



# The AMERICAN MONASTIC NEWSLETTER

Published under the auspices of the American Benedictine Academy

[www.americanbenedictine.org](http://www.americanbenedictine.org)

Volume 50, Number 1

February 2019

## Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
Canon Law Column	4
Coming Events	6
News	7
Oblate Congress	9
Book Reviews	10
Membership List	11
Membership Form	12

*The mission of the American Monastic Newsletter is to be an instrument of communication and information for Benedictine monasteries of North America and members of the American Benedictine Academy.*

## *Buddhist/Christian Nuns Hold World Dialogue*

In an address to participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue on June 9, 2017, Pope Francis encouraged his audience to create more space for women to participate in interreligious dialogue, saying “Many women are well prepared to take on encounters of interreligious dialogue at the highest levels and not only on the Catholic side. [...] Today more than ever, it is necessary that women be present.”

With this in mind, the PCID organized its first Buddhist/Christian dialogue for nuns, held in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, in October of 2018. With the assistance of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (DIM/MID), and the collaboration of Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Monastery and the Association of the Major Superiors of Religious Women in Taiwan, 35 female monastics from the Christian tradition joined 35 Buddhist monastic women for a conversation entitled “Active Contemplation – Contemplative Action: Buddhist and Christian Nuns in Dialogue.” Among the delegates from approximately 20 countries were three U. S. Benedictines, Sisters Dorothy Stoner (Mount St. Benedict - Erie, Pa.), Christian Morris (St. Benedict's - Saint Joseph, Minn.) and Judith Sutura (Mount St. Scholastica - Atchison, Ks.).

The site of the conference, Fo Guang Shan, is a monastic city covering three mountainsides. In addition to the several hundred monks and nuns and the massive museum complex with its 36-story tall Buddha statue, there are theological colleges for women and men, buildings for calligraphy, translation, publishing, broadcasting and other works of evangelization, multiple large shrines for worship, and several hotel-like facilities for conferences, tourists and retreatants. Sister Dorothy was particularly struck by this contemporary expression of Buddhism. “The beauty, the size, the most up-to-date technology, the outreach especially to children, the human amenities, all spoke of the desire to engage the world with the best the world has so as to be effective in engaging with this world. In addition to this, the bhikkhunis [religious women] were well-educated and able to articulate their identity and vision with clarity and conviction.”

*(continued on p. 3)*

## *President's Message*

In the last few years every religious community I know in North America (and I know many of both men and women) is dealing with issues related to fewer members, aging members, buildings that are too large or need updating to accommodate current needs, and less income. A number have already addressed their reality and have closed, with members transferring into another community of their choice or reconfiguring. In some cases, ministries of the past have had to be abandoned. Oblates associated with these communities have had to find another community with which to be connected or have been left on their own. The impact is felt not only by the communities that have closed but by all of us. While Benedictine communities are independent, we all stem from the same root. We are family, united not only by the Rule of Benedict but also in Christ. What affects or impacts any part of our family affects or impacts all of us as Paul writes in 1 Cor. 12:26, "If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy."

My own community of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, like many other communities, is engaged in a future focus process hoping for new life even



### ***The AMERICAN MONASTIC NEWSLETTER***

Submit any announcements or articles to:

Editor: Judith Sutura, OSB

Mount St. Scholastica, 801 S. 8th, Atchison, KS 66002

Email: [jsutura@mountosb.org](mailto:jsutura@mountosb.org)

For all address changes, membership payments, or any other ABA business, please contact the ABA secretary:

Email: [ambenacad@gmail.com](mailto:ambenacad@gmail.com)

*The American Monastic Newsletter* is published three times per year and it, as well as other ABA information, may be read online at:

***[www.americanbenedictine.org](http://www.americanbenedictine.org)***

while we deal with the chaos of the moment and fear of what lies ahead. Scripture and faith tell us that new life comes out of chaos and death. It is always difficult to let go of what we know, what has "always been this way" in our life history. However, life is about change, as we know from nature and our own past history.

Part of my professional background includes work with parishes, schools, and congregations in planning for the future. A starting point with each group is to look at their past to consider accomplishments, to tell stories of their shared history and faith, to raise the values that hold them together. Then they need to consider the current situation: their own needs, wants, hopes and dreams, as well as the reality of what is happening around them and how that impacts them. From there emerges a vision for who they are and can be, as well as what they can reasonably contribute to the kingdom of God as they move forward.

ABA has gone through changes since it was first formed in 1947. Changing from being an organization made up mostly of male monastics who worked in Benedictine institutions of higher learning, it grew to welcome others. The purpose of ABA, as stated in the 2010 updated constitution and by-laws, "exists to cultivate, study, and support the Benedictine heritage within contemporary culture. Further, the Academy sponsors and promotes disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research, writing and collaboration among its members. It serves as a catalyst inviting men and women to ponder creatively and to discuss the challenges to Benedictine values in the twenty-first century."

The updated constitution also reflects change in membership happening over time. Professed membership in ABA and attendance at conferences is dwindling and oblate membership is growing. The constitution stipulates that the board must be made up of at least one oblate. Currently, the vice president, Greg Peters, is an oblate and there are two other oblates serving on the board, Judith Valente and Gregory Evans.

