

PAX - WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE
ADVENT/CHRISTMASTIDE (2016-2017), and ORDINARY TIME
THROUGH TO ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1ST, 2017.

PAX-WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE IS SENT OUT TO OBLATES AND TO THOSE WHO ARE ENROLLED IN THE OBLATE FORMATION PROGRAM, **FIVE** TIMES EACH YEAR. THIS EDITION IS ALWAYS NUMBER ONE, BEING SENT OUT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH'S LITURGICAL YEAR. PLEASE TAKE YOUR DIRECTION FROM EACH EDITION OF "PAX – WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE".

SECTION ONE: RREADING AND REFLECTION

The theme of this Section of the Booklet, is "receptivity". I have been inspired by chapter five of the Book, "From Advent to Pentecost", written by a Carthusian Monk. As we begin the Church's Liturgical Year, may we pray for the grace of receptivity: "We should open ourselves to the action of the Spirit who will give birth to Christ in our hearts. Let us try to place ourselves at the school of the Word of God..." (Page 37). The writer opens out the beauty of Mary's receptivity: "She is the first to whom God gave the hundredfold – the birth of the Messiah...She must actively consent to the mysterious action of the Spirit within her. She is called to faith and trust – not to clear understanding." (ibid.)

For us: it is "important to have...receptivity to the unexpected, to the unknown, to the mystery [of Divine Providence] when God invites us to it. Mary's reception of God's word is total; in a unique way, with all her heart and all her body, she conceives and gives birth to the Word made flesh. This birth of Christ is the principle and the model of His birth in the heart of each one of us. We are asked to receive Christ with the receptivity of a faith which does not set down conditions", but rather a receptivity characterized by "simplicity and confidence", both of which expect "everything from God, to whom nothing is impossible." (pages 41-42). While this has been written for novices of the Carthusian Charterhouse, it is just as applicable to Benedictine Monastics – that is, all of us who form the large community known as Jamberoo Abbey. Each one of us will be moved by the Holy Spirit to find in part of this reflection, or in all of it, the challenge we need to begin again at the beginning of another Liturgical Year. It was St. Gregory of Nyssa who wrote: "From beginnings, to beginnings, through beginnings that never end".

SECTION TWO: FURTHER READING AND REFLECTION

Quis stabit mecum? Who will stand with me?

Once again, the Mother of God is our model.

In his book, *Prayer According to the Scriptures*, Jean Laplace, S.J., describes Our Lady as the perfect model of prayer with the Scriptures.

She stands with her Son, from His birth to His death, and beyond. "She hears Simeon's prophecy – *A sword shall pierce your own heart*. Ten years later, she hears Jesus' reference to the Father's business...words she does not understand at the moment. Instead of forgetting, or hardening herself against them, she allows them to rest in her soul. Then there is Cana, and later the allusion to those who do

the will of the Father, those who are mother, brother and sisters to Jesus. Like the seed of the parable falling into good soil, these words bud forth in her heart. At the foot of the Cross they bear fruit.” (page 36).

Quis stabit mecum? Who will stand with me? And so, the challenge presents itself to each of us to be that person who stands with another in sickness, emotional pain, the shame of redundancy, domestic violence, dispossession, poverty. There’s no better time to do this than Advent and Christmastide – the time of giving, of love and joy and coming together for the end of year celebrations. When I was just ten years old, a woman with a small child rang the door bell of our home in Brisbane. The woman was carrying a suitcase and the little girl was clutching her doll. The woman was a distant cousin of my father – and had walked away from a situation of domestic violence involving addictions to alcohol and gambling. It was just under a week before Christmas. And no, perhaps it wasn’t what our parents had planned, but they rose to the occasion and took her and the child into our family home. There wasn’t much help from the Government for these kinds of situations in the 1950s. The woman cried a lot, smoked a lot, and talked softly and confidentially to my mother, who comforted her. Quis stabit mecum? Who will stand with me? Mary stood at the foot of the Cross, and before that, met her Son on the way to Calvary. Quis stabit mecum?

What if it was changed to a more direct question: Will you stand with me? Could this be the question which calls us forth as followers of Jesus? Someone is asking us: ‘Will you stand with me?’

We can do this in multitudinous ways. As Monastic men and women we can:

- pray for the people of Yemen, and those across the world who are enduring indescribable suffering.
- invite a lonely person or persons to Christmas dinner or our Christmas barbecue.
- do some voluntary work with the Rev. Bill Cruise and the mobile food van in Sydney, or with other charities in the cities where we live.
- take Christmas dinner to an elderly neighbor.
- mow the lawn or tidy the garden for an elderly or sick neighbor.
- do an extra shift on the life saving roster, especially as the holiday crowd arrives at all the beaches along the east coast of Australia.
- help a grand-child with his or her Christmas list - what to give to everyone for Christmas. My grandmother used to help me to this.
- be there for someone with anxiety, or depression.
- go along to one of the local community groups who are meeting with, and helping the homeless.

