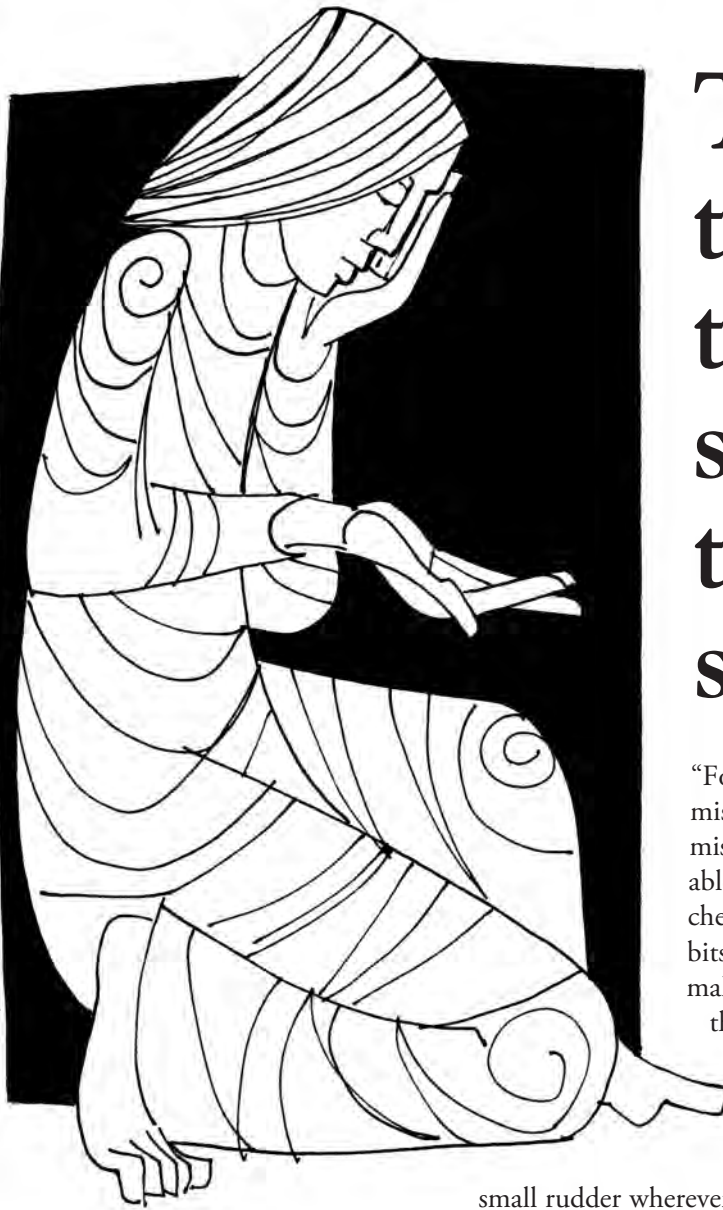


Artwork by Br. Martin Erspamer, OSB



## Tame the tongue, subdue the speech

“For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

“So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell.

“For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue – a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so” (*James 3:2-10*).

Today, our use of speech runs rampant over many forums. We release our thoughts in words spoken, printed, signed (ASL), even emojis. This issue of the *Benedictine Oblate Quarterly* focuses on speech and the need for restraint. As it is stated in Psalm 141:3, “Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”

*Kathleen Polansky, oblate  
New Salisbury, IN*



# A POINT TO PONDER FROM *The Rule*

## *Restraint of Speech from Chapter 6*

Let us do what the Prophet says: “I said, I will keep watch over my ways that I may not sin with my tongue: I have set a guard at my mouth, I was silent and was humbled, and kept silence even refraining from good words” (Psalm 38[39]:2-3).

Here the Prophet shows that there are times when good words should be left unsaid for the sake of silence. All the more reason, then, to abstain from evil words to avoid the punishment for sin.

“In much speaking, you will not avoid sin” (Proverbs 10:19), and elsewhere: “Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Proverbs 18:21). It is for the master to speak and to teach; the disciple is to be silent and to listen.... We absolutely forbid vulgarity, idle words, or speech provoking laughter in all places and we do not permit the disciple’s mouth to be opened for such talk.

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# Monks carve out time for silence



*Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB*

“Hey, listen, Mom. He talks!” I smiled as I heard what looked to be a 5-year-old pointing at me and whispering (loudly!) to her mother.

Yes, Benedictines talk. Do people confuse us with Trappists? Cistercians? The Camaldolese hermits of Big Sur? Or have they just seen too many movies that portray all religious wearing a brown robe with a white rope for a belt? (Here at Saint Meinrad, we wear black and keep it all tucked in with a black leather belt.)

Benedictines do not take a vow of silence, although living in community, we sometimes wish a particular confrere or two would! But we certainly value silence and readily agree it is an important part of our life as monks.

Our *Customary* – our monastery’s book of “house rules” – does specify certain times when silence is to be considered not only golden, but in fact, the rule. For example, our “night silence” begins at 10 o’clock and lasts until after our

Eucharist the following morning (usually about 8 a.m.).

And we even practice “day silence,” keeping quiet in the corridors and the reading room so we’re not bothering others. After all, a large part of living in community is remembering that it is *our* house, not *my* house, and that we are living *with* others. Tell that to your hotel neighbors who are always slamming their doors!

Benedict is not against talking, but rather *careless* talking. Simply put, Benedict wants us to use our brains before we engage our mouths. As the Old Testament Book of Sirach says: “If you blow on a spark, it will glow; if you spit on it, it will be put out; yet both come out of your mouth.” (*Sirach 28:12*)

And here, the Letter to the Ephesians sets out a principle that benefits us and others when it comes both to talking and refraining from speech: “Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.” (*Ephesians 4:29*)

*Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey*



*Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, poses for a picture with the new oblates and oblate novices after the oblate rites on June 4, 2022.*

# Cultivate an ‘esteem for silence’



Janis Dopp

In Chapter 6 of his *Rule*, St. Benedict imparts two very important teachings. First, he says, “there are times when good words are to be left

unsaid...” but this is immediately followed by the teaching “out of esteem for silence.” These two bits of wisdom go hand in hand. Without an esteem for silence, restraint of speech seems like a punishment.

Why shouldn’t I say what is on my mind, especially if I think what I have to say is of value?! It is the way of the world in which we live. The reality is that it is very difficult to do that! And yet, Benedictine spirituality teaches us just that.

One day, a monk from Saint Meinrad was sitting in my office with me. About 30 minutes passed without a word being exchanged. I was feeling like I had dropped the conversation responsibility, so I said something. He smiled gently and responded, “Presence does not require conversation.” It was a remarkable lesson in restraint of speech and in the esteem for silence. It was a profound moment of insight into what I could teach myself and others about words.

The Jewish tradition holds that words are sacred. My life is inundated with words – most of them flippant and empty. If I were to consider everything that I said with the weight of sacredness, what would I really say? Most importantly, how would those words affect my understanding of life and of God’s grace? As Benedictine oblates, what we have to say should

make a difference. Our words should matter.