Since my election to the board of directors in 2012, subsequent election to vice-president in 2016, and then president this past July, I have spent time pondering the purpose of ABA. I see in the

### *President's Message (continued)*

last sentence of the stated purpose a call to consider how this association is serving as a catalyst to ponder creatively and to discuss the challenges to Benedictine values in the twenty-first century. While we are basically an association of North Americans, we are affected by what is happening with our Benedictine sisters, brothers and oblates around the world. We cannot grow or thrive if we refuse to look at family members beyond our national boundaries. The world is too small for such myopic vision. "If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy" (1Cor. 12:26). It is time to consider questions such as the following. What gifts do Benedictines in Asia, Africa, Central and South America offer to monastics and oblates of North America? How do the challenges they face impact us and visa-versa? What gifts do Benedictines offer our world today? What study, what research will help us to address the challenges we face as the world community of Benedictines? What changes do we need to face if we are to be relevant in the future?

It is with this in mind that I would like to invite you to become a member of ABA if you are not already one, to renew your membership if you have yet to do that for 2019, and to invite other members of your community and your oblates to become members. We need to work together to address the challenges to Benedictine values in the twenty-first century.

Further, I want to invite you to put on your calendar now the dates for our next convention. It is July 16-19, 2020, at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. The theme is "2020: Seeing the World in a Single Ray of Light." We will reflect on our history, consider what is currently happening with Benedictine communities in other parts of the world, and ponder and discuss how ABA could creatively address challenges we face as part of the world community of Benedictines. We need to consider change that will lead to growth and enable us to move forward together. I hope you will join in the conversation.

Antoinette Purcell, OSB  
ABA president  
Our Lady of Grace - Beech Grove, Ind.  
antoinettep1964@gmail.com

### *Dialogue (continued from p. 1)*

Presentations were given by selected participants on the history of women's monasticism in the two faiths, understandings of contemplation and action, prayer forms and service to the world. Several presenters described efforts at making contemplative life relevant in contemporary culture, as well as how elements of the traditions are being shared across religions. Joint peacemaking efforts and environmental projects in places from the United States to Cambodia were examples of cooperation for the greater good. A session led by a Lutheran woman representing the World Council of Churches in Geneva, entitled "Religious Women Promoting the 'Feminine Genius'" (a title given by the PCID), focused on the importance of religious women in the faith life of a culture and the special gifts they bring.

Sister Christian summarized various elements she appreciated: "Small group conversations allowed time to realize and express the unique perspectives of women in their experience of monastic life. We discovered similarities in our concerns for the health of this life alongside strong hopes for the future of nuns. We see further dialogue as desirable for deepening our common love and understanding of the contemplative life and its implications for the world. Breaks and meals offered many great opportunities for informal conversations with women of diverse historical, cultural and religious experience. Best of all for me was being on the "bridge of understanding" with women whose desire for active contemplation shows itself in their loving activity in the world. It is a privilege and a pleasure that I could be a part of this experience."

A longer report of the event, written by Sister Judith, was published online by *Global Sisters Report* (Jan. 8, 2019, [www.globalsistersreport.org](http://www.globalsistersreport.org)). The headline on the Vatican website announced, "First international Buddhist-Christian dialogue for nuns asserts they can be powerful witness." Conversations around attracting new vocations spoke especially to the importance of being witnesses in the world: witnesses that joy and peace can be found in a life that counters consumerism and individualism; that people of different beliefs can welcome one another; that care for the common good transcends religions.

## CANON LAW COLUMN

### *CIB and Canon Law in the Past 4 Years*

The Benedictine order is ancient and widespread. However, there is little centralization. Rather, it is made up of many individual monasteries deeply rooted in their local geography and culture. Most of these monasteries are associated with one another through monastic congregations and federations. There are 2 international associations of Benedictines. For women, there is the *Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum* (CIB) and for men, the Benedictine Confederation. The CIB is actually part of the Benedictine Confederation. For a fuller explanation, see the canon law column in the October 2014 *American Monastic Newsletter*, entitled “*Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum* (CIB).”

In the last four years the activities of the CIB have intersected to a large extent with canon law. This began just prior to the 2014 CIB Symposium, which is held every 4 years, when the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (hereinafter CICALSAL) sent a letter along with a questionnaire to enclosed monasteries of nuns worldwide indicating the Congregation’s openness to revision of legislation on the contemplative consecrated life.

The questionnaire asked for input regarding various aspects of their lives, such as initial formation, enclosure, etc. In response to the expressed need of Benedictine nuns to discuss this questionnaire, at the 2014 CIB Symposium, Sister Scholastika Häring, a German Benedictine nun who is a canonist and an historian, gave a presentation on the questionnaire itself as well as giving an overview of legislation regarding enclosed nuns dating back to 1950 (*Sponsa Christi, 1950; Verbi Sponsa, 1999*). There were lively discussions at the symposium concerning what the questionnaire might mean for Benedictine nuns. A small group of Benedictine women, representing CIB, went to CICALSAL to address concerns about the questionnaire that were posed during the symposium.

