



# The AMERICAN MONASTIC NEWSLETTER

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[www.americanbenedictine.org](http://www.americanbenedictine.org)

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*The mission of the American Monastic Newsletter is to be an instrument of communication and information for Benedictine monasteries of North America and members of the American Benedictine Academy.*

## 2020 Vison: Seeing the World in a Single Ray of Light July 16-19, 2020 Benedictine College, Atchison, Kansas

### (Proposed Schedule)

#### *Thursday, July 16*

- 5:00 Evening prayer with monks, social, supper with monks
- 7:00 Welcome by Abbot James and Sister Esther, opening of conference

#### *Friday, July 17*

- 7:00 Breakfast, optional Mass, morning prayer  
*Seeing A World View of Benedictine Monasteries: Challenges and Gifts*
- 9:30 General introduction to plenary sessions with Sr. Pia Portmann, Fr. Joel Macul, Sr. Ann Hoffman, OSB
- 10:30-11:30 Plenary Session, part 1
- 2:15-3:15 Plenary Session, part 2
- 3:45-4:45 Plenary Session, part 3
- 5:00 Evening Prayer, supper
- 7:00 Celebration of Life of deceased members since 2018, social

#### *Saturday, July 18*

- 7:00 Breakfast, morning prayer
- 9:00 Fr. Hugh Feiss, OSB: "The Benedictine Future in the Light of the Benedictine Past"
- 10:30 Facilitated small and large group discussion
- 11:45 lunch (with section meetings for archivists and librarians)
- 1:30 Section meetings for researchers and visual artists
- 3:00 ABA business meeting
- 5:00 Sunday anticipation Mass, banquet
- 9:00 Viewing of city fireworks for Amelia Earhart Days

#### *Sunday, July 19*

Breakfast and departures

## President's Message

Dear ABA Members and Friends,

The time for our biannual gathering at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, July 16-19, is only five months away. The board, planning committee and speakers are busy preparing. We hope that you are making travel arrangements and sending in the registration form, if you have not already done so.

Following upon the heels of the "Being Benedictine" conference hosted at Mount St. Scholastica's Sophia Center, this ABA convention has the hallmarks of a unique meeting. Hopefully, I will be among others to attend both events, looking for a way we can welcome new members to ABA and exploring together what being Benedictine is all about—past, present, and future. I hope that those who attend both meetings can engage with ABA members in conversation about our future as we consider what is currently happening in the Benedictine world here and beyond our border.

About 25 years ago, when I was a new member of ABA, I was a young oblate director and thought that ABA might be an organization that could meet the needs of what I was hearing from some of our oblates, that there would be a way for oblates to come together from many monasteries to meet and share. At the

time, the only national organization was for oblate directors who were allowed to invite only two oblates to attend their meetings.

I remember asking at an ABA meeting if it would be possible to establish a new section for oblates, just as there were sections for researchers, librarians, archivists, and artists. It didn't fly. The reason I was given is that oblates would want to attend a section meeting of their choice and not just meet as oblates. I understand that wisdom and have accepted it. I am glad to see the growing number of oblates who have not only become members of ABA and added to the various sections, but who also have added to the research and writing about Benedictine history and life, and who have served and continue to serve on the board and as officers.

Some years after that ABA meeting when I asked about having a section for oblates, Abbot Primate Notker Wolf in 2005 invited oblates from around the world to attend the first World Congress of Oblates in Rome. I had the opportunity to attend the second World Congress in 2009. It was a memorable event of meeting, sharing and praying with Benedictine oblates from a dozen countries across four continents as sisters and brothers. As reported in the February 2019 issue, these congresses have continued every four years. The official mission statement indicates the purpose of the World Congress of Benedictine Oblates is "To help widen the horizons of the participants and give new impulses to Benedictine spirituality under the protection of Saints Benedict and Scholastica." The next meeting is scheduled for November 6-12, 2021. The focus of the 2021 gathering is to build on progress made at the 2017 Congress, where the nearly 300 delegates adopted a 5-point vision plan.

In my twenty-seventh year as oblate director, I believe that besides the World Congress, ABA is a way to bring professed monastics and oblates together. Keeping up with what is happening in the Benedictine world is an ongoing challenge and an important adventure. As I see it, this needs to happen not only in Rome, but also on our own soil with consideration for our Benedictine sisters and brothers throughout the world.



