It is another way for God to reveal himself to us.

**Sister Robin Lynn Evans** and **Sister Teresa Henscheid** are the primary caretakers of the monastery grounds. Part of the community mission statement and the Biblical verse Genesis 1:31 support the belief that all creation is a gift of a loving Creator. We are to hold it in sacred trust knowing all things are one in God.

Sister Robin Lynn spoke about the realization of creation on macro and micro levels. From the smallest bacteria to the largest animals and vegetation, we are to protect and nurture this life. Where people tilled the soil for food and sustenance in the past, many people hardly interact with nature now. We seem to move farther away from our roots.

Each day the Psalms are used in the prayer life of the monastery. The Psalms speak to us of the universality of life and death in nature, praise God for His goodness in creation, and tells us how to treat the earth and His creation.

Both Sister Robin Lynn and Sister Teresa gave examples on how their gardening practices are changing, so that nature is allowed

to govern itself. They are working on limiting synthetic and chemical methods of bug control and have stopped “tilling” the soil.

God didn't create neat tidy rows with mulch and no weeds. The sisters are attempting to follow His plan of creation for a meadow environment. Gardening is a spiritual practice for them, delighting in God's love and sharing the fruits of their labor with the community and the public. If we see as God sees, we enter into the web of life.

**Sister Alberta Dieker** gave a talk on bird watching as a spiritual practice. She has been interested in nature all her life, at one point even keeping a snake. She feels anything good and beautiful gives glory to God.

She encouraged us to find the many references to birds that are in the Bible, or to become aware of how God uses the imagery of wings as His protection for us. The dove represents the Holy Spirit, the ravens fed Elijah, and the symbolism of the pelican as Christ's sacrifice are a few examples.

Sister Alberta reminded us of Jesus' words to consider the lilies of the fields or birds of the air that neither toil nor reap, but God provides all that they need.

Sister Alberta finds that the spirituality of bird watching relates to the Rule of Benedict by his word to us to “listen”. She invites us to go outside, take a walk, and listen for all the bird song in nature. They are praising God, too.

**Sister Dorothy Pulkka** and **Sister Agatha Meissner** each gave their talk on the spirituality of weaving and handwork. Sister Dorothy read a passage from Joan Chittister's *The Monastery of the Heart*, which speaks of artisans creating a sacred art within the community for beauty.

Sister Dorothy had always wanted to weave, so when she retired she found a teacher

and took classes. You can find her in her studio, weaving daily. Her work is also available for purchase at Shalom.

She related some of the history of weaving and cloth making through the ages. It was women's work and perishable, and so much of it did not last. Weaving was different for different areas. Hebrew priests required fine linen; the poor used wool cloth. While women have always done handwork for practical purposes, we also do so to create beauty and art.

Sister Dorothy also gave us a tour of her studio where her loom is set up for weaving. She creates a variety of shawls and scarves, among other items. The beautiful colors and textures give glory to God through her creative endeavors. Sister Dorothy told us that every piece of weaving has a “mistake” in it because only the Divine is perfect.

Sister Agatha related how she needed to return to her childhood home to take care of her aging parents. While there, she needed something to do with her hands, so she began the study and creation of primitive hooked rugs, as well as some quilting. Much of her material came from thrift shops. She brought pictures of her creations to share with the Oblates. One memorable piece was the quilt Sister Agatha finished for her sister who died at a young age. Sister Agatha completed the quilt and gave it to her nieces.

Growing up in North Dakota, she learned first to sew on a treadle machine. While in the monastery, for thirteen years she made habits for the sisters to wear. Now, Sister Agatha makes potholders and shopping bags from denim material left over from worn out jeans.

**Sister Maureen Niedermeyer** invited us into the chapel to talk about the spirituality of music. She played Brahms's Lullaby for us on the harp. Music has been an intricate part of her life as well as part of the spiritual gifts she offers to others. Music can touch one's soul as

nothing else can. In moments of crisis or when comfort is needed, music often speaks more than words.

Sister Maureen worked at Providence Hospital as a chaplain, and gave examples of how music changed circumstances for some of the patients. It brought comfort to a dying woman, brought a family out of their fear of death and into the moment to support a parent's passing. It calms nerves, and soothes pain.

She also led us in a Taize service. This service, established in France decades ago, is a prayer service centered on simple, melodious repetitive choruses. In the stillness of prayer, the gentle candlelight, and the voices of Oblates, the Presence of God was felt and blessed our time together.

We gratefully thank the sisters for sharing with us their gifts of creating for God's glory, and letting us see a part of their spiritual walk through this life.



### REFLECTION

Submitted by QAM Oblate Rae Parlier

The Oblate Retreat October 14-16, 2011 had as its theme: *The Spirituality of Creating*. A number of the Queen of Angels sisters treated Oblates to presentations. The following reflection incorporates topics brought up by these presentations.

