

ABOUT EALING ABBEY BENEDICTINE OBLATES

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE OBLATES consists of lay people whose desire it is, while living in the world, to seek God with all their heart and will under the special patronage of Our Holy Father Benedict, and those who have been admitted by the Abbey to make the public Promise. It is the canonically approved way that enables lay people to participate most fruitfully and harmoniously in the life and work of the monks and thereby to share in the spirit, ideals and practice of the Benedictine way of life. It offers them a certain stability to assist them in modeling their own private lives upon the Rule of Saint Benedict so far as is compatible with their family and social obligations and their duties at work. At one and the same time they sanctify themselves and their families, while also helping to extend the apostolate of the monks around and outside the monastery. The Church has legislated that the Oblate Promise does not bind under pain of sin.

The Abbot has appointed an Oblate Master whose task it is, under the authority of the Abbot, to assist and oversee the Oblates' spiritual formation. For this purpose the Oblate Master arranges Oblates' meetings, currently on six occasions per year, including a weekend retreat for Lent, and to the Feast of St Frances of Rome, Patron of Obaltes, which occurs on 9 March, as possible. The Oblate Master also assists in individual guidance. Each month he offers Holy Mass for the Association of the Oblates. Upon notification of the death of oblates who have not allowed their Promise to lapse he offers a Mass of Requiem. He also, and especially, guides candidates during their probationary period, which lasts a minimum of one year.

During their probationary period the candidates – with the active support of their Sponsors – acquaint themselves thoroughly with the Rule of Saint Benedict and consider it in the light of their personal circumstances and existing secular obligations. Prior to their Oblation, as a means to achieving their spiritual aims, the candidates draw up their own individual rule of life, modeled on the Rule of Saint Benedict as closely as their own prior secular commitments permit, and submit it for approval by the Oblate Master. Thenceforth they conscientiously strive to live by this personal Rule of Benedictine life. If their personal circumstances at a later date either facilitate or necessitate a modification, they should seek the approval of the Oblate Master before making any changes.

Dom Timothy Gorham, Oblate Master