### ***The AMERICAN MONASTIC NEWSLETTER***

Submit any announcements or articles to:

Editor: Judith Sutera, OSB

Mount St. Scholastica, 801 S. 8th, Atchison, KS 66002

Email: [jsutera@mountosb.org](mailto:jsutera@mountosb.org)

For all address changes, membership payments, or any other ABA business, please contact the ABA secretary:

Email: [ambenacad@gmail.com](mailto:ambenacad@gmail.com)

*The American Monastic Newsletter* is published three times per year and it, as well as other ABA information, may be read online at:

***[www.americanbenedictine.org](http://www.americanbenedictine.org)***

## CANON LAW COLUMN

### *Guidelines for Modification or Suspension of Regular Governance of a Monastery*

This column follows up on Fr. Dan Ward's canon law column published in the October 2017 *American Monastic Newsletter* which he entitled, "A Path Forward – Possible Governance Model in Light of Smaller and Older Monasteries." We owe Fr. Dan a great debt of gratitude for helping in the creation of this new way of allowing the life of our monasteries to continue even when regular monastic governance is not possible due to various personnel issues.

As Dan noted in his column, at that time, only the American Cassinese Congregation of men and the Federation of St. Gertrude of women had norms allowing for suspension of regular governance. Since the time of the October 2017 canon law column in this newsletter, the other monastic congregations of women (also known as federations in the USA, though canonically they are monastic congregations) have adopted new norms in their constitutions to allow for modification or suspension of the regular governance of a monastery, and providing for the appointment of a person, often referred to as a "commissary" to provide alternative governance and provision for the needs of the members of the monastery. As Fr. Dan pointed out in his October 2017 canon law column, "The role of the commissary is general oversight of the community that is to assure the daily care of the members so that they can continue to live life together in the fullest way possible."

As an important follow-up to the new norms, all of the women's monastic congregations asked that guidelines be written to help this new reality of modification or suspension to come to life. An inter-federation effort was launched in 2018 which consisted of a research and writing committee of 8 members – 2 from each of the monastic congregations of women (Federation of St. Benedict, Federation of St. Gertrude, Federation of St. Scholastica, and the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration).

The committee authored a set of guidelines. At the February 2020 meeting of the American Conference of Benedictine Prioresses (CBP) held in Yankton, South Dakota, the "Guidelines for the

Modification and Suspension of Regular Governance of Autonomous Monasteries" were presented to the prioresses gathered. The members of the CBP unanimously approved these guidelines and urged further study in each monastery. Of course, these guidelines are only a beginning. It is not expected that the guidelines will cover every situation or answer every question. Rather, they are a starting point for monasteries as they look to the future when they might not be able to have regular monastic governance.

The guidelines are divided into:

- an introduction
- a pastoral and theological framework
- an overview
- steps to initiate modification or suspension of governance
- key assumptions
- canonical authority of each federation
- necessary changes to the canonical and civil governance of a monastery
- the selection of and role of a "commissary."

There are also 3 appendices:

- a listing of signs of fragility to which monastic communities should be attentive as they are arising within the community;
- some practical ideas of how to do financial management of a monastery after governance is suspended;
- a primer on the establishment of trusts which could allow for the planning of the legacy of the monastery when the monastic community ceases to exist. For instance, a trust could allow for the continuance of a charitable work of the monastery.

It seems to me that the main value of these guidelines, rather than providing answers, is to raise important questions that each monastery facing transition will need to ask. After all, there is no exact answer, as solutions will vary according to the unique history and circumstance of each monastic community. Nevertheless, questions are important and must be considered. I'm reminded of the famous quote of Rainer Maria Rilke: "Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And

the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”

I suspect that as we seek to negotiate this new path of our future, we will gradually live into the answer of the best way forward that both gives life and honors changed realities in our communities. But it will not be without a lot of soul searching, serious research, and hard work.

The guidelines document ends with these words:

“This document is intended to serve as a guide for monastic communities, monastic leadership, and federation leadership in implementing the modification or suspension of the regular governance of an autonomous monastic community. It provides information about alternative structures that may meet the present needs of monastic communities and allow them to continue to live as fully as possible as they come to completion. ... As we face the realities of this new era, assessment and planning become critical components in moving a community into its discerned future. We hope this document will be of assistance as monastic communities look at their reality and plan for their future.”