The artist, like the monastic,  
gives voice to the soul:  
by silence, humility, and the right use of  
time.  
The beauty I see  
Is Beauty within me  
praising God.

Developing a gift allows me  
to connect to and place myself in  
the great web of life,  
and feels like coming home.  
For home was where I first learned  
how pleasure could be found  
with things at hand:  
materials that were discarded or  
in plentiful supply.

I look from afar and also  
up close,  
and see the complexity in Creation.

As keen observer  
or  
In the making of a gift  
I set in motion a grand theme of nature:  
A cycle in which the end  
possesses the beginning.

This beauty, given a voice,  
speaks to all who will listen  
and makes us  
One.



### North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors

Submitted by QAM Oblate Mary Nelson

**From the Editor: QAM Oblates Sharon Barnes and Mary Nelson attended the bi-annual NAABOD conference held at St. Meinrad's Archabbey, July 1-6, 2011. Below are excerpts from Mary Nelson's report.**

Sister Antoinette Purcell from Beechgrove, IN (Our Lady of Grace Monastery) set the tone for the conference. Our topic was "Embracing Creation with Reverence and Hospitality." The other focus of the conference was "Leadership Development and support for Oblate Directors."

The main points Sister Antoinette talked about were: 1. How can monasteries share their resources through hospitality while maintaining their unique autonomy. 2. It is possible to live in hope and joy in a world of chaos. We can be a presence of love and peace by our example of how we live in the world. 3. It is a Benedictine value to respect the person, the environment and the world.

Sister Katherine Huber was our first keynote speaker. She spoke about Benedictine values concerning the stewardship of creation. Her key points were 1. Our experiences shape us. 2. All created life is gift. 3. We celebrate nature in our liturgies and it is in our mystical traditions. We revere all creation as “The sacred vessels of the altar” RB31. 4. All of creation is God’s work and we share in that work. 5. The intentional and intense living of Christian spirituality is the corner stone of caring for the earth. 6. Remember that we are pilgrims on our earthly journey. 7. The RB encourages a life of commitment. Balance, respect and right relationship is a path that converts an ordinary life into one of extraordinary worth. 8. We acknowledge the presence of God everywhere. We believe that a harmonious group of people will strive to do the right thing. 9. We practice a common-sense approach, which acknowledges and utilizes the most recent advances, while not discarding things that continue to work for us.

In Scripture, we read “dominion” over the earth. Initially, that meant the care of the earth. We regard all as gift. We need to listen and to come to know the living presence of God in all the happenings of our world.

We processed these values in the light of three thoughts. 1. What can I do to impart these values to the world? 2. How can our monasteries reflect these values to the world? 3. How can monastics and Oblates work together to foster these values in practical ways.

Our second keynote speaker was a young man named Kyle Kramer. He is an organic farmer as well as director of the lay formation program at the college. He described a shift in consciousness from a need to control and utilize our, and other peoples’, resources to a way of living in the world that is sustainable and more in harmony with nature.

The key Benedictine values at work here are stability, hospitality, obedience, poverty, conversion, prayer and work.

For Kyle, stability is a commitment to the land—not to exchange it for a better piece somewhere else; but a commitment to work to improve what he has. Hospitality is sharing the fruits of his labors; and his involvement in the life of his community. Obedience is about listening to the land; by planting crops that work. Spirituality is the connection of God, self, others, and creation. Kyle referred to monasteries as “arcs” of example for people around them. By their example, they can demonstrate a way of living that is sustainable. By the value of poverty or non-attachment, we remember that the land belongs to God. It is not ours to destroy, but to reverence as God’s own creation.

Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick gave the last talk of the conference. She said it was her intention to integrate what the first two speakers had said. She focused on our interrelationships with nature and God. Everything we do and the attitudes we carry have consequences in our world. We need to think about our actions and our choices. With modern technology for instance, it is possible to isolate ourselves from a summer day with our closed up air conditioning. (Most of us wore jackets inside for instance) A consequence is more green house gases in an already fragile atmosphere.

She left us with a quotation from Hildegard:

“We are dressed in the scaffold of creation:

In seeing, that we might recognize the world

In hearing, that we might understand

In smelling, to discern

In tasting, to nurture

In touching, to govern.

† † † †

## *Sister Antoinette Traeger*



**From the Editor:** Last spring, it was announced that Oblate Director, Sister Antoinette Traeger, planned to retire. Below are comments about her retirement from Sister Antoinette, Prioress Sister Donna Marie Chartraw, and newly appointed Oblate Director, Sister Robin Lynn Evans.

