



TUCSON OBLATE NEWSLETTER
ADDENDUM
OCTOBER 2017

Dear Oblates and Friends,

It is with deep regret that the Benedictine Sisters will be leaving Tucson. For more than eighty years our community of Sisters has been privileged and blessed to be a praying presence in this diocese. Throughout our years here, countless people have come to worship and pray with us in our beautiful chapel filled with the light and love of our Lord. Our doors have remained open every day for those who have sought to know God with us in this quiet prayerful Sacred Space. It has been a true privilege to have walked the path of faith with you, to have known your friendship and love and goodness, and to have experienced the unity with which the love of God binds us together.

There are really no words to describe the grief of leaving those who are so much loved and cherished, our brothers and sisters in Christ. We truly know that you are experiencing this grief as well, and our hearts go out to you.

For all that you have given us of yourselves - your time, your help, your prayers, your concern, your friendship, your countless hours of generous service and ready response to be of assistance in any way, we *Thank You*. You have poured yourselves out in love for our community. Words are inadequate to express all that is in our hearts.

With much love and gratitude for the richness you have brought to our lives.
We hold you in our prayers.
In the love of Christ Jesus,
Sr. Kathleen Clare

*Trusting in God's
Goodness*



*Continuing the Journey
Sunday, Sept. 17, 2017*

For those who were unable to attend the Oblate Day of Transfer to our new meeting site, the following account written by Mary Sheridan may help you to experience it somewhat. This was a day filled with much emotion. The *Ceremony of Candles*, both at the Monastery and at St. Philip's, was particularly moving. Our dean Sharon Hammond reminded us as we lit our candles:

The light of God lives within each of us.

A lovely transfer ritual marked the changing site for our Oblate meetings. We began at the Monastery with thanks to all who had made this meeting possible: Salpointe High School for loaning us their vans, St. Philip's Church for providing us with meeting space and a warm welcome, the Deans who helped plan the meeting, and Sr. Sarah who came from Clyde to meet with us.

Sr. Kathleen Clare began by acknowledging how difficult it is to leave the Monastery, but noted that we have the blessing of going to a place where we are truly welcome. God has been with us throughout the process of finding a new place, she said, and we must continue to trust in God's goodness.

Sr. Joan Ridley, Administrator of the Monastery, spoke next. She said that this was both an ending and a beginning and quoted Romans 8:28: "For those who love God, all things work together for the good." Were it not for Vatican II and the resulting Ecumenical movement, we would not be going to an Episcopal Church. She also noted that, with the decline in vocations to religious life, the laity have become much more important in spreading the charism of St. Benedict. Sr. Joan finished by saying, "We wish for this group nothing but God's goodness."

Sr. Sarah then spoke. She said that a "time of transition is a time of confusion because we must reconstruct meaning. She reassured us that our bond with the Sisters will continue, just at a greater distance. The entire universe is contained in God, who penetrates all things. We all meet together in God, no matter how far apart. We are moving, she said, from one sacred place to another. We are the ones who sanctify a place, because God is in us.

Oblate Dean Sharon Hammond then began a candle-lighting ritual accompanied by readings and psalms. Everyone present was given a lovely tea candle in a clear glass holder. Deans Sharon and William stood before the assembly, each with a taper in hand. In the dimmed light of the room, two lines of Oblates formed, walking in silence to receive the flame that lit their candle, and then placed them on the wooden table by the statue of St. Benedict. Throughout the remaining ceremony of Scripture readings and communal responsorial psalms, the candles filling the table cast a soft glow from the flickering flames.

Sr. Sarah read the first passage from the Hebrew Scriptures (Gn 12: 1-7). Remembering that the light of God lives within each of us, we heard about Abram in Genesis. He and his family, Sr. Sarah told us, moved by stages, setting up altars along the way, consecrating every place where they stayed. "We move on," Sr. Sarah said, "and as we do so, we sanctify." The assembly of Oblates responded with alternate choirs reciting Ps.16, "Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge. . . You will show me the path of life."

The second reading was taken from the New Testament, the Book of Hebrews (Hb 11:1-2, 8-12), and reminded us of the faith of many who have gone before us. The response was Ps.33, a psalm of praise. The final reading from the Gospel of St. Luke, (Lk 12:22-34) expressed our dependence on God. The response was taken from Ps.145, a psalm of thanksgiving. At the end of this ritual, the candles were extinguished one by one as the Oblates processed out.

Those present then transferred to St. Philip's, using the Salpointe vans and some additional cars. At St. Philip's we again lighted our candles and placed our Oblate banner at the front of the room. We were warmly welcomed by Fr. Robert Hendrickson, Rector, and Fr. Peter Helman, Associate Rector. They acknowledged the difficulty of the move, but reminded us that we were celebrating the feast of the Holy Cross. After the death of Jesus, his disciples and followers were utterly desolated. But at the resurrection, they saw a renewal of life. The priests hoped that our loss of the Monastery could also lead to new hope.

After the formal program, refreshments were available. A tour of the main features of the St. Philip's campus was offered, and there was also time for socializing.