The guidelines may be downloaded from:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/anh9w1fo2sz2v0r/Suspension%20of%20Governance%20Handbook-Final%20Again.PDF.2-5-2020.pdf?dl=0>

Lynn M. McKenzie, OSB

Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, Alabama

[lynnmckenzieosb@gmail.com](mailto:lynnmckenzieosb@gmail.com)

*If you have a question or idea for a future column, feel free to contact Sister Lynn.*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The ABA Biennial Convention in 2020

*2020 Vision: Seeing the World  
in a Single Ray of Light*

July 16 - 19, 2020

Benedictine College  
Atchison, Kansas

This is what led to the theme of this year's convention, "2020 Vision: Seeing the World in a Single Ray of Light." We can learn much from Benedictines who live and minister among other cultures and in other lands.

While I highly support the continual research being done and supported by ABA, I also see that we need to focus on what is happening NOW at this time and the impact ABA can have on the future by engaging with the present reality through dialogue and research that addresses some of the current issues faced by Benedictines here at home and around the world. The world has grown much smaller since our communities came to America to make new foundations. There were specific needs at that time, and we are grateful to those who went before us who were dedicated to monastic life and kept up with the needs of their time.

Here we are twenty years into the twenty-first century. Needs of the people of God, oblates, and of our communities continue to change. ABA has adapted over the years to meet changing times. We need to consider what we must do NOW and how we are being called into the future. I believe we need to be open to the bigger picture, to see the world and how God is calling us to be present in it.

In Pope St. Gregory's words, "When it is said that the whole world was collected before his (*Benedict's*) eyes, this does not mean that heaven and earth were shrunk, but that the soul was expanded."\* I look forward to seeing you in July and engaging in conversation with you about how this 2020 vision is expanding us as Benedictines and the soul of ABA.

*\*The Life of St. Benedict by Gregory the Great: Translation and Commentary. Terrence G. Kardong, p. 133; Liturgical Press, 2009.*

Antoinette Purcell, OSB

ABA president

Our Lady of Grace - Beech Grove, Ind.

[antoinettep1964@gmail.com](mailto:antoinettep1964@gmail.com)

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**The ABA now accepts digital payment for dues, donations and convention registration on its website. Look for the Paypal button on the page.**



ABA Biennial Convention

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**"2020 Vision:  
Seeing the World in A Single Ray of Light"**

July 17-19, 2020  
Benedictine College  
Atchison, KS

**Registration Form**

*(Please Print!)*

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ OSB\_\_ Oblate\_\_ Other\_\_

Preferred name on badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Abbey/Monastery and City \_\_\_\_\_

Street/PO Box Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: F ( ) M ( )

**Registration Fee:** *mark your choice*

	<u>Before April 1, 2020</u>	<u>After April 1</u>	
ABA Member	\$100.00	\$150.00	Day rate: \$125 per person/day (includes meals)
Non-member	\$150.00	\$200.00	Friday                  Saturday          Friday = \$125    Saturday = \$1

**Room and Board:** Includes three nights and Thursday evening dinner through Sunday morning breakfast

Single Room w/private bath: **\$ 295.00 (\$60 per extra night on \_\_\_\_\_**

Single Room w/shared bath: **\$265.00 per person (\$30 per extra night on \_\_\_\_\_**  
(suites hold up to 6 people—give all names of suite mate/s)

I would like to share suite with: \_\_\_\_\_

**Airport Transportation:** Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Airline/Flight # \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Time \_\_\_\_\_

**I need airport transportation. If this box is checked, you will be contacted for details.**

Please specify dietary restrictions or mobility assistance needed (limited handicap rooms available):

**Registration Fee \_\_\_\_\_ + Room & Board \_\_\_\_\_ = TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_**

Please make check payable to **"American Benedictine Academy"** and submit with your registration form to:

Sr. Robin Lynn Evans, OSB  
802 E 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Ferdinand, IN 4753



## NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

More than 150 people have already registered for “Being Benedictine in the 21st Century: Spiritual Seekers in Conversation,” June 26-28, 2020, at the Sophia Center of Mount St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kan. The goal to gather as many voices as possible to envision a meaningful Benedictine future is being realized as the assembly now includes professed Benedictine/Cistercian men and women, oblates, employees, friends, members of Episcopalian or non-traditional monastic communities and seekers, with a particular emphasis on millennials. There will be short presentations from speakers including Sisters Joan Chittister and Judith Suter and oblate authors Judith Valente and Kathleen Norris, but the core of the event will be facilitated table conversation where participants explore how to live the Benedictine tradition now and into the future.

