

PAX – WITH THE GOSPEL FOR OUR GUIDE
POST-PENTECOST II, 2022.

September, October, November.

More specifically, this edition of “Pax” spans the period from September 1 until the first Sunday of Advent.

SECTION ONE: Reading and Reflection

Theme: Keep death daily before your eyes: Chapter 4, verse 47.

THE MARTYRDOMS OF EVERY DAY.

Most of us will die in a hospice, hospital, home, hopefully surrounded by family, but the real death happens daily, as we put “self” to one side, and let irritations go, fade away, so that we can be free and move on.

St. Benedict has a number of teachings on death:

1. We must be on guard against base desire because death is stationed at the gateway of pleasure. Life then, must be stationed at the gate where I leave self behind, before entering.
2. The tongue holds the key to life and death. Benedict is quoting Proverbs 18:21 as his source. Of course, this is too true. How many of us wish we hadn’t opened our mouths at that precise moment and upset everyone?
3. Why didn’t I listen to my wife’s advice, my husband’s advice and keep my mouth shut? Now, I’ve created a bigger rift between me and my son/daughter/son-in-law/daughter-in-law.
4. The martyrdoms of every day – these are what we face: my son leaves the milk out of the fridge no matter how many times I tell him not to. The next bottle of milk that goes sour, he can replace it with a new one, paid for out of his own pocket money!
5. My daughter spends hours on her mobile phone and spends little time with the family. Go on loving her and wait for a time when you can talk to her calmly about the matter.
6. My son is in with a bad crowd at school and I know that they are doing drugs. This means my husband and I have to face another “showdown”! Mechanisms of conflict and resolution are part of family life. Yelling and screaming at one another doesn’t resolve difficulties in relationships. Peace can be achieved only where conflict is honestly acknowledged. To acknowledge such conflict (any conflict) takes courage and humility and an uncommon readiness to forgive.
7. We seem to have another Luciano Pavarotti in our Parish – thank God we only go to the church once a week! Let it go. No need to turn around and give him a filthy look.
8. The priest preached for 35 minutes today – I timed it. Maybe we’ll try another parish next week, or maybe we will just let it go and offer it for the starving millions of people in Africa, facing the worst famine in history. Maybe we will offer it for the people of the Ukraine, enduring this very long and terrible war.

9. My daughter asked us if we could have a family conference. She began by thanking us for attending. And then went straight to the business on her agenda. She said that she would like to learn the piano, and the guitar. We explained that this would cost money. She understood but seemed very passionate about it. We agreed, but said we would hire a piano, just in case she lost interest after a while. She already does ballet, horse-riding and kayaking.

The martyrdoms of everyday – these are the real deaths we are dealt. Somehow, we cope with the death of friends, parents, siblings. The death of husbands and wives – this is more of the Cross for us. Death is so final.

It was Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), who said: “It matters not how a person dies, but how that person lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time.” It matters how a person lives! That’s where the emphasis should be.

St. Augustine speaks of the alternatives we have before us at all times: There are two cities – the earthly city which consists in the love of self, and the heavenly city which is the love of God. Consider these two cities, Jerusalem, a vision of peace, and Babylon, called confusion. They are made by two loves, love of God and love of the world. Let each of you ask: Which is my love, and you will know of which city you are a citizen.

SECTION TWO: Continuing our reading and reflection.

Have you bought a copy of “The Monastic Heart”, by Sr. Joan Chittister, (Convergent Books, 2021)? The final chapter says it all: The making of the Monastic Heart, On Developing the Heart of God.

“It is the spirit of monasticism that has been the rudder of the Western world. It is the spirit of monasticism that calls us beyond all the systems of the world to find the best of our spiritual selves, to be lights in the darkness of a world struggling to find again the best of its human self.” (page 254). From pages 254 to 257, using a series of statements, Sr. Joan summarizes the truth of contemporary monasticism:

1. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of tradition.
2. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of community.
3. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of reflection.
4. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of personal growth and development.
5. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of service.
6. Monasticism is driven by the spirit of transcendence.

