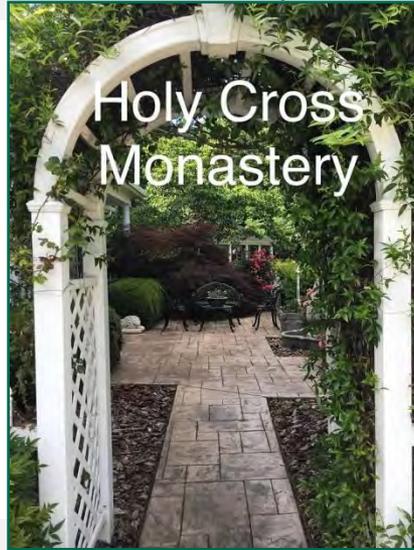


# Obsculta

“Listen with the ear of your heart”



June 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:

These past three months have been rather slow for the Cistercians. Most of us like being locked into the quiet of our homes. The virus is certainly not welcomed but it does give us an opportunity to reflect on what is really important. Sadly the evil one is trying to destroy the “we can do it together” with misdirected self promotion that is creating division. How quickly we can move from peace to tyranny.

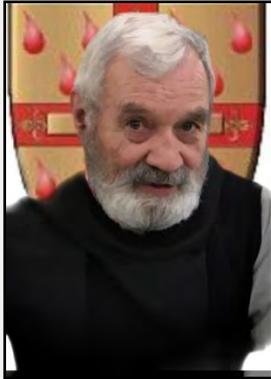
Religious life can just as easily be ruined by a few self absorbed individuals. Often their delusion, purposeful or otherwise, is supported by the lies of doing service for others or, “God told me.” I can assure you that God’s will is focused on serving others not ourselves

I can also assure you that if you properly discern God’s will you will find that God does not change His mind. He doesn’t call you to take vows one moment then nine months later tell you to do something else.

I can also assure you that once you have made vocational vows you cannot release yourself from them and then retire. I can also assure you that people who do such are living in terrible sin.

This Obsculta is focused on Benedictine obedience that requires the satisfaction of stability. If there is no stability there is no us.

- Thoughts on the Rule
- Oblate Joachim
- Mother Mary
- Trinity, Active Love
- Cat Wisdom
- Oblate Janice
- Poems
- Rule of St. Benedict
- Examination of Conscience
- Independent Anglican Church
- Daily Prayer for the Order
- Who we are and what we do
- Looking for more Priests
- Members’ comments
- Contact us



## Br. Albert Joseph, OCCO +

Kathleen and I want to give sincerest thanks to Br. Albert Joseph for his heroic pastoral care to Kathleen's mother, Vee Van Son, as she was about to make her entry to heaven.



### Thoughts On Benedictine Rule 36

"I was sick and you visited me "(Matt. 25:36). I endured what is becoming an annual winter health problem – a bronchial infection of endless congestion highlighted by two and a half weeks of sleepless nights. I took note during the ordeal of how the weakened body weakens the soul. How ravaged must the chronically and terminally ill be.

Right on the heels of 36 is 37 (Old men and children). Quote "The Rule also should make provision for them ". Yes, illness renders one as old and childlike.

What is the effect on the weakened soul? Whether God fearing or not, the thought feeling is – please, leave me alone! Things really become simplified, don't they? Well that's what I'm getting to. My experience of prayer and finding Jesus was in a simple thought, simple gazes at a holy icon, or the crucifix. Christ was visiting me simply and softly. He is giving to us what He did not allow Himself on the Cross.

Keeping these thoughts in mind, I'm going to leave you with a soft, simple prayer written by St Francis of Assisi:

The Lord bless you and keep you  
The Lord to make His Face to shine upon you  
And be gracious to you  
The Lord lift up His Countenance upon you  
And give you peace  
May God bless you  
Peace and Goodness my brothers and sisters,.

