



Nothing Dearer than Christ

Oblate letter of the Pluscarden Benedictines, Elgin, Moray, Scotland. IV30 8UA.

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Website www.pluscardenabbey.org DMB series No 38

Summer Ss. Peter and Paul 2018

Monastic Voice

Fr. Michael Casey on heaven

The hidden dynamism of God's action in our lives leaves its imprint in a strong, interpersonal, hope-filled anticipation of our definitive sharing in the resurrection of Jesus. We who in our own small way have borne a portion of the sufferings of Christ are called to be coheirs of his Kingdom, and to become, in the fullest possible sense, sharers in the divine nature. We are called to divinization, and the promise of God is certain. If we were to fill our minds more often with this thought, no doubt our journey would seem less wearisome.

Bernard of Clairvaux preached a strong devotion to heaven. In one of his sermons, he includes a short lyrical acclamation that compresses his theology into a few lines. Heaven is a place where all that is good becomes so intensely present that whatever remains of past evil dries up and disappears. Heaven lacks impermanence; it lasts forever. In heaven, the best of each of the four seasons combines. Heaven has the intense simplicity of the noonday sun; it is the ultimate solstice, lasting forever, it is the coming together of apparent opposites: all the seasons of life coexist in a single moment of being.

An Ode to Eternal Day

"O true noon-day
when warmth and light are at their peak
and the sun at its zenith
and no shadows fall;
when stagnant waters dry up
and their fetid odours disperse.
O never-ending solstice
when daylight lasts forever.
O noon-day light,
marked with the mildness of spring,
stamped with summer's bold beauty,

enriched with autumn's fruit--
and lest I seem to forget--
calm with winter's rest from toil."

We are divinized to the extent that nothing of our humanity is denied, despised, or ignored, when nothing of what makes us human is lost or left behind. Just as God's Son left behind nothing of his divinity during his sojourn on earth, so we will carry to eternal life everything in our lives that is genuinely human. May the humanity of Jesus inspire us to accept our own humanity in all its present ambiguity, so that through him and with him and in him we may become, in a manner that is beyond our imagination, full sharers in his divinity.'

FROM THE OBLATEMASTER'S DESK

Easter, Pentecost and Summer have come. If we are thinking liturgically and spiritually then with Summer's season we cannot but think on Heaven whose image and type and shadow it is within our experience. Neither waxing nor waning it has a fullness of excellence and plenitude that yet has a potential that Autumn does not have. Winter and Spring both suggest lack and Autumn a fullness poised on the brink of decline.

People sometimes say that fewer sermons are preached today on Hell but it might be truer to say that even fewer sermons are preached on Heaven and yet Heaven is an ever-present reality inasmuch as Heaven is the fullness of the enjoyment of God's presence and we may begin to live in that presence even now. The presence of heaven , the presence of God is what motivates and empowers and enlivens our lives. Heaven is the fullness of Being which again is as Summer to the fullness of God's Being which is transcendent. God transcends even Heaven. Heaven does not exhaust God who is always "ultra"- beyond.

- **August 17th-20th Bishop Richard Moth—Fri-Mon**
2018 SUMMER OBLATE WEEKEND AT PLUSCARDEN:-

Listening With The Ear Of the Heart

--The Pluscarden guesthouses have been reserved for Oblates on these dates! Book with guestmaster for those dates --popular time-- please book early! Friday August 17th arrivals, Saturday 18th 10.30 am 1st Conference, 3.00 pm 2nd Conference. Sunday 18th 10.00 am Mass Bishop Richard may preside and preach, 11.30 am 3rd Conference, 3.00 p.m. 4th Conference. Monday 20th final Mass with renewal of Oblation 9.00 am and departures. It is hoped that lunch or supper for attendee Oblates on either or both days may be provided!

An invitation is extended to you to join the Annual Pilgrimage to Pluscarden Abbey on Sunday 24 June 2018.

