



June 2018

CONTENTS

- Letter from Our Oblate Director
- Article: A Nurse for All Seasons
- Lectio Divina Reflection: "*The living Spirit is within You*"
- 2018 Mount Michael Student Oblates
- Meeting Dates & Special Events
- Oblate Ministry Updates
 - Mount Michael Festival
 - Christmas Giving Baskets
 - 4th Saturday Book Discussion
 - Snacks
 - Food for Soul & Body
- Contact Information

Letter from Our Oblate Director

Dear Oblates,

As Monks and Oblates of Mount Michael Abbey we try to live each day "Seeking God". This daily encounter involves communication, turning to the other in community, and conversion, each day to move to the cave of the heart for silence and solitude, so that we can move out to our brothers and sisters in peace and service.

Saint Benedict fled to the cave to be the hermit, but was called out by the Spirit to encounter God in the communities which we form to "Seek God".

Each day encounter God in the burning bush of your heart. This will lead us to encounter God in the brothers and sisters with whom we live and meet.

To "Seek God" in The Rule involves this deep encounter with our brothers, the stranger, and all humankind. Everyone you encounter should be treated like "a vessel of the altar." The sick should be treated with compassion, so that they may be "truly served as Christ."

"All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ." Listen and encounter the young and respect the elders for they also bring us God's word. "If you have a dispute with someone make peace with him before the sun goes down." "And finally, never lose hope in God's mercy."

The grace for these true encounters with the Divine is a gift of the Spirit. Thank God for the gift, unwrap the gift and use it to come to the service of your brothers and sisters.

Our encounter in seeking God takes place in the ordinary activities of our lives, but they transform the ordinary into the holy.

I wish you a blessed summer, and hope to see you at the July 8th Vespers and picnic with the Monastic community. Peace,

Brother Jerome Kmiecik, OSB

Excerpt from, "A Nurse for All Seasons", found in "THE TABLET", by Gosia Brykczynska, April 28, 2018 issue:

A Nurse for All Seasons

Just hours before the forty-fifth anniversary of her death, the Venerable Hanna Chrzanowska became the first lay registered nurse and the first Benedictine oblate since the Middle Ages to be declared Blessed.



The beautification took place in the Polish city of Krakow and marks the latest stage in recognition of the grace-filled life of a talented and highly intelligent woman, full of zest for life and with a legendary sense of humor.

Her many friends, colleagues, former students and patients initiated the process of canonization. They became convinced Hanna was a special soul - a Christian example for all to appreciate, a saint. The process of canonization was initiated in 1995 and opened by Krakow diocese in 1998. The cause proceeded extremely quickly, even though Hanna was a lay person who was neither a martyr nor a Religious, nor even a member of an established church movement. It was her nursing colleagues and former students who drove the promotions of the cause.

So far as we know, Hanna had no extraordinary mystical experiences. Hers was no sugary-coated piety, but a firmly feet-on-the-ground joyful acquiescence in the will and love of God. She was born in Warsaw in 1902 into a mixed Catholic/Protestant family that had achieved considerable success in industry and land ownership. Her grandparents had set up a school for apprentices and health center for poor children in Warsaw; her aunt founded a children's hospital.

Hanna suffered from respirator and immune system deficiencies as a child and spent considerable time in the hospital. In 1920, she was among the first women in Poland to attend nursing school. She went on to become an instructor at the University School of Nurses and Hygienists, editor of the *Journal of Polish Nursing* and she helped to form the Catholic Association of Polish Nurses. She also helped prepare the first nursing legislation for the Polish state and was vice-president of the Polish nursing association, all while supporting and training the next community of nurses.

During the Second World War, Hanna's father died at Sachsenhausen concentration camp and her brother was killed in the Katyn massacre. She remained in Poland, where her work with refugees contributed significantly to the avoidance of mass homelessness and starvation in Krakow.

