



September 2016

# Oblate Newsletter

## SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Yankton, South Dakota

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Dear Oblates,

The summer has gone by so quickly and soon we'll be meeting again here in Yankton for our monthly Oblate meeting. Our first meeting this fall is on Sunday, September 18, 2016, at 1:00 pm in our Chapter Room. Plan to attend and we'll renew our acquaintances. We are still studying the book *The Oblate Life* and will be discussing Chapter 18 on "Obedience."

Even though the summer was very hot and humid, we have had enough rain to refresh the earth and keep the grass green and still produce plenty of tomatoes. The early garden was not good, as some of the vegetables didn't even come up, but the fruit trees were abundant with apricots, peaches, plums, and apples. God has blessed us with fruitful gifts for which we are most grateful.



Once again we had beautiful celebrations for this year's Jubilarians. Those Sisters who celebrated their Golden Jubilees on July 23, 2016, were Sisters Jennifer Kehrwald, Joyce Streff, Kathryn Easley, Marietta Kerkvliet, and Margo Tschetter. Many of their families and friends joined us in the beautiful liturgies and the meal that followed the Mass. On August 5, 2016, in a private ceremony here at the Monastery, Sister Madonna Schmitt marked 70 years and Sisters Bernadette McGowen, Louise Marie Goettertz, and Matthew Wehri celebrated 60 years. What a beautiful witness of love and fidelity to monastic life that all these Sisters share with us.



Next March 2017, we Sisters will be electing a new Prioress as Sister Penny will complete her six-year term as our spiritual leader. This is a very important and holy election as the Sister elected will be the one who guides us for the next six years. Enclosed with this newsletter is a special prayer that we are asking all of our Oblates to pray several times a week so that the Holy Spirit may help us in our choice of our next prioress. Thank you for your prayers.



On August 7, 2016, Terry Lafferty entered the novitiate. She is beginning a year of study which includes classes on our Sacred Heart Monastery Community History, Monastic History, and the Rule of Benedict. Terry will be working in various places in the monastery and learning more about Benedictine life, praying, and studying scripture. Terry was a scripture teacher at Mount Marty College, during which time she became an Oblate. Please remember her in prayer this coming year. She would appreciate that.

In the recent edition of our “Yankton Benedictines,” we had a very interesting article about our Residential Volunteer Program that started in the fall of 2015. In this program young women are given the opportunity to participate in the life, prayer, and ministries of the Sisters. So far we have had five women from various parts of the United States who have been a part of this wonderful program and have volunteered several weeks or months of their life to work in the ministries in our Monastery. It has been such a joy to have these dedicated women working and praying among us.

As we come to the end of “The Year of Mercy,” proclaimed last year by Pope Francis, we strive to remember some of the Pope’s words, “Never be afraid to reach out and touch the poor and those in most need. The Lord invites each of us to feel our own need and to ask for this healing touch.”

**God’s Blessings,  
Sr. Patricia Heirigs**

## *Next Meeting:*

Don’t forget! Our September Oblate meeting is this coming Sunday, September 18 at 1:00 in the Chapter Room. I hope to see many of you here.

## **Oblate Yankton Meetings 2016:**

**October 16 | November 20 | December 18**

## *Upcoming Opportunities:* (Further information listed on website)

There are several Retreats being held in our Retreat Center in the coming weeks.

1. Discernment Retreat on September 23-25, 2016
2. Lincoln Oblate Deans Retreat on September 30-October 2, 2016
3. Our Fall Oblate Retreat is on October 28-30, 2016. The flyer is on the last page of this newsletter.

### **Fall Theology Institute:**

Fr. Dennis Hamm, SJ, will speak on “Luke: The Gospel of Mercy,” on Saturday morning, September 17, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. All are welcome to attend this free event.

To register, call 605-668-6000 or e-mail S. Marielle Frigge at [mfrigge@mtmc.edu](mailto:mfrigge@mtmc.edu)

### **Scripture Study Series:**

The fall series includes *The Gospel of John* facilitated by Sister Doris Oberembt on Wednesday mornings, 10:00 to 11:45 a.m., for 8 weeks in the fall and continues in the spring.

The course called *Panorama of the Old Testament* will be facilitated by Sister Mary Jo Polak on Wednesday evenings, 7:00-8:30 p.m., for 5 weeks and will take a wide-range view of the Old Testament.