Events:

13:00 – 14:30: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Lady Chapel)

13:00 – 14:30: Confessions (St. Benedict's Retreat)

15:00 – 17:00: Pilgrimage Mass & Procession (In honour of Our Blessed Lady)

Refreshments available in the Marquee from 12 noon

An optional part of the pilgrimage this year, the Walking Pilgrimage from Greyfriars Convent, Elgin to Pluscarden Abbey has been revived by Uplifting Walks.

Eighth National Retreat for Benedictine Oblates – Organised by the UK Oblates Team

October 15 – 18 , 2018

at Mount Saint Bernard Abbey, Leicester, LE67 5UL

To be led by Abbot Erik Varden, OCSO, Abbot of Mount St Bernard and Revd Sr Mary Philippa OC, Bernadine Sister, Brownhill

Theme "Look to him and be radiant"

For further details and information on how to book a place on this Retreat contact Frances Bailess on ukoblateteam@gmail.com

or 0116 241 9611

4th National Convention of Polish Benedictine Oblates

November 16 – 18 , 2018

The Community of Benedictine Oblates at St. Peter and Paul Abbey in Tyniec, Poland invite UK Oblates to their Fourth National Convention! Invitation and enrolment online.

BOOKS AND MEDIA

"Fully Human Fully Divine"--an interactive Christology (briefly quoted above)--by Michael Casey O.C.S.O.(monk of Tarrawarra Abbey, Victoria, Australia) ISBN 0-7648-1149-5 Liguori Publications 2004. Concentrates on the Gospel of Mark and we are in the liturgical year of Mark. This was my Lenten reading. This must be one of his best. From the pen of the present-day Thomas Merton.

Are you a subscriber to the Pluscarden Abbey Magazine "Pluscarden Benedictines"? If not write the Editor Fr. Benedict to be put on the mailing list.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For Fr. Matthew dormant myeloma, Br. Cyprian, sarcoidosis-- and for his mother Margaret Bampton who is dying.

For the repose of the soul of Oblate Bob Clark.

For the repose of the soul of Monsignor Robert's elder brother Very Rev Bernard G. Canon McDonald.

For Abbot Anselm's and Bishop Hugh's intentions.

Fr. Stuart Chalmers (Oblate) new spiritual director of the Scots College in Spain

For Brothers Martin de Porres and John Bosco here from Thien Phuoc in Vietnam for two years and for Oblates Monsignor Eugene Harkness, Lord Kevin Shinkwin & Joe Staton who looked after them on their travels!

For Prior Bede.

For Fr. Ambrose Flavell in charge of the Shetlands.

For Br. Cyprian-Prosper returning to Kristo Buase Priory, Ghana via Prinknash having completed his monastic studies.

For vocations to Pluscarden especially Br. John, postulant, to St Mary's and St. Scholastica's, Petersham, U.S.A and Kristo Buase Priory, Ghana.

New Oblate David THOMAS Wilson and for his family.

For new novice Oblate Rev. Will Stalder and his family.

For all our novice and postulant Oblates. Please pray for the health of the Very Rev Mgr. Robert Provost McDonald, Rev. Christopher Mayo, Fr. Bob Halshaw, *Jim Timoney who is poorly*, for Gail Schmitz, Mrs Francis Phillip's husband Michael, and for Albert Paterson. For Siobhan Gilmour's husband, for Mrs. Allie Brien, Mrs. Alice Sullivan- poorly ,lost the sight of one eye, Mrs. Janet Fraile, Gitte Mackay, Martin Farrelly, Kay Fernandez, Leonora Duson and her daughter, and Margaret Rawcliffe, Robert Cantafio's mother Margharita poorly, Joe Barrett, Maureen Woodhead, Bob Barr, Brian Milne, Fiona Sellar, Johan(Joy) Baillie, Graham Dunbar, Nick MaCrae's son, Martin MaCrae battling illness, Dr. David Paterson and his wife Angela, Bryan Miller, Jacqui Heath-Anderson and daughter Sally, Hester du Plessis, Poppy Sinclair, Ian and especially Frederick Brodie--the twins, for Pat Foster, Carolyn Boardman, Malcolm Boardman & all the family, , and also for Peter Wynne, Susan Stephen, Cindy's husband, Danielle & her son Osyp, Evelyn, Violet and Sheila, Bernadette Harris and all friends of the Abbey and for all Oblates, and for ALL the sick and those who care for them-- and for ALL our sponsored seminarians.