It was in Krakow during the darkest days of the Cold War that Hanna established the work for which she is best remembered. The unique parish-based system of nursing care she coordinated reached out to the poorest and most marginalized. It put her Gospel values into practice, devoting her gifts as a nurse at the service of those who needed them most, with quiet, cheerful determination. "From the beginning, we tried to base our work on the words of the Gospel, where so much is written about Christ's attitude toward the sick, just like our own patients with rheumatism, paralysis, or those suffering from cancer, indeed exactly like those whom the hand of Christ once touched," she said. She died on April 29, 1971. Karol Jozef Wojtyla, then Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow, celebrated her funeral.

To support her creative nursing spirituality, Hanna became a Benedictine oblate of Tyniec Abbey, which helped her deepen her already deep appreciation of prayer and involvement in Catholic activism. She was a devout practicing Catholic, who saw herself as being "single for the Lord", but she was surrounded and sustained by a veritable community of saints. She did not become who she was destined to be in isolation.

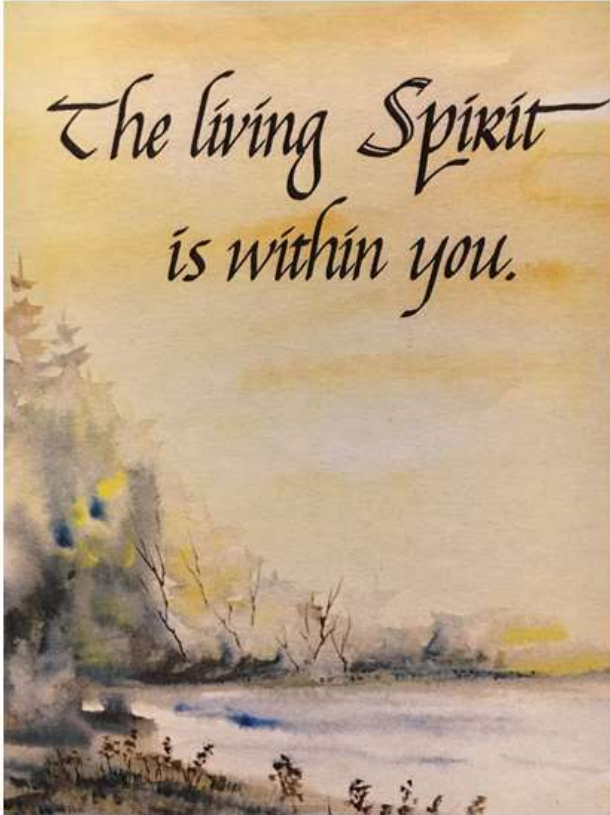
Some of these saints have been recognized by the Church - for instance, Pope Saint John Paul II; Servant of God Maria Epstein; Servant of God Teresa Strzembosz; and Venerable Servant of God Jrzy Ciesielski. There were also so many unsung saints who worked along side her, and fellow Benedictine oblate Alian Rumun.

Many Catholics still believe that to be considered a real - that is, an officially Vatican-approved and canonized - saint you have to have been dead for at least a couple hundred years. More ordinary, non-levitating saints, who during their time on Earth worked as farmers or factory workers or run homeless shelters, tend not to be considered "the right stuff". In fact, Pope Francis reminds us in his recent exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, holiness is for all of us, and Heaven is full of holy souls who led quite ordinary lives in extraordinary ways; butchers, bakers, bridge builders - and nurses.

Hanna's memoirs, written at the request of her parish nurses, are being published in Poland to coincide with her beatification, together with an insightful essay, "A Nurse's Examination of Conscience". She was a very private person and her papers were burnt immediately after her death - at her request - but enough material has survived to give us a glimpse of her deep and distinct spirituality. Hanna would tell her nurses, "What dignity belongs to our profession! Christ in us serves as Christ in the other person." It was this that elevated nursing - as Hanna would add gleefully, "Fleas and all" - from a task to a joyful service.



Lectio Divina Reflection



God for us, we call you Father.
God alongside us, we call you Jesus.
God within us, we call you Holy Spirit.

You are the Eternal Mystery
That enables, enfolds, and
Enlivens all things,
Even us and even me.

The psalmist asked,
Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your Presence?
If I go to the heavens, you are there.
If I make my bed in the depths,
You are there.