Please take for *Lectio Divina*, the readings for the Sundays of Advent and the Sundays of Christmastide. The usual *Lectio Divina* guide is on our website at the beginning of every week with a view to the following weekend.

SECTION THREE: ABOUT THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

The Rule of St. Benedict is totally infused with “solidarity” or “standing” with the other person. We are to think of the needs of the other rather than our own needs. We are to reverence and nurse the sick. The sick in their turn are to reverence their carers and enable the carers to do their work of caring. We are to stand with one another in “mutual obedience”. We are called to stand with the community and extended community through our fidelity to *Lectio Divina* and some or all, of the Liturgy of the

Hours. We are to stand with the community/family/parish community by sharing our talents and gifts and allowing others to share their talents and gifts.

Ponder on the words: receiver, receivership, recipient – all related to “receptivity”. A **recipient** is a beneficiary. We are all beneficiaries of God’s salvation. This is never clearer than at Christmas time, as we remember that God sent His only Son Jesus to be the Saviour of the human race. And we follow a Rule which is centred on Jesus Christ – a Christological Rule.

When we sincerely embrace our Benedictine Rule, we are **receivers**, in the sense of being a “source”, “spreader”, “bringer”, satellite dish or aerial. We receive God in a spirit of “receptivity” as did Mary, and we spread God, bring God, transmit God to all who associate with us on our Benedictine journey.

When a company goes broke, one of the options is to go into **receivership**. May we be there for someone who is broken in spirit, because of failure or other reasons. We can bring them back from despair through the Divine Love bestowed upon us and in the spirit of the Benedictine Rule which calls to us: “If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts.”

SECTION FOUR: COMMUNITY HISTORY

Our Community Chronicles record that on December 24th, 1942, Archbishop Gilroy of Sydney had forbidden the celebration of Midnight Mass in the whole of the Archdiocese because the Government had ordered “black-outs”, fearing air raids by the Japanese. By this time, the wireless had been introduced into the monastery, and the setting up of the wireless was almost as detailed as it is today to set up a satellite dish. Because of the wireless, thenuns received the news of Pearl Harbour 7th Dec., 1941, and the news of the bombing of Darwin (10.00 a.m. on February 19th, 1942), within twenty-four hours.

SECTION FIVE: LITURGY

Advent begins a new liturgical year: The Sunday Liturgy readings take Year A, and Weekdays take Year 1.

THE ‘O’ ANTIPHONS BEGIN ON DECEMBER 17th.

CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS AT JAMBEROO ABBEY IS PRECEDED BY THE TRADITIONAL MONASTIC VIGIL AT 10.45 p.m. YOU ARE INVITED TO THIS TRADITIONAL VIGIL AND THEN TO THE SINGING OF CAROLS PRECEDING MIDNIGHT MASS. The Vigil takes an hour, the Carols just fifteen minutes before Midnight.

Feasts and Solemnities:

November 27: First Sunday of Advent

November 30: St. Andrew, Feast

December 3: St. Francis Xavier (Memorial)

December 4: Second Sunday of Advent

December 7: St. Ambrose (Memorial)

December 8: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

December 11: Third Sunday of Advent

December 13: St. Lucy (Memorial)

December 14: St. John of the Cross (Memorial)

December 17 – 24: Greater Advent Ferias (O Antiphons at Vespers)

December 18: Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 25: Christmas Day

December 26: St. Stephen, first martyr
 December 27: St. John the Evangelist
 December 28th: The Feast of the Holy Innocents
 December 29: 5th Day in the Octave of Christmas
 December 30th: The Feast of the Holy Family
 December 31st: 7th Day in Octave of Christma
 Vespers on this day is First Vespers of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

JANUARY:

01: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 02: Sts Basil and Gregory Nazianzen. (Memorial)
 08: SOLEMNITY of the EPIPHANY of Our Lord.
 09: BAPTISM OF OUR LORD (feast) This is a special DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
 IN OUR COMMUNITY, - the first Abbatial Blessing in 1983
 11: St. Aelred of Rievaulx
 15: Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
 21: St. Agnes (Memorial)
 22: Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
 25: The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul
 26: AUSTRALIA DAY (Solemnity)
 28: St. Thomas Aquinas (Memorial)
 29: Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

FEBRUARY

02: Titular Solemnity: PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE – the title
 of our Abbey
 05: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
 06: Sts. Paul Miki and Companions (Memorial)
 10: St. Scholastica – Solemnity
 11: Our Lady of Lourdes – World Day of Prayer for the Sick
 12: Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
 19: Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
 22: The Chair of St. Peter (Feast)
 26: Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A.

