



"Indeed, our affiliation with the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross has brought tremendous spiritual blessings to us and our dear ones. The Cistercian habit has become an effective and visible sign of the healing and reconciling presence of our Lord, Jesus."

Obsculta

"Listen with the ears of your heart"

March 2017



"The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross serves God in a variety of ministries throughout the world. Our union with each other, developed through common prayer also unites us to Jesus Christ, whom we ultimately serve with joy."

The quarterly newsletter of
The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance
Worldwide Membership of Monks Living Inside and Outside of a Monastery
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News From The Abbot General



Oscar Joseph, OCCO Of Special Interest In This Obsculata

- Praying the Scriptures, Workshop
- Pastoral letter fro Primate Gordon
- Priest, a Soldier in a War
- Meet Postulant David Smith
- Meet Postulant Burt Weigen
- Meet Trustee Lance Key
- The Priest as Warrior in Battle
- Video Reflections on Lent and Easter
- Who are we and what do we do?
- Names of monasteries
- St. Stephan Harding Seminary
- Teaching videos on Vimeo.com
- Prayer for the Order
- Contact us

Greetings Brothers, Oblates and Friends:

Here it is March already. Time passes far too quickly.

My joy is communicating with our monks, oblates and friends. We are indeed icons of hope in our communities.

Almost every day I hear of spiritual, emotion and physical growth.

Just recently I did a four week workshop, at a local church, on Lectio Divina. We took Mk.2:1-12 and looked at it four ways, approaching Christ, spiritual healing, physical healing, and living in the encounter.

There were quiet and group prayer experiences with many spiritual and physical healings.

Other monks are working in hospitals, jails, serving the poor and marginalized, and many quiet works of service to their neighbors.

May God bless us and the Orthodox Anglican Church which celebrates its 50th year of Word and Sacrament.

Become icons of hope in your community.

God is pressing me lately to create a monastic group in Winston-Salem NC. We are looking for married couples and singles, clerical or lay, who would like to help get us started. Please contact me for more information.

Praying the Scriptures workshop was held at 7:00PM- 9:00PM February 6,13,20,27
Focus was on: What is praying the Scriptures and how can I do it? How can I hear God?
What gets in the way of hearing God? For those wanted to get closer to Jesus, God the Father
and the Holy Spirit this was the place to be!!!

We met at Pine Grove United Methodist Church.
Facilitator will be Abbot General Oscar Joseph, OCCO from the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



BIG THANKS to Rhita Newcomb for all of her assistance.



The Praying the Scriptures workshop Monday night might best be described as, "give me an amen" monastic "tent revival" without the tent.

"Preach it again Abbot" gave a Holy Spirit fired up "How to find God's will."

"Ripping Rhita" gave us a find to Jesus moment on "the necessity of forgiving others."

Prayers abounded.

Finally we ate Jesus food.

Everyone, and there were a lot of everyone's, having such a good time Abbot had to call Amen.

Another way that the evening might be described is... "God showed up as promised.

The Orthodox Anglican Church AD 1964-2017

On March 6th of 1964 the Orthodox Anglican Church was incorporated in the state of the North Carolina. Let us give thanks and pray:

O LORD, our heavenly Father, we praise and glorify thy Holy Name on this, the anniversary of our jurisdiction in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church: may the candlestick of our ministry remain before thy throne in heaven and the light of our praise remain before you in our generation. May thy heavenly blessing be renewed upon the Orthodox Anglican Church. Replenish her with the Holy Spirit, bringing peace, power, wisdom and godliness. Make her strong in will to do thy will. Keep her from all danger, evil and error, and defend her from all her enemies. Bring into her fold thy countless children who are today wandering as sheep without a godly shepherd, that they may be fed with the Living Bread and nourished with the Water of Life.

Move the hearts of thy faithful people to give to her ministry generously of their bounty as thou hast given to them, that the witness of this Jurisdiction may flourish for thy Name's sake, testifying of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, training godly men for the Holy priesthood, and spreading the gospel of Life throughout the world. Bless our labours to enlarge thy Kingdom, that thy will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And this we humbly ask in the Name of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, who with thee and Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. Amen.





Welcome

The Most Rev. David Lee Smith Jr. to Postulancy in the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

Rev. David hails from Cleveland, OH. where he is employed as a Nurse Administrator of a local hospital.

Additionally he is pastor/priest in charge of St. Stephen Community Church Anglican where he conducts church planting, parish ministry, pastoral counseling, church administration, worship planning, evangelism and preaching.

He is a humble servant and we are so pleased to have him in our Cistercian family.



