

Dear Sister or Community Mentors,

Thank you for your willingness to be Community Mentors. The schedule is at the end of this piece. We are using for Joan Chittister's Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century with our Oblate Candidates.

The Oblate Mentors will be using Judith Valente's How to Live: What the Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us about Happiness, Meaning and Community or whatever book might work best for the new Oblate Candidate. We would appreciate having you meet with your Oblate Candidate and Oblate mentor for the first session.

- Please see the Guidelines for the Oblate Mentors. In the first meeting, kindly discuss #1 under **Specific Tasks** and do a review of #2 **Signs of Growth: Commitment**.

### **Specific Tasks:**

1. **Meeting together:** As you journey with the Oblate Candidate we hope that you will be able to meet in person once a month or via Skype/Zoom or a phone call. We know how busy everybody is and how difficult it can be to make schedules work, so please do the best you can to make this a priority.

- **First meeting:** The first meeting might be a good time to share your faith stories, how you came to the Oblate Formation program, what is it about Benedictine spirituality that you find nourishing and challenging, and how you understand discernment. The Oblate Candidate may want to talk about their hopes for the process. At this first meeting you can then set some goals for the next year in terms of monthly meetings, what you want to study, tools for reflection, etc.

- **Invite Oblate Candidate, Oblate Mentor and Sister Mentor to meet for the first meeting. This may happen in person, such as Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, via Zoom or Skype, or phone.**
- **Discuss the relationship between Sister and Oblate Mentors with the Candidates and decide what sources might be used for your meetings.**
- This year we recommend Judith Valente's How to Live: What the Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us about Happiness, Meaning and Community be done with the Oblate mentor. If another source would be better, please use it, but be clear what the Sister Mentor and Oblate Mentor do with the Oblate Candidate.

2. **Signs of Growth, Commitment:** As you journey with the Oblate Candidate there are certain signs of maturity and commitment to watch for. These include:

- Is there a commitment to grow spiritually and to go in depth in learning Benedictine spirituality? Is the Oblate Candidate willing to go move more deeply into their faith journey, to be challenged and grow?

- Does the Oblate Candidate demonstrate appropriate behavior and attitudes? Do they demonstrate respect and openness to all people? Do they demonstrate appropriate social boundaries e.g. not intrusive, able to understand limits? Are they able to be supportive of others and not be focused just on themselves?

- Do they see participation in the Oblate formation program primarily as a spiritual exercise rather than simply a social group or one that nourishes only them?

- Do they demonstrate a high level of commitment and participation? Do they regularly attend meetings and their sessions with you? Have they made the Oblate formation program a priority in their life?
- Do they demonstrate an ability to be part of a diverse group? (e.g. appropriate behavior and attitude towards other members, acceptance of beliefs different from one's own, ability and willingness to respect and tolerate people one has difficulty with.)
- Do they demonstrate a willingness and commitment to be involved in their oblate group as well as the monastery?
- Do they understand that a long term commitment is a way of life and an explanation of the 3 promises: Obedience, Stability, and Conversion of Life? (can be dealt with at any session).**
- Do the Oblate Candidates participate in the ministry and/or financial support of the community? (see Oblate handbook for possibilities).**
- Do they incorporate service into their daily life (through work, Church, volunteer activity, etc.)

Your role is to help them become familiar with our community and to dialogue about what Benedictine values might be helpful for them to reflect and discuss with you. Your goals and tasks are the same as the Oblate Mentors but because you have a community foundation and have lived in a Benedictine Community you will be able to help your Oblate Candidates with a different perspective.

When you feel your Oblate Candidate is ready to become an Oblate, kindly let Camille and me know. There is no time limit about how long a person may be an Oblate Candidate.

If you have any further questions, kindly feel free to talk with Novice Camille and me.

Gratefully,  
Sister Lucy  
Oblate Formation Team

### **Sessions for 2019-2020**

- Sept 15 RB 31 The Qualifications of the Monastery Cellarer; RB 32 The Tools and Goods of the Monastery
- Oct. 13 RB 33 Monastics and Private Ownership; RB 34 Distribution of Goods According to Need
- Nov.10 RB 48 The Daily Manual Labor
- Dec. 14 Retreat: Jesse's Tree and the Story of Ruth: Repairing the Broken Places  
Facilitator: Kathryn Rickert
- Jan. 12 RB 53 Reception of Guests, RB56 The Prioress's Table; RB66 The Porter
- Feb. 9 RB 57 The Artisans of the Community
- Mar. 8 RB 58 The Procedure for Receiving Members
- Apr. 19 RB 73 The Rule Only a Beginning of Perfection

