

TUCSON OBLATE NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER, 2016

By now most of you have heard that we will be closing our Monastery here in Tucson within the next two years. The Sisters here will be going to our Motherhouse in Clyde, MO. Gathering the Sisters in one place is a financial and practical necessity since we are getting smaller and aging. So many people in Tucson, of many denominations, have discovered peace, love, and hospitality among us. The people of Tucson will always remain in the hearts and prayers of the Sisters. The Oblate Program will continue through our Monastery in Clyde, Mo. but in a different form--although we don't know what that form will be. We're open to suggestions.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

At the September meeting, Sr. Hope spoke on Chapter 4 in the Rule of Benedict, and how it relates to peace. She began by discussing how this chapter on "The Tools of Good Works" (our theme for this year) summarizes Gospel living. The tools include the Commandments, Beatitudes, loving God, and loving neighbor. By observing these precepts, and having hope in God's mercy for the times we fail, we bring peace to ourselves and others. Being present to others, listening to them, and controlling the angry parts of ourselves, bring peace and stability to our families and communities. Prayer, lectio, and the other "tools of the spiritual trade" help bring peace to ourselves as we allow God to work through us.

"Peace" is used in four ways in the Rule: as a goal of life, as a false peace that needs reconciliation, in community, and in relation to monastic ritual. It is hinted at in many passages that ask us not to annoy others, not to grumble, not to foster contention, not to be proud or envious, etc. It is easy to see that Benedict envisions a monastery as a place of peace, where people--no matter their differences--work at getting along with one another as an essential part of their spirituality.

A Goal of Life: Benedict first uses the word "peace" in the Prologue: ". . . let peace be your quest and aim." He quotes Isaiah (58:9) who says that, if we behave in this way, God will be with us and give us the help we need. It is the desire for God, first and foremost, that brings us to the peace that Jesus promised.

No False Peace: Benedict deals with this in Chapter 4. He tells us not to give "a hollow greeting of peace, or turn away when someone needs your love." Most of us have experienced a "friendly" greeting that is anything but. Benedict wants honesty in relationships. If we have a problem with someone, we should try to resolve it promptly. For the love of Christ, we are to bear each other's burdens and ask forgiveness from one another.

Peace in Community: Benedict envisions a community in which all receive what they need, recognizing that individual needs differ. He is famously opposed to "grumbling," which can tear communities apart. Humility is essential for the Rule to work; those who need more should feel humble about their weakness, those who need less should be grateful, and those in leadership are servants.

Peace in Monastic Ritual: The community itself should be a sign of peace to the world, welcoming all guests as Christ. This is symbolized by the Kiss of Peace during the Eucharist.

Sr. Hope ended her presentation by saying that “thoughts matter.” When we catch ourselves being judgmental or grumbling internally, we must “dash these thoughts against Christ,” asking for God’s help in overcoming our weakness. This is a lifetime’s work; we never lose our humanness. Peace is a treasure that requires work, but it is worth working towards.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Please update email and street addresses and phone numbers when these change.
- Deaths: Caroline Villa passed away May 6th in Tampa, Florida. She went peacefully at her home surrounded by her five children. Caroline had been an Oblate for many years. On Oct 22nd Mass will be offered for her. Lt. Col. Charles Phipps died recently at age 100. Mass will be on Nov. 24th by the Prescott Chapter. Margaret Armstrong, Susan Stokes and other deceased oblates will be remembered at Mass here in our Chapel Nov 5th.
- Ellen Duax and her husband were in an accident this summer. Please keep both in prayer for healing in mind, body ad heart.
- The Lectio group continues to meet from 10AM to 11AM, every Saturday in the prayer room (off the chapel). All are welcome.

OCTOBER 16TH OBLATE MEETING

Our next meeting will be October 16th at 2 p.m. The doors open at 12:45 for inquirers, candidates and anyone else who would like to come early to use the library or visit with others. Sharon Hammond will be our presenter, speaking on “Moral Injury.” Moral injury is the damage done to one’s conscience or moral compass when one perpetrates, witnesses, or fails to prevent acts that transgress their own moral and ethical values or codes of conduct. We’ll examine the impact to our community and brainstorm interventions.

INQUIRERS’ AND CANDIDATES’ CLASS. This class will start at 1:00 p.m. and finish at 1:45 to join the others in the basement. The Class is in the prayer room on the right side as you enter the Chapel. Sr. Gladys Noreen OSB will do the class on Listening. Please read the Prologue to the Rule in preparation for this class. Questions for thinking: (1) What does Benedict say about listening in the Prologue? What role does listening hold in our lives? What are some examples of times when listening made a difference, or failure to listen caused problems? (2) What has your experience been in listening to God?

CHAPTER NEWS

PRESCOTT: Shirley Mayday reports: We shared on Michael Casey's book, *The Road to Eternal Life*, Ch. 23, on Peace. Casey stressed "that it is not enough to desire peace; we have to create peace. The way we begin to do this is by ensuring that our will is fixed on God, in whose will is peace. Then try to ensure that our conduct is in effective harmony with the direction we have chosen." Next Meeting Oct. 16th at 1:30 p.m. Lesson: Chapters 24 and 25 of Casey's book, pp. 85-91. We meet from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at St. Anthony Claret Room.

EAST VALLEY OBLATES: Nancy Kaib said the Oblates met Sept. 24 and resumed the DVD series on the Second Greatest Story Ever Told. They also were able to catch up on everyone's God stories for the past two months. For more information about classes call Nancy Kaib 480-883 8025 or Frank Young 480-219-1505. Nancy mentioned that St. Andrews now has Saturday morning Mass at 8:30 a.m. For those of you who can get there that will be a great way to prepare for our Saturday meetings.

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.

May the Peace of Christ fill our hearts and minds with the Love of Christ and one another.

Sr. Hope

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