Those not attending can still help by making a donation to support this effort and help participants who may not have the means to attend otherwise. Information and registration is at the conference website <[www.beingbenedictine.org](http://www.beingbenedictine.org)>.

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A Benedictine Heritage Journey to Italy: You are invited to join us on a Benedictine Heritage Journey to Italy for 11 days, October 15-25, 2020. Included are visits to Norcia, Subiaco, Monecassino, Rome, Assisi and much more! The cost is only \$4,799 from Dulles (IAD) and \$195 in tips. The trip is under the spiritual direction of the Benedictine Sisters of Virginia (Bristow). To download the free color brochure and registration form, visit [www.GoCatholicTravel.com/20080](http://www.GoCatholicTravel.com/20080), or for more information, please contact Rita Zimmermann, Obl. SB at <[rzimmermann.obl.sb@gmail.com](mailto:rzimmermann.obl.sb@gmail.com)> or John Kowalski, Obl.SB <[jk6872@gmail.com](mailto:jk6872@gmail.com)>. Space is limited so register today!

\* \* \* \* \*

Only a few days remain to register for the European trip “Sacred Sites: the Holy Land in

the Heart of Italy,” June 20-29, 2020, organized by Mount Tabor Ecumenical Centre For Art & Spirituality, an outreach of the Community of Jesus in Orleans, Mass., Mons. Timothy Verdon, Alexei Lidov and Fr. Martin Shannon will lead a week-long study trip and retreat exploring some of the places in Italy which represented Holy Land sites including Florence, San Vivaldo: Sacro Monte/ Holy Mountain with its life of Christ in sculpture, Bologna and Loreto. The entire tour will be seasoned with the taste of Italian cuisine and highlighted by the beauty of the Italian countryside. More information is at <<https://mounttabor.it/events/sacred-sites-the-holy-land-in-the-heart-of-italy/>>. Registration closes March 15.

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The 2020 Monastic Institute at Saint John’s in Colegeville, Minn. is entitled “Humility: Paradoxical Pathway to Union with God” and will run from June 29 to July 3.

Letting go of the demands of the ego begins with fear of the Lord. The ascent of the ladder of humility leads to that perfect love that casts out fear. Come and explore the wisdom of the monastic tradition on this central challenge of embracing the Cross of Christ with the assistance of highly-regarded spiritual guides.

Presenters are:

Fr. Luke Dysinger, O.S.B., monk of St. Andrew’s Abbey, Valyermo, Cal. – Fr. Dysinger has published books and articles on psalmody and prayer and has taught moral theology, spiritual theology, and biomedical ethics.

Sr. Manuela Scheiba, O.S.B., Abbey of St. Gertrude, Alexanderdorf, Germany – Instructor in the Monastic Institute at Sant’ Anselmo, Rome since 2008, she is author of several monastic studies.

Fr. Michael Casey, O.C.S.O., monk of Tarrawarra Abbey, Australia – For the past decades he has been engaged in exploring different aspects of monastic spirituality, writing, and giving conferences throughout the English-speaking world. Among his popular books are *Strangers to the City: Reflections on the Beliefs and Values of the Rule of Saint Benedict* (Paraclete Press, 2005) and *the Road to Eternal Life*. (Liturgical Press, 2011). Information and registration are at <<https://www.csbsju.edu/sot/lifelong-learning/monastic>>.

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The Conference of Benedictine Prioresses held their annual meeting from January 28 to February 3 at Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, South Dakota with the theme for the meeting as “Called To Serve.” Forty-four prioresses and federation presidents from North America, Canada, Mexico and the Bahamas attended. The meeting included two days of retreat with Sister Michaela Hedican of St. Benedict’s Monastery (St. Joseph, Minn.). She spoke to the assembly on the topic “The Sermon on the Mount and Leadership.”