*Jesus came and stood among them.
He said, Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me,
So I am sending you.
After saying this, He breathed
On them and said: Receive
The Holy Spirit,
God within us.*



2018 Mount Michael Student Oblates

We are blessed to welcome this year's Student Oblates to Mount Michael Abbey! The students were received as Benedictine Oblates in the chapel. After posing for a photo with Abbot Michael the student Oblates and their guests enjoyed a reception in the Abbey with the monastic community. Congratulations and a warm welcome to our newest Oblates.



Meeting Dates & Special Events

Please keep these meeting dates and special events in mind. Oblate meetings are the 2nd Sunday of the month unless noted. Lectio & the *Lectio Matters* book discussion are the 4th Saturday of the month unless noted.

We will use the book, *HOW to LIVE - What the Rule of Saint Benedict Teaches Us About Happiness, Meaning and Community*, by Judith Valente (ISBN: 978-1-57174-798-3) during the upcoming year during our Sunday Oblate meetings. We will discuss chapters 1 & 2 at during our 3 PM Oblate meeting on September 9.

- **JUL 8 - PICNIC Dinner with the Monks**
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
 - After Vespers, Picnic Dinner in the Abbey, Please bring a salad or dessert to share - the rest of the meal is provided by the Monks
- **SEP 9 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey
 - 2:30 - Novice Meeting
 - 3:00 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapters 1 & 2)
 - 4:30 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **SEP 16**

- Mount Michael Fall Festival

- Oblates work the Flea Market during the festival, various times are available for sign up - Please volunteer

- **SEP 22**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **OCT 14 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey
 - 2:30 - Novice Meeting
 - 3:00 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 3)
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks & Receive New Oblates in the Chapel
 - 6:00 (approx.) - Return to Abbey for Social
- **OCT 27**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **NOV 11 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey (*Please note we begin our Winter meeting hours*)
 - 1:00 - Novice Meeting
 - 1:30 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 4)
 - 3:00 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **NOV 24**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **DEC 9 - Advent Retreat** In lieu of our regular Oblate and Novice meetings, there will be a special Advent Retreat!
 - OPTIONS prior to the start of the Retreat include:
 - 9:30 AM - Eucharist in the Chapel followed by free time & prayer
 - 11:15 - Brunch in the Abbey
 - 1:00 - Oblate Retreat in the Abbey
 - 3:00 - Christmas Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **DEC 29**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **JAN 13 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey
 - 1:00 - Novice Meeting
 - 1:30 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 5)
 - 3:00 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **JAN 26**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **FEB 10 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey
 - 1:00 - Novice Meeting
 - 1:30 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 6)
 - 3:00 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **FEB 23**

- 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
- 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
- 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion in the Guest House
- **MAR 3 - Lenten Retreat**, 1st Sunday, location TBA
 - 2:30 - In lieu of our regular Oblate and Novice meetings, there will be a special Lenten Retreat!
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **MAR 17**, 3rd Sunday **Dinner with the Monks**
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
 - After Vespers, Dinner in the Abbey entirely provided by the Monks
- **MAR 23**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion
- **APR 14 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** in the Abbey (*Please note we begin our Summer meeting hours*)
 - 2:30 - Novice Meeting
 - 3:00 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 7)
 - 4:30 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks in the Chapel
- **APR 27**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion
- **MAY 5 - Novice & Oblate Meetings** 1st Sunday (due to Mother's Day) in the Abbey
 - 2:30 - Novice Meeting
 - 3:00 - Oblate Meeting (*How to Live* chapter 8)
 - 4:30 - Social
 - 5:15 - Vespers with the Monks & **Receive New Oblates** in the Chapel
- **MAY 25**
 - 8:00 - Morning Prayer & Eucharist in the Chapel
 - 9:00 - Lectio Divina in the Guest House
 - 10:00 - Lectio Matters Book Discussion
- **JUN - Pilgrimage to Yankton, SD - date & details TBA**



Oblate Ministry Updates

All are welcome to participate and contribute to our Oblate Ministries. Ministry opportunities will be discussed at the monthly meetings.