Pope Francis, in June 2016, issued the apostolic constitution, *Vultum Dei quaerere* (VDQ, “Seeking the Face of God”), which addressed twelve matters of nuns’ enclosed monastic life. More on this document was in the canon law column in the February 2017

*American Monastic Newsletter*, entitled “*Vultum Dei quaerere* – apostolic constitution of Pope Francis published June 2016,” and the February 2018 column, “Recent Legislation from the Holy Father on Enclosed Women Religious (*Vultum Dei quaerere*) – Part I.”

This apostolic constitution was discussed by the CIB Administrative Council and then the CIB Conference of Delegates at their 2016 meeting in Assisi. Because we learned from VDQ that there would be a follow up “Instruction” to be issued by CICALSAL, we realized that not much could be done in the interim between VDQ and the issuance of the forthcoming Instruction. Nevertheless, after the Conference of Delegates’ meeting, the CIB deputed Sister Scholastika Häring and myself to go to CICALSAL to express concerns about some of the provisions of VDQ and to urge CICALSAL to seek input from the nuns who would be impacted by the coming Instruction. Also, we offered our own canonical expertise to the Congregation and suggested that there were also other canonists who were well versed in the canonical aspects of nuns’ lives. VDQ was again discussed during the CIB Conference of Delegates held in South Korea, seeking to understand more clearly what the Church was asking of nuns (*moniales*) in VDQ.

Finally, after two years of anticipation and waiting and wondering, CICALSAL issued the Instruction entitled, *Cor Orans* (praying heart) in May 2018. Major areas include formation, enclosure and federations. It is a rather long document with four main chapters: Chapter 1: The Autonomous Monastery; Chapter 2: The Federation of Monasteries; Chapter 3: Separation from the World; and Chapter 4: Formation.

The purpose of an Instruction according to canon 34, §1 of the Code of Canon Law is this: “Instructions clarify the precepts of laws and elaborate on and determine the methods to be observed in fulfilling them. They are given for the use of those whose duty it is to see that laws are executed and oblige them in the execution of the laws.”

In an unpublished response given to me by Sister Nancy Bauer, OSB (St. Benedict Monastery, St. Joseph, Minn.), a professor of canon law at The Catholic University of America, who has studied and written about VDQ and *Cor Orans*, she had this to



## Canon Law (continued from p. 4)

say: “As an instruction, *Cor Orans* determines the methods to be observed in fulfilling the laws given in *Vultum Dei quaerere*. It is, first of all, for the monasteries of nuns to implement the laws given in the apostolic constitution. The instruction explains how to implement those laws and obliges the monasteries to implement them.

During the 2018 CIB Symposium in Rome, Sister Scholastika Häring presented the main points of *Cor Orans*, which led to lengthy discussions about this new Instruction’s impact on the lives of nuns and the constitutions that govern them.

In a future canon law column, the directives of *Cor Orans* will be addressed. It will be the “Part II” that follows on the February 2018 canon law column in this publication.

*If you have a question or idea for a future column, feel free to contact Sister Lynn.*

Lynn McKenzie, OSB, JCL  
Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, Ala.  
lynnmckenzieosb@gmail.com

---

### CIB BOOK NOW AVAILABLE

At the 2018 CIB Symposium in Rome, Sister Scholastika Häring, OSB of the Abbey of St. Scholastika in Dinklage, Germany, gave insightful explanations regarding *Cor Orans*, implementing the Instruction of the Apostolic Constitution *Vultum Dei Quaerere* on women’s contemplative life. Sister Scholastika holds a doctorate in theology with a concentration on Canon Law from the Vallendar Philosophical and Theological University in Germany. She has become a valuable resource person to those communities of contemplative nuns seeking to implement *Cor Orans*.

At the 2014 symposium, she had presented an overview of her dissertation material on the founding of the *Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum* (CIB). The title of Sister Scholastika’s dissertation is:

*“There is no doubt that structures reflect values as well as a method.”: Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum (CIB) - Study on the juridical development of the relationship between the communities of Benedictine women, among each other and with the Confoederatio Benedictina (1965-2009)*

Now available in English, the book presents the development of the CIB from 1965 to the present, capturing how, over the years, a network of relationships was built among the Benedictine women from all over the world. In the translator’s preface, Sister Marianne Burkhard writes, “It is the story of women, faithful to their monastic call and to the Catholic Church, who have never given up finding new forms of cooperation. This story is still continuing in their search, supported by many of their Benedictine brothers, for an organization in which they would have rights equal to those of Benedictine men. It is also the story of how Benedictine men and women have developed a closer mutual understanding over the years.”

Sister Scholastika’s dissertation was originally published in German. The material was translated into English by Sister Marianne Burkhard, OSB of Rock Island, Ill. Sister Judith Sutera of Atchison, Ks., handled the editing, layout and self-publishing process.

If you have been involved in the CIB, you will certainly want a copy of this book. If you have never been involved, here is a wonderful opportunity to familiarize yourself with the development of the CIB over the years. Since this historical material will be of benefit to all for many years to come, you will certainly want a copy for your monastery library.