There was also a business meeting at which Sister Susan Rudolph, OSB, prioress of St. Benedict’s Monastery (St. Joseph, Minn.), was elected to the CBP coordinating committee to replace Sister Nicole Kunze, prioress of Annunciation Monastery, (Bismarck, N.D.), who completed her three year term on the committee but will continue to serve as treasurer for the group. Sister Aileen Bankemper, St. Walburg’s Monastery (Covington, Ky.) was elected chair of the committee.

\* \* \* \* \*

The meeting of North American Benedictine Abbots took place at Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside, Cal., from February 14-18. New Testament scholar and historian of early Christianity, Dr. Luke Timothy Johnson, offered several conferences on the witness of monastic life in a post-modern world. Participants included abbots and conventual priors from across the nation, including the Anglican communion. The abbots also visited Christ Cathedral in Orange and enjoyed a dinner with Bishop Kevin Vann.

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Jonathan Licari, OSB (Saint John’s, Collegeville, Minn.) has been appointed as residential canonical administrator of the the monastic community at Mary Mother of the Church Abbey in Richmond, Va.

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The Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities will hold their annual meeting, Benedictine Leadership Formation Institute, and Benedictine Pedagogy Conference June 16-

18, 2020 at Saint Martin’s University in Lacey, Washington. The group includes administrators of Benedictine institutions of higher education and the superiors of the sponsoring communities. More information on the organization and its conferences is at <abcu.info>

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Last fall, AIM USA held its annual board of trustees meeting at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie, Penn. AIM is an organization that assists monasteries in developing countries. In the past year, they were able to provide grants to African communities in Namibia (for four sisters from Oshikuku to attend Association of African Benedictines of St. Mechtildis’ meetings), Tanzania (for sister from Ndanda to complete her medical laboratory study), South Africa (for travel for two sisters from Twasana to study social work in Chicago), and Benin (for monasteries in Parakou and Hekanme to get an electric generator that may utilize solar energy). In Asia, nine superiors from the Philippines and Vietnam) attended the Benedictines of East Asia and Oceania (BEAO) meeting in Taiwan, and Madagascar superiors participated in the Meeting of Monastic Superiors (SIM) course. Educational scholarships assisted 14 religious from Vietnam for the Inter-congregational Institute in Ho Chi Minh Villa, a sister from Manila to attend the Course of Monastic Formation (CMF) in Rome and two sisters from the Philippines, Pampanga and

Vigan, to attend the Leadership and the Rule of Benedict (LRB) course in Rome.

Cistercians and Benedictines were also able to participate in the 2019 Association of Benedictines and Cistercians of the Caribbean and the Andes (ABECCA) meeting in Costa Rica. Monasteries in other parts of Latin America receiving assistance included Colombia (for a new women’s community to remodel a building for safe housing), Brazil (for two sisters from Bahia to attend a Cistercian formation course in Rome), Peru (for monk from Lurin to receive living expenses while studying in Rome), and Mexico (for priest from Cuernavaca to study at Sant’ Anselmo and for a speaker for the Union of Benedictines and Cistercians in Mexico (UBCM) summer course).

Current board members are Mary David Hydro, OSB, (Holy Name, St. Leo, Fl.), Stanislaus

Gumula, OCSO (Mepkin Abbey but currently with the Trappistine Sisters of Our Lady of Hope Monastery in Ecuador), Executive Director Sister Ann Hoffman, OSB (Mount St. Benedict, Erie, Penn.), Therese Glass, OSB (also of Erie) Joel Macul, OSB (Christ the King, Schuyler, Neb.), Abbot Neal Roth, OSB (St. Martin's, Lacey, Wash.), Paul Richards, OSB (Saint John's, Collegeville, Minn.), Prioress Anne Wambach, OSB (Erie), Michael Marie Rottinghaus, OSB (Immaculata, Norfolk, Neb.), Chris Kosin, OSB (Erie), Anne Shepard, OSB (Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, Kan.), Nancy Miller, OSB (Annunciation, Bismarck, N.D.), and Mother Maureen McCabe, OCSO (Mt. St. Mary's, Wrentham, Mass.).

AIM is once again holding its annual Lenten appeal to assist even more communities this year. Contributions will be given to: monks in Nigeria to bake bread to feed villagers and to support the community; sisters in Vietnam to study theology so they can teach and preach the Word of God by their lives; Benedictine and Cistercian monks and sisters in the Philippines to gather in order to sustain and strengthen relationships among communities; and monks in Africa to use a photocopier to spread the Word of God, providing spiritual nourishment to others.