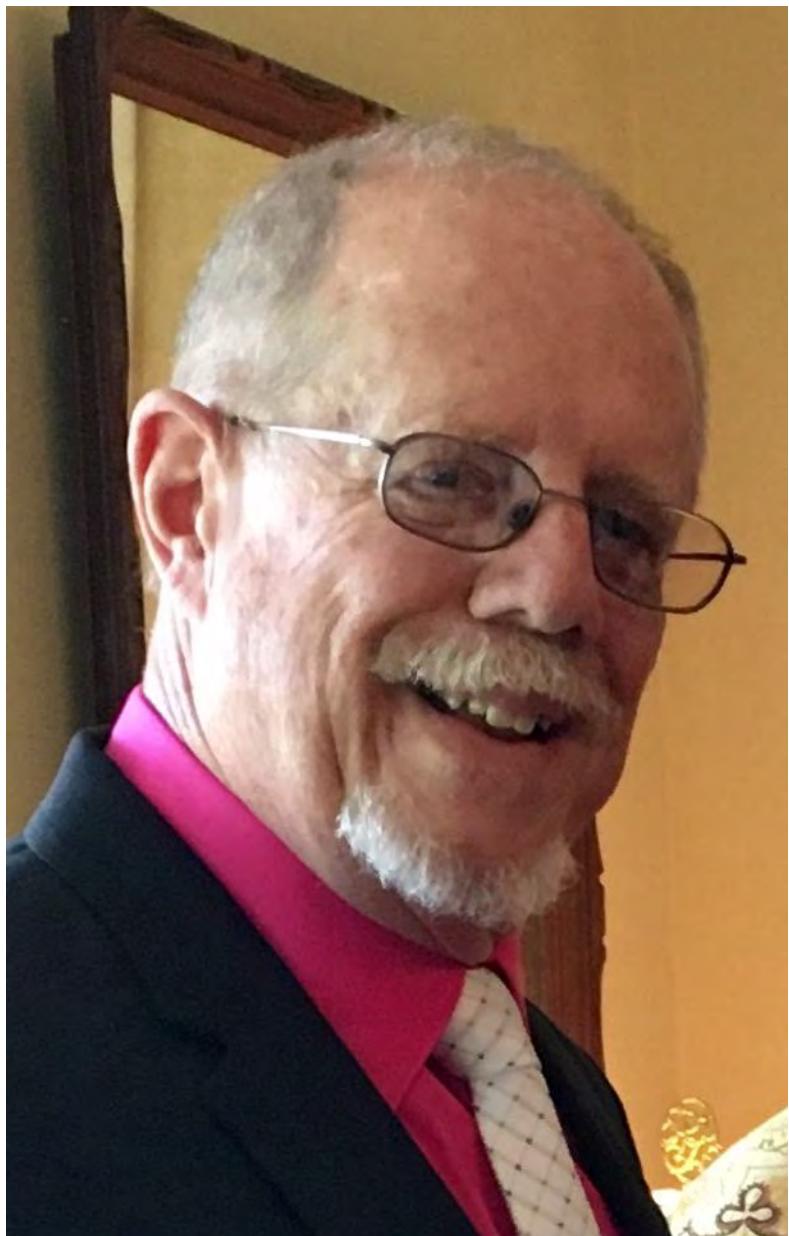
Welcome Burt Weigen into Postulancy

Burt and his wife Connie visited us at Holy Cross Monastery in Winston Salem, NC the weekend of January 8th.

Burt and Connie live in snowy Buffalo, NY. We were hoping to show off a warm Southern summer in January but wouldn't you know...as soon as he got into Winston Salem they encountered our one and only snow of the winter.

Our visit was lively and personable. We celebrated the Holy Eucharist, visited some more, ate, visited more and ate even more. Certainly, they enjoyed Southern hospitality.

We are proud to have Burt and Connie as part of our Cistercian Family.



Hello

My name is Lance Key. Thank you for the vote of confidence for trustee. I am 64 years old, born an only child. I am married to the same beautiful woman for 45 years. I have two children, 43 and 37, and 5 grandchildren/ 12-9-5-3 and 15. I am still employed by the Surry Co. School System for 14 years. My wife is retired from the Forsyth Co. School System after 36 years. I am a member of Salem Baptist Church. I have lived at the same address for 64 years on the same property as my parents. I'm looking forward to serving in this capacity.

The Abbot writes:

Lance and his wife Karen have been long time personal friends. They both have assisted me in providing a workshop and a retreat.

I am pleased to have Lance on our Board of Trustees. He is a man of strong faith and Godly wisdom.

