



Obsculta

"Listen with the ears of your heart"

July 2017



"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."

"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
Founded 1981
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<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HolyCrossCistercians>

News From The Abbot General



Oscar Joseph, OCCO
Of Special
Interest In
This
Obsculta

- Therapeutic Spirituality
- Silence is a cornerstone
- Philippines
- Burt becomes a Deacon
- Two Concordats of Intercommunion
- OAC ordaining three deacons
- The Abbot is beat by little ones
- Video Reflections
- 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:

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.



**Come
join me
for the
ride of
your
life.**

**You won't believe what Br. Brendan
said about the Abbot. "It will blow
your mind!!!"**

<https://vimeo.com/32063529>

From the Abbot: I have included this article as more evidence of the need for us to be living icons of hope in our communities.

Excellent article by the Rev'd Timothy W. Massaro (Presbyterian) entitled "Therapeutic Spirituality":

"Today's spirituality is novel in the sense that it is based upon a person's felt needs, as opposed to an authoritative person or text. Self-expression has become the new form of worship in both traditional and innovative religious practices, rather than a practice of self-denial.

This spirituality adopts preference as a means of self-actualization (i.e. a way of becoming the fullest expression of yourself as a human being). The commitments to these preferences are deeply personal and subjective, which results in the expression, "Your own personal Jesus" who neither confronts with his transcendent „Otherness" nor deals in categories of sin, hell, or judgment.

Therapy as a model of spirituality has replaced traditional norms due to the secularization of culture (i.e., the cultural shift that has resulted in religious beliefs becoming wholly individualized and disassociated from the social sphere).

Divine Providence over mankind has been replaced by the invisible hand of economic forces. Whereas the Almighty beneficent being was previously seen as integral to daily life and well-being, today, he is seen as a cosmic bellhop who comes at our beck and call. With the loss of life's „center" by these competing visions of reality, faith has been left only with an interior and subjective expression which allows „believers" to cope with the „real world" science and technology have given them. In the face of this modern nihilism (i.e., the belief that there is no true reality beyond that which is apprehended through the senses), religion has often attempted to fill the vacuum through such therapeutic modes of expression.

Even in traditional, conservative contexts orthodox worship and practice may succumb to this mode of spirituality, ultimately leaving little effect upon the practice of the worshipper or in the public square at large. Concrete, external liturgical practices (such as the reading of the law, corporate confession, a declaration of pardon, and corporate supplication) are often displaced by personalized small groups that help believers in their life journey. This is deemed as more „relevant" to the therapeutic man, and an improvement upon the „dead rituals" that don't speak to the hearts of worshippers.

Worship thus becomes a therapy „session" something akin to Alcoholics Anonymous, a place where kindred spirits can hear one another's stories and help one another cope with their weaknesses and failures, rather than a place of divine judgment and salvation where sinful people meet with a holy God, and through faith in their Savior, by the power of the Holy Spirit, are forgiven for their rebellion, and comforted by the assurance of their salvation."

Silence is a cornerstone of Benedictine life and spiritual development, but the goal of monastic silence is not non-talking. Instead it is “selective talking.”

Someone following Jesus Christ in the way of St Benedict will often be silent because he realizes that what he has to say is either disrespectful, gossipy, unfruitful, insulting, vulgar, unkind or detracting of others.

He will also be silent because he realizes that what he means to say is complaining or frivolous are just stupid, and to say such things is pointless.

The monastically inclined will also be increasingly silent because he realizes that what he has to say will not be heard. In the face of irrational rage, demonic lust and foolish sentimentalism, what he has to say will be, at best, ignored, and at worst a cause for persecuting him.

Finally, the one who follows St Benedict will be silent in the face of overwhelming evil. When faced with irrational, mindless forms of argument, and the foolish arrogance and pride of the world he realizes that silence is the only response.

This is, the silence of Jesus before Pilate. He was silent because there was nothing more to be said.