Donations may be sent to AIM USA; [director@aim-usa.org](mailto:director@aim-usa.org); 345 East Ninth Street, Erie, PA 16503-1107.

as they speak of ordinary life experiences and the challenge those experiences offer us for spiritual growth.

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*The Monk Within: Embracing a Sacred Way of Life* by Beverly Lanzetta, 2018, Blue Sapphire Books, Sebastopol, Cal., 402 pp., \$19,00, ISBN 978-0984061655.

More than one author has encouraged contemporary Christians to embrace their monkhood. Lanzetta takes up the theme from the point of view of a theologian and spiritual teacher so this book is both academic and inspirational. Her exploration of the monastic life is wider than just the Christian lens as she brings in quite a bit of wisdom from the broader mystical tradition, particularly Gandhi.

Her goal is to encourage seekers to open their hearts, whether through contemplative practice, an appreciation of the monastic vows, or through her favored path of the "via feminina." This lengthy book is not a quick read or a simple how-to. It is the deep dive of a theologian into mysteries that anyone can explore to dive for more depth in their own lives. It is no wonder that the book's publicity points out her popularity with "new monastics" and other spiritual seekers. Such books are speaking to those who are not familiar with the monastic way as religious know it but as a way to learn about universal truths.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Musings: A Benedictine on Christian Life* by Don Talafous, OSB, 2019, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn., 215 pp., \$19,95, ISBN 978-0-8146-8472-6.

Father Don Talafous has been acquiring wisdom for nine decades. Always an inspiring homilist, he has moved into the digital age. His internet posts of *Daily Reflections with Fr. Don Talafous* have inspired many. Some are now gathered into a book of musings, each less than one page long.

The selections are just right for someone seeking a moment of meditation that will keep them thinking for much longer. They are also an excellent source for that short quote for a discussion or worship aid

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*Small books from a small (but interesting) press:*

Some time ago, the editor of this newsletter received an envelope of booklets. St. Vincent's Archabbey has reprinted the lectures from a 1947 to 1970 series, newly edited by Rene Kollar, O.S.B., including one on *Benedictine Contributions to Church Architecture* by archaeologist and historian Kenneth J. Conant, with a new introduction by Rev. Vincent de Paul Crosby, O.S.B. Another very different booklet was correspondence with a Pakistani oblate who was murdered by Islamic extremists in 2012 and whose cause as a martyr is being promoted by Latrobe oblates. A catalog of these and other books of spirituality and the Benedictine life are at [www.stvincentstore.com](http://www.stvincentstore.com). Just right for a monastery library's reading table or waiting room.



# ABA Business

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It is time for ABA members to place nominations from among current ABA members for vice-president (who becomes president) and two board members to be elected at the convention. Duties can be found in the by-laws. Nominations may be submitted in advance or made from the floor during the business meeting. Having nominations in advance helps to ensure that there is a sufficient slate and allows for information about the candidates to be published in the June *AMN* in advance of the convention for the members' deliberation and prayer. Please take time to give this serious right of membership your energy and initiative. Members may submit names for vice-president or board members by email (greg.peters@biola.edu), or by hard copy to Greg Peters / 13005 Oakwood Lane / La Mirada, CA 90638.

## The Terrence G. Kardong MONASTIC STUDIES GRANT

ABA members are invited to apply for Monastic Studies Grants to support projects that "cultivate, support and transmit the Benedictine heritage within contemporary culture." Applications will be selected on the basis of quality of the proposal (originality, feasibility, clarity of purpose), potential benefit for monastics, and relevance to the purposes of the Academy. More details are on the ABA website.

To apply for a grant please supply:  
Name, address, phone number, e-mail  
Religious or academic affiliation (if any)  
A brief description of the proposed project  
The goal(s) of the proposed project  
An itemized budget which includes:

total cost of project  
sources of funding other than the ABA  
sum requested from the ABA

Send applications to: Greg Peters  
THI, Biola University  
13800 Biola Avenue  
La Mirada, CA 90639  
or submitted by email as a Word document to  
greg.peters@biola.edu

The Visual Arts Section of the ABA invites Benedictine artists to submit one to four pieces of their artwork for the ABA Art Show at the convention in Atchison. There will also be a digital art gallery for which artists may submit one to three digital images.