Special gratitude certainly goes to Sister Scholastika Häring for her work on this masterpiece. She has done a valuable service for all of us. Likewise, the untiring, year-long translating efforts of Sister Marianne Burkhard and the service of Sister Judith Sutera to get this book edited and published deserve our profound appreciation.

The cost of the book is \$20 US dollars, plus shipping. To order your copy, please go to <<http://www.lulu.com/shop/haring-scholastika/the-founding-of-the-communio-internationalis-benedictinarum/paperback/product-23921857.html>> and click on “Add to Cart.” If you have any problem with this link, simply go to [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) and enter “Scholastika Haring” in the search bar. If you have any questions, please write to Lynn McKenzie, OSB at [lynnmckenzieosb@gmail.com](mailto:lynnmckenzieosb@gmail.com).

Sister Judith Ann Heble, OSB

## COMING EVENTS

---

### ***National Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors Convention***

*St. Benedict Center - Schuyler, Neb.*

*July 5 -10*

Oblate directors and assistant/associate directors of oblates are encouraged to attend along with two oblates from each monastery. If a director is unable to attend, one or two designated oblates may still attend as representatives. This year's theme is "Continuing the Sacred Tradition: Benedictine Spirituality Today and Tomorrow." Speakers will be Sister Rosann Ocken, OSB (Immaculata Monastery - Norfolk, Neb.) Sister Marielle Frigge, OSB (Sacred Heart - Yankton, S.D.) Minn.) and Father Joel Macul, OSB (Christ the King - Schuyler, Neb.)

See details and registration at <[www.naabod.org](http://www.naabod.org)>

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Monastic Worship Forum***

*Our Lady of Grace - Beech Grove, Ind.*

*July 1 - 5*

Monastic liturgists and musicians are invited to the biennial meeting featuring Megan McKenna, theologian, storyteller, spiritual writer and lecturer. She will present and engage participants in reflection and discussion on the topic of "Liturgy and Justice." She will focus on different sacraments, with her presentations based in scripture and liturgical expressions of lived experience.

Contact [dmoore@csbsju.edu](mailto:dmoore@csbsju.edu)  
[www.monasticworshipforum.org](http://www.monasticworshipforum.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Monastic Oblate Institute***

*Sophia Center - Atchison, Ks.*

*July 11 - 14*

This annual institute is for oblates of any monastery who wish to learn more about their monastic calling and connect with other oblates. The speaker for this year's institute will be Sister Judith Sutera, OSB (Mount St. Scholastica - Atchison, Ks.). The author and oblate director will blend her two fields of psychology and monastic theology to address the topic of humility and its interpretation in contemporary life. Contact your oblate director for the registration

material or, for more information: <[maryliz@mountosb.org](mailto:maryliz@mountosb.org)>

[www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org](http://www.sophiaspiritualitycenter.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***International Medieval Studies Congress***

*Western Michigan University - Kalamazoo, Mich.*

*May 9 -12*

The American Benedictine Academy and the Center for Cistercian and Monastic Studies are among the many organizations offering presentations of interest to monastic scholars. The congress brings together more than two thousand people from around the world for sessions on all things medieval. More information on the congress is at their website: <<https://wmich.edu/medievalcongress>>.

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Conference on the History of Women Religious***

*Saint Mary's College - Notre Dame, Ind.*

*June 23 - 26*

Meeting every three years, CHWR is focusing on the theme "Commemoration, Preservation, Celebration." Religious, academics and independent scholars in the fields of history, sociology, literature, anthropology, theology, gender studies, visual/creative arts, material culture, religious studies, and communications will share their study of how the history of women religious has been commemorated, preserved and celebrated.

Program and registration are at <<https://cushwa.nd.edu/events/chwr2019/>>

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***James Lloyd Breck Conference on Monastism and the Church***

*Nashotah House Seminary - Nashotah, Wisc.*

*June 13-14*

This year's conference theme, "The Monastic Call of Every Christian," will explore the idea that the foundation of all forms of religious life, consecrated or lay, is the sacrament of baptism. Held at Nashotah House, the conference will provide an intimate forum to investigate this reality and its implications for the life and ministry of all Christians.



## NEWS

The sisters of St. Gertrude's Monastery, formerly located in Ridgely, Md., are now in their new home in Newark, Del. The address is: 25 Gender Road, Newark, DE 19713.

\*\*\*\*\*

After decades of generous and able service (1983-2018), Father Terrence Kardong has retired as editor of the *American Benedictine Review*. The new editor is Sister Colleen Maura McGrane, OSB, of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Mo. In her first communication to the editorial board members, she made a request that could apply to all readers. "Consider writing or encouraging someone you know to write an article for ABR. We need a balance of scholarly articles and thoughtful articles concerning lived monastic life and the intersection between monasticism, church, and culture. The guidelines for writing articles are found on our new website."

The website is <[www.americanbenedictinereview.org](http://www.americanbenedictinereview.org)>. It contains information about the publication and submissions and also is a portal to the Hathi Trust Digital Library's archives. All issues, from volume 1(1950) to five years previous to present, are available in digital form.

