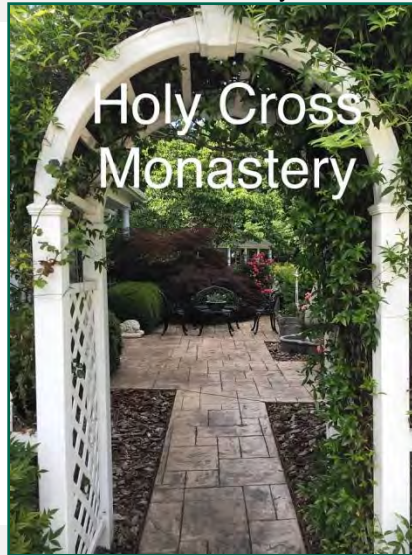


# Obsculta

"Listen with the ear of your heart"



**March 2020**

**"Persevere in prayer. Gratitude will open our souls to the unity of God, self, and others. Gratitude moves us from limitations and fear to expansion and love."**

**Member of the Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod**

**The quarterly newsletter of**

**The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance**

***Worldwide Membership of Monks Living Outside of a Monastery***

**Founded 1981**

**1606 Briar Lake Circle Winston-Salem, NC 27103 336 918-0975**

**[www.CistercianMonks.org](http://www.CistercianMonks.org)**

# News From The Abbot General



Of Special  
Interest In  
This  
Obsculta



Greetings Cistercians and Friends:

The past several months I have been completing my book called, *Listen with the Ear of Your Heart, Your Pilgrimage Towards Intimacy with God*. It is at the publisher now and should be available in six months.

Previously Kathleen and I co-authored a book called *Getting Healed, Staying Healed* which you can find on Amazon.

I am now officially retired from providing professional Christian counseling. It has been a fruitful 35 years. Currently I am offering Spiritual Direction and have a goodly number of Directees. If you are interested in receiving Spiritual Direction email me and we will discuss your inquiry.

We had the pleasure of blessing a new drop in childcare facility in Kernersville, NC called BiziKidz.

We have accepted William and Heidi from France into our Cistercian family. They are a special couple to be sure. See their article.

One of our dear friends Johnny Young, who has a dynamic ministry for our local poor, is in a critical medical condition. Please pray for him.

Excellent resource for thousands of free books etc. [www.flutesonline.com/classic](http://www.flutesonline.com/classic)

- William and Heidi introduction
- BiziKidz
- Philippines Jail Ministry
- Healing and Sacred Space
- Cat Wisdom
- Mother Mary Says
- Benefits of Fasting
- List of Prayer Books
- Listen with the Ear of Your Heart
- Rule of St. Benedict
- Independent Anglican Church
- Daily Prayer for the Order
- Who we are and what we do.
- Looking for more Priests
- Members' comments
- Contact us

*The Abbot writes:*

*We are honored to have William join us as a postulant and Heidi as an oblate.*

*We have had a number of communications. I have found them to be an extraordinary couple loyal to each other, the faith, and Benedictine spirituality.*

*Welcome to the family.*



Hello to everyone,

Our names are Heidi and William, and yes you are quite correct I'm Swiss and William is from the UK

I moved to London more years ago than I care to remember to pursue a career in photographic's (behind not in front of the camera). It is there that I met, fell in love with and eventually married William who was a senior retail manager.

Life has not always been as smooth as we hoped for. In 2005 I was diagnosed with a serious health issue, however the Lord in his goodness ensured that the hands of the surgeon were guided and the problem was eliminated...Praise God.

Following this scare and because we are not getting any younger we decided through prayer and discernment that we should seek a "calmer" way of life. We looked around and the Lord put it into hearts to move south....the South of France. So in 2006 we set off on the adventure of a lifetime..for us anyway!!

We live in a very remote corner nestled in the foothills of the Pyrenees, with only three other neighbours in our little commune. Again it has not been easy but we love our life here, the mountains, the green valleys , blue skies and a way of life we could only ever have dreamed of before, The winters are cold, very cold but Spring and Summer are just so delightful.

It was William who first introduced me to St Benedict and since arriving here we have tried to follow as closely as possible the Rule. Our prayer life is central to our day and we do pray the Liturgy of Hours as fully as the day will allow.

