

St Gregory's – Oblates Report

Nearly a dozen oblates met at Downside on Saturday 4 March 2023; it was heartening to greet a number, including a few who had made long journeys, whom we had not seen for several years due to CV19 and the monks' move.

We were welcomed warmly by Dom James Hood, our Oblate Master. After restorative refreshment we had introductory prayers followed by a double session of discourse and study, covering both today's chapter 27 of the Rule of St Benedict – *The Superior's care of the Excommunicated* – and *lectio divina* of the following day's gospel reading – The Second Sunday in Lent – *The Transfiguration*.

Then followed a visit to the monks' cemetery to pray for the souls of deceased brethren, especially those who had had care of oblates. We recalled that Dom Alexander's first anniversary had just passed. Then it was off to the Abbey Church crypt for Midday Office.

We enjoyed catch-up conversation over an informal lunch before returning to the conference room for a short administrative session; a useful update on the Community of St Gregory at Southgate, Buckfast and an exegesis on the themes of Sundays 3, 4 and 5 of Lent – Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Thanks to Dom James for his preparation and delivery of a thought-provoking series of talks and to the Abbot's secretary, Allyson Jones, for her contribution to a splendid meeting.

Timothy Chambers
SS Perpetua & Felicity 2023