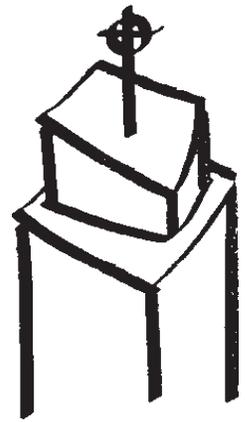


OUR FAMILY



NEWS



For Oblates of St. Bede Abbey, Peru, Illinois

January &
February, 2013

CELEBRATING OUR BAPTISM MINDFULLY IN THE YEAR OF FAITH

The Year of Faith and the paschal mystery

This fall, the Catholic Church began the Year of Faith to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962. In his speech on that occasion, Blessed John XXIII said that

ecumenical councils, whenever they are assembled, are a solemn celebration of the union of Christ and his Church... Illuminated by the light of this Council, the Church, we confidently trust, will become greater in spiritual riches and... look to the future without fear. By bringing herself up to date where required and by wise organization of mutual cooperation, the Church will make individuals, families and peoples turn their minds to heavenly things...

Pope John was aware that many in the Curia thought the Council was unnecessary.

He said:

In the daily exercise of our pastoral office, we sometimes have to listen, much to our regret, to voices of persons who, though burning with zeal, are not endowed with too much sense of discretion or measure. In these modern times they can see nothing but prevarication and ruin. They say that our era, in comparison with past eras, is getting worse, and they behave as though they had learned nothing from history, which is, nonetheless, the teacher of life. They behave as though at the time of former councils everything was a full triumph for the Christian idea and life and for proper religious liberty. We feel we must disagree with those prophets of gloom, who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand. In the present order of things, divine providence is leading us to a new order of human relations which, by men's own efforts and even beyond their very expectations, are directed toward the fulfillment of God's superior and inscrutable designs. And everything, even human differences, leads to the greater good of the Church...



Pope John had great hope and optimism for the Church. As a church historian, Pope John knew that councils have been engines of reform for the Church. He knew that a new council could take up the balancing of tradition, *ressourcement* (the return to sources, that is, the Scriptures and the early Church Fathers) and *aggiornamento* (bringing Church practices up to date). He also knew that a council would be “an invitation to the separated communities in the quest for unity,” a goal which was very dear to John’s heart.

One of the great blessings of Vatican II is the renewed focus on the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ in the life of the Church – “a solemn celebration of the union of Christ and his Church” that extends into our daily lives as Christians and followers of St. Benedict. As *Lumen Gentium*, the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, teaches:

The Son of God, by overcoming death through his own death and resurrection, redeemed humanity and changed it into a new creation.... The life of Christ is communicated to those who believe and who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ in his passion and glorification. Through baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ: “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.” (1 Cor 12:13) [*Lumen Gentium* 7].

In his life, death, resurrection and ascension, the ministry and teaching of Jesus on earth are validated and celebrated in heaven. This is the mystery we participate in by our baptism and what we celebrate in the liturgy. We live the paschal mystery in faith and in Christian action in our lives.

Our baptism is not something which unites us to Christ but isolates us from others. It is the sacrament which draws us into the family of believers and nourishes us for life. God wanted to make us “into a people who might acknowledge him and serve him in holiness.” The new and perfect covenant is “the fuller revelation which was given through the Word of God made flesh,” namely Jesus himself [*Lumen Gentium* 9]. A covenant in blood, a covenant for Jews and Gentiles, a covenant which links us in the Holy Spirit to one another within the communion of saints and sinners – that is what we celebrate in our faith and deepen our understanding of during this Year of Faith.

Commemorating Christ’s baptism and renewing our own



On January 13, the Church will commemorate Jesus’ own baptism in the liturgy and so conclude the Advent-Christmas season. In his baptism, Jesus was anointed for his public ministry of teaching and healing. The event is narrated directly in the synoptic Gospels of Matthew (3:13-17), Mark (1:9-11) and Luke (3:21-22); in John’s Gospel, it is borne witness to by John the Baptist (1:29-33). Most modern scholars assign a high degree of certainty to its historicity. John’s baptism was “a baptizing...with water,” a prefiguring of the baptism by which Jesus would baptize the world “with the holy Spirit and fire” (Lk 3:16). The baptismal moment at the Jordan River includes the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and God’s words, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased” (Lk 3:21-22). Jesus’ baptism is one of the five major milestones in the gospel narrative, the others being the transfiguration,

the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension – all of them connected to the paschal mystery by which Jesus Christ saved us from our sins and gave us new life in the Holy Spirit.

When we come to celebrate the paschal mystery in a solemn way during the Triduum, we will renew our own baptismal vows to powerfully remind us that we have entered into this mystery by our own baptism. On Saturday, March 30, 2013, in the darkness we will sing of Christ our Light, settle down to listen to the stories of our common history from Scripture, and then recall our own baptism as we joyfully celebrate the incorporation of new members into the Church. What a wonderful night and what a moving experience – to renew our baptismal promises and our own connection to the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. What is at work in the world and in community is what is at work in each of us.