We were so honoured to find the Cistercian Order and the Abbot General has been such a wonderful and open guide to help us become Oblates. It is a real expression of our love and service to the Lord and we pray that we will be able to develop a stronger relationship to Our Blessed Lord through the Rule of St Benedict.



## Blessing My New Business

by Nikki Parker

I would like to start by saying what an absolute blessing it has been to have met Abbot Oscar Joseph in 2013. If it were not for him, I would not be celebrating the many blessed moments that I have had in my life. He helped me remember hope, understanding, love and joy again. But above all else, he brought me back to God.

Abbot Oscar Joseph and his lovely wife, Kathleen, were generous enough to give their time and blessing upon my new business (which I was oh so scared to start on my own!).

The Abbot arrived in his full uniform, (vestments). He took the blessing very seriously. He met my entire immediate family for the first time. He prayed with us that God would bless and protect my new adventure. He also blessed us and the property with holy water.

It was extremely honorable to have him do this, especially on, December 13<sup>th</sup>, his birthday!

My new business requires care for young children, Bizikidz in Kernersville, NC.. I finally feel like I am where God wanted me to be all along.

Thank you, Abbot for helping guide me throughout the years. I have never felt as close to God as I do in your presence. You are a blessing to everyone and I am forever grateful for you!







Rev. Br. Mervin, OCCO

*The Abbot says: Br. Mervin has labored sacrificially in the Philippines for many years overcoming difficult obstacles. We are proud to have him representing the Order. Please let us keep him and his work in our prayers.*

On November 15, 2010 I was invited to visit National Bilibid Prison, Maximum Security Compound with the Anglican clergy named Rt. Rev. Ronald Rae of the Communion of Evangelical Episcopal Church that religiously follows the Anglican Tradition.

We visited the inmates in Bilibid and learned that they needed a priest who will take care of their spiritual life and other religious needs. We discussed about the other possibilities until we arrived at a conclusion to start immediately the mass on the coming Sunday. We first used the church of the Aglipay and served their faithful and other roman catholic parishioners.

We served these faithful for six years, until such time that their priest arrived and we decided to leave the church and started a new ministry inside the Bilibid. We were very fortunate because the gang named, "Happy Go" in Quadrant 3 accepted us and offered a place in their place that we could use as our chapel. We started our Sunday Mass on January 10, 2016. We had a very fruitful Mass. After two months we decided to appoint worthy vestry. These appointed members of vestry were really very responsible. We also started our "Lay Leaders Training". We were able to produce four faithful and aspiring deacons. They served the altar and assisted us in other religious activities. I have four acolytes, three good men as my laities.

Before President Duterte assume his post as president we were allowed to stay inside the Bilibid for five hours. Immediately when replaced Ninoy, he changed everything. He appointed new director and deployed the Special Action Force (SAF) to guard the Bilibid.

Policies were changed and for seven months we were not allowed to enter the Bilibid for reasons we did not know. When we were informed that we can no continue the prison ministry everything was new. Priests, Nuns and other religious leaders were frisked and asked to remove garments to ensure that we were not bringing contraband inside the Bilibid. Even though it was for us very insulting we submitted to the new policy. This policy is until now being implemented. We do not know when and how will we stop this or request to exempt us from this frisking. But we will not let the enemy stop us. We will continue the ministry and will not let the devil overpower us. We love already them and we offered already our lives to God to serve the lost, the last and the least.

Last November 18, 2017 I presented an action research in St. Paul Seminary, Silang Cavite. This seminary is managed by a Diocese of the Roman Catholic church. In the presentation I informed the audience about the situations inside the Bilibid. I informed them that the religious programs of the church have had effect in the transformation of the inmates even the hard core criminals. In fact I had an acolyte who once was a hired killer but he repented and served God. He realized that he needs to have Christ as his Lord and Savior

It is true that we may have doubts about his claims but we must remember that his situations are totally different from us. He may be manifesting unnoticeable changes but his desire to live a pure and clean life is his heart. He even shared to me that he once was invited to go back to his old life but he refused and mentioned that he is now a servant of God. Praise God for his life.