New contact information for ABR:  
Sister Colleen Maura McGrane, Editor  
*The American Benedictine Review*  
Benedictine Sisters or Perpetual Adoration  
31970 State Highway P  
Clyde, MO 64432  
660-254-1307

\*\*\*\*\*

Thomas Keating, OCSO, died on Oct. 25, 2018, at St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Mass., at the age of 95. He had been abbot there from 1961 to 1981 and later was part of St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colo.

He was one of the chief proponents and teachers of centering prayer. He and other monks wanted to make the ancient traditions of contemplation and silent prayer of the heart accessible and meaningful for contemporary Christians. Through his writings,

retreats and educational videos, centering prayer became a powerful and influential movement in monastic and lay spirituality. His organization, Contemplative Outreach Ltd., now supports and trains thousands of individuals and prayer groups in chapters in 39 countries.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks to a generous endowment of \$3.5 million by the St. Benedict Servants of Christ in 2017, the Rev. Dr. Greg Peters has been appointed the Servants of Christ Research Professor of Monastic Studies and Ascetical Theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Wisconsin. Founded in 1842, Nashotah House is an Anglican seminary founded in the Anglo-Catholic tradition along monastic lines, celebrating in community the daily offices of Morning and Evening Prayer and daily celebration of Holy Eucharist. The seminary will also sponsor annually the James Lloyd Breck Conference on Monasticism and the Church beginning in June 2019. As this is not a full time position, Peters will also continue to live and teach at Biola University in California.

\*\*\*\*\*

In recent elections, Fr. Charles Albanese, OCSO, was elected abbot of St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colo., and Fr. Christian Leisy, OSB, became abbot of Christ in the Desert in Abiquiu, N.M. The community of Mount St. Mary's Abbey in Wrentham, Mass., chose Sister Sofia Millican, OCSO, as their abbess. Father Joseph Tedesco, OCSO, was named *superior ad nutum* of Mepkin Abbey in Monck's Corner, S.C., upon the retirement of the previous abbot.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Federation of St. Scholastica will celebrate 100 years in 2022. As a means of sharing Benedictine life as a vision unfolding, the federation is offering a multi-featured website to share the life and values of the member communities. It includes weekly reflections, podcasts and other resources and may be found at <<https://scholastica-celebration.org/>>.

\*\*\*\*\*

In mid-January 2019, the governing body of the *Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum* (CIB), the worldwide association of female Benedictines, met at the Benedictine Abtei St. Scholastika in Dinklage, Germany. At this meeting of the committee with its moderator, Sister Lynn McKenzie, OSB and Abbot Primate Gregory Polin, the main topic was the various possibilities for cooperation between women's and men's monastic communities, and between men and women in the Church at large.

\* \* \* \* \*

The meeting of Benedictine abbots and prioresses was held on February 22-25 at St. Bernard Abbey in Cullman, Ala., with the sisters at Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman offering hospitality to the female participants. More than 75 monastic superiors representing more than 2,700 Benedictine men and women in the Americas attended the meeting. The keynote speakers were Abbot Primate Gregory Polan, OSB and Sister Susan Hutchens, O.S.B. (Rock Island, Ill). The topic of their presentations was the virtue and practice of hope under the theme, "As We Wait in Joyful Hope." In addition to meetings, other events included vespers and festive meals with the two local monastic communities. There were also reports on The Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM), *The American Benedictine Review* (ABR), The *Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum* (CIB), The International Commission on Benedictine Education (ICBE), Monastic Interreligious Dialogue (DIMMID), the Benedictine Development Forum and the Monastic Worship Forum. At the business meeting of the abbots the new schema from Sant'Anselmo on the subsidium and solidarity funds was presented. Prioresses also held a separate business meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*

As part of the canonization process for Dorothy Day, every word of Dorothy Day's 6,800 page collection of diaries must be transcribed from the handwritten to MS Word documents, page by page. A global team of volunteer transcribers has brought us to 40% completion. We need your help to reach 100% by Labor Day, 2019. Please email <jkorgen@korgen.associates> if you are interested in transcribing.

Workload and deadlines are negotiable. After a 20 minute telephone orientation, you'll receive a 10-page diary excerpt to transcribe. If you want to continue, we'll send more. If 408 volunteers each transcribe 10 pages, we'll be done by Easter!

Jeffry Korgen

\* \* \* \* \*

Saint John's School of Theology is offering its annual Monastic Institute's Benedictine Studies Program with two short courses. Each course will invite a variety of people (monastics, graduate students, laity) to engage in further conversations and education about monastic spirituality and life. The time will include many opportunities for prayer, socializing and reflection, with the option of each participant receiving one credit in monastic studies and spirituality at the School of Theology and Seminary.

The first course will be "The Age of the Cloister: Western Monasticism c. 1050-1350," led by Colman O'Clabaigh, OSB, from June 17-21. The class will explore the remarkable developments in male and female Christian monastic communities that occurred in Western Europe between the mid-eleventh and the fourteenth centuries.

