

**PAX - WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE
ADVENT/CHRISTMASTIDE (2019-2020), and ORDINARY TIME THROUGH
TO ASH WEDNESDAY, 26 February, 2020.**

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".

This booklet is also on our website and is sent personally to oblates who prefer to receive it by email.

SECTION ONE: Reading and Reflection

From the Rule of St. Benedict, chapter 6: *Restraint of Speech*.

First of all, sit quietly and read chapter 6 of our holy Rule. Note that it is called "Restraint of Speech", not silence. And certainly not silence for the sake of silence. The call is to restraint of speech as a way of life, lest I indulge in a banquet of negativity, or a critical slanderous portrayal of another person. Br. Hugh Feiss, in his book "Essential Monastic Wisdom", devoted chapter six to "Silence and Speech", as it is presented in the Rule of Benedict. Think of it as the two SS's. Feiss collects the monastic wisdom of the great reformers and solitaries, and those who live in community like us. He leads us through a journey of wisdom texts:

We should avoid gossip and chatter, flattery and deception, detraction and slander." Complaining corrodes community life..." some complaining is objectively justified." And in the present climate of church and state, there is a need for "legitimate avenues of communication through which people [can] make problems and difficulties known and find solutions to them; indeed, there are times when silence is sinful." (Pages 69 and 70 on "Monastic Wisdom, Writings on the contemplative Life by Hugh Feiss, (Forward, by Kathleen Norris). Many of our oblates have been helped by the writings of Kathleen Norris.

Don't miss Sr. Joan Chittister's book "The Time is Now, a Call to Uncommon Courage". (A Convergent Books, 2019). James Martin has the following praise for this book: "Joan Chittister is that rare combination of a gifted spiritual writer and a great prophetic voice in our Church, speaking out for women, for minorities, and all marginalized people. When I think of someone who speaks truth to power, I think of Joan." (James Martin, S.J., Author of *Jesus: a Pilgrimage*).

Prior to the Royal Commission into sexual and physical abuse of minors, there was a sinful silence. Br. Hugh Feiss says that "one must speak up to protect the innocent or abused, to try to correct those who are wrecking their lives, to defend the truth from falsehood. An honest argument is better than passive-aggressive silence" (pages 69-70).

St. Benedict says: "Utter truth from the heart and from the mouth. Be neither a complainer nor a detractor. Keep your mouth from evil or depraved talk.

In...silence, holy desires, peace and calm of heart takes place because vain talkativeness is absent.” (From the writings of Br. Hugh Feiss – the chapter on Restraint of Speech).

SECTION TWO: Further Reflection of the Topic of Silence and Speech

Can we start again, at the beginning of a new liturgical year and make 2020 a year when chapter six of our holy Rule is taken for *Lectio Divina* and responded to in our day to day living. Brother Feiss, for one of his supportive texts, quotes the Rule of John Trithemius, who teaches: “We are going to render an account to God, not only for our idle words, but also for our ill-considered silence.”

Sr. Joan Chittister is on course with her insights into this subject: “The goal of monastic silence and monastic speech is respect for others, a sense of place, a spirit of peace.” This is a deeply insightful text.

A year ago, we took the theme: “The eloquent silence of words left unsaid.” The same theme this year builds on that of last year.

In the Desert Tradition, Abba Agathon appears to be the most up-front teacher on restraint of speech. He teaches: “Nothing is worse than an uncontrolled tongue, because it is the mother of all the passions.”

SECTION THREE: About the Rule of St. Benedict

The Rule of Benedict calls for thoughtful speech. (Joan Chittister). Thoughtful speech is very hard work. Let us begin:

Example 1: My sister and her husband have recently been divorced. What words will I speak to be in solidarity with her, and to help her find the professional assistance to restore her sense of self-worth. I wouldn't say: “I told you not to marry him. He's looking for a mother, not a wife.”

Example 2: I am in a shelter with other families who have been told to evacuate ahead of the threat of bushfire. There are others who are crying because their homes have been destroyed and some of their cattle or sheep burnt to death. What words of comfort can I speak? Maybe there aren't any words, just a warm hug, or a hand extended in solidarity with them.

Example 3: A young farmer has taken his own life because he can't carry on. All has failed. Years and years of work has been destroyed in drought and now in fire. I live about 40 kilometers away, on a small property, just out of town. Perhaps my words will take the form of a couple of meals for the widow and her children.

Example 4: Are there non-thoughtful words which I have spoken and which I am ashamed of?

Whatever the situation, let us start anew. “The Rule of Benedict calls for thoughtful speech.”