Take time to let these statements into your mind and heart. Looking at each one, how does it impact on your life as an Oblate of St. Benedict.

SECTION THREE: About (Concerning) the Rule of St. Benedict: Death as it comes to us in our daily martyrdoms.

“Remind yourself daily that you are going to die.” Or: “keep death daily before your eyes.”

The first word of the Benedictine Rule is “Listen”. In Latin it is “obsculta”. In old Latin, it is “ausculta”. The oldest copy of the Rule of Benedict, which is held in the Bodlian Library in Oxford, uses “ausculta”. It means “LISTEN”. Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, rsc in her book “Day by Day” says that listening brings relief to the listener as well as to the person who tells. To listen, you have to empty yourself of yourself. While you listen to the other, your own troubles and anxieties do not exist. While you are listening, you are free. Your inner noise is quietened. Peace descends on you.” These wise words are precious for all of us who are Benedictine Monastics, following a Rule which begins with one word: “LISTEN”.

Sr. Joan’s six statements can only become reality if we listen: the spirit of tradition, the spirit of community, the spirit of reflection, the spirit of personal growth and development, the spirit of service, the spirit of transcendence. And in order to listen, we must die to self.

SECTION FOUR: Community History

Our two foundresses opened a school in 1851. Sr. Scholastica Gregory (foundress) mentions education in a letter she wrote and sent home to England – to her own community: “Parents are longing for a convent education for their daughters. Numbers of young ladies are settling in life before even they are fully grown. It is really quite distressing and to me quite revolting to see mere children as mothers of families...and such numbers of children without any means of education so that a convent for that purpose is quite necessary for the colony. Added to these impressions are the more caustic comments of Dame Magdalen le Clerc (foundress), in a letter dated 14 February 1849: “I am told the children here are very indolent indeed; to tell the truth, independence being the spirit of the land, there are no children. A child of ten is like one of fourteen at home, and to see their consequence – it is quite laughable as they strut about the streets. We must try to bring down their spirits a little when we get them under our tuition. Dame Magdalen le Clerc and Sr. Scholastica Gregory (our two foundresses), were not alone in their initial impressions. The English of the colony of New South Wales, and the English in Australia generally, had difficulty with the independent spirit of the young. H.R. Rae, in “Pencilings by Land and Sea”, sees the “walking of an Australian girl as peculiar to herself – she swings and sways her right arm to and fro.” These first impressions do not appear to have negatively affected the teaching of girls who would attend the educational establishment run by Benedictine Nuns in the Colony. The nuns refrained from allowing first impressions to blind them to the work of the Holy Spirit in the Australian Mission.

SECTION FIVE: LITURGY

SEPTEMBER:

01: St. Giles. And it is also the Day of Prayer in Praise of Creation – a day to reflect on the state of the earth, and its flora and fauna, on oil spills in the oceans, on nuclear testing, and on wars which desecrate the earth and human beings. This day was introduced by Pope Francis in 2015.

02: Spring Ember Day (A special day of Prayer and Penance.

03: St. Gregory the Great. (Feast).

04: 23rd Sunday in Ordinary time, Year C

08: Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary. Feast)
11: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
13: St. John Chrysostom (Memorial)
14: Exaltation of the Holy Cross. (Feast)
15: Our Lady of Sorrows
16 Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian. (Memorial)
17: St. Hildegard of Bingen (Feast)
18: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
20: Sts. Andrew Kim Taegon, and Paul Chong Ha-sang and companions. (Memorial)
21: St. Matthew. Feast
25: 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
27: St. Vincent de Paul (Memorial)
28: St. Lioba. Feast.
29: The feast of the archangels Michael, Raphael and Gabriel.
30: St. Jerome (Memorial).