From June 25 to 28, Columba Stewart, OSB will be the presenter for "Before Benedict: Roots and Shoots." He will give his insights on the surprising origins and early development of Christian asceticism and monasticism in their formative cultural contexts.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are still being sought for a special issue of the journal *Religions* that will look at the history, sociology, and theology of monasticism in order to formulate constructive suggestions for the future of the institution. Details about the specific topic areas and instructions for submission were in the October, 2018 *Monastic Newsletter*. Research articles, review articles, as well as short communications are invited. Submitted manuscripts should not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere (except conference proceedings papers). Manuscripts should be submitted online at [www.mdpi.com](http://www.mdpi.com) by registering and getting the submission form. Please visit the "Instructions for Authors" page before submitting a manuscript. Deadline for submissions is June 1, 2019.



## *Planning Committee for 2021 World Oblate Congress*

The committee coordinating the next International Oblate Congress met from October 27 to Nov. 4, 2018, at Sant'Anselmo in Rome to begin the planning process. The international Congress takes place every four years and includes oblates from across the globe, as well as oblate directors.

The 2021 planning group chose "Moving Forward: Living the Wisdom of the Rule" as the theme for the next congress. The group emphasized the importance of exploring ways in which the Rule represents a living tradition for the 21st century. The 2021 theme builds on progress made at the 2017 Congress, where the nearly 300 delegates in attendance adopted a five-point Vision Plan, culled from several small-group discussions about the future of oblate life across the globe.

The planning team consists of more than 20 oblates, including several who helped plan the 2017 Congress, as well as Father Pachomius of Sant'Anselmo. The team represents Benedictines from a dozen countries across four continents.

Father Benoit Allogia, a French-born monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey in the United States, who now resides at Sant'Anselmo, is in charge of overall planning for the new Congress. He succeeds Father Edward Linton of Saint Meinrad Archabbey (USA), who has a new assignment at the Institute for Continuing Theological Education in Rome.

The planning committee also met with Abbot Primate Gregory Polan, who announced that he and the superiors of several Benedictine monasteries are considering establishing an Oblate Commission. Abbot Gregory described the proposed commission as recognition of the growing number of oblates across the globe, and the important role they have in helping to pass on the Benedictine charism.

For the first time in history, there are more oblates than monks and nuns – 25,000 oblates to 22,000 professed Benedictines. Those numbers date back several years and likely undercount the actual number of oblates today.

Among other topics, the 2021 Congress will address such issues as oblate formation, appropriate roles for oblates within their monasteries, struggles posed by the shrinking number of professed Benedictines, and effective ways in the 21st century

for evangelizing the Benedictine values of listening, community, consensus, humility, hospitality, prayer and praise.

The next congress will take place from Nov. 6-12, 2021, at the Fraternal Domus convention center outside of Rome. The planning team will keep oblates informed of developments related to the Congress, such as the selection of keynote speakers, through social media updates and a quarterly newsletter, as well as a Google Docs page that the team is in the process of setting up.

Judith Valente, OblSB  
Communications Director for the 2021 Congress

### MONASTIC STUDIES GRANTS

ABA members are invited to apply for Monastic Studies Grants, which provide funds to support projects that "cultivate, support and transmit the Benedictine heritage within contemporary culture." Applications will be selected on the basis of quality of the proposal (originality, feasibility, clarity of purpose), potential benefit for monastics, and relevance to the purposes of the Academy.

More details are on the ABA website.

To apply for a grant please supply the following information:

Name, address, phone number, e-mail

Religious or academic affiliation (if any)

A brief description of the proposed project

The goal(s) of the proposed project

An itemized budget which includes:

total cost of project

sources of funding other than the ABA

sum requested from the ABA

Send completed grant applications to:

Greg Peters

THI, Biola University

13800 Biola Avenue

La Mirada, CA 90639

or submitted by email as a Word document to  
greg.peters@biola.edu

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Renouncing Violence* by Mary Margaret Funk, OSB, 2018, Liturgical Press, Collegetown, Minn., 144 pp., \$16.95, ISBN 978-0-8146-8459-7.

While I was hoping for a handbook for the world's political leaders on how to end the nuclear weapons proliferation, the arms race in outer space, and all wars here, I did find something else well worth pondering and using. For all who have read Sister Meg Funk's other books, this one packs the same challenge to live a more disciplined life. Who of us would not benefit from becoming more God-conscious, rooting out our afflictions, and seeking God in humility? This small book is packed with wisdom from the monastic tradition on how to live its motto, "pax."

Violence in all its forms requires a personal response and Meg Funk provides plenty of avenues we can each pursue. She shares her own experience of healing from a deep anger aimed at someone she encountered often. Her method is all about positioning one's self to be attentive to God, who does the transformative work, as opposed to trying to change another person. Knowing healing takes time, it is based on a deep faith that nurtures calmness.

She shares her method of renunciation that she knows through the monastic tradition. "When our way of life is renunciation, then it's natural to renounce violence. Renouncing is a poised but active way of living. We pause and then lean in to the right and good rather than react from our default defenses."