## Healing –A Broader Perspective

by James Ferguson

When I discovered I had cancer five years ago, I called upon my friends with healing ministries for prayers. At that time I believed that the prayers would be answered by God alone and that healing would be swift. Reflecting on all that has happened I now see that healing takes place in many ways. Certainly, the physicians and support people have been blessed with healing skills and compassion. In my situation, one of the physicians is Muslim.

I have a tendency to be effusive with my praise for those who help me. One of the nurses I have grown to see as a friend chided me that their patients all get great treatment and I am getting nothing special. I'm sure that is true. God's healing spirit is available to all who want to share it in their profession.

My broader view of healing is just another way of appreciating our great God and Healer who is a part of every professional person who has treated me.



## Developing a sacred space by Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO

If you are indeed interested in developing an intimate relationship with God than you absolute need a sacred space.

It is evident all throughout Scripture that sacred spaces are essential. In every incident the space was created sacrificially with intent and care.

Throwing a candle and cross on a table and calling it your sacred space is not sufficient. I realize that not everyone can build a chapel as we have but we can make our sacred spaces more sacrificially and thus more sacred.

# ***Want to Learn About Life? Talk to Your Cat***

## **Stability**



Every morning just before prayer time Mister, the cat, and I sit on the stairs and commiserate about Cistercian life.

This morning he was rather insistent on getting his nurture.

This morning Mister said, “Every morning I wait patiently for you to wake, stumble towards your coffee, and say hi to me. I have waited all night for my ritual of stair nurture.”

“This has become my place, our place, where we really speak with each other. I been have waiting for years to mature enough not to be distracted by every little thing. Now at last I can focus.”

“I look forward to the certainty that our time will happen. I position myself while you drink that coffee. If you even appear to be going away from our stair I cry out. It is more than a meow. It is a cry of my need.”

“ I want the growth and safety that Stability provides.”

“Thank you, Daddy”

**Stability is a rooted engaging commitment to place, time and relationships.**

Expectations found in genuine stability:

### **External**

Reliable patterns in persons and life events where one can productively live their life while attending to the present moment.

### **Internal**

Inner stability is focusing on God and responding to the moment with love.

Face one's pain and destructive emotions.

Look for the best in others and an eagerness to forgive.

**Stability is achieved through persistence, patience, and humility. Focus on God and prayer.**



KATHLEEN P. RIVEST, PH.D., D.D.

MARION SCHOLAR  
PUBLISHED AUTHOR  
TV AND RADIO PERSONALITY



## Marian Apparition at Conyers, Georgia on October 13, 1995

The following is from my handwritten notes taken during the apparition, as the Blessed Mother spoke to visionary Nancy Fowler.

*My dear children, in great love and joy I greet you. As your loving Mother I invite you, my dear little ones, to draw closer to God. I say to you, come closer. Again I say, draw closer to God. Only with the help of God can you resist the many temptations which come upon you each day.*

*My dear children, as your heavenly Mother I intercede for you unceasingly before the throne of God. I desire for every soul to be united with God forever.*

*With a mother's plea I say to you, please, please my dear children you must stop offending God. You do not know what awaits you.*

*Pray, pray, pray my little ones. Amend your ways and live for God. Live the Gospel message. Through the Gospel message God has called each one of you. Love, help each other.*

*I say to all of you, my dear little children, be united under God. Be bearers of His truth and love. I love you, my dear little children. Please listen and return to God.*





## **SEEKING GOD: THE BENEFITS OF FASTING AND PRAYER**

**by Br. Isaac Simon, OCCO**

*Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” (John 12:20-21)*

The world is a busy place. As technology advances, human time and space becomes ever-more filled with distractions. However, the Season of Lent gives us an opportunity to simplify our lives and focus on connecting with God. This opportunity arises through the combined use of fasting and prayer.

Religious fasting is found throughout Holy Scripture. Fasting clears the mind of worldly distractions. Prayer, when combined with religious fasting, helps one to become more sensitive to the presence and power of God; and to “hear” Him speak via the Holy Spirit.