MARCH

01: ASH WEDNESDAY

SECTION SIX: YOUR COMMUNITY

This edition of “Pax – With the Gospel For Our Guide” goes to the printing room before November 19th, so we will miss news of the next Group Ceremony on that day. However, your ceremonies will be mentioned in the Lenten Booklet which goes out at the beginning of February, 2017.

Death Notice:

Oblate John (of the Cross) Delaforce died on November 3rd, after a long time in palliative care. Please pray for Pam who is now a widow, and who has stood with John through an illness that has spanned 20 years or more. Pam is one of this world’s holy people.

**Our prayers are with all Oblates who are
 ill at this time – those in nursing home care, those in palliative care, those
 coming through surgery for cancer, and those with chronic illness.**

HAPPY FEAST DAY TO:

Robert Arsenius Daly, for December 6.
Sr. Maureen Therese Woodhouse, and Oblate Wanda (Immaculata) Kwan, for December 8.
Oblate Catherine (Thomas) Corban, for December 10.
Oblates Doreen (Adele) O'Sullivan and Elizabeth (Adele) Quinn for December 24.
Sarah Louise (Emanuelle) Kirsop for CHRISTMAS DAY
Obl. Robert (Stephen) Basham and Graham (Stephen) McCall for December 26.
Sr. Joanna Bagot, Anders Gottfrid (Johannes) Nilsson, and Therese Veronica (Johanna) Nilsson, and Neville (John) Feeney, for December 27.
Fr. Nigel Thomas Wright, for December 29.
Marie (Basel) McGuckin, for January 2.
Fr. Dixon Seraphim Kenny, Helen Seraphim Shorter, and Sandra Seraphim Temple for January 2.
Oblate Rob (Aelred) Johnstone for January 11.
Oblates Aaron (Placid) McElhone and John (Placid) Limbourn for January 15.
Oblate John (Anthony) Dunne for January 17.
Sr. Agnes, for January 21.
Brian (Robert) Brennan for January 26
Lynne Scholastica Middleton, Rhonda Scholastica Kinsela, Jacqueline Scholastica Collins and Cathy Scholastica Ransom for February 10.

ANNIVERSARIES OF OBLATION:

December 3rd: Patrick Martin (Hildegard) O'Connor, and Beppi Lioba O'Connor
December 5th: Sandra (Julian) Cooper
December 6th: Robert Arsenius Daly
December 10th: Catherine Mary Thomas Corban
December 11th: Irene Gertrud Bajda, David Alan Brendan Mumford
December 15: Kathryn Mary Proctor
December 16: Rev. Kevin Bede Walsh
December 16: Jeanette Magdalen Murray
December 18: Deborah Martha Pike
December 28: Maria Teresa Elisabetta Gambino
Epiphany: Sr Carmel Mechtilde Leighton, Graham Stephen and Mary Hildegard McCall
January 9: Elaine Mechtilde Alinta
January 11: Rob Aelred Johnstone and Elizabeth Aelred Sheppard
January 15: Donna Sturgeon, and John Placid Limbourn
January 18: Joan Augustine Lorente, Carmen Teresa Lorente, Georgette Sharbel Najjar, and Peter Bernard Sheehan
January 21: Robyn Hildegard Wein
January 30: Catherine (Thomas More) Lindsay
February 3: Ingrid (Ruah) Cheng
February 3: Therese (Anthony) Harding.
February 4: Rev. Ann Clare Dittmar-McCollim
February 8: Shirley Clare Basham and Robert Stephen Basham
February 10: Ellen Benedicta Woods
February 11: Garry Benedict Gleeson, Marie Catherine Gleeson, Frances Mildred Cormack, Kathleen Lioba Mason, Ken Ambrose Halliday, Elizabeth Adele Quinn, Patrick Bede Quinn, Maureen Frances Williamson, Margherita Hilda Cappetta, Russell Benedict Collins, Jacqueline Scholastica Collins
February 12: Sylvia Dymphna Honeysett
February 13: John Gregory Wynen and Robyn Teresa Wynen
February 14: Bendetta Marina Di Mattia.
February 17: Giovanna Scholastica Tesoriera, Matthew Edward Dowsey