The Book of Sirach reminds us, “In a shaken sieve the rubbish is left behind, so too the defects of a person appear in speech.” (*Sirach 27:4*)

A monastery is designed to cultivate both an esteem for silence and the restraint of speech. Oblates live in a world where we must cultivate those two teachings of St. Benedict more intentionally if they are to take root in our lives. When they do, we will affect the people who surround us. We can be agents of change and transformation wherever we find ourselves. If we take that seriously, miracles can happen.

Janis Dopp  
Oblate Director

# Choose your words wisely



Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB

Words are powerful, much more powerful than many of us realize. God asks us to choose our words wisely, so we need to be disciplined in our speech and

use what we say for the benefit and encouragement of others.

St. Benedict addresses this in chapter 6 of his *Rule*, which concerns the restraint of speech. He writes, “In a flood of words you will not avoid sin.” In this chapter, St. Benedict quotes the Psalms and Proverbs. Sacred Scripture tells us that wisdom is the key. It also provides many instructions on how to be disciplined

in our speech, and it offers many admonitions that warn us not to speak foolishly.

The most famous examples of wisdom literature are in the Old Testament. Wisdom is a central topic in Proverbs, Psalms, Job, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Wisdom. Wisdom literature contains ageless, sage advice, along with a lot of common sense. For example, “Where words are many, sin is not wanting; but those who restrain their lips do well.” (*Proverbs 10:19*)

We need to become more aware of the power of words. Words shape us and form us. Words direct our attention and our energies. Even a word of truth can be destructive when it is not uttered in charity and true love.

Before we say something, it would be good to ask ourselves: “Does it help to build up or to tear down?” “Is it true?” “Is it gossip?” “Is it cruel?” “Will it hurt someone?” “Will it lead my listener(s) into sin?” When we talk too much, it can lead to detraction of the value of others. Often a conversation that goes on too long can turn into gossip and judgment of others.

Each of us, in our own way, can attempt to find a good balance between speaking and keeping silent. The wisdom to know when to speak and when not to is not only a monastic value, but a value for all thoughtful people. The practice of the virtue of humility will help us discern

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# Notes for Novices:

## Keep watch over words, thoughts, actions



*Br. Gregory Morris*

“Let us follow the Prophet’s counsel: ‘I said, I have resolved to keep watch over my ways that I may never sin with my own tongue. I have put a guard on my

mouth. I was silent, and I was humbled, and I refrained even from good words.” (*RB 6:1*)

In a culture driven by obsessive productivity, entertainment and distraction, Chapter 6, “On Restraint of Speech,” seems foreign, strange and perhaps too risqué. On the surface, St. Benedict asks his followers for the impossible dream of holy silence and humility engendered by a rigorous life of prayer and work. However, I believe that we might lose the inner meaning of Benedict’s words through the forest of our confusion.

It is a fundamental truth: we are language animals. From the moment of our birth, we enter a world of words, sounds and cacophony. From the first smile we give to our parents to the first words we utter, we use language to convey meaning, interacting in a world made up of language and meaning. Suffice it to say, we are bred to speak our minds.

To prompt the obvious question: What is the problem? The past years of lies and half-truths, which inaugurated conspiracy theories, political insurrections, and wars, might give us an occasion to pause.

St. Benedict, reflecting upon the Scriptures, understood that our thoughts are laced with self-will and pride. Because of our inherited nature, words and actions become occasions of sin and division, quickly fragmenting tranquility and equality. Mutuality and fraternity evaporate amid indifference and inequity. Over time, we perpetuate structural sins rooted in violence and oppression through our

complacency and common sense because we are not listening.

I believe St. Benedict offers an alternative lens to perceive reality. In Jesus Christ, God invites us into a different way of life. It is a narrow road, but one that brings about conversion and resurrection. Restraint of speech is more about keeping watch over our thoughts, words, and actions than practicing taciturnity. It is the midpoint between listening and acting.

We pause and attend to the Other, cooperating with God’s grace so that our words and actions manifest his truth and justice. We move from self-will to selfless will. Instead of hatred, we love. We forgive, negating revenge. Instead of self-assertion, we yield to others. In such a small act, we might begin to “Listen carefully ... to the master’s instruction and attend to them with the ear of the heart.” (*RB Prologue 1*)

*Br. Gregory Morris, OSB  
Oblate Novice Mentor*



# Notes from Novices:

## Restraint of speech shows respect for others



Mark Plaiss

Want to know the value of restraint in speech? Try teaching 30 16-year-olds about Church history on the last period of the school day in

May, when the sun is shining outside and the air conditioning in the room has been subjected to the Inquisition.

True, both Holy Writ and the *Rule* rail against a loose tongue, but the surge of testosterone and estrogen in a confined space, I submit, quickly nails down the value, not to mention pleasure, of taciturnity.

Another example: walk down the hallway in a high school during passing period. Listen to the conversations of the students as they either whiz by or lumber along. Fascinating. Profanity, gossip, laughter, flirting, outrage, weeping. The whole gamut of human emotions is not only on display in that hallway, but verbalized as well. I'll wager you'll retreat into an empty, and quiet, classroom at first opportunity.

Cassian notes that humility can be verified via nine attributes, with the ninth attribute being "if he holds his tongue and is not loudmouthed." (*Inst* 4.39.2) Holzherr maintains that silence shows "respect for others and their words." (*The Rule of Benedict: An Invitation to the Christian Life*, p. 130)

Restraint of speech becomes a matter of submission of self-will as well as respect for others.

Listening is exercised in the process. A good example of listening is the rector of the Mundelein seminary, Fr. John Kartje. Father celebrates Mass at our school every Friday morning before school begins. A handful of faculty and students attend. Prior to Mass, a group of us theology teachers gather in the room that acts as a sacristy, where we talk freely.

When Fr. Kartje arrives, he says hello and quickly vests. He doesn't say much, but he listens to us. How do we know he listens? Because frequently he incorporates our banter, our thoughts, into his homily minutes later. This incorporation does not distort the homily or sound like an obvious aside. Rather, the homily is completely whole and organic.

I think that is the value of restraint of speech: being able to incorporate into our lives the thoughts and dreams of others. By maintaining a silent

tongue, we can sift out the grain of such thoughts from the chaff. That doesn't happen if our tongue is constantly wagging.

But back to those students. There is always the silent one. Never speaks up. Never volunteers to read aloud. Head down. One day in Old Testament class, we were reading the story where Jacob falls in love with the lovely Rachel.

When the students finally understood that Jacob was in love with his cousin, the class freaked out. Not the silent one, though. She lifted her head, and above the din she bellowed, "The point is that she is family," and she lowered her head.

"Prefer moderation in speech."  
(*RB* 4:52)

Mark Plaiss, oblate  
Fox Lake, IL



Seaina Kowalski receives the Rule of St. Benedict from Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, on June 4.