One of the most life-giving examples of thoughtful speech takes the form of praise which lifts others out of depression and puts a smile on their faces. Praise is probably the most powerful means of giving new life to others, the new life which has been given to us by Jesus.

SECTION FOUR: Community History

One of the obituaries in this edition of “Pax, With the Gospel for our Guide”, is Bridget Scahill. In community she was known as Sr. Mary Baptist. Her death notice in the Sydney Morning Herald says that she was the eldest surviving member of the Scahill families of Canterbury, Belmore, and United States of America. At the time of her death she was 90 years old. She arrived in the Colony on the Immigrant Ship, “Joseph Somes”, and her calling (work) is listed as “Child’s Maid”. Her brother Thomas had accompanied Bridget to the Colony and they had a brother Patrick and sisters Jane and Marcella already here. Bridget Scahill was 18 when she arrived in the colony of New South Wales in 1852. She and her family came from Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath. Their father was Simon Scahill, and their mother was Bridget Delahunty

SECTION FIVE: Liturgy

Advent begins a new liturgical year:
The Sunday Liturgy readings take Year A, and Weekdays take Year 2.

The ‘O’ antiphons begin on December 17.

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:

- December 1: First Sunday of Advent
- December 3: St. Francis Xavier (Memorial)
- December 7: St. Ambrose (Memorial)
- December 8: Second Sunday of Advent
- December 9: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Solemnity)
- December 13: St. Lucy (Memorial)
- December 14: St. John of the Cross (Memorial)
- December 15: Third Sunday of Advent
- December 17: This day, the greater Advent Ferias begin. The ‘O’ Antiphons are used at Vespers each day for the *Magnificat*
- December 22: Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 26: St. Stephen, first martyr
- December 27: St. John the Evangelist
- December 28: The Feast of the Holy Innocents
- December 29: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- December 30: 6th Day in the Octave of Christmas.

December 31: 7th day in the Octave of Christmas
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)
- 05: SOLEMNITY of the EPIPHANY of Our Lord
- 11: St. Aelred of Rievaulx
- 12: Baptism of Our Lord (feast). This is a special day of remembrance in our community, - the first Abbatial Blessing in 1983
- 17: St. Anthony of Egypt
- 19: Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Yr. A
- 21: St. Agnes (Memorial)
- 24: St. Francis de Sales. (Memorial)
- 25: The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul
- 26: Within Australia, the Australia Day Liturgy replaces the Liturgy for the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A. (Ordo 2020).
- 28: St. Thomas Aquinas (Memorial)
- 31: St. John Bosco (Memorial)

February

- 02: Titular Solemnity: Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple – the title of our Abbey. Blessing of candles and procession take place on this day. This Liturgy takes the place of the Liturgy for the Fourth Sunday of the Year A.
- 05: St. Agatha (Memorial)
- 06: Sts. Paul Miki and Companions (Memorial)
- 09: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
- 10: St. Scholastica, sister of St. Benedict of Nursia. (Feast or Solemnity in Benedictine Houses. Memorial elsewhere).
- 11: Our Lady of Lourdes – World Day of Prayer for the Sick).
- 14: Sts Cyril, and Methodius (Memorial)
- 16: 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A.
- 22: The Chair of St. Peter, apostle (Feast)
- 23: 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
- 26: Ash Wednesday

SECTION SIX: Your Community

Congratulations to:

Patricia (Teresa of Avila) Bartkowiak of Brisbane.
Brendan (Bernard) Schostakowski, of Brisbane.
Patricia (Julian) Clinkskel Wait, of Swan Hill, Victoria.

All these precious and sincere people made their commitment to travel by the Benedictine way to their destination with God.

The Ceremony of commitment was held on 16th November, the feast of St. Gertrud. This was also Mother Mary's feast day and she happened to be here

at the time. Most of us know that Mary chose to take a sabbatical year to allow Abbess Hilda time to lead the community, and the community to respond to her teaching.

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.
Elizabeth (Adele) Quinn for December 24.
Oblate Ethel (Emmanuel) Parriwa-Murray, for December 25.
Obl. Robert (Stephen) Basham, and Graham (Stephen) McCall for December 26
Sarah Louise (Emanuelle) Kirsop for CHRISTMAS DAY.
Sr. Joanna Bagot, Anders Gottfrid (Johannes) Nilsson, 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.
Oblate John (Placid) Limbourn for January 15.
Oblate John (Anthony) Dunne, for January 17.
Sr. Agnes, for January 21.
Brian (Robert) Brennan for January 26
Gabrielle Brigid Nicholson, for February 1.
Lynne Scholastica Middleton, Rhonda Scholastica Kinsela, Jacqueline Scholastica Collins and Cathy Scholastica Ransom, for February 10.
John Gregory Wynen for February 13.
Peter Damien McElhone, Ira Peter Wilson, for February 22.