Nothing could be done. This silence of resignation sounds depressing, but within it there is peace, and within it there sits the small white bird of hope.

fr. longenecker

Five years before he was elevated to the Chair of Peter, then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote his seminal work *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. With regards to silence he noted:

“We are realizing more and more clearly that silence is part of the liturgy. We respond, by singing and praying, to the God who addresses us, but the greater mystery, surpassing all words, summons us to silence. It must, of course, be a silence with content, not just the absence of speech and action. We should expect the liturgy to give us a positive stillness that will restore us. Such stillness...a time of recollection, giving us an inward peace, allowing us to draw breath and rediscover the one thing necessary, which we have forgotten. That is why silence cannot be simply “made”, organized as if it were one activity among many...One of man’s deepest needs is making its presence felt, a need that is manifestly not being met in our present form of the liturgy. For silence to be fruitful, as we have already said, it must not be just a pause in the action of the liturgy. No, it must be an integral part of the liturgical event.”



From the Abbot: We are proud of our group in the Philippines who are faithful icons of hope in their community.

GOD'S Kingdom is manifested even behind bars by Father Mervin, OCCO/Obl

If we are going to examine the Bible, we will notice that God does not only settle for a merely general divine superintendency of the universe and of history. Instead, everything is related to God's concrete plan and purpose and dominion (Henry, 1992). Even behind bars, inmates in Muntinlupa National Maximum Security Prison, the hard core criminals, shall we say are kneeling before God for His great power and love. In fact, when President Duterte, the newly elected president of the Philippines ruled the country, the security in Maximum Bilibid Prison was tightened.

The numbers of Religious Volunteers were trimmed down from more than one hundred (100) down to merely fifty(50). We were affected by the big change in security. We were not able to minister to the inmates for more than six months. But, instead of slowing down and avoiding the ministry in Bilibid, we pursued and continued to pray. Our brother in Bilibid, who is our layman, in the name Dominador Geroche continued the Bible Study and the Liturgy. He did not stop serving the inmates. Until such time that we were allowed to enter again and minister to the inmates.

The waiting period was over, and God was in a climactic way initiating his royal salvific work on earth and in the life of the inmates (Luke 4:21; Matt 11:5; cf. Isa 35:5-6). God managed the work and ministry in Bilibid. He was the one who made the way to change the lives of the inmates even without our presence. God the King was indeed manifested in them, so that in a special sense these earthly rulers were amazed (John 10:34) in the dedication and devotion of our faithful/inmates.

Our attendees now in every mass are more than hundreds. In fact last month, for three Sundays we had a total of more than six hundred (600) attendees.

"The basileia is here, and yet it is not here; it is revealed, yet it is also hidden; it is present, but always future; it is at hand, indeed in the very midst, yet it is constantly expected, being still, and this time seriously, the object of the petition: Thy Kingdom come."

CONCORDAT OF INTERCOMMUNION
BETWEEN
THE CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY CROSS,
COMMON OBSERVANCE
AND
THE INDEPENDENT ANGLICAN CHURCH, CANADA
SYNOD



++Peter Goodrich
and
+Richard Best
presiding



Burt Weigen of Buffalo, NY, and Postulant of the OCCO is ordained a Deacon in the IACC.

This Concordat of Intercommunion does not express or imply approval by, or acceptance into, any jurisdiction, church or religious order.

**CONCORDAT OF INTERCOMMUNION
BETWEEN
THE CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY
CROSS, COMMON OBSERVANCE
AND
THE CONGREGATION OF THE
ANGLICAN OBLATES OF ST. BENEDICT**



Our Congregation of the Anglican Oblates of Saint Benedictine was founded by a group of clergies from the "Diocese of St Mary" (Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil). - Rio Grande de Sul - Brazil; in June 22nd, 1998.

Oblates: Br.: Anselmo (Rev. Regis); Br.: Francisco (Rev. Alvaro); Br.: Inácio (Ir. Tiago); Br.: Bernardo (Ir. Marcelo); and (Bro.: Patrício (Rev. Leandro, Prior)

Postulants: Wanderson Cesar Bastos; William Costa Mota; Cesar Martinho;

We serve our parishes; or communities; or social works in our context life (clergy ou laity; married or single; young or old).

We seek to live the Rule of St Benedict adapted to a secular clergy/laity life.

In our English Service we use 1928, The Book of Common Prayer; and in the Portuguese Service we use 1988, Brazilian Prayer Book (translation of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, USA)

Prior Leandro Campos, OSB

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Ordaining Three Deacons in
Charlotte, NC
Primate Tom Gordon
Presiding



Snazzy Six 2017

FINISH
Snazzy Six
2017



The older Grandchildren beat Abbot (Pepe) in a 5K. **BUT BUT** Pepe took 2nd in his age group. (There were more than two in the age group. Just saying!!!)