Growing in mindfulness of our baptism and of God at work in us

Still, commemorating Jesus' baptism annually at the end of the Advent-Christmas cycle or renewing our own baptismal vows at the Easter Vigil does not translate into a mindfulness of our baptismal promises the other 363 days of a year! And that is what St. Benedict calls us to in daily life as people animated by the Spirit and mindful of God's care for us. Recollection or mindfulness is at the heart of the Benedictine vocation. As Abbot Claude noted two issues ago, St. Benedict tells us that "the first step of humility...is that a man keeps the fear of God always before his eyes and never forgets it" (*RB* 7.10). Being mindful of God, the monk listens carefully for God's voice and, when he hears it, heeds it, obedient to that injunction of Psalm 94(95): "If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts" (*RB* Prol. 10). Mindfulness of God is also seen in the monastic approach to prayer in common: "Let us consider, then, how we ought to behave in the presence of God and his psalms in such a way that our minds are 7).

Mindfulness of God is reflected us that we ought to "prefer nothing is the sacrament of God's love and us is life engendered in the paschal again, so we die in our baptism in order life. This life is what St. Benedict wishes monastic life that he describes in his *Rule*. silence, obedience and humility is one way remaining faithful to and focused on the individual and communal lives. Our God's many gifts is based on a mindfulness what God calls us to as a consequence of our giftedness.



angels, and let us stand to sing the in harmony with our voices" (*RB* 19.6-

as well in St. Benedict's care to remind whatever to Christ" (*RB* 72.11). Christ forgiveness for all of us. Christ's life in mystery. Just as Jesus died and rose to rise from the font graced with new to encourage and nourish in the The Benedictine way of moderation, of living our Christian life, one way of paschal mystery as it unfolds in our response as monks and oblates to of what God has done for us and of

I would suggest that two passages in the *Rule* help demonstrate the mindfulness to which we are called. The first is chapter 4, "The Tools for Good Works." St. Benedict begins and ends his list of Christian tasks with a vertical reference – we are to "love the Lord God" (4.1) and "never lose hope in God's mercy" (4.74). Between these references, St. Benedict speaks of our duties toward our neighbor (4.2-40). He would have us be mindful of God's commands and Jesus' teaching, taking care to do both corporal and spiritual works of mercy. As individuals, we will find strength in fulfilling duties toward ourselves (4.41-73). St. Benedict calls us to hope and to a realistic sense of mortality. By means of reading and prayer, repentance and conversion, we are set on the path of living with ourselves for others. But we cannot grow in Christian virtue and action without mindfulness of God's love and our need to hope in his mercy for us. Without that mindfulness, we will lose focus and begin to forget all that God calls us to.

The second passage is the familiar chapter 72, "The Good Zeal of Monks." The good zeal which "leads to God and everlasting life" is established on mindfulness of Christ's witness of obedience and patience: "They should each try to

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be the first to show respect to the other, supporting with the greatest patience one another's weaknesses of body or behavior, and earnestly competing in obedience to one another" (72.4-6). Being mindful of God points us to the witness of Jesus himself, and there we find the courage to act as he did, obedient to God's will, patient with one another and loving toward all. In this way we are set on the Christian path to which all of us, monks and oblates alike, are called by our baptism. We are transformed by our mindfulness of God, impelled to serve others in love, happy to share with others the paschal mystery into which we are baptized and by which we are saved.

---Father Patrick Caveglia, O.S.B.

Father Patrick Caveglia, O.S.B., was born and raised in Holy Cross Parish, Mendota, Illinois. He entered Conception Abbey in northwest Missouri in 1971 and made first profession of monastic vows in August, 1972. He was ordained a priest in 1994. Fr. Patrick holds graduate degrees from the University of Notre Dame (business) and the Aquinas Institute of Theology (moral theology). He spent twenty years working at The Printery House of Conception Abbey as a printer, art director and general manager. He has served Conception Abbey as novice master and junior master, as subprior, as academic dean for Conception Seminary College, and as business manager for the community. Currently, Father Patrick directs the Abbey's retreat and hospitality ministry. He also teaches moral theology and Christian ethics to seminarians and deacon candidate couples, offers spiritual direction, conducts retreats at the Abbey and beyond, coordinates the Abbey's Program of Protection and serves local parishes with weekend assistance.

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the abbey church from 1:30 P.M.
to 4:30 P.M.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2013

Sunday, February 10, 2013
Sunday, March 10, 2013
Sunday, April 14, 2013
Sunday, May 5, 2013

Passage for *Lectio* at the January Meeting

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in all circumstances
give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ
Jesus.

1 Thes 5:16-18

Passage for *Lectio* at the February Meeting

O God, come to my assistance;
O Lord, make haste to help me.

Ps 69 (70):1

Copies of these passages will be available at the meetings.





Abbey Prayer Schedule

Visitors are welcome to join the monks for Mass and for the hours of the Divine Office. Conventual Mass is celebrated on the first level of the abbey church, the hours of the Divine Office on the second level. During the school year, the monks' schedule is as follows.

- 6:00 A.M. Morning Prayer*
- 12:00 Noon Midday Prayer
- 5:00 P.M. Conventual Mass**
- 7:20 P.M. Evening Prayer***

* on Sunday, 7:00 A.M.

** on Sunday, 10:00 A.M. and on Monday, 7:30 A.M.

*** on Sunday, 5:30 P.M.