# When the Spirit speaks, pay attention



Dale Edwynna Smith

As a studious, bookish child often silenced by self-doubt, a trait that followed me into adulthood and through the often-choppy waters of

academic life, “restraint of speech” was my *modus operandi*. I was not unique in this, as it is a historical truth that the speech of women and people of color traditionally has been censored and muffled. Scripture points to the disbelief Mary Magdalene’s proclamation of the Resurrection met!

Thus, an injunction to “restraint” of speech conveys a particular and peculiar meaning. We seek the direction and freedom of the deepest longings of the soul released in speech. And that, of course, is the question: how to know what comes from the soul, from the Spirit, and what comes from fear, pride, distrust or prejudice?

Spiritual seeking through prayer helps to recognize some of these differences.

My journey to confident, or “mindful,” speech continues to be illuminated by the ongoing call of St. Benedict to “listen!” The *Rule* offers this opening to the daily work of God: “O God, come to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me.” For me, this may be a helpful key to every verbal interaction, secular or sacred. When I remember it!

The *Rule* implores us to begin every “good deed” with prayer, suggesting the sequence: “prayer, thought, words, action.” Impetuosity, a reckless lack of prayerful intent, may lead us astray.

We who have promised to attempt life as “monks in the world” might wonder how “restraint of speech” can work in everyday life. Examples include domestic discussions about division of chores, negotiating sharing of public spaces such as the apartment laundry room, public transportation, waiting in line at the pharmacy for a vaccination, entering pews at Sunday Mass.

Individual interactions remind us of “restraint of speech.” A friend confides a tricky personal situation, or we receive a text or email that requires

an “immediate” response. And don’t forget how we interact with our companion animals!

More poignantly, at the bedside of a dying loved one, when time is short, and final, whispered words are urgent and important. Here, of all places and times, asking God for the words to speak is essential.

The call (“*vocare*”) to oblate life comes as a whisper best heard with quiet attention, and the Gospels offer clues to how we might respond. In Mark, Jesus asks the blind man, “What do you want Me to do for you?” (10:51; also *Luke 18:41*) Likewise, in Luke, we are told “the Holy Spirit will give you the words to say at the moment that you need them.” (12:12)

These and other Gospel reflections suggest that attentive listening, both within to the Spirit and around us to others, may provide us the essential signals needed to know when God bids us to speak, or to practice “restraint of speech.”

Dale Edwynna Smith, oblate  
Brighton, MA

## Outward speech begins with interior peace



Ellen Godbey

“We’ve had enough exhortation to be silent. Cry out with a thousand tongues – I see the world is rotten because of silence.” Whoa! St. Catherine of

Siena, one of the four women doctors of the Church, also says, “It is silence that kills.”

But the *Rule* says, “the disciple is to be silent.” (*RB 6:6*) What to make of this seeming contradiction between Catherine and Benedict?

It is not so black and white. Neither yes nor no. Speak or be silent. In the yin-yang of life’s discourse, restraint of speech is both exterior and interior. Two practices seem to come into play here: discernment and moderation.

If keeping the love of Christ is foremost in my mind and heart, then I

heed Paul’s words to speak the truth with love. (*Ephesians 4:15*) Speaking the truth is sometimes difficult; speaking with love can be quite the challenge but speak I must. I’m tired of not speaking, disguised as submissiveness or a false humility. I’ve had enough of bending my words so as not to offend or step on someone’s toes or be politically/religiously correct.

My words must not be cause for hurt or division; sometimes restraint or

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# Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord

## Seeking silence is cornerstone of Benedictine Life



John Brooks

Seven years ago, as the door opened and I walked with my children through a room full of people up to our place beside the casket, a line formed of friends and family waiting to offer their condolences for my wife's sudden and unexpected passing. As I stood next to the casket, lost in the moment, I struggled to hear the hushed conversations of those in the room.

As those in line came up, some struggling to find the right words and others asking questions, I found myself lost in the noise that surrounded me. In that line, God sent an angel. A woman stepped up and stood in front of me. She placed her hands on my cheeks, then she wrapped her arms around me and hugged. Pulling back, she looked into my eyes, kissed my cheek, smiled, and walked on.

Not a word was spoken, but in that moment, I heard volumes. The silence, drowning out the noise surrounding me, was filled with the warmth of caring, understanding, kindness, faith, hope and love that touched a heart broken by the pain of loss, suffering, grief, confusion and fear. The warm silence, like a shooting star that illuminates the darkness, then fades away, leaving a memory of its path.

Those memories of the silence in our hearts are like embers left in the fireplace after a night fire, waiting for the tinder of love and gentle whisper

of God's breath to ignite our hearts. It is in this silence that we seek and find the voice of God, this beautiful, loving voice, often hidden in the noise of the self-serving voices surrounding us. Our voices often drowning out the cries of our neighbors calling out for help, caring, understanding, kindness, forgiveness and love.

The silence we seek is a cornerstone of Benedictine life. The goal of monastic silence is not the absence of talking, but respect for the truths, wisdom and ideas of others, so that our own noise does not drown them out. It is a knowledge of our place in the world and God's magnificent creation, a peace that can only be grasped by listening and sharing with others.

It is our pathway to the wisdom, forgiveness and love of the God who

created us. The words we choose to speak are thoughtful, kind, caring, forgiving, understanding and patient; our ears and heart silently listening in the presence of God.

A quote from the ancients says, "Once upon a time a disciple asked the elder, 'How shall I experience my oneness with creation?' And the elder answered, 'By listening.' The disciple pressed the point: 'But how am I to listen?' And the elder taught, 'Become an ear that pays attention to every single thing the universe is saying. The moment you hear something you yourself are saying, stop.'" (Sr. Joan Chittister, *A Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century*)

John Brooks, oblate  
Columbus, IN



Oblate novices listen to a reading before making their final oblations on June 4.

# Considering the Psalms:

## Psalm 50: Recall that God's Word initiated creation

The mighty one, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.

Our God comes and does not keep silence, before him is a devouring fire, and a mighty tempest all around him. He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people: "Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"

The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge. *Selah* "Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God.

"Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. I will not accept a bull from your house, or goats from your folds. For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine.

"If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all that is in it is mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."

But to the wicked God says: "What right have you to recite my statutes, or take my covenant on your lips? For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you.

"You make friends with a thief when you see one, and you keep company with adulterers. "You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your kin; you slander your own mother's child. These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one just like yourself.

"But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before you. Mark this, then, you who forget God, or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.

"Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honor me; to those who go the right way I will show the salvation of God."

—*Psalm 50 NRSV*



Kathleen Polansky

Zip it. Hush.  
Put a lid on it.  
Shush. Pipe  
down. Watch  
your mouth.

Why watch what  
we say? Why  
speak less and  
hold our tongue?

We live in a time when words are prolific and often spoken, written, implied, or gestured (ahem), without thought of the results that may follow.

We learn of the power of the spoken word in the first book of the Bible. Verse 3 tells us, "God said." It doesn't say God built, God constructed, God made. No, it says, "God said." It is by the spoken word God creates and all comes into being. Now that should give us pause as to the biblical understanding of the power of the spoken word.