Your Nice Parish Priest is a Soldier in the War Against Sin and Evil

[Denise Renner](#)



The “Renaissance man,” epitomized by Leonardo da Vinci (who was a painter, scientist, engineer, and mathematician), refers to someone who does many difficult things well. The Hollywood version is called a “Triple Threat,” an entertainer who can sing, dance and act—and commands the corresponding fame and fortune.

But what clever phrase exists to describe the diverse talents and traits which, when found in one person, are that humble servant of God: the parish priest? One rainy Sunday, I noticed the priest exit the confessional, where he had been hearing confessions for the past hour. Considering the difficulty of that task alone, I watched him enter the sacristy, emerging moments later to pray the Mass. His homily wove together law, politics, history, and the roles of men and women. He then consecrated the host and fed the faithful. When Mass ended, he stood in the Oregon drizzle to greet parishioners before joining us in the church hall for coffee and donuts.

It struck me just how many hats the priest wears—counselor, comforter, admonisher, spiritual father—and how truly talented he is. He is creative enough to craft homilies and sermons that are delivered daily; introvert enough to pray constantly, be contemplative, and study Scripture; extrovert enough to be in constant demand and eat a powdered donut while conversing about everything from transubstantiation to complaints about the sound system.

This skill set is obviously rare.

Yet it's often dismissed. The priest is frequently regarded not as a dangerous force in a dark world, but as nothing more than a nice guy who loves God. The reality is much more formidable and complex. The priest merges the skills required for at least a dozen secular jobs to fulfill the sacred duties entrusted to him and guide souls toward Heaven. And he also has to sing in public.

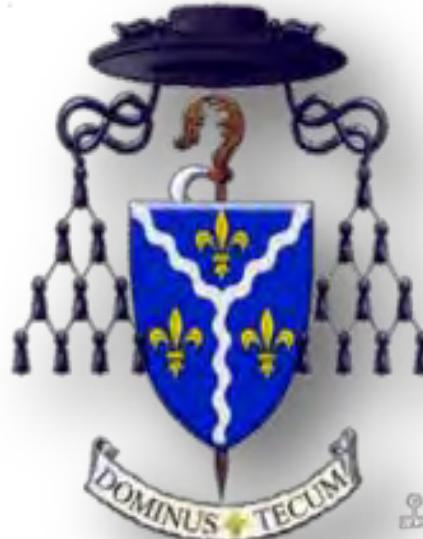
As St. John Vianney said:

If I were to meet a priest and an angel, I should salute the priest before I saluted the angel. The latter is the friend of God; but the priest holds His place. St. Teresa kissed the ground where a priest had passed. When you see a priest, you should say, “There is he who made me a child of God, and opened Heaven to me by holy Baptism; he who purified me after I had sinned; who gives nourishment to my soul.” At the sight of a church tower, you may say, “What is there in that place?” “The Body of Our Lord.” “Why is He there?” “Because a priest has been there, and has said holy Mass.”

But the priest gets short shrift in our culture. Instead we revere men who excel at throwing balls through a basketball hoop, sing rock songs in packed stadiums, or design technological gadgets that “change our life.” None of which actually care for us as individuals, know us by name, or provide wise counsel on the path to eternity.

The priest is blessed with abundant gifts, yet seeks no glory for himself. He lacks the fame of the Triple Threat and the acclaim of the Renaissance Man. He sacrifices that we might have Life. Let us not forget, as we shake his hand after Mass and pass him a donut in the church hall, that our nice parish priest is a soldier on the battlefield, the presence of Christ made visible, a Triple Threat to the forces of Sin, Death, and the Devil.

O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep Your priests within the shelter of Your Most Sacred Heart, where none can touch them. Keep unstained their anointed hands, which daily touch Your Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips daily tinged with Your Precious Blood. Keep pure and unworldly their hearts, sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood. Let Your Holy Love surround and protect them from the world's contagion. Bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and consolation here, and their everlasting crown in the hereafter. Amen. —St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus



Reflections by the Abbot *Lent*

<https://vimeo.com/18189315>

The Meaning of Suffering

<http://www.calledtocommunion.com/2009/08/a-catholic-reflection-on-the-meaning-of-suffering/>

The Medal of St. Benedict

<http://www.osb.org/gen/medal.html>

Reflections by the Abbot *Easter*

<https://vimeo.com/18189267>



We, The Cistercians of the Holy Cross, are embedded icons, living sacramentals; who sustain, grace, and hold together the fiber of our communities. Our martyrdom is conversatio, stability, and obedience. We live in and are influenced by the heretic nature of our culture. However, while clothed in our holy habits we become sacred icons. When people gaze upon us they look into their hope and see reflected back the Source of all Hope. We become sacred signs, living sacramentals.

