

Benedictine Oblates



What is a [Benedictine Oblate](#) ?

Benedictine oblates are laypeople who make a commitment to shape their lives according to the insights and wisdom of the [Rule of St Benedict](#). This rule was written by [St Benedict of Nursia](#) in the sixth century.

The Rule begins with an invitation, "Listen carefully, my son, to the Master's instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart." The heart of this invitation is to "seek God" in every situation of daily life. It is the call of that every Christian receives at baptism.

Oblates undertake to live this call through the principles of Benedictine spirituality. The call of Benedictine spirituality is always particular, it is a call to seek God in a particular place with particular people. At Turvey we are two communities, one of monks and nuns. People who become Turvey oblates are oblates of both communities They live out the call of Benedictine spirituality in several ways:

- ❑ In community: through their connection to the communities at Turvey Abbey and to the other oblates of those communities.
- ❑ In community prayer: by praying some part of the [Divine Office](#), in a way that suits their lifestyle, and by regular worship in their local churches.
- ❑ In personal prayer: by praying with Scripture using the Benedictine practice of [Holy Reading \(Lectio Divina\)](#).
- ❑ In their daily lives: by actively seeking to grow in awareness of God's presence in the daily round of their activities and relationships.

Who can become a Benedictine oblate?

Any baptised Christian is able to explore the possibility of becoming a Benedictine oblate.

How do I become a Benedictine oblate?

- ❑ Oblation by its nature is incarnational so it is good to start your journey by meeting face-to-face. We suggest that you begin by meeting with Sr Miriam and Sr Judith to discuss oblation.
- ❑ If you live near to the Abbey we generally recommend that you begin joining us at the Abbey for some of the liturgy if you can. We also suggest that you try to come to the oblate retreat to meet and share with the other oblates.
- ❑ The next step is a formal request to start your probation. This is called "making petition" and it starts the journey towards oblation. It involves a small ceremony in the Chapel.

- ❑ After this you will be asked to pray some of the Divine Office on a regular basis and practice Lectio Divina. You will also be asked to begin to familiarise yourself with the Rule of St Benedict and how it applies to your life, and, where possible, to attend the oblate retreat.
- ❑ If after this time you wish to make oblation (formal promises) you can ask the communities to accept you for this. If you are accepted there will be a short service of oblation in the Abbey Chapel.

RESOURCES FOR OBLATES

There are many resources available for Oblates in books and on the web. Here are a few that might be helpful. Many of them are American and therefore will need some adaptation for a British environment, but there is much of value in them. They are not the only ones and if you find something that is helpful for you we would be very grateful if you would let us know about it.



Some oblates wear the [Benedictine medal](#), you can find out about the significance of the medal by following the link.

There is an article by Fr Hilary Ottensmeyer OSB of St Meinrad Archabbey on [Stability](#) for Oblates it is available in the Newsletter of the St Gregory's Oblate Chapter, Perth, of New Norcia Abbey.

The oblates of the Monastery of the Ascension, Idaho, have created a very useful [Oblate Manual](#).

You will find some interesting material at [Oblate Resources and News](#).

There is an email group, the oblate [forum group](#), where oblates can discuss with each other. To join, e-mail the group moderator, Jane Frith, an oblate of St Gertrude's Monastery, Cottonwood, ID, at jfrith@cablone.net.

Some oblates communities make their newsletters available online. They sometimes have articles of general interest to all oblates:

- ❑ Newsletter of [St John's Abbey](#) Minnesota.
- ❑ Newsletter of [St Vincent's Archabbey](#), Pennsylvania.
- ❑ The Oblates of [Newark Abbey](#) have their own web pages.
- ❑ "[Matters Benedictine](#)" is a website done by a Benedictine oblate, it provides some personal insight and useful resources.
- ❑ [Douai Abbey](#) publish their oblate newsletter on their website. It has some interesting articles and some useful resources.
- ❑ The British based [Lay Community of St Benedict](#) has a very useful website which provides valuable resources for Oblates as well as news of events.

If you are interested in the possibility of becoming an Oblate of the Turvey Communities please contact:

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