Genesis 11 continues to emphasize the significance of the words we speak in a story that challenges the divine command to multiply and fill the

earth. The discussion at Babel excludes any dialogue with God, focusing on a desire to isolate into an exclusive and privatized community with an intent of making a name for themselves. Their isolationist view places all of creation in jeopardy. The result of their words brings about that which they were attempting to thwart. The separation now is not only of distance, but also of speech. Their words revealed their hubristic motivation.

Psalm 50 begins by expressing the reality of God's supremacy. It is God



who has the authority to speak, both through creation and condemnation. It is God who speaks throughout most of the Psalm. God, who does not need our sacrifices, reminds us that our thanksgiving is the offering we must make. God desires our words, our voices, our speech, to be offered in thanksgiving and calling out in need.

We are warned to keep our mouths free of evil, deceit and slander. It is God who will rebuke and lay charges against us. We are called to hear. (*Verse 7*)

We must watch for hypocrisy and self-aggrandizement in giving honor to God. Our words can create dishonor and divisions because our underlying intention is to appear great to others. “When you pray, don’t be like hypocrites. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners so that people will see them. I assure you, that’s the only reward they’ll get.... When you pray, don’t pour out a flood of empty words, as the gentiles do. They think that by saying many words they will be heard.” (*Matthew 6:5,7; Common English Bible*)

In the *Rule*, Chapter 6, St. Benedict lays out a strict discipline for speaking. “Let us do what the Prophet says: ‘I said, I will keep watch over my ways that I may not sin with my tongue ...’” He warns, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” Saying that, “In much speaking, you will not avoid sin.” He emphasizes the importance of silence.

After being home an awful lot these past three years, I have become quieter and more prone to periods of silence. One thing I noticed on the internet is the proliferation of reactionary comments and opinions. Some have even gotten folks put into “Facebook jail.” Often it is not because of what one believes, but the words that are used to express it that cause the problem.

The words are derisive and demeaning and expressed in the heat of the moment. There is little filtering of thought in how, why, or should this even be posted. It is arrogance that commands an immediate response. If there is any desire to change people’s minds, the word-salad that is tossed about often defeats it.

I am wondering if we have forgotten that there is a commandment that warns us not to bear false witness against our neighbor. Slander, deceit and libel are commonplace and abundant. We are as confused as Pilate when he asks Jesus, “What is truth?” (*John 18:38*)

Growing up, my mother often used the phrase, “Sweep your own doorstep first.” She was reminding me that to speak ill of others, my own life had better be spotless. It is a tough lesson to live by. I guess that is why St. Benedict devoted an entire chapter to the restraint of speech.

As Psalm 50 reminds us, “Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honor me; to those who go the right way, I will show the salvation of God.” Let our words always be chosen with care and thankfulness, or just “Bite your tongue.”

*Kathleen Polansky, oblate  
New Salisbury, IN*

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*Continued from Page 3*

when to speak. People who lack humility often talk too much.

An inability to silence one’s ego can lead to talkativeness. Humble people are often good listeners. They respect others and hope to learn something from them. We can learn only if we stop speaking long enough to listen. Let us resolve to use our words to build up one another. May our silence be a joyful communion with the Lord so that we may love others more faithfully.

*Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB  
Oblate Chaplain*

*Continued from Page 6*

silence is the best option, but in the interest of discerning the most effective path to truth and honoring my personal integrity. My outward speech must come from an interior peace, a heart guided by divine love. A balancing act, for sure.

Moderation is another necessity. Just as excessive and oppressive speech is both off-putting and contrary to the *Rule*, so is phony and demurring meekness. What is best for building up the Kingdom? Again, what comes out of my mouth reflects what is in my heart. My speech results from my interior disposition to be Jesus’ messenger of peace.

For that inner attitude to come forth, I must be a person of prayer, immersed in the words of scripture so that Jesus’ words may indeed be my home. (*John 8:31-32*) Thus, I will keep learning/knowing the truth in order to be free. Then speaking or silence, as the situation demands, will be life-giving.

*Ellen Godbey, oblate novice  
Yosemite, KY*

# Spiritual Direction: When God goes silent



Beverly Weinhold

Paul Simon wrote a hit song in the '60s called "The Sound of Silence." One stanza speaks to "People talking without speaking. People hearing without listening."<sup>1</sup> Simon's words capture today's culture. We are not worthy unless we are hooked up to our devices swiping for messages or plugged into a podcast.

Technology speaks so loudly that it turns our attention to dings and tweets, drowning out the still, small voice of God. If St. Benedict walked the world today, I wonder if his *Rule* to restrain speech (*RB:6*) would also warn us to put down our devices and unplug.

It's worth noting that even God unplugs and seems to go silent. Not often speaking in audible words, sacred speech surrounds us in nature and sets our hearts on fire by reading Scripture, singing a hymn or hearing a sermon. When God goes silent and restrains speech, it's curious and even agonizing for devout people.

Many of us wonder, "What did I do wrong?" But God's silence is not necessarily personal, but providential. After all, 450 years of silence followed Malachi, the last book of the Bible. And Jesus wrapped Himself in silence for 30 long years before beginning his public ministry.

What do we do when God goes silent? Old Testament notables offer instruction. Stephen Beal<sup>2</sup> says King

Saul teaches us what not to do. When Philistine troops were planning a war against Israel, Saul asked God for guidance. He didn't get an answer. Not from dreams, priests or prophets. (*1 Samuel 28*) So, Saul took matters into his own hands and sent for a soothsayer to conjure up the dead for an answer.

It didn't go well. God departs from Saul, who loses both his kingdom and his life. Most of us don't turn to tarot cards. But it's true that our egos want an answer. Like Saul, we have a need to know now and obsessively seek a solution. Saul's story is a cautionary tale to sit with the ambiguity, wait patiently and trust God to speak on divine terms. Not ours.

Job's response is the polar opposite of Saul. Faced with unthinkable loss and deep in grief, he walks by faith not sight. You know the story. Job is a wealthy man and a firm believer. Satan, convinced his fidelity is skin deep, asks God's permission to test Job. A perfect storm sweeps away Job's fortune, family and health.

Sitting on an ash heap, he scrapes his boils but walks by faith, not sight. His friends blame him, and his wife gives bad advice to "curse God and die." Understandably, Job is beside himself, bewildered by God's absence: "I cry to you, but you don't answer." (*Job 30:20*) Despite the dissonance, Job continues to wait and trust: "Slay me though he might, yet I will wait for him." (*Job 13:15*)

While Job invites us to trust God with our suffering, Elijah evokes a deep discernment distinguishing between God's voice and an imposter.

His story spans three chapters in *I Kings (17-19)*. After a string of powerful victories – predicting drought, raising a boy from the dead and defeating 450 false prophets on Mt. Carmel – he falls into a funk. Not hailed a hero, he's hunted like an enemy by the king's wife. Burned out, down and depressed, Elijah despairs of his life: "It is enough now, O Lord, take my life for I am no better than my fathers."