Her thoughts on the revival of the use of holy water are a fresh look at this gesture for blessing. We can use holy water for protection, to deal with evil, to make holy. I for one was convinced by her reflection to get a bottle of it to keep handy, and use.

This quote from Eleanor Roosevelt seems to fit the message of this book, "It isn't enough to talk about peace, one must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it, one must work at it."

Barbara McCracken, OSB  
Atchison, Ks.

---

*Faces of Easter: Meeting the Paschal Mystery in the People Around Us* by Albert Holtz, 2019, Liturgical

Press, Collegetown, Minn., 139 pp., \$16.95, ISBN 978-0-8146-8465-8.

While books of short meditations with reflection questions are extremely popular during Lent, we see few that celebrate each day of the Easter season. The extension of the Paschal Mystery into this season blends resurrection joy with the lingering memory of suffering and death. Father Albert Holtz, who lives and teaches in Newark, one of the most challenging urban environments in the country, puts real faces into his storytelling, blending small moments and big events to illustrate each day's liturgy with very personal experiences. He offers us such characters as the teen on the edge of despair or the mothers grieving murdered sons and deftly associates them with the season of new life.

His stories are short and vivid, his questions for personal reflection creative and stimulating. This year, extend the customary daily Lenten meditation to seven more weeks with a spiritual master who will draw you in and draw more from your own soul.

---

*A Critical Study of the Rule of St. Benedict: Vol. 3* by Adalbert de Vogüé, OSB, translated by Colleen Maura McGrane, OSB, 2019, New City Press, Hyde Park, N.Y., 354 pp., \$49.95, ISBN 978-1-56548-601-0.

The long anticipated third volume of this master work is now available in English, thanks to the tireless efforts of Sister Colleen McGrane in translating it. This volume covers the topics of liturgy, sleeping arrangements and the penal code (chapters 8-20, 22-30, and 42-46).

These chapters, especially the ones on the arrangement of prayers, are not most people's favorite or most inspirational parts of the Rule. In the manner customary to de Vogüé, they are exhaustively analyzed with numerous charts and diagrams to assist in the process. Once again as in the previous two volumes, the translator is meticulous in presenting the work in English that is clear and comprehensible. St. Benedict's dependence on, and departures from, his sources and the tradition will be especially enlightening for students of the Rule.

**DON'T FORGET THAT ALL MEMBERSHIPS PAID THROUGH 2018 WERE DUE FOR RENEWAL JAN 1.**

*The following are the current members of the American Benedictine Academy with dues paid through 2019.*

