



December 2017

Oblate Newsletter

SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Yankton, South Dakota

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Dear Oblates,

I hope your Thanksgiving holidays were spent with family and friends, and you were able to reflect on your many blessings of the past year. The weather was beautiful, and it was a joy to spend some time outdoors. We received our first trace of snow this past week so we can say winter is on its way.



Three Beautiful banners and candles
to represent the Advent Wreath

Photo credit: Sacred Heart Monastery Communications

As we begin this Advent season, let us celebrate the God who is with us: Emmanuel. Are our thoughts on how we celebrate Christmas with the gift giving, all the decorations, and the preparation for parties and the social events we will attend? Advent is a time to slow down and prayerfully reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. It is a time of silence and darkness, waiting and watching, surrender and trust. It is a time to remember that the mission of Jesus is not complete yet, and we need to fulfill it by our love and service to others.

Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month of December is "for the elderly." The Pope said, "A people that does not take care of grandparents, that does not treat them well, has no future." He added that the "elderly have wisdom: they are entrusted with a great responsibility: to transmit their life experience, their family history, the history of a community, of a people." This is so true also of our elderly Sisters whose wisdom and experience collaborate in the education of new generations.

As we journey through the season of Advent let us keep Jesus as the center of our life, think about ways we can help those less fortunate than us, and show kindness and mercy to others. Speak words of encouragement to others. Enjoy these days of Advent so you can be ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

God's Blessings,
Sister Patricia Heirigs

Next Meeting:

Our December Yankton Oblate Meeting is on Sunday, December 17, 2017, at 1:00 pm in the Monastery Chapter Room. Since the next two chapters are so short, we will discuss both chapters this month: chapter 29 on "Marriage and Family," and chapter 30 on "The Single Life."

The new people planning to become Oblates will prepare the second lesson in their book. Both groups will meet at the same time at 1:00 pm. Bob Fullenkamp and Luana Johnson are praying for more religious vocations to our Monastery during the month of December. This December the Sisters will not meet with the Oblates after our monthly meeting. We plan to do that in the spring when our two couples, who attended the International Oblate Meeting in Rome, can tell us about their experiences in Rome.

Oblate Yankton Meetings 2018:

JAN. 21 FEB. 18 MAR. 18 APR. 15 MAY 20

Upcoming Opportunities: (Further information listed on website)

- On Sunday, December 10, 2017, the MMC Band Concert will be held in Marian Auditorium at 7:00 pm. All the bands will be featured and everyone is welcome to attend.
- The Catholic Daughters will have their Christmas Party with the Sisters in the Chapter Room on Thursday, December 14, 2017, at 6:30 pm.
- Christmas at the Cathedral in Sioux Falls, SD, will be held on December 15-16, 2017. Several of the Sisters will attend the performance.
- Novice Terry Lafferty has organized a High Tea for the Care Center Sisters and their Buddies on Saturday, December 16, 2017.
- Mount Marty College will have its Fall Commencement on Saturday, December 16, 2017. The Sisters and employees will enjoy a coffee together on Wednesday, December 27, 2017, in the Monastery Dining Room at 2:30 pm.



Prayer Requests:

For the Oblates who have cancer, especially Angie Hejl

For Oblate Janene Cabalka's son Bob who had bone marrow surgery

For good vocations to our Monastery

For the new people who are interested in becoming a Benedictine Oblate

For all the Oblates and their families

Have a grace filled Advent and a blessed Christmas!

Deaths:

Jim Oberembt—brother of Sister Doris

Monastery Happenings during November 2017

Recently **Sisters Mary Kay Panowicz and Jeanne Weber** attended the RCRI Conference in St. Louis.



Members of the Lincoln, NE Oblates renewing their Oblation.



Novice Theresa Lafferty and S. Virginia Pieper prepare stuffing for the Yankton Community Thanksgiving Dinner.

Sisters Sharon Ann Haas, Debra Kolecka, Kathleen Crowley, and Joyce Streff participated in the Avera Ethics Conference.

Several Sisters and employees attended a Seminar in Sioux City, Iowa, on “Dealing Effectively with Unacceptable Employee Behavior.”

Sister Sharon Ann Haas hosted a meeting to discuss the future of the T4 project. This is a technology program utilized to connect Benedictine women in Initial Formation. The program also gives them access to videos related to initial formation.



Sisters and employees make their way through the serving line with pancakes and eggs for a special celebration to honor St. Gertrude

Sisters Maribeth Wentzlaff, Phyllis Hunhoff, and Patricia Heirigs traveled to Lincoln, NE to preside over the Nebraska Oblation ceremony.

The Busy Person’s Retreat was held recently at Mount Marty College with 26 students participating. Several Sisters met with the students and served as their spiritual directors, meeting with them once a day. The students attended their regular classes during the retreat. At the end of the retreat the Sisters and students met together at the Raven in MMC for a closing prayer ritual.

In November the Prayer Partners from MMC joined the Sisters for Evening Prayer in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel and then enjoyed treats together in the Chapter Room.

Heart Monastery Administration Team served pancakes and eggs to all the Sisters and employees. This was a special celebration in honor of St. Gertrude the Great.

On November 15, **the Mission Committee and Sacred**



MMC prayer partners and sisters headed to the refectory for fellowship and treats after Vespers.

Many Sisters helped prepare, cook, and serve 32 turkeys and 15 pans of dressing for the Yankton Community Thanksgiving Dinner the evening of November 22, 2017. The Yankton Committee is always grateful for the work the Sisters do for this community feast.

Fifth graders from Sacred Heart School, Yankton, SD, and fourth graders from St. Agnes School, Vermillion, SD, came on different days to celebrate a St. Nicholas and Advent Retreat the last week in November. The children went on a tour of the Monastery and learned many things about Advent and St. Nicholas. Many of the Sisters visited with the children.

The Christmas Vespers held in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel was well attended at all three performances the first weekend in December. The songs centered on the theme of the Mother and Child. On Sunday nearly seventy students from Cedar Catholic High School in Hartington, NE, joined the MMC choirs in prayer and song. Many people attending the Vespers said it was the best performance in the 35 years that Vespers have been sung on the first Sunday in Advent in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel.



Dr. Brandon Connell, Mount Marty Choir Director at Vespers with Keith Francis Kube.
Photo by Keith Kube



Mount Marty *Smoothies* Choir sings, "Mary, Did You Know?" at Vespers. Photo from Press and Dakotan's You-Tube



Above: Photo of the Cedar Catholic High School Choir that sang in the afternoon and evening Vespers on Sunday December 3.
Photo credit: Teresa Dvorak Arens