Instead of spiritualizing his suffering, as Job's friends did, the Divine directs him to the mountain of God.

Standing at the mouth of its cave, he witnesses a whirlwind, followed by an earthquake, finished by a fire. But God was nowhere to be seen in the spectacular. No, Elijah had to listen hard. He had to keep his ear to the ground because God's voice came in "a whistling of gentle air," (Douay-Rheims), translated in the Hebrew as a "small thin silence."<sup>3</sup> Encountering the Holy, Elijah wraps himself in his cloak and walks out of the cave with a more coherent sense of God's calling.

Is your suffering so great it's hard to stay in the game, trusting God to answer? Are you so burned out from busyness that only thick thunder gains your attention? Take heart! You are not alone. Great people of God walked in your shoes. Remember, God's silence is likely less personal and more providential. And realize from Paul Simon that "The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls, and tenement halls. And whispered in the sounds of silence."<sup>4</sup>

Beverly Weinhold, oblate novice  
Louisville, KY

<sup>1</sup> Simon, Paul (1963). Recorded in March 1964, Columbia Records: NY.

<sup>2</sup> Beal, Stephen (2013). "When God Is Silent." *Catholic Exchange*. <https://catholicexchange.com/when-god-is-silent/>

<sup>3</sup> Jerusalem Prayer Team. Hebrew word of the day. <https://hebrew.jerusalemprayerteam.org/sound-thin-silence/>

<sup>4</sup> Simon, Paul (1963): *Ibid*.

# Meet A Monk: Fr. Denis Quinkert, OSB



Fr. Denis Quinkert, OSB

From constructing a Benedictine church and monastery to wrangling cattle in the pasture to overseeing the community as abbot – not once but twice – Fr. Denis Quinkert has done it all.

The year was 1954. Young Mr. Quinkert had not yet made his first monastic profession, but his path was set. When the call came to “go west, young man,” off he went, to the rolling hills of northeastern South Dakota to Blue Cloud Abbey, founded in 1950 by monks from Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

Despite a lack of farming experience, he plunged right into the farming work of this 1,800-acre spread. “There were just three of us,” he remembers. “I learned.”

What did he learn? Over the next eight years, his life revolved around milking, haying and field work. Along with the beef and dairy operation was a hog operation as well. He also helped build the church and monastery, started in 1950 and completed in 1967.

Two years in, Mr. Quinkert became Br. Denis Quinkert with his first profession on February 10, 1956.

Blue Cloud Abbey was founded, in large part, to fulfill the request of the local Indian community for Catholic teachers to help at their schools. Three Sioux had already ridden 950 miles on horseback to the Archabbey in 1920 to personally request a “Black Robe” to return to their reservation, after 45 years without one. (*For more details on this amazing story, please see the Benedictine Oblate Quarterly, Winter 2021, pp. 17-18.*)

“I really appreciated the native people. I lived on the reservation with them ... I always felt welcome,” he remembers. “It was very rewarding for me.”

Living among the Sioux people, he also learned a few things about restraint of speech along the way. “They weren’t given to being long-winded,” he says. Listening with the ear of the heart can mean not having to join in immediately.

Today, he has noticed, people tend to talk over each other in order to share their ideas. Listening better can enable us to hear the other person without necessarily agreeing with them, he says.

Unlike many of the monks, Br. Denis didn’t take a direct route from monastic profession to the priesthood. Instead, he attended a school for delayed vocations in Weston, Massachusetts, Pope John XXIII Seminary, and was ordained on May 25, 1976. He subsequently served in a number of pastorates in North and South Dakota and was chaplain of both a Benedictine women’s community and Mount Marty College in Yankton, SD.

His life at Blue Cloud also included two stints as archabbot, being elected to serve from 1986 to 1991 and also from 2009 until Blue Cloud Abbey closed in 2012. He stayed on at Blue Cloud until the property was sold. It is now owned by a lay Catholic group who have renamed it Abbey of the Hills, a retreat center.

Fr. Denis returned to Saint Meinrad Archabbey in 2014. These days, you’ll find him at a variety of tasks, both on and off the Hill. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, he celebrates Mass for the sisters at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand.

During the week, he arranges transportation of the Archabbey’s monks to nearby medical appointments – for which he sometimes ends up as the driver. He also helps with many oblate retreats and days of recollection.

*Angie McDonald, oblate  
Huntingburg, IN*

# The *Didache*: Learning the ways of life and death

*This is the second of four articles exploring the Didache (“Didakay”), the pre-Gospels writing by Jesus community leaders instructing Gentiles how to live and worship. This article discusses the Didache’s teachings and rituals.*



David Miller

Putting aside Christian traditions developed over 2,000 years, let’s consider life as a Jesus follower contemporaneous with Peter and James.

stealing and false witness. Prohibitions of practices normative to Roman life, such as abortion, infanticide, magic and pedophilia, were added as forbidden to followers of Jesus.

Community-building traits were included: speaking well of others, praying for enemies, generosity, avoiding grudges and arrogance, mercy, and hard work.

Unlike the Commandments, there was no requirement to honor parents, as family had rejected the novice. Keeping the Sabbath work-free was omitted, as Gentiles worked daily. The prohibition on “graven images” was gone, as buildings and coinage were replete with them.

“The Way of Death” taught 42 forbidden behaviors, basically the inverse of the Way of Life, but characterized in common parlance. These included anger, double-mindedness, foul speech, grumbling, sloth, judging the poor, greed, pretension and bad manners.

Important traits of patience, gentleness, and acceptance of suffering were added as the followers of Jesus communities were small “house assemblies (churches),” and survival required avoiding dissension. The *Didache* was a practical guide.

Use of the term “The Way” implied seeking Jesus was a journey, walking in a forward motion toward new life. The image of Jesus always walking is manifest.

At the conclusion of the training, the novice and community fasted for two

days to purge the novice of impure foods, but also to mentally prepare for the life-altering moment, baptism, when by immersion she became a member. Baptism was a boundary ritual; everyone was to be baptized. The mentor presided and was as likely a woman as a man; there were no clergy.

The *Didache* describes baptism as immersion in flowing cold water, but other accepted methods included still water, warm water, or pouring water on the head. Baptism was the objective, not the form. As the novice and mentor stood in the water, the “Ways of Life and Death” were repeated from memory, suggesting baptism signified initiation into the Way, or purification by imparting the Spirit. The words “Father, Son and Holy Spirit” were spoken, as “speech,” not “action,” contrary to today’s baptism.

Following Baptism, there was a “Eucharistic” (verb) meal. A thanksgiving, agape celebration. A common cup was blessed first as “the vine of David,” then a loaf of broken bread blessed, following the sequence of Jewish tradition, reverse of today’s Eucharist (noun). The bread evoked separated seeds now united, a scattered world rejoined.

