



January 2018

Oblate Newsletter

SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Yankton, South Dakota

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Dear Oblates,

Winter finally arrived in a fury with light snow and frigid cold temperatures right before Christmas. The cold days were really cold, breaking a record of 36 below zero. Since then, we have had alternating days of warmth with very cold weather and only a few inches of snow.



Theresa McGinn began her journey as a Postulant in our community when she knocked on the front door Friday January 12

Our Christmas celebrations here at the Monastery were beautiful with many Sisters involved in the festivities. The Sisters enjoyed the MMC Christmas Vespers and several of them traveled to Sioux Falls, SD, to attend Christmas at the Cathedral.

During the month of January, Pope Francis' prayer intention is that Christians and other religious minorities in Asian countries may be able to practice their faith in full freedom. All of us can help by praying for this intention.

One of the very important events last week was that on January 12, 2018, Theresa McGinn, from Fort Lauderdale, FL, knocked on the Monastery door and asked to be received into our Benedictine family. Theresa has been a volunteer at our Monastery for a year and a half. She now begins the process of her formation in our Community as a Postulant under the direction of Sister Marietta Kerkvliet.

Starting in 2018 our Oblate newsletter will be published only every other month. So only in January, March, May, September, and November will you receive an Oblate newsletter. We will still have our monthly meeting on the third Sunday of every month from September through May.

In less than a month we will be in the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is on February 14 (Valentine's Day) and Easter is on April 1 (April Fool's Day). It hardly seems possible that the time between Christmas and Ash Wednesday is so short! Lent is a time of sacrifice, letting go of the familiar with a willingness to change, and getting ready to be challenged. May this Lent of 2018 be a joyful journey for all of us!

God's Blessings,
Sister Patricia Heirigs

Next Meeting:

This coming Sunday, January 21, 2018, will be our Yankton Oblate Meeting. We'll meet at 1:00 pm in Room 215 at the Monastery and discuss chapter 31 on "Friendship and Relationships," and chapter 32 on "Possessions." During this month of January Luana Johnson and Lois and Howard Lekmkuhl are praying for more religious vocations to our Monastery. Arlyne Brim is our reader for prayer and Mary Albrecht is bringing refreshments.

Our February Yankton Oblate Meeting will be on Sunday, February 18, 2018, at 1:00 pm in Room 215 at the Monastery. We will discuss chapter 33 on "Leisure and the Benedictine Oblate" and chapter 34 on "Health and Sickness." Mary Kreber, Marge Stoebner, and Luana Johnson are praying for more vocations to our Monastery and Luana Johnson is furnishing refreshments.

The new people planning to become Oblates will prepare Lesson 3 for the January meeting and lesson 4 for the February meeting.

Oblate Yankton Meetings 2018:

FEB. 18 MAR. 18 APR. 15 MAY 20

Upcoming Opportunities: (Further information listed on website)

- Scripture Series: If you are interested in the Lenten Scripture classes, you need to register before February 1, 2018. **Sister Doris Oberembt** is teaching the course entitled, “*The Women of the New Testament*” on Wednesday mornings starting at 10:00 am. **Sister Mary Jo Polak’s** topic is “*The Book of Job*” for her 7:00 pm evening sessions. Both classes start on Wednesday, February 7, 2018.
- **On January 30, 2018**, a Blue Mass will be celebrated in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel at 12:00 noon to honor all those employed in the “public safety field.” The color blue represents the blue colored uniforms worn by people who work in these services. The Mass is an opportunity for the community to show gratitude and support to first responders and their families.
- **February 8**, is the memorial of St. Josephine Bakhita. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the International Union of Superiors General have designated this day as an annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. Please join us Sisters as we pray for an end of human trafficking.
- **The Oblate Retreats** for 2018 are scheduled for the weekends of **April 27-29** and **October 26-28**. The topic is “Scripture and the Rule of Benedict.” More information will be sent soon.



Sisters gather around Shannon Goeden, Maintenance at the annual Employee /Sisters Christmas Coffee

Prayer Requests:

All the Sisters who are sick with the flu and colds
Sister Bernadette McGowen who is recovering from her fall
Sister Rosemarie Maly who is recovering from her knee surgery
Sister Penny Bingham’s sister, Pam, who is in hospice
Oblate Cathy Charging Hawk who had recent knee surgery
Oblate Angie Hejl who is recovering from cancer

Vocations to the religious life, especially Sacred Heart Monastery, and vocations to the priesthood

For all the Oblates and their families

Deaths:

Oblate Yvonne Streff

Father Joel Derks, OSB

Marlyn Koopman—sister of Sister Rosalie Sitzmann

Sandy Kreber— a former employee of Sacred Heart Monastery



Activities coordinator, Carol Rueb enjoys Christmas goodies with her Care Center Sisters.

Monastery Happenings during December & January

Right before Christmas the **ERTH** (*Ecumenical Religious Training for the Handicapped*) people held their Christmas Party in the Monastery Chapter Room. Nearly 50 people with their sponsors attended and enjoyed the singing and gifts.