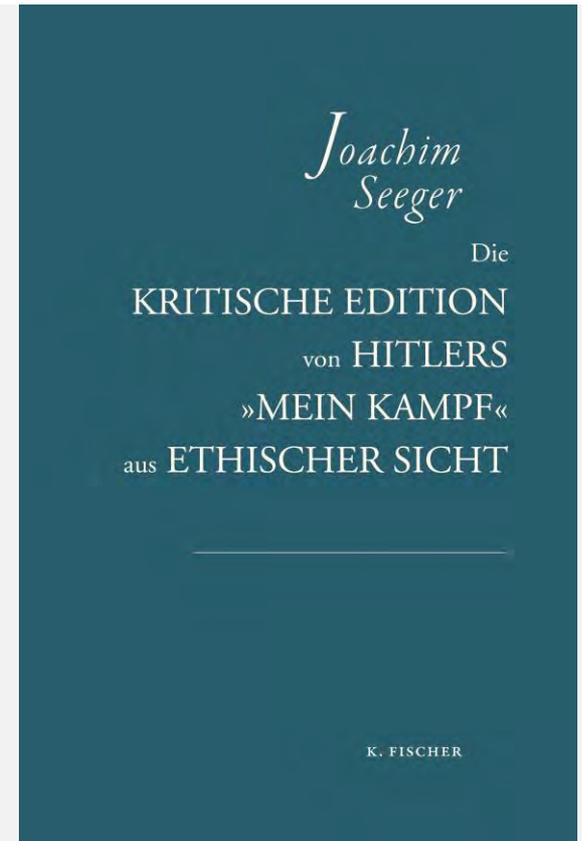


## We congratulate Dr. Joachim Seeger, OCCO/obl on his recent academic accomplishment.

“I take the position that it is important to deal scientifically with the irrational and unsustainable positions of National Socialism, some of which are criminal. That is why the many comments in the new edition are important. After all, the victims of the regime are doing a favor and want to warn young people about new right-wing populist ideas in society.”

The annotated republication of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" is able to divide society. Some see the edition as a chance for a historical reappraisal, for others a painful memory of the Holocaust could arise. May one publish a critical edition of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and thereby hurt the feelings and feelings of the Holocaust victims or cause them to be ignored? First of all, the historian's scientific interest speaks in favor of appropriately reappraising his own history and doing a valuable service to democracy, once again scientifically demonstrating the lies or half-truths of Hitler, providing satisfaction for the victims, and providing current right-wing populist or right-wing extremist currents in society. At the same time, the presentation should make it clear that the project of the Institute for Contemporary History (IfZ) is ethically justified considering all advantages and disadvantages and is worthy of the corresponding appreciation.

Dr. Dr. Joachim Seeger received another academic title at the University of Münster (Germany). He is now a Master in Applied Ethics (MAE). Here is the publication of his master's thesis. A very interesting and controversial topic is assessed here from an ethical perspective. He is an Oblate in the OCCO.





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

MARIAN SCHOLAR  
PUBLISHED AUTHOR  
TV AND RADIO PERSONALITY



### Mary: Our Cistercian Role Model

Adhering to the three fundamental principles of Cistercian life – obedience, stability, and conversion – is easier said than done. As soon as rules are implemented, rebellion rises up within us. We insist on our own way. We are discontented with our circumstances and search for “greener pastures.” We are impatient with our lives and with other people. We say we want to be truly converted, but insist on placing limits on the amount of conversion we will endure. We say we trust God, but defy the authorities he sends us. We fight the essence of genuine love. The vow of obedience requires that Cistercians live in accordance with the Rule of St. Benedict and fulfill all demands required by lawful superiors. Our Lady showed her obedience during her married life by trusting St. Joseph to protect and provide for her. When Joseph told her to prepare for immediate travel to Egypt, she did so. Later in life she trusted her son, then St. John, to protect and provide for her. She lived at peace with God while her physical and spiritual needs were met.

For us also the blessings of obedience are that of peace, protection and provision. Stability means dedication to the Trinity and remaining with the Cistercian community. Mary’s stability began with her dedication to following God. At the Incarnation she became connected to the second person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and indissolubly united with Jesus. She was at his side during all his earthly life, from cradle to grave. She never abandoned the call God gave her. After her son ascended, Mary became mother to St. John and maintained her support to her son’s community. While her geography changed, and the people whom she encountered changed, Mary remained dedicated to the role chosen for her. Consequently she became the Mother of the Church and Queen of the Angels.

Conversion is an ongoing process by which we commit ourselves to the vocation, are open to growth and change, and earnestly follow the gospel of Jesus Christ. Like us, Mary’s conversion was not that of being converted from paganism to monotheism. She did not have to be convinced or converted to give her life to God. Rather, her beliefs had to adapt to the reality of Jesus as Messiah.

Many before Mary considered what the Messiah would do for Israel. Some thought he would be a political king who would rule in the traditional way of kings. By the time of the wedding at Cana, Mary had been at Jesus’ side for about 30 years. She was converted. She understood Jesus’ heart and mind. She knew he would help the people at the wedding party. She also understood that she had earned the privilege of her son’s consent to her request. The blessing of persevering in conversion for us is that of knowing our Lord’s heart and mind and confidence that he will answer our prayers.