Abdala, OSB, S. Julia Elena - Bristow, VA  
Allen, OblSB, Gerry - Bellevue, NE  
Ambre, Matthew - Chicago, IL  
Bethke, Rev. Janell - Vancouver, WA  
Biermaier, OSB, S. Ann Marie - St. Joseph, MN  
Bogue, OSB, S. Edith - Duluth, MN  
Branigan, OSB, S. Renée - Richardton, ND  
Bratrsovsky, S. Mary OSB - Lisle, IL  
Brennan, Donald - Manchester, NJ  
Burkhard, OSB, S. Marianne - Peoria, IL  
Burley, OSB, S. Joanna - Bristow, VA  
Bush, Jacqueline - Maplewood, MN  
Cahill, OblSB, Joanne  
Carlson, Helen - Richfield, MN  
Carrillo, OSB, S. Elizabeth - Atchison, KS  
Carruth, OSB, S. Shawn - Crookston, MN  
Christenson, Katherine - Berea, KY  
Coffey, OSB, S. Benita - Chicago, IL  
Connolly, Joseph - So. Portland, ME  
DeAngeli, OSB, S. Maria - Fort Smith, AR  
Dieker, OSB, S. Alberta - Mt. Angel, OR  
Dirkes, OblSB, Paul - Daphne, AL  
Dunham, Laura - Riverside, CA  
Dwyer, OSB, S. Cecilia - Bristow, VA  
Evard, OSB, S. Virginia - Winnepeg, MB  
Evans, OblSB, Gregory - Manassas, VA  
Evans, OSB, S. Robin Lynn - Ferdinand, IN  
Fallon, OSB, S. Ramona - Pierre, SD  
Feehan, OSB, S. Mary - Elizabeth, NJ  
Feiss, OSB, Fr. Hugh - Jerome, ID  
Forman, OSB, S. Mary - Collegeville, MN  
Fowler, Susan - Champaign, IL  
Fox, OSB, S. Ruth - Richardton, ND  
Funk, OSB, S. Mary Margaret - Beech Grove, IN  
Glasenapp, OSB, John - St. Meinrad, IN  
Goetz, OSB, S. Janet - Erie, PA  
Gudger, OblSB, Cheryl - Port Orchard, WA  
Heble, OSB, S. Judith Ann - Lisle, IL  
Hensell, OSB, Fr. Eugene - St. Meinrad, IN  
Hollermann, OSB, S. Ephrem - St. Joseph, MN  
Hooks, OSB, S. Susan - Nashville, IN  
Hunkler, OSB, S. Marie - Wahpeton, ND  
James, Valerie Lee - Tucson, AZ  
Johnson, OblSB, Jim - Raleigh, NC  
Joyce, OSB, Fr. Timothy - Hingham, MA  
Jung, OSB, S. Virginia - Chicago, IL  
Kardong, OSB, Fr. Terrence - Richardton, ND  
Kehrwald, OSB, S. Jennifer - Yankton, SD  
Keller, Will - Cleveland, OH  
Kirk, OSB, S. Patricia - Lutherville, MD  
Klassen, OSB, Abbot John - Collegeville, MN  
Kodell, OSB, Abbot Jerome - Subiaco, AR  
Kosin, OSB, S. Christine - Erie, PA  
Lavandero, Ramon - Salt Lake City, UT  
LaVorgna, Sarah - Indianapolis, IN  
McEachern, William - Vancouver, BC  
McGrane, OSB, S. Colleen - Clyde, MO  
McKenzie, OSB, S. Lynn - Cullman, AL  
Meadows, OSB, S. Elizabeth - Cullman, AL  
Miller, Mari - Woodburn, OR  
Moorse, OSB, Fr. Dunstan - Collegeville, MN  
Neuman, OSB, Fr. Matthias - Beech Grove, IN  
Neville, OSB, S. Eileen - Yankton, SD  
Norris, OblSB, Kathleen - Honolulu, HI  
Oberembt,, OSB, S. Doris - Yankton, SD  
Odermann, OSB, Fr. Valerian - Richardton, ND  
Okholm, OblSB, Rev. Dennis - Costa Mesa, CA  
Oliver, OSB, Br. Richard - Collegeville, MN  
O’Ryan, OSB, S. Mary Ann - Chicago, IL  
Osika, OSB, S. Lynn - Yankton, SD  
Paschke, OSB, S. Lenore - Marshall, MN  
Peters, OblSB, Rev. Greg - La Mirada, CA  
Peterson, OblSB, Kenneth - Seattle, WA  
Piazza, Thomas - Richmond, CA  
Powers, OSB, S. Bridgette - St. Joseph, MN  
Purcell, Antoinette - Beech Groopve, IN  
Ranek, OSB, S. Jeanne - Yankton, SD  
Raverty, OSB, Br. Aaron - Collegeville, MN  
Rea, James - Lincoln, NE  
Richmond, OblSB, Rev. Donald - Loomis, CA  
Rittmueller, Tracy - Sauk Rapids, MN  
Romey, OSB, S. Linda - Erie, PA  
Rudolph, OSB, S. Susan - St. Joseph, MN  
Sautner, OSB, S. Adel - Pierre, SD  
Schlabach, Gerald - St. Paul, MN  
Schumacher, OSB, S. Johanna - Watertown, ND  
Schumacher, OSB, S. Theresa - St. Joseph, MN  
Shannon, CJ, Fr. Martin - Orleans, MA  
Smith, OSB, S. Lynne - Middleton, WI  
Smudde, Peter - Bloomington, IL  
Spindler, Dr. Audrey - San Diego, CA  
Stasiak, OSB, Rt. Rev. Kurt - St. Meinrad, IN  
Stoner, OSB, S. Dorothy - Erie, PA  
Studzinski, OSB, Fr. Ray - Washington, DC  
Suhr, OSB, S. Laura - St. Joseph, MN  
Sutera, OSB, S. Judith - Atchison, KS  
Swan, OSB, S. Laura - Lacey, WA  
Tewes, OSB, S. Mary - Villa Hills, KY  
Tomaine, Rev. Jane - Mountinside, NJ  
Upton, RSM Julia - Syosset, NY  
Valente, OblSB, Judith - Normal, IL  
Varga, S. Hildegard - Paris, AR  
Verhalen, O.Cist., Fr. Peter - Irving, TX  
Visel, OSB, S. Jeanna - Ferdinand, IN  
Walgenbach, OSB, S. Mary David - Middleton, WI  
Wambach, OSB, S. Anne - Erie, PA  
Ward, OSB, Fr. Daniel - Silver Springs, MD  
Wenstrup, OSB, S. Mary Catherine - Villa Hills, KY  
Wisiewski, OblSB, Kristen - Branchburg, NJ  
Witulski, OSB, S. Pat - Erie, PA  
Wolff-Salin, RSCJ, S. Mary - Marschfield, MA  
Zabel, Susan - Rice Lake, WI

## YOUR ABA MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS

The ABA website, *The American Monastic Newsletter*, awards and grants for monastic studies, and conventions (for which members receive a registration discount)



### American Benedictine Academy Individual Membership/Renewal Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
(If not USA)

Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Community \_\_\_\_\_

(or) Oblate Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

(or) Academic/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any areas of interest/expertise you wish to share with the Academy?

Please check if you wish to participate in one or more of the ABA sections:

Monastic Research \_\_\_\_\_ Visual Arts \_\_\_\_\_ Archives \_\_\_\_\_ Library \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$35 for one year membership \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 for two year membership \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Remit to:**

American Benedictine Academy  
C/O Robin Lynn Evans, OSB  
802 E. 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Ferdinand, IN 47532

**ABA Use Only**

Date Received	Amount	Check #/Cash	Year Term