In Holy Scripture, the crowds chased after Jesus. The crowds knew if they could cross paths with the Son of God their lives would be made whole. They needed Jesus in so many ways. Those who sincerely sought Jesus were comforted by his presence. Countless people met Jesus and went away from him abundantly blessed.

As Christians, we too want to experience the presence and power of God, in our lives. Prayer and fasting brings us closer to God and allows us to enter into His presence. These actions broadcast our intentions to God; and whenever we seek Him we will find Him ready to greet us. During Lent I encourage you to use fasting and prayer on a regular basis. Use these practices in a simplified and meaningful manner which enhances your devotional life, on a daily basis. By faithfully seeking God, you will find Him.

## BOOKS FOR DAILY PRAYER

list represents various texts that a reader might consider when selecting a book for Daily Prayer.

### SIMPLE OPTIONS FOR THE BEGINNER

**“Give Us This Day”**

<https://giveusthisday.org/>

**“Magnificat”**

<https://us.magnificat.net>

**The Glenstal Book of Daily Prayer**

[https://www.amazon.com/Glenstal-Book-Daily-Prayer-](https://www.amazon.com/Glenstal-Book-Daily-Prayer-Benedictine/dp/0814632734/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-3)

[Benedictine/dp/0814632734/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-3](https://www.amazon.com/Glenstal-Book-Daily-Prayer-Benedictine/dp/0814632734/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-3)

### INTERMEDIATE OPTIONS

**Trinity Daily Prayer**

<https://thetrinitymission.org/>

**A Book of Daily Prayer (Two Volumes)**

Volume I: <http://www.lulu.com/shop/robert-lyons/a-book-of-daily-prayer-volume-i/hardcover/product-24316127.html>

Volume II: <http://www.lulu.com/shop/robert-lyons/a-book-of-daily-prayer-volume-ii/hardcover/product-24254170.html>

**“Daily Office Book” (Two-Volume Set)**

<https://www.amazon.com/Daily-Office-Book-Two-Set/dp/0898691397>

**“For All The Saints” (Four-Volume Set)**

<http://alpb.org/books/for-all-the-saints-a-prayer-book-for-and-by-the-church/>

### ADVANCED OPTIONS

**“Christian Prayer” and “Liturgy of the Hours” (Four Volume Set)**

Christian Prayer: <https://www.amazon.com/Christian-Prayer-Catholic-Book-Publishing/dp/0899424066>

Liturgy of the Hours: [https://www.amazon.com/Liturgy-Hours-Catholic-Book-](https://www.amazon.com/Liturgy-Hours-Catholic-Book-Publishing/dp/0899424090/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=liturgy+of+the+hours&qid=1579791681&s=books&sr=1-1)

[Publishing/dp/0899424090/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=liturgy+of+the+hours&qid=1579791681&s=books&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Liturgy-Hours-Catholic-Book-Publishing/dp/0899424090/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=liturgy+of+the+hours&qid=1579791681&s=books&sr=1-1)

**Benedictine Daily Prayer: A Short Breviary (Second Edition)**

[https://www.amazon.com/Benedictine-Daily-Prayer-Short-](https://www.amazon.com/Benedictine-Daily-Prayer-Short-Breviary/dp/0814637027/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-1)

[Breviary/dp/0814637027/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Benedictine-Daily-Prayer-Short-Breviary/dp/0814637027/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=benedictine+daily+prayer&qid=1579791918&s=books&sr=1-1)



It should be noted that there is a website, Universalis, which provides the current Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Hours fully populated and ready to go, for those who wish to pray in an electronic format. They offer an app for iOS and Android that allows you to download to your phone as well.

“Breviary Tunes”, “Divine Office”, “IBreviary”, “Laudate”, “Daily TV Mass”.

If you go to “Book of Common Prayer” in your app store there are a large number of options.

Prayer Book developed by

**Father Robert Lyons, M.Div., BCC, CPES**

# ***Listen With The Ear Of Your Heart* By Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO**

“Can you hear me now?” “Can you hear me now?” The narrator repeats the question over and over throughout the popular commercial. This is an interesting phrase that both markets his product and mirrors your personal need to be heard.

