



## *The Benedictine Oblate Letter*

*May, 2016*

Dear Oblates and Friends,

On Pentecost, we sang the refrain for the responsorial psalm, Psalm 104: “Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.” It is a reminder that God’s Spirit is the spirit of creation. The Spirit is present at the very beginning of all creation (Gn 1:1). The same Hebrew word means *breath*, *wind*, and *spirit*. When God decides to wipe out creation, saving only Noah and his family, he reverses creation and sends the flood. To begin anew, he once again sends his spirit: “God made a wind sweep over the earth, and the waters began to subside” (Gn 8:1).

When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, the artisan, Bezalel, whose name means “in the shadow of God,” was filled with God’s Spirit (Ex 31:1-5). He fashioned the tent of meeting and all its furnishings, including the Ark of the Covenant, as well the sacred vestments for Aaron and his sons. Bezalel was also put in charge of the anointing oil and the incense for the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself was considered to be a microcosm of the universe, which God created, and still creates, through wisdom. It was this divine wisdom in which Bezalel participated.

God’s Spirit is the spirit of creation and of creativity. The Spirit comes to us, as it did to Bezalel, whenever we create something new, whether it is a good meal or a helpful letter, when we speak a kind word or extend a greeting. May we all rejoice in that same Spirit!

### ***And now the news:***

***Reading List:*** I have been working on a *Recommended Reading List for Benedictine Oblates*.

This includes only books relating to the Rule, not to spirituality and prayer in general, at least not now. I am enclosing a copy. Please let me know if you have any suggestions. Eventually I will send a revised list.

***Clyde oblates:*** The next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 17-19, on the theme *Blessings: What, Why, Where, When, and How*. All are welcome!

***Saint Louis area oblates:*** Meetings are held on the third Saturday of the month from 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. at St. Rose Philippine Duchesne School, Room 1 (accessible from Door 1 at the east end of the school).

***Sand Springs oblates:*** The next meeting will be on September 11. The group is up to Chapter 7, “Empowerment,” in Sr. Joan Chittister’s book *In the Heart of the Temple*.

***Sheridan, Wyoming, oblates*** meet the first Saturday of the month. There will be a potluck on July 11, when two candidates will make their final oblation. Then the group is off until September.

***Tucson oblates:*** There will be no regular meetings in June, July or August.

Peace,

Sr. Sarah