The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is a contemplative Order that is also active in ministering to the world.

We are icons of hope in our communities.



We pray for the world and individual intentions.

We pray for the living and the dead.

We are counselors, medical professionals, law enforcement, executives, ministers, educators, and consultants.



We conduct seminars, chapter meetings, healing services, conduct Bible studies, administer the sacraments, visit the sick, jail ministry, hospice, go to hospitals, nursing homes; and give alms, medical aid, food and comfort to the poor and suffering.



We conduct retreats for teens, motor cyclists, and local parishes.

We provide training and education for others to minister to The Kingdom of God by way of our College/Seminary.



We also provide Spiritual Direction to individuals

We develop monks and oblates. We ordain priests and deacons.



"Your ministry has meant a lot to me. The Prayer Retreat I attended this spring was a great blessing to me. I had come to a time in my life when I felt cut-off in my prayers, wondering if I was "saying it right" so to speak. I learned that there is no "right", if it is in your heart (whether it is original words or written words) it is your personal prayer. So now I have those talks with God thru out the day (pray without ceasing)."



Our Monasteries by Name



Holy Cross Monastery, Winston Salem, NC

Sacred Cross Monastery, Cleveland, OH

Our Lady of Covadonga's Respite Hermitage, Hopkinsville, KY

Monastery of the Waters of Shiloah, Tellico Falls, TN

Holy Cross Hermitage, Olympia, WA

Church of the Holy Cross, Philippines



Leslie Berry

Owner/Designer at Key Lime Designs, Winston Salem, North Carolina

leslie@KeyLimeDesigns.net (828) 234-3673

Leslie is a graduate from Appalachian State University in graphics and printing. She started a graphic design business, Key Lime Designs, directly after graduating in 2005.

Leslie has also worked at Keiger Graphic Communications as project manager, web designer and developer/loader of cross-media campaigns and web-to-print stores.

The Abbot General says: The above is a moment of gratitude for Leslie's professionalism and creativity.

Leslie has produced and maintained our Cistercian and Stephen Harding webs sites and two other sites for us personally. We have experienced the torture of dealing with *other* webmasters/designers. Leslie does what she says in a timely and efficient manner. What I like best is that she speaks English not webanise. Not only can I understand her but she is a delight to work with. You can also work with her near or far. So give her a call today!!!



The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance is an independent dispersed contemplative Religious Order that consists of laymen and women, single or married and male Diocesan clergy, from Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Old Catholic traditions who live in the world as well as in monasteries or hermitages.

Our Cistercian roots date back to the eleventh century.

We live the Cistercian charism in our love of solitude, contemplation, work, and study as well as living under the Rule of St. Benedict, our Constitution and vows of Conversatio, Stability, and Obedience.



Our purpose is to:

- a) seek perfection.
- b) praise and worship God

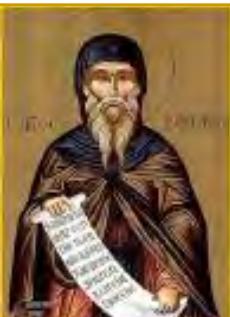
Our work is to:

- a) produce educational materials.
- b) host retreats.
- c) found autonomous religious communities.
- d) prayerfully intercede for those in need and for peace in the world.
- e) perform works of charity, pastoral ministry and mission work

The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is 35 years old. We are one of the oldest Religious Orders or our kind.

Our members come from a wide variety of backgrounds including educators, medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, engineers, retired and disabled individuals, homemakers, and even a peanut salesman. Our monks and oblates give sacrificially to their communities.

Additionally the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross operates The St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary and Saint Seraphim School of Orthodox Theology. They currently have 5 Certified Degree Granting Academic Institutes and provides education for a worldwide student body and several Diocesan jurisdictions.



Martyrs and monks have always been the spiritual fiber holding together the Church Catholic.

Br. Columcille, OCCO writes, “*I believe Cistercians, and all contemplatives to be the heart of the Church. Our intentions, made perfect through the Holy Spirit, support all of the apostolic work around the world. Perhaps the stars would fall from the sky were it not for men and women dedicated to a life of prayer and sacrifice. We are a part of something holy, and are being made holy in the process.*”

We, the Cistercians of the Holy Cross, are embedded icons, living sacramentals; who sustain, grace, and hold together the fiber of our communities.



Monks can also be deacons and priests



Deacon Monks can

- Develop local faith communities
- Do religious services
- Preach
- Baptize
- Marry
- Bury



Priest Monks can also

- Celebrate the Holy Eucharist
- Hear confessions
- Give The Sacrament of the Sick

The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is happy to receive male applicants for Holy Orders, e.g., Priest, Deacon. We would also consider incardination for other rightfully ordained clerics.