You need to be heard. You don’t necessarily have to agree or support me but please, please hear me. When you hear me, I am validated. I become a person of some value. To be validated I will talk on the cell phone about trivial nonsense, chatter all day about nothing important to anyone who will listen, or even create an argument to get attention. This is a sad state of affairs to be sure.

Let us speak about listening skills. You can recall what you know about listening skills by remembering what Mamma told you, “You have two ears and one mouth so listen more than you speak.” Actually the 90/10 rule came from this. That is to listen 90% of the time and speak 10% of the time. It sure would be a quieter planet.

Active listening means full participation by the listener and response to the speaker. This might include such communication efforts as mirroring. Mirroring is speaking back what you have just heard.

Passive listening is thinking of your response rather than really listening. You could also be viewing a sports channel, reading the paper, or almost anything other than listening. Basically, you are not really present to the speaker and show little interest in what is being said.

The next level of listening skills is “to listen with the ear of your heart.” At first that may seem an unusual statement. But slow down for a moment and listen to the words, “listen with the ear of your heart.” I think you will figure it out. Listen in such a way that the speaker, or writer, moves you towards transformation.

Imagine listening to your mate complain about his day. Imagine moving to the “ear of your heart” and the effect his words of sorrow, conflict, stress, and failure have on your heart. Your response to him would be different than if you just simply heard the words. You would be transformed, moved, more charitable, and compassionate.

The heart needs you to speak slowly. Look at your beloved. Do not be in a rush. Save your important messages for a time when you are together. Do not discuss them over the cell phone. Touch them whenever something is really important to you. Speak softly. The heart is tender. It gets frightened when you are loud, critical, or sarcastic. Be careful with your words. Say what you really mean. Be clear and precise. Do not continually repeat yourself. The heart hears better with fewer words.

It takes practice “to listen with the ear of your heart.” You need to develop a quiet spirit. The quiet spirit is developed through a desire to be present to your beloved. Spend time in quiet. Let there be no noise, no distractions. Listen to yourself. Still your body. Move slowly. Don’t always be involved with movement. When you listen your goal is to be in empathic union with the speaker. Look into their eyes. Give them your understanding and respond with few words, a smile, or tear. Mostly be with them.

## **The Rule of St. Benedict, Conversion, Stability, Obedience**

The Rule of St. Benedict has influenced the Church throughout the centuries. What is most impressive about The Holy Rule of St. Benedict is the fact that it has been with us for 1500 years and is still relevant and contemporary.

Throughout the centuries it was adopted as a Rule of Life by numberless male and female monastics, religious orders, autonomous monasteries, religious families and congregations, lay oblates and lay associations. The Rule transcends factions, divisions, denominations, rites, politics, and administrative red tape. One can find monastics, religious and lay people living The Rule of St. Benedict alike in all Christian faith expressions.

The Rule of St. Benedict is ecumenical. It covers all the practical aspects of life and is valued as a guide to a simple life lived fully in homes, businesses, churches, as well as monasteries. It leads those living under the Rule towards a holy life and to encounter God face to face, and to create a personal experience with God.

***You might think of religious vows as “dead man walking.” Your life as you know it is over. No more smiles, no more friends, no more fun.***

Actually religious vows are a vehicle to more freedom. The Rule of St. Benedict is a “guide” to the kind of life that Christians want to celebrate. They want a simple life, lived well.

The last place that a Christian seeks is the whirlwind of earthbound stress, confusion, fear, and fragility.

Following a Rule of Life provides direction on healthy choices rather than making decisions forced upon us by fearful stress. The Rule of St. Benedict is a time-honored way of life that provides guidance on life’s challenges.

Conversatio, or conversion of heart, is not referring to one’s initial conversion into Christianity. Rather the daily desire to grow and change beyond our current earthbound paradigms. Those changes can be challenging but, having a Rule of Life and other likeminded persons helping you, the pilgrimage becomes rather liberating and exciting. Life begins to become simple. Stability is seeking God within the Cistercian community. It does not mean giving up your church, family, employment, and other responsibilities. The Cistercian community becomes a complementary asset. We think of ourselves as extended family.

We dedicate ourselves to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit and in all things trusting in the Power of Grace and in the love and support of the brothers in this community.