Our sponsored seminarians

The Oblates are now supporting 3 seminarians! Your prayers and financial support are appreciated so much. The third student is Okomgo John Stephen, who is in minor seminary (St. Pius X Seminary in the Archdiocese of Tororo). Josaphat is now entering his last semester at major seminary. He will complete his three years of study in May 2018. He will then be sent to a parish for a year of pastoral work (and may need some ongoing support).

But please continue to pray for Sisterr Catherine in Uganda who arranges all this and *whose mother has just died-----* and for Josaphat, Charles and Okomgo. If you would like to support the seminarians financially (typical donations are between £10/£20 monthly direct debit) please contact Campbell Murdoch on 07810 350006 or email jcmurdoch@yahoo.co.uk

CHAPTERS

St Mungo's chapter, Glasgow:-We meet on the second Saturday of each month at 2 p.m. Contact can be made via Peter Aitken. Tel. 0141 427 2084, or via Graham Dunbar at 0141 558 4323 as group Secretary and Treasurer.

St Margaret's Chapter, Dunfermline monthly meetings as announced, All details contact Deacon Pat Carrigan smcb_oblates@live.co.uk

St. Monica's Chapter, Thurso. Contact Jane Coll. "Scaraben", Westside, Dunnet, Thurso, Caithness, KY14 8YD. Phone 01847 851467 and as announced. Jane had double cataract ops last year.

Shetland Chapter Contact Fr. Ambrose for details. More details next time round!

St. Peter's chapter St. Peter's Catholic Church, Castlegate, Aberdeen e-mail brianbmilne2647@gmail.com Brian Milne convener phone 01224 485781 mobile 07443032289 -- due to poor health Brian is encouraging this chapter and any of our Oblates in a similar position or living far from other oblates to join an e-chapter – that of Oblate John McKinlay—the "Benedictine Prayer Circle "The idea is to help oblates who might feel lonely or isolated to connect, through prayer, with their brother and sister oblatesIf interested please contact John G McKinlay by email for further details, and/or a copy of the prayer schedule: jgjm07@yahoo.co.uk

Meetings of this Chapter may also be resuming --if interested contact Mr. Robert Ian Johnston, 31, Tay Road, Mastrick, ABERDEEN AB16 5LA

St Meinrad's Chapter—A new chapter meeting monthly at Dysart Carmel—for details contact Mary Murphy marymurphy118@gmail.com

St. Mirin's Chapter. Paisley. Date: 1st Saturday each month. Time 2-4 pm. Venue: Hall 2, St Mirin's Cathedral, Cathedral Precincts, Inle Street Paisley, PA1 1HR—secure parking there within Cathedral enclosure. Farther information: St Mirin Chapter, Benedictine Oblate Group, c/o Campbell Murdoch, Fircroft, Knockbuckle Road, Kilmacolm, PA13 4JT

"St Andrew's Chapter"?(not yet named!!) Pluscarden Abbey-- next Quarterly meeting (the second) 2.00 to 3.30 Saturday 15th September in St Benedict's parlour no 1. No prep just arrive-- tea and biscuits during.

HEAVEN

Phi 3:20 But our homeland is in heaven and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, 3:21 who will transfigure the wretched body of ours into the mould of his glorious body, through the working of the power which he has, even to bring all things under his mastery.4:1 So then, my brothers and dear friends whom I miss so much, my joy and my crown, hold firm in the Lord, dear friends. St Paul

To have been in the light together has been good, but when we depart from one another let us not depart from God. St Augustine

"It seems to me that I have found my heaven on earth, because my heaven is you, my God, and you are in my soul. You in me, and I in you – may this be my motto." St Elizabeth of the Trinity

Sts. Peter and Paul, St. John the Baptist and our Holy Father St Benedict pray for us

In the love of Christ with Summer blessings,

Fr. Martin

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