

## Tucson Oblate News Letter - June, 2016

Summer is here, and I pray it will be a blessed time for all of you. One of my favorite sayings is from Fr. Michael Heims: "Everything is soaking with grace, everything is dripping with grace." Grace is God. As you enjoy this summer may you see everything soaking, dripping with God, in all of creation and in every one.

We celebrate four special Feasts this month--June 3rd, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and June 4th, Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, will already be over by the time you get this Newsletter. Upcoming are the birth of St. John the Baptist on June 24th, and the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29th. John the Baptist is the subject of the beautiful Canticle we recite every morning at Lauds. When Jesus left Nazareth to begin his public ministry, a part of Mary's heart stepped into the world. Her own heart was "pierced." Jesus says to us, "Come to me and rest on my heart." What would it mean for you to have a heart like Jesus? To love like Mary? To have the humility of John the Baptist? To bear witness like Peter and Paul did? Fruit for thought these hot summer days.

The **LECTIO DIVINA** program is continuing this summer every Saturday from 10 – 11 a.m. Those attending chose to continue during the summer months.

**July 17th, 1:00-2:30: ICE CREAM SOCIAL** for the Feast of St. Benedict: Bring a small carton of ice cream or your favorite topping. PUT THIS ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR; we will NOT send out another notice. RSVP to [tucsonoblates@gmail.com](mailto:tucsonoblates@gmail.com) or 520-325-6401.

We have several new inquirers and I would like to get to know you and learn about your interest in being a Benedictine Oblate. If you phone 325-6401 and ask for Sr. Hope, or email me at [rodenborn.hope@gmail.com](mailto:rodenborn.hope@gmail.com), we can set up a time to get acquainted.

Our **NEXT MEETING will be Sunday September 18, 2016**. Doors will open at 12:45 for inquirers, candidates and anyone else who would like to come early, use the library or visit with others. The class for inquirers and candidates will start at 1:00 p.m. and finish at 1:45 to join the others in the basement for the 2 p.m. general session. (Program will be announced later.)

The International Congress of Benedictine Oblates will meet Nov. 4-10th 2017 in Rome, Italy. The theme is "A Way Forward: the Benedictine Community in Movement." This conference is held every 4 years. Michael Schroeder from Phoenix represented us in 2013, and shared with us his great experience. Our representative would need to

be someone who can afford the trip; hopefully we could have a collection from the Oblates to help. Michael told us that they visited Monte Casino and Subiaco. More information will be passed on to the group as we receive it. Anyone interested, please let me know.

Prayer Needs: Beverly Gonda, is having hip surgery, so keep her in your prayers. Joan Marcoux, a long time oblate, is in a nursing home and begs for prayers. John Hill's mother entered eternity May 31. Let us keep all our loved ones in prayers.

## **Summary of Videos from 2015 NAABOD meeting, presented at Oblate Renewal Day, May 15, 2016**

Sr. Karen Joseph

The most basic requirement for oblates is that they accept the need for ongoing conversion (*conversatio*) and allow themselves to be transformed by God. How do we do this? The answer is in the Sermon on the Mount, which is reflected in the RB's Instruments of Good Works. Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus suggests that we are to be salt and light—prophets for our times. We must make sure that our saltiness is fresh and our light bright, that we are doing what we do for the right reasons. What we are about is no less than building the reign of God—making God visible on earth.

Salt exists for the sake of the whole, not just for itself. Through our baptism, we are committed to the common good. Salt is regenerative, a preservative. Does our presence add zest and life? Gospel values? Does it bring life to others? Are we approachable? We can prevent decay, we can regenerate life in our communities, churches, and world, if we are people of faith and prayer. But Jesus also says that salt can lose its flavor. How do I keep my salt fresh?

We are called to be light. How do we keep our light burning bright? With candles, light consumes itself. Jesus gave his life-blood for the sake of the world; we should also spend ourselves for others. The light that Jesus gives is never exhausted. Without air, the candle will go out. This is community at its worst—a jealous community that squelches light. What deprives me of my air? Does anyone protect my light? Have I thanked them?

God does good to both friends and enemies. In God's eyes, everyone matters. Our task is to serve all freely throughout the whole world—it is part of our commission as Christians, Benedictines, and Oblates. The Gospel is our guide and passion, the source of our zeal. The Gospel is the revelation of love, forgiveness, and compassion to all. If we can do this, we can become the "city on the hill," a beacon of light to the

world. We must make God tangible and real, just as Jesus did. What do we need to do to put hope into action? What do I need to repent of to be a better witness?

