

# Oblate Creative Responses to June 4<sup>th</sup> Retreat

What is the abundant life that comes  
with promises kept?

Hospitality and humility

Strength and vulnerability

love and friendship

personal development and

community engagement

reason and sensibility

balance, harmony

energy and enthusiasm

effort, ease, and paradox

dilating apertures

life eternal and life embodied

blessings and challenges

life everlasting

all the pleasure that

the good things

of the gift of years

can bring

amen

By Saima Scott

Our Benedictine Promises by Don Cairns

Stability

*All is Monastic*

*Rooted in Community*

*In the Flow of Grace*

Conversatio

*A Daily Practice*

*What this Time Calls Us Toward*

*It is the Journey*

Obedience

*Listening to God*  
*Staying in Conversation*  
*In Humility*

Haiku by Cheryl Gudger

6/4/11  
rule of Benedict  
moderation, balance, joy  
soulful adventure

1/6/12  
early morning hours  
my favorite time of day  
a thin place for me

6/1/12  
i love your decrees  
help me understand your law  
promise of delight

4/25/13  
life is unfolding  
moment by moment in time  
presence is a gift

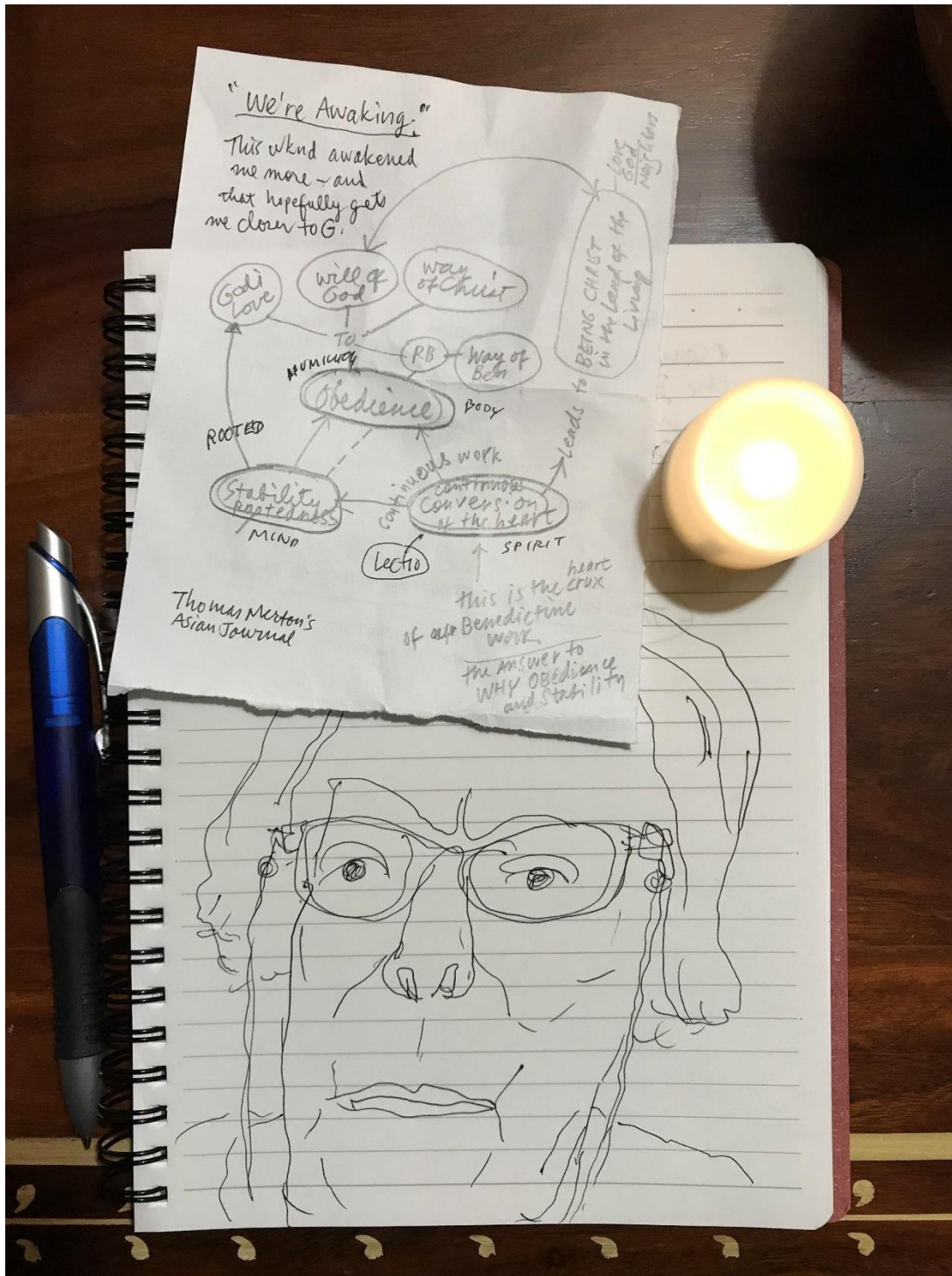
4/5/14  
this desert journey  
wandering in GOD'S mercy  
do not be afraid