**Sister Antoinette:** My ministry with Oblates since the beginning in 1975 has been a joyous and spiritual experience for me. In a letter written to Oblates at that time, I stated, "We (our community) have learned that as we share aspects of our community life with others, our lives are enriched." How true! Then and NOW!

I could not be more grateful for each one of you and all the Oblates of previous years. May each one of us, today and into the future, "prefer nothing whatever to Christ and may He bring us all together to everlasting life.



**Sister Donna Marie:** Sister Antoinette has given a wonderful service to our community as Oblate Director over these many years. Her expertise in spiritual direction and prayer of the heart, as well as her love of the monastic life, has been shared with the Oblates in many ways, helping them to discern how to live out their Oblations. We thank Sister Antoinette for her dedication and self-giving. We wish her a peaceful retirement from the Directorship, and

hope that she will continue sharing with the Oblates in some way."



**Sister Robin Lynn:** First of all, I must say that following in the steps of someone like Sister Antoinette is not going to be an easy task. However, I have had the opportunity and the privilege of working alongside her and with many of you for the last eleven years. She has been a wonderful mentor and I have learned much. Sister Antoinette is the epitome of a true monastic; a monastic's monastic, Benedictine to the core and an inspiration for all.

As much as I admire her and her style of leadership, I know that mine is a bit different. Be assured that the basic structure of the Oblates will remain. I believe that continuity is important for most people and organizations, perhaps even more so for Benedictines. It is continuity that helps create and maintain stability, which is our valued key in monastic life. However, stability does not mean static or sameness; it means level, even-keeled, steady, as we move through this life on our individual journeys and our collective journey, "along the path of life". In other words, stability is the "spiritual gyroscope", the instrument that helps us maintain an upright position even though the path zigzags around, back and forth, is steep, bumpy, rough, and smooth on the switchbacks and slopes of life. It is a necessity for the spiritual life, one in which we monastics cannot be without.

For us to move along this path in stability, we need to have our feet firmly planted in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, but we also need to glance back and see the pathway from where we have come and to see the path before us as well, even though it may be foggy or stormy at times. One manner, in which we can do this, is by using some 21<sup>st</sup> Century tools. These tools can both help enrich our lives and bring us all closer together within time and space. Using these tools can give us opportunities to connect

with one another and to reach out toward others who are searching for meaning and purpose in their lives. This has never been truer than for young people today, many of whom are often lost in our society's swirling winds of contradictory values and messages.

Since most people today have access to the internet, which can be a bane or a boon, I would like us to create a website and/or blog site where we could post the Oblate Newsletter, teachings from Oblate meetings and/or retreats, have various links, recommend reading materials, interesting articles, have a synopsis or perhaps a slide show of Benedictine and early Christian history. I am continually amazed at the lack of historical knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Benedictines by both Christian adults and young people. I believe it is imperative to tie all these facts and events together within the context of both the spiritual and the temporal aspects of Christianity in order to convey the ancient Benedictine way of life, a tradition that transcends time and space; where the old is ever new, ever timely, and ever pertinent in living out gospel values.

In the coming months, the Oblate Council and I will be working on this monumental communication task. It has tremendous possibilities for all of us. We are open to suggestions for content/and or design. If there are any you with web skills, we would be interested in hearing from you. I believe it necessary to have a small committee of Oblates to work with me and the council on this project. So, we will be contacting some of you for this endeavor, especially if we find out that you have web skills.

For several years now, the e-mail addresses for the Oblate Director have changed over the course of time. Most have been the general addresses for other ministries or the monastery's. I thought it expedient to establish yet another new e-mail address for the Oblate Director, it is: [gam.obates@gmail.com](mailto:gam.obates@gmail.com). It was necessary for a variety of reasons, number one

of which is that a particular address for the Oblate Director could be passed on to the next Director, thus various brochures, web pages, etc. would not have to be changed ever again, unless g-mail ceases to exist. It also allows the Director ready access to the e-mail account without using another ministry's or a personal account.

I look forward to working with all of you and serving as Queen of Angels Monastery's new Oblate Director. Blessings upon all!



## BLESSINGS ON YOUR ADVENT JOURNEY!

*Want what you have,*

*do what you can,*

*and be who you are.*

*Do these things with reverence,*

*humbled by awe, and your cup will*

*overflow.*

**From: *Love and Death* by Forrest Church**



**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:** Thank you to each of the people who contributed to this newsletter. The time and energy you spent in preparing and sending your article is a gift to those who read your message.

**And, please remember:** To contribute material for the Lenten 2012 Newsletter, contact newsletter editor, Dorothy Frances: by phone (509-548-5697), by e-mail ([dhbwrites@charter.net](mailto:dhbwrites@charter.net)), or by U. S. mail (P. O. Box 2218, Leavenworth, WA 98826.)