OCTOBER:

01: St. Therese of Lisieux. (Feast)
02: 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
04: St. Francis of Assisi. (Memorial)
07: Our Lady of the Rosary, and Blessed John Henry (Cardinal) Newman (Memorial)
09: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
12: St. Mechtild von Hackeborn - Feast or Memorial in Benedictine communities.
15: St. Teresa of Avila. (Memorial).
16: 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C
17: St. Ignatius of Antioch (Memorial).
18: St. Luke (Feast)
23: 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year C
28: Sts. Simon and Jude
30: 31ST Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

NOVEMBER:

01: All Saints. Solemnity.
02: Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day).
04: St. Charles Borromeo (Memorial)
06: 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
09: Dedication of the Lateran Basilica. Feast.
10: Pope St. Leo the Great. (Memorial).
11: Armistice Day. Also, St. Martin of Tours.
12: St. Josaphat. (Memorial)
13: All Saints of the Order of St. Benedict. (not this year as it is Sunday).
13: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A.
16: St. Gertrud the Great. Feast.
17: St. Elizabeth of Hungary.
20: Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Last Sunday of the Liturgical Year C.
22: St. Cecilia (Memorial)
24: St. Andrew Dung-lac & Companions, (Martyrs).

November 27 is THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, and the beginning of a new Liturgical Year. The Sunday Cycle is Year A. The Weekday Cycle is Year 1.

SECTION SIX: Your Community

The 5th world Congress of Benedictine Oblates will take place from 9-16 September 2023, at Sant 'Anselmo in Rome. This is the only information so far. If you are interested in attending, the email address is for the Abbot Primate is: abate@anselmianum.com

Sr. Marie Grace recently made her first vows (Temporary Profession) and the Mass was streamed to her family in Malaysia. It is wonderful technology that can defeat the power of Covid to keeps us all apart from one another. Grace is accomplished at everything. She is a brilliant gardener, and an extra brilliant cook. One wouldn't get better food in a first-rate hotel or resort. She is able to turn "nothing much" into something worth eating. At the moment she is learning to accompany the monastic choir on the church organ.

We don't hear news of some Oblates because circumstances have changed for them. A significant number of them have gone into nursing home care. We must not forget them, - may they be in our daily prayer.

May we pray too for those who are recovering from Covid or have just succumbed to this awful virus. May we pray for those who have died either from the virus or from health issues made more manifest by the virus.

Please pray for oblates who have children, grandchildren, teenagers or adolescents. It is a troubling world they confront and which confronts them. The violence of mass shootings, of Russian missiles, of starving children, climate change and sustainable energy, all that faces the young! It's their future.

Blessings on your Feast Day:

SEPTEMBER:

01: Varcha (Giles) Sidwell, Jill (Anna) Grienke, and Rachel (Hanna) Emmitt.

03: Lenka (Gregoria) Melville, Donn (Gregory) Corcoran, The Most Rev. Brian (Gregory) Mascord.

04: Tristram (Moses) Ellicott

06: Wendy (Begu) Fisher-Hudson

06: Sr. Antonia Curtis

14 : Sr. Veronica Chandler, Sonia (Veronica) Pleines, Dorothy Veronica Guilliani Touzell.

16: Val Margaret Johnson.

17: Pam (Hildegard) Russell, Linda (Hildegard) Childs-van-Wijk, Patrick (Hildegard) O'Connor, Diane

(Hildegard) Young, Beth (Hildegard) Muntz, Robyn (Hildegard) Wein, Mary (Hildegard) McCall,

Elaine (Hildegard) Housen, Louise (Hildegard) McMahon, Anne (Hildegard) Morris Bannerman,

Nazin (Hildegard) Atalay, Sr. Hildegard Ryan.

28: Rosie (Lioba) Jenkins, Gerardine (Lioba) Healy, Beppi (Lioba) O'Connor, Elizabeth (Lioba)

Anderson, Rev. Sharon (Lioba) Baird

OCTOBER:

01: Jan (Therese) Clark, Fiona (Therese) Harris, Libby (Therese) Denny, Sr. Therese Gilmour.