The meal was a forward-looking event, foreshadowing additional community meals, not a memorial to Christ’s death, nor a recollection of the Last Supper. Jesus was referred to as God’s servant, messenger, “anointed,” not “son of God.” That came years later.

You have been cast out of your home, your parents will not speak to you, your friends ridicule you. This is the life of a Gentile or a Jew seeking The Way. Abandoned and frightened, but deeply called, your mentor softly intones, full of love and concern, over and over, “My child... My child,” as she explains The Way of Life and Death.

Each novice was assigned a mentor, a one-on-one apprentice relationship. The mentor imparted The Way from memory, and community standards by action. The student and teacher entered the divine presence as the words were repeated until The Way was absorbed, permanently altering behavior. A months-long holy activity, “trembling” at the teaching.

The *Didache* opens with a stark demand to choose “The Way of Life or Death!” In the Greco-Roman world, “the gods” controlled humankind’s future; there was no choice. Jesus, in Jewish tradition, preached a concept shattering to Gentiles: choose your own path.

“The Way of Life,” a Deuteronomy extract, included loving God and neighbor, and warnings against murder, adultery, fleshy desires,

Before eating, the prayer “commanded by the Lord” and “delivered” by his “messenger” Jesus was said.<sup>1</sup> In the Gospels, the term “daily bread” and present-tense verb “give” implies the “feeding” is in the present. In the *Didache*, “daily” is omitted and the verb “forgive” future tense, suggesting the “feeding” is the coming banquet in God’s Kingdom.

There is no doxology, and the single value of “debt” suggests the prayer’s

purpose was purging community, not individual sins. Several prescribed prayers followed, asking the Father to “tabernacle in our hearts,” grant knowledge and faith as revealed by servant Jesus, and to receive this “gathering” (group) into the kingdom.

New members have memorized The Way, been baptized, and celebrated by the community. The *Didache* prescribes three times daily saying the Lord’s Prayer and fasting Wednesdays

and Fridays, which is the root of the later tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays.

The next article will explore how practices promoted hospitality, created identity, and perpetuated the group.

*David W. Miller, oblate  
South Milford, IL*

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<sup>1</sup> The Didache’s Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father in heaven, your name be made holy, your kingdom come, your will be done upon earth as in heaven, give us this day our loaf coming, and forgive (*future tense verb*) us our debt as we likewise (*present tense*) forgive our debtors, and do not lead us into the trial but deliver us from evil because yours is the power and glory forever.”

## Awakening to God’s guidance on our journey



*Deepak Frank*

Awaken is to rise. It’s rising to a new state or a level of different awareness.

Awakening usually leads to change in direction and realization of

purpose. St. Paul’s awakening happened on the road to Damascus, which had a profound effect on early Christians. St. Augustine’s conversion led to turning back on his former way of life to a renewed sense of purpose.

What causes awakening? It can be God aligning us to his plans or us realizing our incorrect ways. Sometimes with our routines, we take life for granted, hence do not realize its deeper purpose. Only God can fulfill our yearnings or voids.

Awakening can happen when we reach out to Him. As oblates or novices, we have responded to a call that leads us to a path of peace that St. Benedict and his followers have long found as a way to move closer to God. The voice that rose inside us led to our

awakening and brought us to the doorstep of Saint Meinrad. Following the *Rule* and being associated to a chapter helps us on the path thereafter.

When does awakening happen? It happens when realization and understanding overcome our former life. When sin overwhelms me, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is my source of awakening and provides profound peace. The peace that it brings transcends the short-term pleasures that sin brings and takes

away the guilt that saying no to God brought.

Awakening can also happen when we reach our nadir and are desperate. God has been with us on our way waiting for us to turn. When we finally awaken, God’s gentle hand guides us on our journey. May God help all of us awaken and reach our true potential.

*Deepak Frank, oblate  
Columbus, IN*



*Oblates listen to a workshop titled, “The Landscapes and Challenge of Laudato Si,” given by Fr. Guerric DeBona, OSB, during the Oblate Study Days.*

# How private ownership might apply to oblates

As an oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, I can understand the necessity and benefit of St. Benedict requiring a lack of ownership by monks living in community in the monastery. According to the *Rule of St. Benedict*, all monks and members of the monastery are required to be equal in material goods and are to depend on each other and the abbot for their everyday needs.

They are prohibited from owning even the clothing on their bodies. The monks are not to collect private possessions, as this could lead them in some ways to feel superior to others in the community. An excess of possessions could also lead them to the love of material things in opposition to their love of God. It could also cause them to neglect their prayer life and contemplation of God in lieu of needing to take care of and protect the possessions they love and rely on for comfort. God's love is to be their comfort as well as ours.

It is something quite different to apply this section of the *Rule* to our lives as oblates. As oblates, we realize or should realize that we are not monks. We live outside the monastery, living our lives as best we can according to the *Rule*. We are members of and a part of the family of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. This gives us the responsibility of living and applying the values of the monastery in our everyday life in the world.

I believe we are to be a conduit of the monastic values of Saint Meinrad, living and spreading these values by our example to the troubled society we live in. We are part of a worldwide monastery of sorts, bringing monastic values and God's love to those whom God has brought into our lives and taking that love of God back to Saint Meinrad.

For most of us, negating private ownership from our lives may be impossible. God, in his grace and love, has brought into our lives many people to provide for both spiritually and physically. It is up to us to provide for these blessed souls as we continue on our journey back to God.

In my view, private ownership for an oblate is not a bad thing. It is more of a necessity for survival and to provide support and well-being for those souls God has entrusted to us. Oblates are much like the abbot of a monastery. We are responsible for those God has put in our life.

It is when we put more value on the things and possessions of our lives that we can lose our way and be blinded to the plight of our family and brothers and sisters in need of our support. It can also (just as with our brother monks) take us away from our spiritual lives and focus our attention on the accumulation of things instead of the love of God.

If I can live my life trying to put into practice the *Rule of St. Benedict* and at the same time renounce materialism and the greed and unfairness of the

world, then I can center my life and thoughts on the spiritual life and helping others.

In our own way, oblates can fulfill this part of the *Rule* by providing a sense of monastic community. By providing for our families and our brothers and sisters in need, we show care for one another. Helping others and living modestly allow us to project our monastic values into the world at large, as opposed to collecting material goods.

As the abbots of our spiritual monastery, we are, in a small but important way, implementing the private ownership section of the *Rule*, while bringing those we serve, as well as ourselves, to the love of God and eternity with Him in heaven.

All we really need to do is "Listen," the first word of the *Rule*, to God's voice with "the ear of our heart," loving one another as God has loved us. Then God will lead each of us to be the abbots of the spiritual monastery we have been entrusted with on our journey to Him.

Dan Sheets, oblate  
Mishawaka, IN



Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, puts the scapular over Brian Draper's head during the investiture rites on June 4.

