



SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

21st September 2005

The topics dealt with were communion as experienced within one's own family, and our relationship with others in general.

As regards communion in the family, various situations were identified. In families where both husband and wife are oblates, there is a common spiritual journey marked by a Benedictine way of life based on prayer and on the contact with the monastery. This spiritual journey transforms the family's way of life which goes against the "culture of death" (secularisation) which is so widespread in today's world. Oblates who are the only ones who follow the Benedictine way in their family have to be even more aware of their role as witnesses of Christ through forgiveness, mediation, anticipation of the needs of others, support to others especially in difficult moments and, above all, willingness to communicate in love and understanding. The way to achieve this is to put no thing above God, to pray and to put our full trust in God who knows what is good for each one of us.

Relationships with relatives, colleagues and acquaintances have to be approached in the same way. Often because of these relationships we have to deal with particularly difficult challenges. The working groups highlighted the fact that we must start off from recognising the uniqueness of others and from realising that all human beings are children of God who deserve respect and love. A readiness to forgive and an open heart are required to achieve such a perspective. We must feel that we are instruments in God's hands and believe strongly in what we are doing, in order to be witnesses of our Christian faith among others. Many oblates commit themselves to various initiatives for the benefit of others, and they try to pay great attention to the simple acts of kindness which open communication channels with other people every day. All this must be nourished continuously by prayer, and especially by praying for others, who are also gifts from God to us.