03: Susan (Columba) Lambert.

04: Christine (Frances) Angus, Diane (Frances) Greenway, Rose (Francis) De Angelis, Eva (Francis)

Leppard, and Christopher Francis Capper.

12: Elaine (Mechtild) Alinta, Sr. Mechtild Crawford.

15: Carmen (Teresa) Lorente, Robyn (Teresa) Wynen, Elizabeth (Teresa) Montgomery, Maria (Teresa)

Elisabetta Gambino, Ewa Maria (Teresa) Komorowska.

16: Vincenzo (Gerrado) Cappetta.

25: Wilf (Ambrose) Moon, Ken (Ambrose) Halliday.

NOVEMBER:

16: Sr. Mary Gertrud Barnes (Abbess Emeritus), Joan (Gertrud) Dray, Irene (Gertrud) Bajda, Rita

(Gertrud) Schembri, Joan (Gertrud) Eldaher, Christine (Gertrud) Phillips, Nereda (Gertrud) Blake,

Debi (Gertrud) Russell, Toni (Gertrud) Jenkins, Laura (Gertrud) Moya, Maria Elena (Gertrude)

Zaragoza, Christine (Gertrud) Simons

21: Kathryn (Mary) Proctor.

23: Patricia Julian Wait.

ANNIVERSARIES OF OBLATION:

SEPTEMBER

03: Maree Basel McGuckin.

08: Lyn Hilda Yates.

09: Helen Therese (no surname on the charter of commitment).

14: Rev. Andrew Aidan Doohan.

15: Maria Elena Gertrude Zaragoza, Antonia Bede Zaragoza, Doreen Rita Mary Soballa, Monica

Augustina Rodrigues, Geraldine Mary Benedicta Doyle.

16: Dean Bernard Godric Piryak.

22: Elaine Hildegard Housen, and Harry Gregory Housen.

24: Daphne Anne Spelter, Douglas Thomas Fitzpatrick, Brian Barnabas McKinlay, Brenda Joan Payne,

Anne Hildegard Morris Bannerman,
29: Chantal Mary Benedicte Jacquier, Debra Benedicta Vermeer, Claire Benedict Lanigan, Judith
Magdalen Pickering
30: Lindsay Samuel Alban Roe, and Vivien Teresa Hilda Arnold.

OCTOBER:

05: Diane Frances Greenway
14: Louise Hildegard McMahon.
17: Rev. Dixon Serafim Kenney, Wendy Mary Kenney, Gudrun Majella Muling, Paul Bernard Muling,
Lilette Monica Louise, Helen Therese Subramanian
22: Janet Therese (of Lisieux) Clark
27: Valerie Margaret Johnson

NOVEMBER

09: Diane Hildegard Young
11: Eva Francis Leppard, Matthew Hermann James Sebastian Tague and Ethel Emmanuel Paraiwa-
Murray
14: Rose Francis De Angelis, Kathleen Catherine Daysh, Monica Augustine Hunt, Brenda Joan Williams,
Robert (of Molesme) Hamilton, Felicity Benedict Giles.
15: Alan Bede Hickey, Amanda Mary Hickey, Pamela Hildegard Russell, John Antony Dunne, Irene
Sutherland, Helena Frances O'Neill, Joan Gertrude Dray, Heather Bede Gorman, Mary of the
Annunciation Wyatt, Claire Catherine Devlyn, Gerardine Lioba Healy, Pamela Henry Herrick, Ira
Peter Wilson, Elizabeth Frances Fahey, Rita Romanus Gertrude Schembri, Linda Hildegard Childs-
Van-Wijk, Jeff Boniface Smart, Margaret Hilda Watts, Denise Frances Hill, Ken Benedict Press,
Rosie Lioba Jenkins, Brian Robert Brennan, Patrick Benedict Sleight.
16: Patricia Julian Wait.
17: Colleen Julian Hines and Victoria Rose Sultana
19: Helen (Anna) Howard, Lucy (Lioba) Sneesby-Tooth, Judith (Anne) Kendall
21: Christine Gertrud Simons, Patricia Benedict Thomas.
22: Catherine Anne Cecilia Milgate, Janet Therese Clark.
23: Marjorie Teresa Carroll
24: Fiona Therese Harris
26: Therese Julian Proctor, Arnold Boniface Struzina.
Solemnity of Christ the King: Mary Elizabeth Locke.