When we consider the human struggles that come into play as we attempt to become obedient, loving children, Our Lady’s example is all the more impressive. A fully human woman, she lived a life of obedience, stability and conversion. She is both proof that the accomplishment of Cistercian ideals is possible, and a help for us in our efforts when asked.





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

*Should I miss our morning stability promise on the stairs Mister is sure to take ownership of my chair. His attitude is a clear demand that I keep the promises that I have made. My focus should first be on him. After all I did promise to do everything that I can to not only maintain but advance our relationship. He consistently reminds me to do the doings of the stability that I had promised.*

**Cistercian Obedience is not blindly obeying the law under threat of punishment.**

**For Benedict obedience is an action taken when we exercise both physical and emotional stability.**

**Obedience to others is the way that we live out our obedience to God.**

**Obedience is accountability in community and in relationships by focusing on the needs of others.**

**Obedience is putting God at the center of our lives thus giving a balance between our needs and the needs of others.**

**Obedience is the recognition that I cannot always be in control and to listen to those who are.**

**Obedience is to take only an action that is endorsed by those who show wisdom and understand.**

**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.**

## **Sheltering in Place, by Janice Joy Ariza, OCCO/obl**



I work for Benedictine Sisters who have been sheltering in place since March. When I left the monastery's retreat center to work from home for what was intended to be a couple of months, I had no idea how impactful time spent in one place would be for spiritual development. Boxes of files, supplies and a potted plant were the only office to go to every morning. My daily interaction with people became emails, some phone conversations and Zoom invitations.

The newness and challenge of this routine was really satisfying. I was excited to try a variety of schedules and loved the flexibility. There were so many advantages to this lifestyle of the home being my work, my dwelling and prayer place. I was now living a monastic lifestyle and Ora et Labora a reality rather than a concept.

There are so many beautiful ways our Lord speaks to us. I have felt the guiding hand of His gracious mercy throughout. The frustration of uncertainty is replaced with a constant that He is the stability not the routine of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm or the rush hour commute. Even though I am not sure of where or when our circumstances will change, I know I can depend on God's wisdom.

I found inspiration and solace in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "What the eye has not seen nor the ear heard, God has prepared for those who love Him".

## A gift from Enid Burrows

### TREES.

God created many wonders  
In this world for us to see,  
One of the best of His creations  
Is an ordinary tree.

A tree is beautiful in winter  
With it's branches stark and bare,  
A tree is beautiful in springtime,  
With leaves and blossoms fair.

It is beautiful in summer,  
A canopy of welcome shade.  
And the most glorious sight of all  
Is an Autumn everglade.

A tree provides a home  
For small creatures and for birds,  
And provides the pulp for paper  
On which to write these words.

It provides the wood to build our homes,  
builds fires warm and bright,  
And the evergreen, will enhance  
the scene  
of a snowy winter night.

The cross was made of wood,  
The cross which set men free,  
The cross on which Christ died,  
The cross came from a tree.



### Quiet Havens.

Apple blossom boughs  
Swaying in the breeze,  
Create a fragrant haven  
Underneath the trees.

Chuckling, gurgling streams  
Meandering through wooded copse,  
Creates a quiet coolness  
As it tumbles over rocks.

Berry laden hedgerows,  
leaves crackling underfoot  
Create a haven of colour,  
Everywhere you look.

Cool, crisp frostiness  
And silent white snowfall,  
Sends us hurrying back to firesides,  
The cosiest haven of them all.

God created havens  
in all seasons of the year,  
Amid earth's natural beauties  
For all of us to share.

## **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 it means 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.

## Imitate the Faith of the Magi and Follow Their Path

### Examination of Conscience for Religious By Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO

“Guided by the star, the Magi reach Bethlehem. They enter the house, which they recognize by the pointing star that stands over the place where the child was. They find the child with his mother, but a mother who is a virgin.”

Where do you find Jesus? Do you find Jesus in the most unusual places? When people look at you in your habit, do they see Jesus? Do others seem to be drawn to you for no apparent reason? Do they seek you out for comfort and guidance or do they imagine that you are not really interested? Do you treat your Abbot as Christ present for you? Are you engaged with other religious and your community?