# Thoughts from the Lenten Oblate Retreat



Michelle Blalock

At this year's Oblate Lenten Retreat, there was an outpouring of blessings, joy, hospitality and peace. For this I am grateful; for this I was

subconsciously seeking, and God has provided. Conversation and greetings filled the Guest House gathering space. Fellow oblates converged from near and far, with different lifestyles and ages, some new to the community and others long standing within the community. But this space, this time, this retreat had brought us all together.

For this occasion, many were extremely grateful. There was excitement for the opportunity to reconnect with the monastic community in person. Many were joyful for the beauty of this space, for the quiet of this place, and for the spiritual nurturing of this event. The retreat theme was "The Passions of Christ" with Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB.

In his conferences, Archabbot Kurt shared insights and wisdom regarding the Gospel's depictions of the events surrounding the Passion of Christ. The Passion narratives from the Gospels of Mark, Luke and John presented the opportunity for thought-provoking conversation.

Archabbot Kurt led the retreat beautifully, allowing for a variety of thoughts, perspectives, and insights to be shared by the participants. This was an amazing opportunity to experience an awakening, a rekindling and a regeneration of faith by many of the participants. Throughout the retreat, he created the space for each of us to experience the *Rule of St. Benedict*.

My thoughts contemplated St. Benedict's Prologue from the *Rule*: "Listen carefully to the master's instructions and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from a Father who loves you; welcome it and faithfully put it into practice." (*RB1980 The Rule of St. Benedict in English*)

Many beautiful moments punctuated the days: Mass, Reconciliation, Adoration, Anointing of the Sick, community prayer, private prayer and reflection were made available throughout the retreat.

At the first conference of the retreat, Archabbot Kurt said, "You will never hear the Passions in the same way again." I took these words to heart, seeking to be open to all that God desired to reveal to me and quietly hoping that each of us would receive all that God wished to bestow upon us.

I was not disappointed as I listened to the Gospel Passions recited at my parish on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, bringing me back to contemplation about thoughts shared throughout the conferences. How will I be open to entering into Christ's Passion?

How will I allow myself to engage and lean into Christ's pain and suffering? Will I allow myself to walk with those around me and help them carry their crosses? Will I allow those people that God places in my life to carry my cross with me and allow them to support me on my journey?

Sometimes through prayer, sometimes through quiet listening, and sometimes actually bearing the burdens side by side. These are powerful experiences that are blessings if we allow ourselves to encounter them. God wishes to bless us in

mighty ways in so many experiences and so many situations. Our part is to receive the gifts. Will we receive it? Will we be open to it? My prayer is that I will, that each of us will.

In closing, I wish to thank all those who attended and those who helped to make this retreat an amazing opportunity. Thank you for all that you share with those around you.

Michelle Blalock, oblate  
Ferdinand, IN



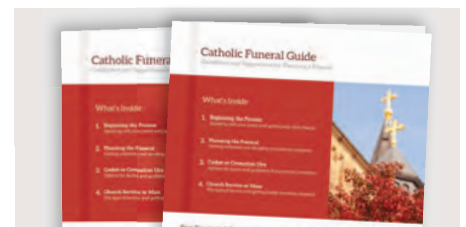
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# Use discretion, humility and love as values for your speech

When it comes to speech, one has to realize how one's words can have a powerful impact on another person, both verbally and nonverbally. In speech, nonverbal communication is 70% of the message we send. Hence, when one is communicating, sensitivity and compassion need to be utmost.

I pray the Lord's Prayer daily as my guideline for the day in all that I say. Our goal in speaking to other people is to help build the Kingdom of God and make the situation better, leading to a positive experience in helping the listener to meet their daily needs. We should strive to project a friendly demeanor rather than a competitive and challenging approach. We should strive for a positive outcome in the conversation.

Fr. Harry Hagan, OSB, wrote an article on major themes in the *Rule of St. Benedict*. The three themes of discretion, humility and love can guide restraint of speech for the oblates, and the abbot should be a model for any conversation.

**Discretion:** The mother of all virtues, to find the "middle course" and a proper balance of all speech in order to strive for a positive outcome for any conversation.

**Humility:** In Philippians 2:7-8, Jesus humbled Himself and we should do likewise in speaking to others. Being humble is the way to our "true self," according to Richard Rohr, and is our guide for our daily speaking to others.

A review of the *Rule of St. Benedict* section on humility is helpful in restraint of speech. All levels are insightful, but especially levels 2-4, 7, 9 and 11.

**Love:** To practice love of the other person and to let love into our speech is a needed and good guide.

As Benedictine oblates, we have excellent themes, guidance and perspective in order to practice restraint of speech daily. Let discretion, love and humility be our guide in restraint of speech.

*Will Hine, oblate  
Terre Haute, IN*

## Reflections on Ravens



*Edward Castronova*

My studies as an oblate novice led me to believe that the Benedictine Order was founded in the mountains for a reason. Praising God was

apparently so important to Benedict that he felt it best done at some distance from the hustle and bustle. I believed that Benedictine spirituality was not political. Benedict did not choose Subiaco because it was a good site for launching political action against Theoderic the Goth.

Yet in my years as an oblate, and as a past coordinator of the Bloomington Chapter, I have encountered many

members of the community who think otherwise. Benedict, and Benedictine spirituality, have been invoked in my hearing to support particular policies and politics.

It is the same pattern at my workplace, Indiana University, where faculty will set aside the educational business of a meeting because they feel it is more important for us to talk politics. I would have much rather talked about university business. Similarly, when communing with other Benedictines, I would prefer to trade politics for prayer.

Removing politics from our speech is more difficult for some than others. I find myself sitting in a Benedictine meeting where it has been assumed that everyone shares the politics of the

speaker, while I do not. Seething, I force myself to recall Benedict's admonition that many things need not be said, even some very good things.

Political conflict is so very hot in our times. We are all trapped, to a greater or lesser degree, in political attitudes that are not entirely of our own crafting. It has become difficult to obtain reliable information.

Politics is sand. Let us not build on it. Let us instead keep politics out of our prayer time and so build on the Rock, whose only politics has ever been to take away the sins of the world.

*Edward (Ted) Castronova, oblate  
Bloomington, IN*



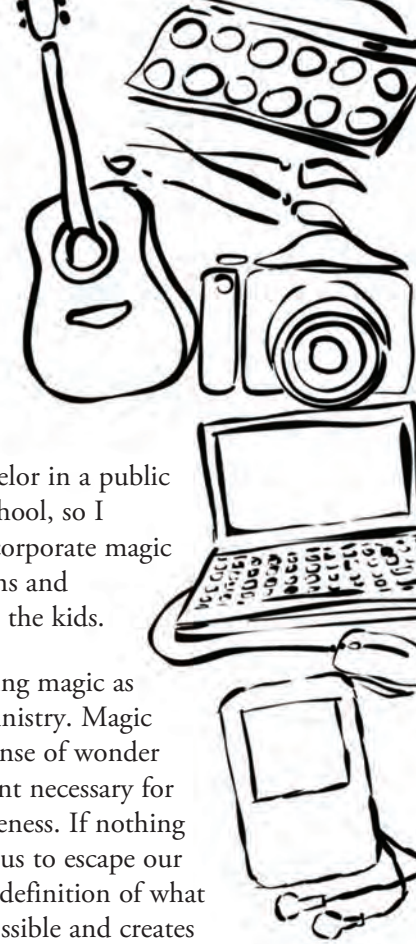
# Oblate Hobbies

Got a hobby? Tell us about it. We'd love to share it.