Criteria for submission:

- original artwork in any medium (fiber, ceramic, woodworking, stain glass, photography, etc.)
- pieces ready for hanging or display on a pedestal or table
- each clearly labeled with artist's name & medium
- name of artist's community and its location
- shipped in a returnable container with pre-paid return shipping included

**DO NOT SHIP ANYTHING WITH GLASS**

Bring art to the convention or ship to arrive at the convention site by noon, July 16, 2020. ABA is not responsible for return shipments. Shippers will need to make arrangements for return shipping with Gregory Evans.

Send art to:

ABA Art  
c/o Br. Joseph Ryan, OSB  
St. Benedict's Abbey  
1020 N 2nd St., Atchison, KS 66002

Submissions for the digital gallery need to be in JPEG format. Please email files to <greg.evans.oblsb@icloud.com> by June 12, 2020. Please contact Gregory Evans with any questions or concerns: Phone (571) 225-7745, Email: <greg.oblsb@gmail.com>.

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## *Prayer for Deceased ABA Members*

Friday evening, July 17, during the convention the ABA will honor all members who have died since the 2018 meeting. Please send names of deceased members to Sister Antoinette at <antoinettep1964@gmail.com> or at the postal address: 1402 Southern Avenue / Beech Grove, IN 46107 to be included. If the person was a religious or oblate, include the name of their monastery and city. Deadline for receiving names is July 1, 2020, to allow time for preparation.

## ABA ESSAY CONTEST

Each convention year, the ABA sponsors an essay contest exploring topics related to the Benedictine tradition and charism. This contest is aimed at inspiring writing among newer community members and is open to monastics and oblates who have made their first profession or oblation within the past 10 years.

The word “essay” derives from the French verb *essayer* – to try, probe, or test. The *Oxford English Dictionary* notes that essays offer a sense of inquiry and discovery. They provide concrete evidence of the thinking that has gone into a piece of writing. The best essays spark thinking. They maintain a balance between the objective and the subjective. They inspire and delight the reader as well as inform.

We are seeking essays of 3,000-3,200 words that deal with a Benedictine theme. We have included some suggested topics below, though topics are not limited to these themes. We encourage you to use a combination of published sources and your own lived personal experience. This is not a research paper, but rather a more personal statement about some aspect of The Rule/ Benedictine life showing the writer’s personal process of thinking and feeling that led to his/her conclusions.

In keeping with the upcoming ABA conference theme of “2020 Vision,” we are seeking particularly essays that explore being Benedictine in the 21st century. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Adapting The Rule in concrete ways to 21st century needs
- How is RB 7 is relevant to today’s issues?
- Is contemplation possible in the age of Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram?
- Delve into a tradition in your monastic community (for example a monastic or liturgical practice, annual community event, social event) and examine through archival material, interviews with current members and oblates how this tradition impacts your community. How is it a contemporary expression of the Benedictine charism?
- What tool from “Tools For Good Works” is absolutely essential for today’s world? Who in your experience is a master in using this tool? What challenge does using this tool pose for you and for our world?
- How do different members of your community exemplify aspects of the Benedictine charism? Who personifies humility, or hospitality or good zeal ... and why? How is their witness relevant in the 21st century?

### *Requirements for Participation:*

- Open to professed members and oblates up to ten years after first profession or oblation
- Submit an essay of 3,000 - 3,200 words as a double-spaced and computer-generated Word document

### **Deadline: March 31, 2020**

Send to Judith Valente, contest committee chair, at [jvalente17@msn.com](mailto:jvalente17@msn.com).

Winners will be notified by May 15, 2020.

### *Prize:*

- a 2-yr membership in ABA with waiver of registration and hospitality fees for the 2020 Convention
- a book of interest for monastics/oblates
- possibility of having one’s essay published in a relevant publication
- possible mentoring by contest committee members for runner-ups to further develop their thoughts/writing

DON'T FORGET THAT ALL MEMBERSHIPS PAID THROUGH 2019  
WERE DUE FOR RENEWAL JAN. 1.

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Please check if you wish to participate in one or more of the ABA sections:

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Enclosed: \$35 for one year membership \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 for two year membership \_\_\_\_\_

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