“The Magi fell down and worshiped him. Do you do likewise? The Magi, experts in divine worship, teach you how you are to worship God. Luke says: “They fell down and worshiped him.” But that is not how you act: rather, when you enter the house of prayer, the house in which we pray to Jesus, you immediately collapse or sit down, overpowered by your idleness or negligence as by a heavy load; then, carelessly, or even eagerly, you settle yourself not for prayer but for sleep. Not only do you not kneel for prayer, but you yawn and scratch yourself, and you cast your wandering gaze now up, now down. As for the prayers themselves - if they are to be called prayers - and the psalms, you run through them so quickly that you cut the verses short by half.”

Have you ever prostrated before the Lord? How often do you kneel? How often do you pray? Do you look forward to raising your heart and mind to God? Is prayer just one more thing that you have to find time for in your hurried world? Is your prayer rushed? Sometimes do you just listen? How often do you use a prayer book? Do you read sacred writers? When you go to church is it to worship? Do you spend time socializing when you should be praying? Is Sunday worship your weekly fill up? Who is the center of the Lord's Day? How often do you fast? Does your Lectio Divina include conversatio? How do you live out your the Cistercian charism? What is your definition of a Cistercian monk? Would other people define you according to that definition? Do you treat all things as if they were items on the altar?

“Imitate the Magi, who fell down and worshiped him. The text goes on to say: Opening their treasures, they offered him gifts. Think of the wonderful faith of the Magi: they saw before them an infant wrapped in rags and lying in an unworthy inn that was probably a wretched shack; they saw a mother clothed in the cheap garments of the people, her reputation further blackened because of the work done by her carpenter husband; they saw, finally, the carpenter himself, unkempt from his manual toil and labor as a carpenter, and yet called the father of so mighty a king. The Magi saw all this, and yet they did not lose heart nor think that they had journeyed foolishly and in vain; they did not even think to themselves: “Is this poor infant, this child of the people, to become the King of the Jews? Was it for such a child that we have travelled this long road? How shall so poor, humble, and lowly a child rise to royal honors? We regret our toil; we are disgusted with our journey. Let us at least take back with us the gifts we brought.”

“The Magi entertained none of these thoughts. Instead, made certain by the grace given them of the royal and divine majesty of the child, they fell humbly down and adored, and then opened their treasures and joyfully offered gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

How many times have you been disappointed in God? Do you accuse Him of not being there for you? Do you believe that if you were good enough God would be induced to answer your prayers? When you look for God where do you find Him? Have you worked really hard at something and gotten upset because it didn't work out the way you wanted it to? When God asks you to do something difficult what do you do? If your Abbot were to ask you to do a difficult thing what would you do? Do you ignore it or simply put it off until it is forgotten? When you see a poor dusty beggar what are your first thoughts? What are your concerns about tithing? If God were to tell you to leave everything behind and go follow Him what would be your response?

From a sermon by Julian of Vezelay (Sermon 11: SC 192, 80-85)

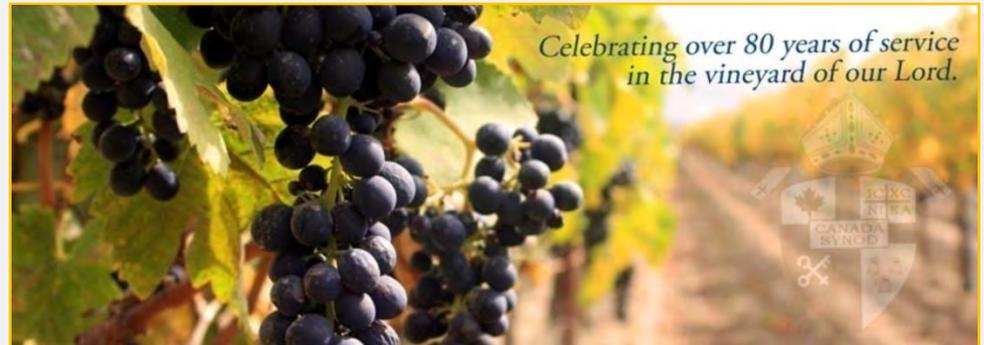


## The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross are Proud Members of The Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod

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.*

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.

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.





**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.**

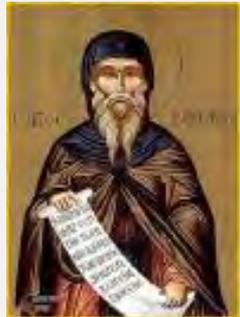
We are an independent dispersed religious order within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and an autonomous member of the Independent Anglican Church - Canada Synod.

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.”***

***For more information contact  
Abbot@bellsouth.net***