8/22/19  
dailiness offers  
a life that is happy  
healthy, and holy

2/13/21  
a mystic listens  
a mystic ponders in heart  
then acts accordingly

6/6/2021

obedience in love  
stability in love  
daily conversion in love  
mutuality



From Roy DeLeon (the sketch is Sr. Lucy)

(I think she looks like Dorothy Day here! Sr. Anna-Camille)

## Benedictine Cauliflower

### A recipe

(Which like the Rule, serves as a guide)

You may begin by going outside.  
Look up at the sky and around at the ground.  
Notice if there is a small flower or other beautiful thing.  
Bring it inside and set on the table-  
in preparation.

Turn on the oven to 400 degrees.

Then, take the cauliflower out of the refrigerator.  
It looked perfect in the grocery store last week,  
But now there are brown patches.  
Remove them, gently.  
And forgive yourself for forgetting it was there.

Wash the whole big blob under cold running water.  
Be thorough while not wasting (too much) water,  
even though your fingers delight in touching and caressing.  
Think of streams cascading down steep mountain slopes  
And fish swimming along the banks. Imagine salmon.  
They always know where they're going.  
Give thanks for plumbers and engineers.  
Notice the beauty of the faucet.  
Consider also, how many people are thirsty.

Time to break the thing open.  
Use a small knife to cut apart the flowerets.

Here, you can ask the cauliflower questions like  
"Have you been stable today?"  
Listen carefully. Notice how silence speaks.  
Praise the roundness, the whiteness, the little, tiny knobby crumbs.

And continue.  
Remove the exterior leaves and stem.  
Slice into pieces and put in a big bowl.  
Next, get some garlic and mince the cloves.  
Put in the bowl and drizzle with olive oil.

Spread the mix out on a baking sheet.  
Sprinkle with seasoning salt.  
Grate some cheese and sprinkle some on top.

Pop in the oven and set a timer for 15 minutes.  
Time is a tricky thing.  
After 15 minutes, rotate and stir a bit.  
Set the timer again for 15 minutes.  
Cook until toasty on top.  
You may begin to savor a yummy fragrance in the air.

Meanwhile, clean up.  
(This is very important).  
Put the clean plastic wrap from around the cauliflower  
into the plastic recycle bin.  
Put the wilted, moldy, and broken crumbs  
into the organic compost bin.  
Clean the knife and other utensils and dishes.  
Put them where they belong.

Finally, serve the cooked cauliflower.  
Arrange on a clean plate and begin to feel satisfied.  
Pause.  
Consider how the cauliflower has experienced “*conversatio*.”  
And be grateful that we too, have been called to this table.

Katy Suchland, 6/6/21

### **Living the Benedictine Promises**

*I share the following poems with you, our Oblate Community, as a reflection of experiencing the Benedictine Promises in and around my home in Roslyn, a small, forested town on the eastern slope of the Cascades. I have imbedded quotes from Sister Lucy's and Sister Anna-Camille's generous presentations during our Keeping the Benedictine Promise Retreat.*

#### **Stability**

*Staying put, remaining rooted and faithful to the situation in which God has placed us.*

In spring, walk the trails  
on the ridge with friends.  
Greet lupine, lily,  
the morning song  
of mountain bluebird.

In summer, tend a garden  
with the children.  
Grow sunflowers, snap peas,  
bush beans and squash.

Let them dig for worms.

In autumn, sit with the dawn  
and the gilded leaves of  
aspen, apple, cottonwood.  
Give thanks for salmon return.  
Search for their nests in gravel beds.

In winter, watch the rising  
moon silhouette pines  
on the ridgeline.  
See it shimmer on snow  
on the neighbor's roof.

In all seasons,  
stare at the stars  
bejeweling the sky  
before first light.  
Pray without ceasing.

## **Obedience**

*obaudire: listen to*

Listen with the ear of my heart  
and sit with first light of dawn  
as salmon return to the river.  
Hear God's voice in the bugle of elk.

Sit with first light of dawn  
to serve as I am called.  
Hear God's voice in the bugle of elk.  
Behold the gold of aspen

to serve as I am called  
as salmon return to the river.  
Behold the gold of aspen.  
Listen with the ear of my heart.

## **Conversion of Heart**

*conversatio: way of life*

Surrender to mystery  
in the waning moon at dawn,  
the fading constellations.

Awaken to orange flash of ash berry,  
dollop of bear scat on the grass,

coyote slink in the meadow.

Praise bell-chime,  
morning prayer,  
thick bark of pine,  
first blush of tomato.

Give thanks for morning pleasure,  
bitter coffee,  
candle flame,  
the tender touch of love.

Susan Johnson