Happy Anniversary of Oblation to:

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 Mechtild 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: Patricia Julian Morgan, 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: Edward Dowsey, Vincenzo Gerardo Cappetta, Elaine Brigid Guy, Wendy Lucy Browning, Barbara Elizabeth Jamieson.
 February 18: M. del Carmen Teresa Boharull-Vita, and Robert Anselm van OOrt.
 February 20: Christine Frances Angus, and Patricia Hildegard Benedict
 February 21: Fr. Henry Bernard Byrne
 February 27: Robert Anselm Cashman and Colleen Augustine Cashman

Anniversaries of Solemn Profession:

Sr. Maria Frances Slade, Sr. Hildegard Ryan, Sr. Naomie Ruth Varnakulasingham, Sr. Hannah Massy-Greene for February 2.
 Sr. Clare Gamble and Sr. Joanna Bagot: February 10

Let us pray for those whose 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 Lequaietermaine
 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
 26.12.2018 Oblate Bill (Benedict) Price
 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.
29. 1. 2018 Oblate Irene (Patricia) McAllister

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

The title "Dame" was used after 1908, when the Beuron Constitutions were in use. Being a set of constitutions written for a new monastery of nuns in Europe, the term "Dame" and "Dom" were used for nuns and monks who entered to make solemn vows and to pray the liturgy of the hours. Sr. was also used for a Lay Sister, who wasn't committed to the daily Liturgy of the Hours, but rather to housework, and the Little Office of Our Lady. There are three "mothers" in the list above: Mother Mary Joseph Brady, third elected Prioress; Mother Mary Bernard Hawthornethwaite, who earned it as one of early nuns, and the life of illness which she carried; Mother Mary Benedict Lett, who was there on 2 February, 1849 and who assisted Dame Magdalen le Clerc in the school after the death in 1850 of the founding mother, Scholastica Gregory. Unfortunately, the obituaries need tidying up, but time is just not there; So, we see that there are a number of Sisters who are Choir Nuns, professing Solemn Vows. The title Dame gradually faded away in the years leading up to the Vatican Council.

SECTION SEVEN: SAINTS

Saints are those people of our own times, and times past, who stand in solidarity with those who are suffering. As the Advent Oblate booklet begins a new Liturgical Year, let us reflect on the following:

It is an excerpt from the New York Times, for May 20, 2018: Australia is a breadbasket to the world and a globalization success story. So why are its farmers killing themselves?

The answer may be found in the following tragic story: *James Guy had been a dairy farmer since he was 15, and at 55 he thought he'd be preparing for retirement. Instead he struggled to make the payments on a bank loan after the price of milk fell and never recovered. One night in November 2016, his wife, Mary, who was working part-time as a nurse to help make ends meet, came home to find he had hanged himself.*

When a farmer is looking down the barrel of having to sell his farm or lose his farm or give up the only work he'd known all his life, it's devastating...

SECTION EIGHT: FOR SERIOUS REFLECTION

From a country dweller: *On the mainstream news bulletins, it is as if we don't exist on the other side of the sandstone curtain. "Weather reporters blab on about lovely clear skies and sunny weather as if the cities were all that mattered. But how will the people in the cities eat if the country isn't producing enough food for lack of water."*

OBLATE RETREATS In 2020

28 and 29 March, 2020
21 and 22 November, 2020

OBLATION CEREMONIES in 2020

These ceremonies take place during the Eucharist on 28 March and 21 November 2020.

If you are ready to make a commitment as an Oblate of the community, you need to write a formal letter to Sr. Hildegard, Oblate Director, it will then be passed on to our abbess. In this letter, you need to state your reasons for the request. You also need to write your Rule of Life. This would contain your commitment to some or all of the Liturgy of the Hours, to prayer and Holy Reading (*Lectio Divina*), stating as far as possible, times in each day. Added to this would be your work in the vineyard of the Lord: visitation of the vulnerable ones in our society: a Eucharistic Minister who takes the Blessed Sacrament to the sick in homes and nursing homes; work with the disabled; a grandmother who looks after grandchildren on a regular basis, and teaches them the important values in life etc.

Thanks to all our oblates who send donations towards the production of our booklet, including the oblates who want to pay for more than their own.