February 17: Vincenzo Gerardo Cappetta, Elaine Brigid Guy, Sidney Michael Rice, Wendy Lucy Browning, Barbara Elizabeth Jamieson

February 18: M. del Carmen Teresa Boharull-Vila

February 20: Christine Frances Angus, Patricia Hildegard Benedict (Benedict is Patricia's surname)

February 21: Fr. Henry Bernard Byrne

February 27: Robert (Bob) Anselm Cashman, and Colleen Augustine Cashman

ANNIVERSARIES OF SOLEMN PROFESSION:

Sr. Maria Frances Slade, Sr. Hildegard Ryan, and Sr. Naomie Ruth Varnakulasingham, February 2nd

Sr. Clare Gamble and Sr. Joanna Bagot: February 10th

Let us pray for those who anniversary of death occurs during this season.

DECEMBER:

03.12.2015 Oblate Maxine Francis Pickering

05.12.1913 Dame Mary Teresa Parkinson

06.12.1961 Dame Mary Winifred Price

07.12.1923 Dame Mary Romanus McKee

07.12.2013 Oblate David Aelred Russell

10.12.1911 Dame Mary Philomena Hay

11.12.1985 Oblate Carmel Condon

14.12.1998 Oblate Richard Damian Lequaetermaine

14.12.2014 Oblate Valerie Mary Cecilia Proverbs

18.12.1855 Sr. Mary Gertrude Nagle

19.12.1969 Sr. Mary Benedict Walsh

21.12.1985 Sr. Teresa Gillin

22.12.1950 Sr. Mary Anthony O'Connor

23.12.2012 Sr. Immaculata Briglia

29.12.1908 Sr. Mary Martha Comyn

30.12.1949 Mother Mary Joseph Brady, third elected Prioress of the Community

JANUARY

02. 1.2004 Oblate Elizabeth of the Trinity Corcoran

07. 1. 1882 Mother Mary Bernard Hawthornethwaite

10. 1.1985 Sr. Moira Bradshaw

12. 1.1923 Sr. Mary Catherine Connolly

17. 1.1923 Sr. Mary Baptist Schahill

20. 1.1913 Sr. Mary Placid de Castella

20. 1. 2008 Oblate Dr. Carney (Bede) Fisher.

FEBRUARY

02. 2.1899 Mother M. Benedict Lett,

02. 2. 2015 Obl. Fr. Ronald Bede Harden.

08. 2.1973 Sr. Mary Bernadette Hughes.

26.02.1931 Sr. Mary Mildred Smythe

SECTION SEVEN: SAINTS

"There are souls who seek God in Jesus Christ, who accept the humanity of Christ, but stop there. That is not sufficient. We must accept the Incarnation with all its consequences." (Blessed Columba Marmion).

SECTION EIGHT: FOR REFLECTION

Beginning anew – a new Liturgical Year and on January 1st, a new Calendar Year, we reflect:

“There is never a moment that isn’t an opportunity to create something new. There is never a moment when there isn’t something to let go of. There is never a moment that isn’t an opportunity to make space for the new by letting go of the old.” (Page 16, “Stillness Through my Prayers” by Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, r.s.c. – known to the Irish as St. Stan of Dublin). This Book is published by Townhouse, Dublin, 2006.

On the back cover:

“You may need this book if you have ever had sleepless nights, feared the morning, faced difficult decisions, felt anxious about the future or craved an answer to life’s many mysteries.”

OBLATE RETREATS:

25th and 26th March.

11th and 12th November.

Most Oblates who make a booking, arrive on the Friday evening. If you want to make your commitment as an Oblate of our Community, the ceremonies are held on the Saturday morning at the 9.00 a.m. Mass. The Retreat Brochure for the year is not yet printed – but there will be no Oblate Meetings in 2017, for the same reason as 2016 – too many retreats on weekends throughout the year.

DUE TO THE COST OF POSTAGE AND THE SLOWNESS OF DELIVERY, WE ARE PUTTING OUR ANNUAL NEWSLETTER ONLINE THIS YEAR. IT WILL APPEAR SOON SO KEEP AN EYE OUT ON

www.jamberooabbey.org.au in the News & Events section

Thanks to Sr. Clare who keeps on printing the “Pax” Booklet after I have written it. Thanks also to Oblate Cathy Milgate and her husband Les, who see the process through to the Post Office each time.

MAY THE PEACE OF CHRIST FALL GENTLY INTO YOUR HEARTS THIS CHRISTMASTIDE, AND MAY YOU BE GRACED WITH STRENGTH FOR ANOTHER CALENDAR YEAR.