The Saturday Advent Retreat directed by **Sister Mary Jo Polak** was well attended. Sister used the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary as the theme for the morning retreat.

The Catholic Daughters of Yankton, SD, held a fun-filled evening for the Sisters at the Monastery. After games and desserts, gifts were distributed and a fun time was had by all.

After our **New Year's Eve Vigil Service for PEACE**, **Sister Bonita Gacnik** and her helpers provided a wonderful Open House with food and time for visiting.

Jean Fish, who has worked in our Business Office at the Monastery, retired after 13 years of service to the Sisters. She will be greatly missed. We had a farewell reception for her, and her entire family attended, along with the other employees. Her replacement, **Jean Fitzgerald**, worked the month of December with **Jean Fish** so she could take over on January 2, 2018.



The Catholic Daughters once again provided a delicious array of sugary treats during the Christmas Party



Jean Fish (Left) and S. Anna Dangel share a special moment at her retirement party. It was a wonderful best wishes send-off which included a blessing.

Sister Lynn Osika is the new member on the **Yankton Area Banquet Board**. She is replacing **Sister Marietta Kerkvliet** who has served two terms on the board.

All of the Sisters were home for our January 13 Chapter meeting.

The World Congress for Benedictine Oblates met in Rome in November 2017, with the purpose of bringing together Oblates from many countries to share and discuss their role in the Benedictine World. Benedictine **Sister Joan Chittister** delivered the keynote address, "*Let the Call be Heard.*" Her entire talk was printed in the "National Catholic Reporter." Two couples, **Lois and Howard Lekmkuhl** of Ames, IA, and **James and Arlene Rae** of Lincoln, NE, represented our Monastery by attending this Fourth International Congress in Rome. They have agreed to share a summary of their experience at the Congress for all the Sisters and Oblates at our monthly Oblate Meeting in Yankton on March 18, 2018, at 1:00 pm in the Chapter Room. Please plan to attend, if you can, and learn about other Oblates around the world.

Sisters Patricia Ann Toscano and Jeanne Weber flew



Sisters and staff gather in the Refectory (Dining Room) for some Christmas Coffee and Treats

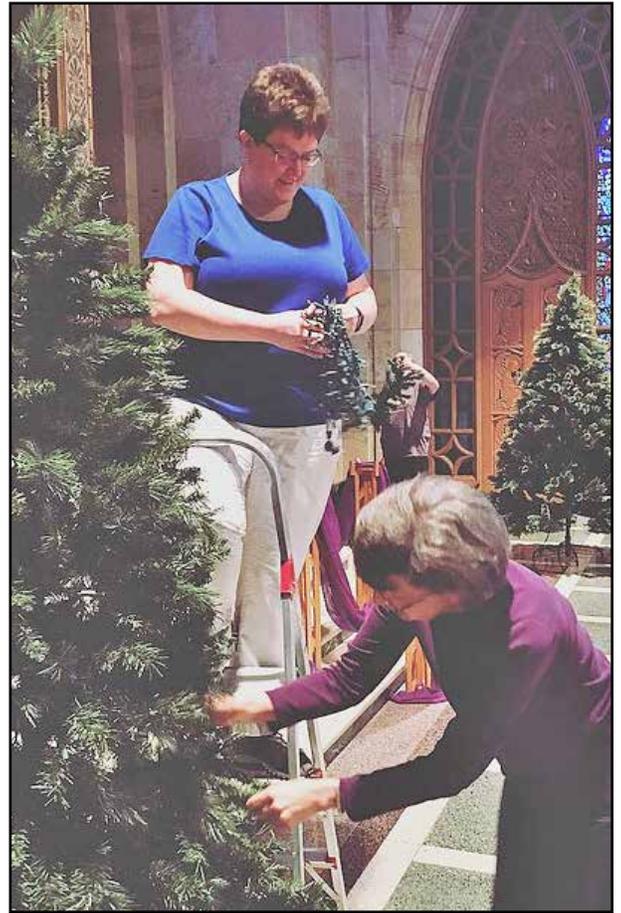
to Rome this past week to help with the planning of the liturgy for the International group of prioresses who will be meeting there later this year.

Sister Ann Kessler will celebrate her 90th birthday with an Open House given for her by Mount Marty Alumni on January 28, 2018, in St. Benedict's Café at the college.

Sisters Maribeth Wentzlaff and Jeanne Weber will be attending the Conference of Benedictine Prioresses from January 31-February 7, 2018, in Cullman, AL.



S. Bonita Gacnik tidies up the bows at the front of Bishop Marty Chapel.



Ss. Peggy Venteicher (left) and Jeanne Weber spruce up the tree and add lights on the front altar.



Above: (left to right) Ss. Maribeth Wentzlaff, Kathy Burt, Patricia Ann Toscano, and Patricia Heirigs assemble the trees to illuminate the manage scene in the Gathering Space.