NEW



EXCITING



Reflections by the Abbot

Abbot Oscar Joseph gently uses St. Benedict's ladder of humility to discuss how one can use humility to mature the character traits of courage and charity.

<https://vimeo.com/145155858>

Using worldly wisdom for spiritual use by Br. Brendan

Br. Brendan has a unique style, a little bit of earth and a whole lot of heaven.

<https://vimeo.com/145155895>



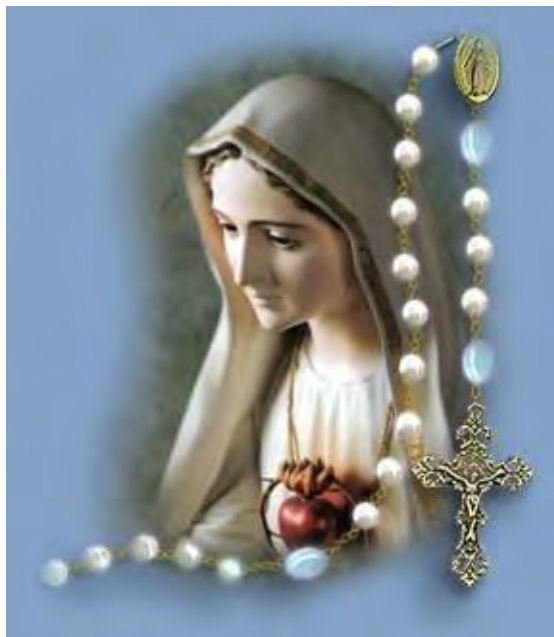
The Four Degrees of Love by St. Bernard

<http://www.soulshpherd.org/2013/08/bernard-of-clairvauxs-four-degrees-of-love/>

The Medal of St. Benedict

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





The Abbot says: These links have great and interesting information. Worth the read.

<http://catholicexchange.com/5-reasons-pray-rosary-every-day-2017>
5 Reasons to say the Rosary

http://www.catholicbridge.com/catholic/mary_rosary.php
Is the Rosary Biblical?

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/ANSWERS/ROSARYDI.HTMp://www.ewtn.com/library/ANSWERS/ROSARYDI.HTM>
The Rosary Dissected



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
Anglican Oblates of St.. Benedict, Brazil



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/builder 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 36 years old. We are one of the oldest Religious Orders or our kind.

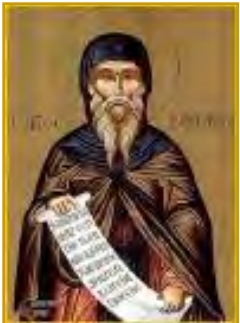
Our members come from a wide variety of backgrounds including educators, medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, engineers, retired and disabled individuals, homemakers, and even a peanut salesman.

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

**You won't believe what Br. Brendan
said about the Abbot. "It will blow
your mind!!!"**

<https://vimeo.com/32063529>

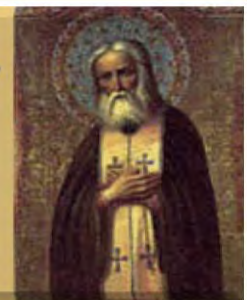
I have really enjoyed ALL of these videos and I think that this technology is blessed by your and by our intent. I think it's really difficult for many of us to "feel" like we are a community, what with distances, languages, etc. Your videos have helped me in that regard. I think of them as chapter talks 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.*

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.

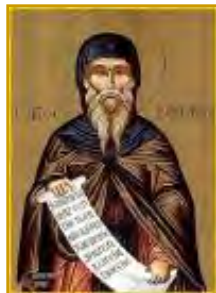
We pray for all those who have requested our prayers particularly members of our Order and those who are in union with us.

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

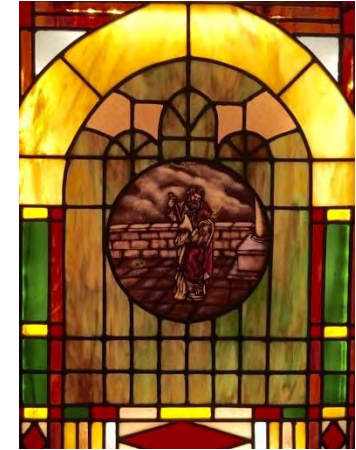
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Please pray this prayer every day.



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
Abbot@bellsouth.net*