*How long has this been a hobby? What got you interested? How is it challenging?*

*Why do you enjoy it? Does this hobby enhance your life as an oblate?*

*Send articles to [kpolanskyoblate@yahoo.com](mailto:kpolanskyoblate@yahoo.com).*



*Thomas Causey*

“When I was a child, I thought as a child.”  
*(1 Corinthians 13:11)* Now I think as a magician, but that is pretty much the same thing!

About 15 years ago, my childhood interest in learning and performing magic was rekindled after watching a David Blaine TV special. The obsession was to figure out how he restored a crushed soda can into a full can of Coke with the pop-top intact.

Learning other effects and then developing a routine gave me the confidence to perform. After being

introduced, through membership in the Louisville Magic Club, to a group of professional and amateur magicians, my interest and skill increased. I now perform magic shows for schools, libraries, churches, fundraisers, private parties and just about anywhere that doesn't kick me out.

I enjoy performing comedy routines using cards, coins, and smaller props rather than the big “smoke and mirrors” type of illusions. I am also becoming more interested in mentalism (prediction, mind reading) effects as well.

Magic has been a fantastic hobby for me because it builds self-confidence, makes connections with folks, and brings a laugh or smile. My “real” job

is as a social worker/counselor in a public elementary school, so I frequently incorporate magic into my lessons and activities with the kids.

I see performing magic as part of my ministry. Magic can spark a sense of wonder and amazement necessary for spiritual awareness. If nothing else, it allows us to escape our often-narrow definition of what is “real” or possible and creates space to imagine something new.

*Thomas Causey, oblate  
New Salisbury, IN*



*Thomas Causey, a Saint Meinrad oblate, performs magic tricks to entertain adults and children at local gatherings.*

# The Oblate Toolbox

Listen to God so that you are able to hear others



*“These, then, are the tools of the spiritual craft ... the workshop where we are to toil faithfully at all these tasks is the enclosure of the monastery and stability in the community.” – Rule of St. Benedict 4:75, 78*



*Angie McDonald*

There seems to be an epidemic of speech these days – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Rumble, MeWe – the list goes on and on.

Everyone gets a chance to mount their own soapbox and sound off.

Some buzz phrases you may hear: I want you to hear me. Please listen to me. I need to speak my truth. Please don't interrupt me. Please don't tell me what to think. Please don't tell me what to say.

What has all this to do with restraining speech? Are we really supposed to cut back on our communication?

In my own life, I feel the screws tightening down when I believe others are not listening to me. I react against this with a visceral raising of the volume. Obviously, the other party is deaf.

Then comes the time of day when God calls me back to Himself to give me a piece of his mind. Am I really listening? The gentle repetition of the Psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours helps correct this tendency to always demand the floor.

I know that this truly is the key to disconnecting from all fears of not being heard. When I actively listen for what God is saying to me – in the quiet of the morning, in the time of the hinge between day and night, in the silence of the bedtime hour – I again become grounded in God's love. Trust is renewed. Confidence in

God's goodness is restored. My spirit is refreshed.

In short, I have returned to a place of receiving from the Lord. And when I receive God's grace through this prayer, I find myself being drawn toward the Center of Being in Christ. And when that happens, I am much more able to hear others.

As I pour out my heart to Him (Psalm 33), I find that blessed place of rest, and trust. And from that place of quiet confidence, I no longer must strive to be heard. Then, and only then, am I able to truly restrain my speech and allow others to have their say.

*Angie McDonald, oblate  
Huntingburg, IN*



# OBLATE NEWS

## INVESTITURES

The following took part in the investiture ceremony on March 5, 2022: Lee (Leon) Andrews, Arlington, MA; Mary Anne Anselmino, St. Joseph, MI; Jim (James) Green, Muncie, IN; Keith Jennings, Milton, GA; Jean Kelly, Westerville, OH; Mitch (Myles) Piotrowski, Flora, IN; Eric Roseberry, West Lafayette, IN; Denny (Denzil) Vanderpool II, Georgetown, KY; Mary Jo Zimmer, Carmel, IN. ♦

## FINAL OBLATION

These oblates took part in the oblation ceremony on March 5, 2022: Darren Sroufe, Newburgh, IN; Diane Walter, Georgetown, KY. ♦

## DEATHS

J. Mike Head, of Owensboro, KY, died on February 20, 2022.

Linda Kay Cox, of Millington, TN, died on May 29, 2012.

Melba Eva Miller, of Columbus, OH, died on September 9, 2020.

Anne Wagner, of Bloomington, IN, died on March 19, 2022. ♦

## VOLUNTEERS APPRECIATED

Recent volunteers in the Oblate Office were Br. Michael Reyes, OSB, Br. Gregory Morris, OSB, Joanna Harris, Kathleen Polansky, Angie McDonald, Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, Fr. Joseph Cox, OSB, Fr. Mateo Zamora, OSB, Fr. Noël Mueller, OSB, Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB. ♦

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Investiture and Oblation Rites: October 1, December 3

Oblate Novice Only Retreat: July 29-31

Oblate Advent Retreat: Dec. 9-11

Oblate Council and Finance Meetings: October 21. ♦

## We REALLY want you and your articles!

The *Benedictine Oblate Quarterly* invites oblates and oblate novices to write an article based upon our issue's theme, your Benedictine journey, news and information about your chapter, or a book review for the Reading Room column.

Submissions will be edited and published as they fit the theme or need of the *Quarterly*. If choosing to add sources, please use endnotes and not footnotes.

Send all submissions to Kathleen Polansky at [kpolanskyoblate@yahoo.com](mailto:kpolanskyoblate@yahoo.com) and include your name, city and state.

### Upcoming themes and submission dates:

Fall 2022 – Reverence (Final date of submission August 1)  
Winter 2023 – Faults (Final date of submission November 1)





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## Reading Room



*The Liturgy of the Hours for Benedictine Oblates* book is available for purchase again. The popular book can be ordered from Saint Meinrad's Oblate Office.

The 420-page book includes the four-week cycle of the Liturgy of the Hours, featuring Lauds, Midday Prayer, Vespers and Compline. Included are psalms, hymns, readings, intercessions and prayers for each day of the four-week period.

The reprinted edition has a leatherette cover, gilded pages, and ribbons for marking the pages.

It is available for \$30, plus \$9 for shipping. To order, send your mailing address and a check to:

Office of Benedictine Oblates  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey  
200 Hill Drive  
St. Meinrad, IN 47577

Or you can call the Oblate Office with your credit card and shipping information, 812-357-6817.

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