- **Mount Michael Fall Festival** - The annual Mount Michael Fall Festival is on Sunday, September 16, 2018. Oblates staff the Flea Market during the festival. Please sign up to help with this fun event at one of our Oblate meetings. It's a great opportunity for our guests to meet our Benedictine Oblate community.
- **Christmas Giving Baskets** - Oblates donate to the annual Christmas Giving Baskets. The baskets are distributed to brighten up Christmas for families in our community to help them through the season and to let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers. THANK YOU for all your generous donations in the past! We will gather donations again this year as we near the Advent season.
- **4th Saturday of the Month Book Discussion** - All are welcome and encouraged to join the oblate book discussion group. We are currently reading *Lectio Matters - Before the Burning Bush* by Sister Mary Margaret Funk, OSB. (ISBN 978-0-8146-3505-6) We will continue discussing this wonderful book when we

resume our 4th Saturday of the Month book discussions. Please see the *Meeting Dates & Special Events* section above for dates.

- **Snacks** - Our Oblate meeting snacks are provided by various Oblates during the year. Kindly sign up at one of our meetings to bring some treats to share. Many thanks for your hospitality.
- **Food for Soul & Body** - A wonderful and prayerful time was had by all who attended our Lectio and lunch sessions during the past year. Brother Jerome hosted a number of these events at the Guest House. Several tables of guests were led by Oblates in Lectio Divina before lunch. This is a great opportunity for guests to learn about the Mount Michael Oblate program. Lunch was served after Lectio, and of course, there was ample time for shopping in the Guest House and the Flea Market. Plans are to continue hosting Lectio and lunch, Food for Soul & Body, sessions. Lectio Divina begins at 10:30 AM followed by lunch. Dates to be announced. Please contact Brother Jerome if you would like to help lead a table in Lectio Divina at one of these events.



Contact Information

Mount Michael Abbey Oblates of Saint Benedict

*"Listen carefully, my son, to the master's instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart."
(Opening words of the Prologue of The Rule of Saint Benedict)*

Oblate Director

Brother Jerome Kmiecik, OSB - jkmiecik@mountmichael.org

Assistant Oblate Director

Abbot Theodore Wolff, OSB - twolff@mountmichael.org

Oblate Deans

Howard Schanzer - hschanz@cox.net

Jean Hlavacek - jean.jeweler@gmail.com

Oblate Ministries

*"All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ..."
(RB 53.1)*

Visiting Oblates care facilities or homebound

Francesca Dammermann - [402-332-2986](tel:402-332-2986), mdammermann@aol.com

Hospitality snacks for socials after oblate meetings

Howard Schanzer - hschanz@cox.net

Guest House help

Brother Jerome, OSB - [402-206-2069](tel:402-206-2069), jkmiecik@mountmichael.org

Flea Market help

Brother Jerome Kmiecik, OSB - jkmiecik@mountmichael.org

Abbey help with special events, provide transportation as needed for aging members of the monastic community; assist with monastic community Sunday meal

Brother Jerome Kmiecik, OSB - [402-206-2069](tel:402-206-2069), jkmiecik@mountmichael.org

Oblate Formation mentor oblate novices

Francesca Dammerman - [402-332-2986](tel:402-332-2986), mdammermann@aol.com

Prayer Ministry or for **Oblate Article** submissions for *The Michaelen* or *Oblate Newsletter*

Brother Jerome Kmiecik, OSB - jkmiecik@mountmichael.org

Abbot Theodore Wolff, OSB - twolff@mountmichael.org

Newsletter Editor

Jean Hlavacek - [402-504-4222](tel:402-504-4222), jean.jeweler@gmail.com

Useful Links for Oblates

Mount Michael Oblate Website

<http://www.mountmichael.org/Pages/Oblates>

Daily Liturgy of the Hours

<http://www.universalis.com/Library/index.htm>

Daily Reading from the Rule

<http://www.osb.org/rb/show.asp?mode=today>