While there are traditional qualifications for ordination/incardination, the principal interest is discerning a true vocation and developing Priests or Deacons who are fruitful ministers. Therefore, educational requirements may be individually tailored.

We celebrate valid apostolic lines of succession, the seven sacraments and liturgical worship consistent with the historical churches. While some practices may differ, e.g., married clergy, we adhere to the dogmas constituted by true apostolic teaching.

If you are interested in ordination or incardination, complete the application found on our website and forward it to the Abbot General. His office will then contact you.



Great videos for all occasions and needs. Good for personal study and group discussions. Can be used to introduce others to the Cistercian charism. Check them out.

There are several new videos available. Check them out.

The Abbot is really funny in some of these videos.

Can you believe it?

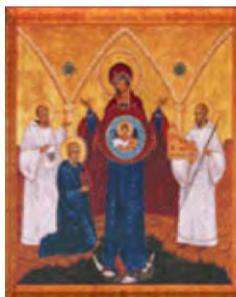
www.vimeo.com/Cistercian

Two NEW teachings on Sexuality

I have really enjoyed ALL of these videos and I think that this technology is blessed by your and by our intent. I think it's really difficult for many of us to "feel" like we are a community, what with distances, languages, etc. Your videos have helped me in that regard. I think of them as chapter talks and pray for my brothers and superiors in relation to what you have said. I am honored to be part of such important work.

Br. Columcille, OCCO

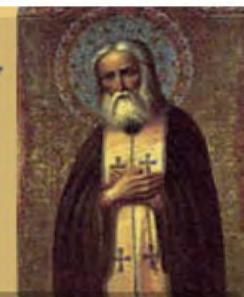
Technology gives our worldwide community one more way of coming closer together. I have produced a number of videos to provide personal messages and teaching opportunities for our members. I hope that they will be both enjoyable and inspiring.



The St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary

and

The St. Seraphim School of Orthodox Theology



St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary welcomes students to a wide variety of degrees, programs, licensing, and continuing educational opportunities. Check it out <http://stephenharding.college> for more information and application.

Daily Prayer for the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

C. Let us pray
C. Our help is in the name of the Lord,
R. Who made heaven and earth.
C. Holy Lord, Holy Mighty One,
R. Incline your ear towards us.
C. St. Benedict, Father of our Order
R. Pray for us.
C. Mother Mary, Queen of Heaven
R. Pray for us.
C. All the Angels and Saints
R. Pray for us.

Please pray this prayer every day.

All. O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we give you praise and thanks.

May we respond to Your call in charity and courage and grow in numbers and holiness.

Bless our Abbot General Oscar Joseph with good health, growth in wisdom and grace. Help him to see the world as you do.

May our Beloved Order be blessed with leaders, both monks and clerics, who will carry forward our charism.

May our Beloved Order be blessed with the material and financial resources necessary to fulfill its mission.

We ask you, Lord, to bless us with a residential monastery in Winston-Salem where we can live as brothers and host others in a spirit of hospitality as taught by our Father, Benedict.

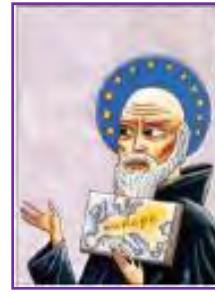
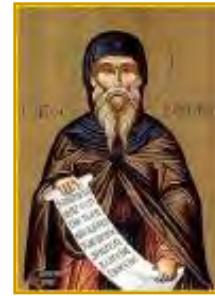
Holy Father Benedict help us to bring a contemplative balance to everyday matters, to cultivate the daily disciplines of work and prayer, to persevere in our vows of obedience, stability and daily conversion.

We pray for all those who have requested our prayers particularly members of our Order and those who are in union with us.

We pray also for those who may have given up hope or have forgotten to pray for themselves.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.



CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY CROSS, COMMON OBSERVANCE



We serve men and women, clerical or lay, married or single by:

- *Helping them grow in perfection through the use of the Rule of St. Benedict, our Constitution and Manual, and community life.
- *Consecrating to a first or second order religious life those who want to live either in community or outside community.
- *Third order oblate program.
- *Validating and assisting those already living the religious life but not living in a formal community.
- *Supporting men with a call to the diaconate and priesthood through ordination, incardination.

The Cistercian charism is a refuge for ardent lovers of God. The adherence to the Holy Rule of St. Benedict and focus on contemplating God in prayer is a precious balm on hearts aching for closer union with the Lord. The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is an opportunity for men or women to become a true monk or nun in this revered tradition."

For more information contact
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