BUT, how can we do this with all our limitations? Oscar Romero said, “We can’t do everything, but we can do something.” We need to start by believing that we are alive. Do we cling to what is dead, while life is knocking at the door? All we need is to believe, trust, and risk opening the door.

What do we need to do to be salt? To be light? To keep our salt fresh and our light burning? Silence and prayer help us. Our response to the word of God is born in prayer. We hear the voice of God, and find our own voice as prophets. If we hope for peace, let us be peace for one another. Don’t get bogged down with things that don’t matter in the light of eternity. Focus on what really makes a difference. Let us be the reservoir of hope. Be salt, be light, be fully alive. Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.

Rev. Dr. Jane Tomaine (author of St. Benedict’s Toolbox; [www.stbenedict’stoolbox.org](http://www.stbenedict’stoolbox.org))

We have an enormous impact on all of those around us through the way we live. It is easy to be consumed by daily life and its demands. We have so many things to worry about—but who says we can’t live with joy and hope? There has to be a vision and a beginning, over and over. This is what being a follower of Christ is all about—living in community, in peace and justice, with simplicity and faith. Having forgiving hearts and being faithful to our baptismal commitment.

What does the Church need now? Solid Christian witness, following Christ’s example. Benedictines have a counter-cultural witness of sharing, service, fidelity, etc. to counter the problems of today’s world. What will this witness cost us? All that we have.

Each time we can abandon ourselves to God and be open to transformation, we come closer to being the person God wants us to be. Like a sculptor, God gradually chips away at what is not needed. This process is not for ourselves alone, but for others as well. God’s creation was not a one-time event, it is ongoing.

All this takes courage. What if we believed that we have enough courage, faith, hope, and love already? Envision what it would be like if we abandoned ourselves into God’s hands!

Common obstacles to doing that are [Sr. Joseph made an analogy to learning cross-country skiing] fear of loss of control, fear of falling, and forgetting. We “wrestle” with our duties, situations, people—anything we can’t control, including ourselves. We can

be so consumed by this wrestling that we're not self-aware and we can't hear God. But we can think about what God might be doing in the midst of this conflict. Fear can make us "congeal"; the solution is to let go and learn to trust God. This doesn't mean letting go of the situation, but placing it in God's hands. Let go of the wrestling; it gets in the ways of grace. Helpful practices for this are prayer, silence, and lectio. Our grumbling separates us from God. No matter what happens, God is with us. Let go and trust.

Since falling often happens when we're not in the present moment, the solution is to be in the present moment. Hold an image of Jesus loving us and loving what we do, and nothing else matters. We need self-awareness to live in the present. Forgetting can be countered with study, review, and practice. Forgetting also may mean that we don't feel we have the necessary resources (whatever those may be). We have resources in the RB, our promises (especially conversatio), leadership, friends, family, and mentors. We should use the resources we have. Let Go!

## **CHAPTER NEWS**

PRESCOTT: Shirley Mayday reports: Nancy Hinshaw led the ceremony for Bethany Forbes, who became an official candidate for Oblation. Congratulations, Bethany! Next event: July 10, 1:00 p.m., a social at Bill Lutz's home in honor of St. Benedict's Feast Day. Our next meeting Sept 18th. "The Road to Eternal Life, Ch. 20 pp.72-74 by Michael Casey's book, " The Road to Eternal Life – Reflection on the Prologue of Benedict's Rule," Chapter 23, pp. 81-85, at St. Anthony Claret Room.

EAST VALLEY OBLATES: . For more Information on oblate meetings call Nancy Kaib 480-883 8025 or Frank Young 480-219-1505

PHOENIX CENTRAL: For information call Patty Williams 602-957-1464. We meet at Mount Claret Retreat Center, 4633 N. 54th St. Phoenix, 85018. Our meeting room is in the St. John Paul II room in the back of the parking lot.

Blessings, Sr. Hope

Benedictine Monastery, 800 N. Country Club Rd. Tucson, AZ 85716-4583 phone 520-325-6401

Emails [rodenborn.hope@gmail.com](mailto:rodenborn.hope@gmail.com) or [tucsonoblates@gmail.com](mailto:tucsonoblates@gmail.com)