SOLEMN PROFESSION ANNIVERSARIES:

OCTOBER:

11: Sr. Elizabeth Funder. Elizabeth will be 96 on the 26 October. She entered our community in 1947.

NOVEMBER:

03: Sr. Magdalen Mather

16: Abbess Emeritus, Mary Gertrud Barnes.

NECROLOGY:**SEPTEMBER**

03: Sr. Mary Patricia Kelly.

07: Sr. Mary Chanel Pechy

12: Fr. Maurus O'Connell, who was chaplain for a short time from 1888, following upon the death of

Fr. Bonaventure Curr. (chaplain from 1874-1888)

15: Oblate Patricia Mary Atkins.

21: Sr. Fidelis Williams

24: Sr. Gertrude Hishon

26: Sr. Marie Therese Malone

27: Oblate Philip Francis Bruno Price

OCTOBER

Sometime in October 2016: Oblate Enid Fleming.

04: Oblate Ann Gertrud Anderson

08: Mother Mary Scholastica Gregory (one of two founding Mothers), Kathleen (Lioba) Mason

09: Sr. Mary Aloysius Carroll, Sr. Mary Scholastica O'Loughlin.

10: Sr. Dominic Fitzpatrick, Sr. Mary Magdalen Brown.

11: Mother Walburge Wallis (first elected Prioress - 1864). Prioress Wallis died on 11 October 1902.

11: Oblate Vivienne (Martha) Chiswell

13: Sr. Marie Vianney Loughnan

17: Fr. Bede Sumner. Fr. Bede lived at our monastery in the last years of his life. He freed our

community from debt in 1864, and was therefore, one of our most generous benefactors of the

early decades of our history.

18: Oblate Aubrey Patrick Connors

19: Sr. Mary Joseph Diamond.

19: Sr. Placid Wilson, fifth elected Prioress.

19: Jennifer (Benedicta) Morrow-Canty

24: Oblate Leo (Thomas) Montgomery

25: Sr. Mary Lucy Kirsch

26: Sr. Mary Patrick Emblem.

NOVEMBER

03: Oblate John (of the Cross) Delaforce

09: Sr. Mary Stanislaus Dwyer.

21: Sr. Mary Francis Macklin.

23: Sr. Mary Veronica Hennessy

24: Sr. Mary Gabriel Enge

25: Sr. Mary Teresa Diamond.

SECTION SEVEN: Saints

From the wisdom of Blessed John Henry (Cardinal) Newman (feast day, 7 October):
“...though prayer for self is the first and plainest of Christian duties, the Apostles especially insist on another kind of prayer; prayer for others, for ourselves with others, for the Church, and the world, that it may be brought into the Church. Intercession is the characteristic of Christian worship.”

SECTION EIGHT: For Reflection

Sr. Joan Chittister, in her book “Illuminated Life: Monastic Wisdom for Seekers of Light”, speaks at length about dailiness. She doesn’t use the words, “the martyrdoms of every day”, but she describes exactly these when she says: “One of the most difficult, but most seasoning, elements of life is simply the fine art of getting up every morning, of doing what must be done if for no other reason than that it is our responsibility to do it. To face the elements of the day and keep on going, takes a peculiar kind of courage. It is in dailiness that we prove our mettle, and it is not easy. Living through the sterile and fruitless cycles of life earns no medals, carries no honour.”