



## Tucson Oblate Newsletter October 2014

**I**t is hard to realize that nature's countdown to Christmas has begun with the days becoming shorter since Autumn began a few days ago. Of course it's still summer for most Arizonans, but for all of us it's a reminder that cycles of birth, growth, bearing fruit, and letting go keep repeating in our lives. Not just once, but over and over, in cycles which vary in length and intensity. This is where stability is especially important, and this is one reason to look forward to Sr. M. Pascaline's presentation on stability of heart.

At the September meeting Sr. Lenora gave a presentation on *Stability as Rootedness*, that was followed by small group sharing afterward. Some thoughts from the presentation follow:

Paradoxically, it is precisely by staying put that we are enabled to grow spiritually. We can gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the values that may get lost in a lot of moving about.

When we consider the largest plants—trees—we realize that roots have other functions than being conduits for the tree's nutrition. Roots are what give the tree stability. Our signature desert cactus, the saguaro, has very shallow roots designed to catch surface moisture, but these roots fan out in all directions where possible, and are as long as the cactus is tall. These are what keep it stable. A mesquite tree, on the other hand, can send down a root 150 feet or more in search of water. There are times of transition in our lives when, like the saguaro, we depend daily on a network of supportive relationships to help us maintain our stability. At other times, like the mesquite, we have to go inward, down to the water table of our deeper values.

The best definition of stability that I have found was by a monk, Magnus Loehr, which roughly translates: "**Stability means being so passionately committed to essential values, that you can let go of anything that is not essential.**" This is a very dynam-

ic way to look at stability. To live consistently from our deepest values demands sincerity and courage, as well as the humility to admit that we will sometimes not be able to live up to that ideal. St. Paul's words are familiar: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness . . . whenever I am weak, then I am strong" (II Cor 12: 9, 10).

**GOOD NEWS:** Phoenix East Valley Oblates **Laurie Zenter** and **Heather Erhart** are both settled now in their respective religious communities. See the East Valley news for details. Both have been at Tucson Oblate renewal days, so many of us will remember them. Do keep up prayers for them during their challenging time of transition.

**THANK YOU!** to all those who responded to the request to help feed our hungry "kitty." Kitty is smiling gratefully and we can now buy a few library books as well as stamps. Thank you too, to the Tucson Oblate deans who organized an impromptu celebration of their oblate director's recent 88th birthday.

**TUCSON:** Next meeting **Sunday October 19, at 2:00 p.m. Doors open at 1:00** for inquirers, candidates and anyone else who would like to come early, use the library, and/or visit with others.

**REMINDER:** *All who have copies of the **Benedictine Handbook (the hard cover red book)** please **bring it with you to the meeting.** (Have your name in it)*

**1:15: Oblate candidates and inquirers meet in prayer room** (1st door on right from chapel upstairs), **at 1:15. Bette Dickinson** will lead this group. In preparation for this session, read the Prologue of the Rule of Benedict. If there is a preface or short introduction to the Rule in whatever copy you are using, you could read that too. Questions for discussion are:

a. What does Benedict say about listening in the Prologue?

b. What rose does listening hold in our lives? What are some examples of times when listening made a difference, or failure to listen caused a problem?

c. What is the difference between hearing and listening?

d. What has your experience been to listening to God?

**2:00: Our presenter for this meeting will be Sr. M. Pascaline Coff, OSB**, who will speak to us about **Stability of Heart - the Heart of Stability**. Sr. Pascaline was prioress general of our Congregation back in the turbulent 60s and 70s, following Vatican II. Shortly after her term in that position, she went to India to live in the Christian ashram of Bede Griffiths, OSB. On her return, she became founding superior of a Christian ashram within our Congregation – Osage Monastery, in the Forest of Peace, near Tulsa, Oklahoma. She continued in that position for 30 years, until circumstances made it necessary to turn the ashram over to other hands in 2008.

At the Tucson Oblate meeting October 19, Sr. Pascaline will continue our exploration of the Benedictine commitment to Stability by her presentation on "Stability of Heart." This will include such topics as

recognizing the divine mystery in every moment and every place;  
contemplation and the "cave of the heart;"  
the hidden monk in each of us;  
standing firm when it seems impossible;  
what is, IS;  
some stabilizers.

**PRESCOTT: Next meeting Sunday October 19, 1:30-3:30 p.m., St. Anthony Claret Room.**

*Shirley Maday writes:* The Lesson will be from Michael Casey's book, *The Road to Eternal Life: Reflections on the Prologue of Benedict's Rule*, the Preface through page 21. Besides Benedict's emphasis on the active life, there is a complementary emphasis on reliance on grace. Every good action is to be accompanied by prayer. Our work is a response to God's daily call to conversion. Casey says

that "The way to eternal life will be long and toilsome, but it will be the Lord who helps us traverse it." Candidate **Bill Lutz** now views his job differently. He realizes he is performing his work in the service of God and others and starts his day with prayer.

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

**PHOENIX CENTRAL: Next meeting, Saturday, October 11, 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. The yearly Mount Claret fundraising event will also be on October 11, in the evening. Some from our group volunteer each year to help in any way we can and give thanks for our special meeting space. 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 Saturday, October 25.**

*Nancy Kaib writes:* On Sunday, September 28 Oblate **Mike Schroeder** and his wife **Micki** celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with Mass and a party afterward. Two Oblates, **Laurie Zentner** and **Heather Erhart**, have entered their respective houses where they hope to live out their vocations as religious. Laurie is at a Dominican House in Ann Arbor, MI, and Heather is at a Benedictine Monastery in CT. We pray for their continued growth in their chosen vocations.

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

***Blessings,  
Sr. Lenora, OSB***