Obedience is the most liberating of all. It means being able to trust and gain your confidence under the direction of a loving compassionate leader. You will never be asked to do the impossible or anything that is outside of the Cistercian governing documents that include Scripture.

Now your simple life is lived well.



## The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross are Proud Members of The Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod

We are the **Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance**, an independent dispersed religious order within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and an autonomous member of the Independent Anglican Church -Canada Synod.

**“The Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod** is proud to be traditional Anglicans. Who follow, "where the saints have trod", the old, familiar path; the path that leads, in order and dignity, to warmth and tolerance.

“The discipline and public worship of the Church are, most properly, Catholic. Our adherents will experience a spread of services and style stretching gloriously all the way from Anglo-Catholic to (Low) Evangelical. Most of our congregations would be described as being Broad Church, following a via media.”





# 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.

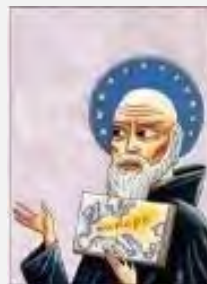
We pray also for those who may have given up hope or have forgotten to pray for themselves.

**We pray that at all times and under every circumstance that every holy action, prayer, Liturgy, joy and even suffering that we experience is perpetually offered as a prayer for each of us, our intentions and the intentions of others. Let it be known that when you pray we all pray. AMEN.**

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.  
The Abbot has proclaimed this to be our  
new daily prayer. Please join him daily to  
pray this together.





**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.

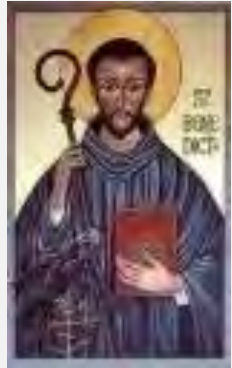
We live the Cistercian charism in our love of solitude, contemplation, work, and study as well as living under the Rule of St. Benedict, our Constitution and vows of Conversatio, Stability, and Obedience.

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 was founded 1981. We are one of the oldest Religious Orders or our kind.**

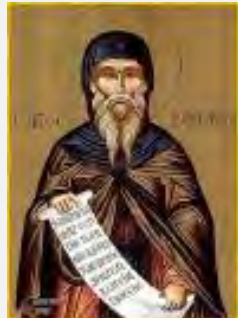
We are an independent dispersed religious order within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and an autonomous member of the Independent Anglican Church - Canada Synod.

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 Memorial Day for our dear Br. Paul, OCCO is June 24th. He was a true blessing to our Order.**

- 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.

**From The Abbot:**

***Rather than list the qualities of the Cistercian Charism and discuss what we can do for you I am listing below some comments from members on what we have done for them.***

*“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.”*

*“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.”*

*“There were certain things that prayer, study, and scriptural research have convinced me are required in my own path. It was important for me that the order be contemplative, and that it adhered to the traditional orthodox teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I was not interested in joining an order that was too easy, or that bent over too far to be politically amenable. It was important to me that I would be well guided along the way.”*

*“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.”*

*“Each aspect of this humble expression is precious balm on hearts truly aching for closer union with the Lord. The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is an opportunity for a Spirit-led man or woman to become a true monk or nun in this revered tradition.”*

*“When I joined the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, the first thing that changed was my prayer life. Before, it was a life-less obligation, a burden my wife and I committed ourselves to pray at least the Morning and Evening Prayers and whenever time allows, to pray the other offices as well. This helped us to become more prayerful, teaching us to offer everything to God each day; referring to Him even the mundane things of our daily life. I started seeing myself opening more and more to my wife in terms of communication, becoming more forgiving and affirming. My relationship with the Lord started improving tremendously. Whereas before, obeying God is a duty, now it is a joy.”*

### **Suspicious Signs of a Call to Contemplative Religious Life**

**Desire to grow in union with God through prayer. Love of God that manifests itself in a desire to give one's life to Him. Desire to live simply. The wish to live life with less stress and more order. Generosity. Ability to listen to others and accept direction when needed. Desire to worship God in all the moments of life.**

**Contact us immediately if these symptoms appear.**



# 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."*

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