Both groups will begin classes on September 21, 2016. *Please register by calling 605-668-6000.*

### **Serving the Banquet:**

On Sept. 29th the Sisters are preparing and serving the Banquet in Yankton. This is always a time to reach out to those who need a meal or the opportunity to socialize with others. If any of you would be willing/able to help serve with the Sisters please let me know or Sr. Joelle ([jbauer@mtmc.edu](mailto:jbauer@mtmc.edu) or 668-6009) so you can be added to the list. It would be a help to have you.

### **Holiday Fair:**

Our Holiday Fair this year will be on Saturday, October 22, 2016. This will be a modified Fair from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. It will feature the works of our sisters as the monastery artisans.

## *Prayer Requests:*

Continue to pray for **Sisters Marie Helene Werdel** and **Aurea Medina** whose health is becoming frail. Some of our Sisters have had surgery over the summer and are recovering very well. They appreciate your prayers.

## *Deaths:*

**Richard Korger**, Sister Clarice's father | **Joanne Healy**, Sister Rosaleen's sister  
**Roland Healy** - Sister Rosaleen's brother-in-law | **Lorraine Ranek** - Sister Jeanne Ranek's aunt  
**Albert Dutcher** - Sisters Thecla and Esther's uncle | **Bernice Medina** - Sister Aurea's sister-in-law  
**Ron McTague** - Sister Barbara's brother | **Helen Odermann** - Father Valerian's mother  
**Connie Weber** - Sister Rosemary's sister-in-law and S. Jeanne's aunt

## *Monastery Happenings during the Summer of 2016*

**Sister Penny Bingham** and **MMC President Marc Long** attended the meeting of Benedictine Colleges and Universities in Duluth, MN in early June. Both College Presidents and Monastic Leaders met to discuss concerns and opportunities about maintaining and promoting Benedictine education in the 14 Benedictine Colleges in the United States.

In June **Sister Bonita Gacnik** was appointed chairperson for the Planning Ethics and Quality Committee of Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell, SD. All of the Sisters were home for the June Chapter Days and many of them made the conference retreat given by **Fr. Eugene Hensell** in June.

**Sisters Sharon Ann Haas, Marietta Kerkvliet, Peggy Venteicher** and **Novice Terry Lafferty** took part in an enneagram workshop in Norfolk, NE in June.

**Sisters Marietta Kerkvliet and Kathleen Courtney** facilitated a retreat at the Retreat House in Schuyler, NE on "The Art of Pausing."

**Sister Ann Kessler** writes on the outstanding Benedictines, past and present, on a blog initiated and designed by **Dr. Nev Kelly** at [www.benedictinehistory.com](http://www.benedictinehistory.com). Sister Ann's book is in the Gift Shop.

Members of Avera Sacred Heart Hospital served ice cream sundaes to the Sisters in our Monastery Dining Room in appreciation for all that the Sisters do for our sponsored institutions.

The Sisters hosted our Sacred Heart Monastery "Tailgate Party" for the alumni in the Chapter Room during Mount Marty All School Reunion Days.



At the Sunday Liturgy during MMC Alumni Days, **Sister Matthew Wehri**, along with **Father Thomas Wordekemper**, were awarded the “Service to MMC” award. They were both recognized for their ministry of beautifying the campus: Sister Matthew with all her flowers and Father Thomas with his numerous hours of painting.

**Raelynn Coldwell**, our PR person, received the “Outstanding Young Alumni” award at the same Alumni Reunion.



Several employees were recognized at our Sacred Heart Monastery Picnic held in the Chapter Room this summer. All of the employees received a gift of their choice.

**Sisters Sharon Ann Haas, Jill Young, Peggy Venteicher, and Postulant Terry Lafferty** attended the Monastic Institute in Collegetown, MN in early July. The topic “Monastic Profession: Baptism, Kenosis and growing into Christ,” was presented by Abbot John Klassen of St. John’s Abbey and **Sister Michaela Hedican**, Prioress of St. Benedict’s Monastery, MN.



As we Sisters celebrated the Solemnity of St. Benedict on July 11, we saw many posters and signs of Benedictine living around the Monastery.

**Sister Barbara Kowalkowski** assisted in the Totus Tuus Program in Madison SD.

**Sister Debra Kolecka** took part in a pharmacological conference in Norfolk, NE in mid-July.

Sacred Heart Monastery Sisters’ Council and the Presentation Sisters’ Council met together in early July with the Avera System Members in Sioux Falls, SD.

