



# Tucson Oblate Newsletter

## January, 2015

**Happy New Year!** In view of the number of people, both near and far away, who are suffering from situations beyond their control, that may seem a selfish or vain greeting. In 1776 The Fathers of our country endorsed our "unalienable rights to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." However, happiness as a *goal* is sometimes discouraged not only by spiritual writers who insist that happiness in this life is *not* a Christian's goal. Others, such as Eleanor Roosevelt declare that "Happiness is not a goal . . . it's a by-product of a life well lived." She adds, "What keeps our interest in life and makes us look forward to tomorrow is giving pleasure to other people."

We might look to Annie Dillard's writings to find an invitation that St. Benedict would certainly affirm. Monastic writers have consistently stressed that the monk's goal is "that in all things God may be glorified" (Rule, Ch. 57). Annie writes: "We are here to abet creation and to witness it, to notice each thing so each thing gets noticed. Together we notice not only each mountain shadow and each stone on the beach but we notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature so that creation need not play to an empty house."

Elsewhere she writes: "Hasidism has a tradition that one of man's purposes is to assist God in the work of "hallowing" the things of Creation. By a tremendous heave of the spirit, the devout man frees the divine sparks trapped in the mute things of time; he uplifts the forms and moments of creation, bearing them aloft into the rare air and hallowing fire in which all clays must shatter and burst." *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

If you would like another closely related approach to making the New Year a deeply happy one, try reflecting on the *Sacrament of the Present Moment*.

**TUCSON: Next meeting is our RENEWAL DAY, Sunday, January 18.** If you cannot come for the whole day, please come for whatever time you can. The Assembly Room will be open from about 8:35 a.m. to 8:55 a.m. in case you have food to leave downstairs.

**Sr. Gladys Noreen**, who was superior and one of the last two Sisters to leave our Dayton, Wyoming, Monastery when it closed, will be our presenter at the renewal day and hopefully, at the February meeting to follow. Some of you may have found her commentary on the Rule of Benedict in our library. She is a lifetime student, having earned a bachelor of arts degree from Valparaiso University, a master's degree in religious studies from Washington University in St. Louis and a doctor of ministry degree in ecumenism from the Graduate Theological Foundation. She was director of the Oblates in Wyoming and greatly enjoys teaching. We are happy to give her an opportunity here in Tucson.

**Please note: NEW this year:** For the noon meal we need as accurate a count as possible, and so are asking that all the Tucson people who will be here for the meal, please **let us know by Monday, January 12.** Please email me or phone the monastery and leave a message that you will be here. (The Phoenix folks always let us know). **Donation for the meal is \$7 if possible**, or if you are not bringing food. ***Please note: Those who are bringing food need not call or email, as we presume you will be here and your food contribution is your donation!***

**Volunteers are still welcome to bring food:** Please call Bette Dickinson, 834-5300 to find out what is still most needed.

### **ORDER for Renewal Day**

9:00 a.m. Any who wish are welcome to join with the monastic community for Mass.

10:00 Light breakfast: Coffee, donuts, bagels, etc., downstairs. Some of the Sisters will join us.

10:30 (or as soon as we can start) Welcome, then first presentation by Sr. Gladys, who will share reflections on *Scripture and the Rule of Benedict*.

11:30 Inquirers being enrolled as candidates, and candidates making oblation, meet upstairs with directors. Others have QUIET time for reflection--in chapel, outside, browsing in the library, etc. Some will be setting up for noon meal. [continued over]

- 12:00 Midday prayer in Chapel with Community, concluding with enrollments and oblations.  
 12:30 Lunch downstairs: Hot dish, potluck for salads and dessert  
 1:45 (Approximately) Second presentation by Sr. Gladys.  
 3:00-3:15 Closing and cleanup.

Preparation for those participating in the renewal day: Sr. Gladys asks that you bring a copy of the Rule of Benedict with you--any version that you have.

*The following candidates have expressed their desire to go ahead with Oblation:*

- Beverly Gonda (Tucson)
- Michele Headrick (Phoenix Central)

*The following inquirers have asked to be enrolled as candidates:*

- Susan Pease (Phoenix Central)
- Ellen Duax (and the following, all from Tucson)
- Helen Garcia
- William Joseph
- James Lundberg
- Holiday Woodward

**CONTINUED PRAYERS** are asked for Tucson Oblates coping with health problems, especially Rosemary Blonigan and Frank Frisina.

**PRESCOTT:** Next meeting Sunday, January 18 at 1:30 p.m.

Nancy Hinshaw writes in the absence of Shirley Maday, who broke her collarbone. The December meeting was a small one, but did include an Advent reflection followed by a potluck luncheon. Nancy presided at the **Oblation of Bill Lutz**. At the next meeting the assigned reading will be the one assigned for December: Michael Casey's *The Road to Eternal Life*, pp 23-30.

For more information, call Nancy Hinshaw: 928-445-1271.

**PHOENIX CENTRAL:** Next meeting, Saturday, January 10, 2014, 8:45 a.m. for Inquirers and Candidates, and 9:30 a.m. for all. Mount Claret Retreat Center, 4633 North 54th Street, Phoenix, 85018.

*Patty Williams writes:* Please join us for a morning of prayer, community, God stories and study. We celebrate the upcoming renewal day in Tucson when Michele Headrick will become an oblate and Susan Pease will be enrolled. We are blessed!

For more information call Patty Williams: 602-957-1464 or email [Benedictine@cox.net](mailto:Benedictine@cox.net)

**PHOENIX EAST VALLEY:** Next meeting is January 24

For more information, call Nancy Kaib, 480-883-8025 or Frank Young, 480-219-1505

*With love and prayers that this New Year will be blessed for you and all those dear to you,*

*Lenora, OSB*

### Peace Within

- May today there be peace within.
- May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
- May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
- May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.
- May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.
- Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
- It is there for each and every one of us.

*- attributed to St. Thérèse of Lisieux and also to St. Teresa of Avila*