**Sisters Penny Bingham, Phyllis Hunhoff, Clarice Korger, Maribeth Wentzlaff, and Mary Jo Polak** shared in a symposium on “The New Generation of Catholic Sisters: The Challenge of Diversity,” held at St. Benedict’s in Minnesota on July 15, 2016. Sisters Clarice, Maribeth, and Raelynn Coldwell attended the National Religious Vocation Conference also at St. Benedict’s.

Several Sisters and Oblates participated in the conference on “Aging Faithfully,” presented by **Sister Joan Chittister** in July in Sioux Falls. **Sister Jeanne Ranek** had the honor of introducing Sister Joan that day.

**Sister Carol Jean VanDenHemel’s niece, Grace**, came for a week of “Come and See.” Grace had a great time praying, working, and playing with the Sisters.

In July, **Sisters Carol Jean and Barbara McTague** taught Vacation Bible School in Grace’s home parish in Valentine, NE.

**Sister Clarice Korger** attended the Behavioral Assessment Training Program presented by **Fr. Ray Carey** in Chicago. This training enables Religious Congregations in the United States to perform comprehensive vocational assessments.

Our Monastery helped to sponsor the Meridian en Blanc Event on the Meridian Bridge over the Missouri River. **Sisters Patricia Ann Toscano, Barbara McTague, Jeanne Ranek, Louise Marie Goettertz and Mary Jo Polak** served as hostesses to our guests –**Marc Long, and Jim and Celia Miner** as they dined on the bridge and enjoyed the good company, art, and music (see image on next page).



**Sister Virginia Pieper** was recently named chairperson of the Contact Center Board in Yankton.

Quite a few Sisters rode the bus down to the Yankton Riverboat Days. It is some challenge to experience even a part of the 167 vendors who are trying to sell their creations. The **Native American Band of Brulé** was performing 5 or 6 times a day so that was enjoyed by all.

**Abbot Adrian**, who served as our chaplain for most of the summer, went back to his Abbey in Lacey, WA, on August 15, and Father Valerian returned the next day.

**Sister Penny Bingham** attended the LCWR Assembly in Atlanta in early August.

We Sisters had an ice cream social with the incoming MMC freshman on Friday, August 26. Nearly 100 freshman came and enjoyed visiting with the Sisters. Then they and their parents processed into Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel where they had a blessing ceremony. It was a beautiful way to begin a new school year.



The Sisters in the Care Center had several unique projects this summer. Among the many activities were a couple walks they took outside. In June they walked with their “buddy” pushing their wheelchairs to see the cemetery and the gardens. The first Saturday in September they toured out in front of the Monastery to see the flower gardens that the Master Gardeners had planted. How beautiful they look now that we have had over two inches of rain the first week in September.

The most unique activity was the “Rocks of Encouragement” created and supervised by **Novice Terry Lafferty**. The Care Center Sisters decorated rocks for all the Sisters in our community. All rocks have the statement, “We are praying for you! SHM CC,” and pictures and words of encouragement are printed on each rock by the Care Center Sisters. When the art project was finished, the rocks were hidden around the Monastery and each Sister was to find one and claim it. The rocks are different sizes so they can be used as doorstops, paper weights or decorations. Each rock is unique and gives a message of love.

## *Prayer For Election of Prioress*

God of all Faithfulness, we ask you to enlighten the minds and hearts of all the Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery as they prepare to elect the next prioress.

May they select a member of the community who is best able to lead the monastery into the future in the Benedictine way of life according to Your will.

This we ask in Christ’s name and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## *Remember:*

Don’t forget! Our September Oblate meeting is this coming Sunday, September 18 at 1:00 in the Chapter Room. I hope to see many of you here.

*A reminder to continue to follow events and happenings by visiting [www.yanktonbenedictines.org](http://www.yanktonbenedictines.org)*

# – *Fall Oblate Retreat* –

## “*Ways of Praying*”

Presenters are:



*S. Marietta Kerkvliet*  
“Praying with the Psalms”



*S. Cynthia Binder,*  
“Spirituality and Art”



*S. Corinne Lemmer,*  
“Praying with the Body”



*S. Doris Oberembt*  
“Prayer – Being With God”

**Starting Friday, October 28 at 5:15 p.m. —  
Sunday, October 30, 2016 at noon**

The retreat is available to both women and men

**| The retreat is \$120 | Scholarships are available. |**

**Please Register by October 22, 2016**

**To Register: Contact S. Patricia Heirigs by visiting our website at  
<http://yanktonbenedictines.org/oblate> or  
(605) 668-6017 or (605) 668-6000**