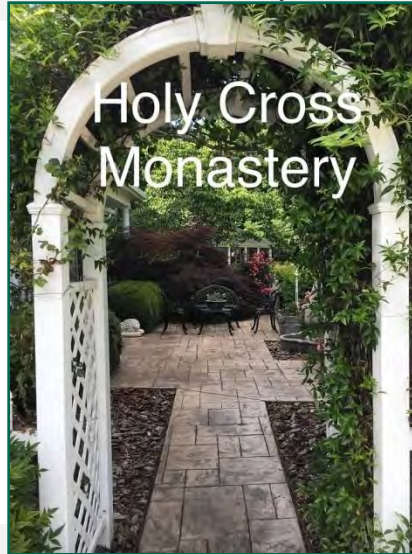
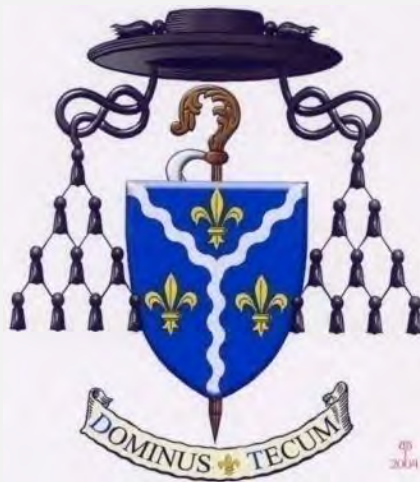


Obsculta

"Listen with the ear of your heart."



December 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

Do your holiday shopping at SmileAmazon.com and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



Greetings Cistercians and Friends:

These past three months have been busy with the “We Got Your Back Program”. I want to thank each of our generous volunteers and encourage each Cistercian and IAC members to take advantage of this exceptional program. Go to our website for detailed information: CistercianMonks.org.

- Memorial “We Got Your Back”
- Donation page
- Problems Find Solutions
- Mary the Mother of Jesus
- Passion, A Driving Force
- What the Abbot has learned
- Quotes of Wisdom
- New Books by Abbot Oscar Joseph
- New Book by Oblate Joachim
- Cistercian Honor Programs
- Companions of the Holy Cross
- Honorary Doctorates
- Face Book Ministry
- Cat Wisdom
- Looking for more priests
- Members’ comments
- Contact us

Four areas of support

Spiritual Support

Spiritual Direction

Enrichment Support

Enrichment Support for Men

Enrichment Support for Women

Enrichment for Women, Marian Devotions

Making Life Easier Support

Automotive Second Opinion Clinic

Improve Your Life, Hundreds of Resources

Life and Health Insurance

Financial Support

Emergency Fund

Do your holiday shopping at SmileAmazon.com and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

Introducing the Br. Benedict, O.C.C.O. Memorial “We Got Your Back” Program



Br. Benedict often said, "Miracles are always happening because God loves you. *He's got your back.*"

Before I describe the Memorial Program let me reintroduce you to Br. Benedict. You might remember that Br. Benedict was a life professed monk with us who went onto heaven two years ago.

He was an exceptionally holy monk whom I loved dearly. Unfortunately both he and his wife Alexis had a number of disabilities and lived in constant physical and emotional pain. We had the privilege of helping them financially particularly with some medications.

Via video I and his family conducted the “Last Rites” by his hospital bed. God lead a Roman Catholic Eucharistic minister to arrive at the conclusion of our service. He died shortly after surrounded by his family and a host of angels.

I offer here some additional information that was presented at his funeral in the hopes that you might grow to love him as much as I.

.....

Br. Benedict, OCCO , Passed to the heavens surrounded by his family and many angels. So many angels that the hospital staff saw them. Br. Benedict and I spent many video hours together. He had been hurt and disappointed by the church. He had to figure out if I was trustworthy. In that process we became the best of friends. When it was time to join he went to town selling me on his Cistercian journey. “Dear Father Abbot I dreamed of being a monk when I was little. As you can see I am still in love with St. Benedict. I agreed to the obvious. So he took on a pensive look and said, “Well Abbot let me think about that.” Br. Benedict was so very humorous, captivating and a dear lover of our Lord. I miss him terribly.

His wife Alexis describes Br. Benedict “as a deeply devoted man, not only to God, but to his family, friends and any stranger who needed a prayer or a friendly conversation. He had a gift for making anyone feel like family. He could see people’s hearts and never held a grudge. He was stubborn and difficult but he was also the kindest, sweetest and most caring man I ever knew. He was my Viking Monk, intense, funny, and kind. Benedict was always full of life despite being in so much pain for so long. He wanted people to see the strength, not the weakness, and tried to maintain that until the end.

He never blamed anybody for his faults and was way too hard on himself. Being a former Marine, he would hide his pain and often push it too far. I would tell him that he needed to show people how much he was actually suffering, but he couldn’t do it.

He was my soul mate, my best friend, and the love of my life. I never once regretted being with him and I never felt gypped by his illness. I would have taken care of him forever. I am the person I am today, and a better person, because I was blessed with the presence that is Benedict.”

Do your holiday shopping at [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



The “We Got Your Back Program” was inspired by Br. Benedict, OCCO.

Br. Benedict often said, “Miracles are always happening because God loves you. He’s got your back.”

Br. Benedict was a life professed Cistercian monk who went on to heaven on September 13, 2018.

He was an exceptionally holy monk. Br. Benedict was humorous, captivating and a dear lover of our Lord.

His wife, Alexis, describes Br. Benedict as “a deeply devoted man, not only to God, but to his family, friends and any stranger who needed a prayer or a friendly conversation.

He had a gift for making anyone feel like family. He could see people's hearts and never held a grudge.”

In loving memory of Br. Benedict and our love for the Cistercian Order we have founded

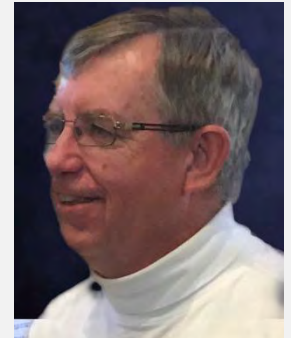
The “We Got Your Back Program”

Four areas of support

Spiritual Support
Enrichment Support
Making Life Easier Support
Financial Support

This program is also available to the Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod clergy and families.

These are Your Volunteers



The “We Got Your Back Program”



These services are available to:

Members and their families of the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross

Some restrictions apply.

Four areas of support

Spiritual Support

Spiritual Direction

Enrichment Support

Enrichment Support for Men

Enrichment Support for Women

Enrichment for Women, Marian Devotions

Making Life Easier Support

Automotive Second Opinion Clinic

Improve Your Life, Hundreds of Resources

Life and Health Insurance

Financial Support

Emergency Fund



These services are available to:

Clergy and their families of the Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod

Some restrictions apply.

Go to
CistercianMonks.org
for detailed information and how to
participate.

Do your holiday shopping at SmileAmazon.com and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



The Br. Benedict, O.C.C.O. Memorial “We Got Your Back” Program

We already have \$1,000.00
We need
\$2000.00 more



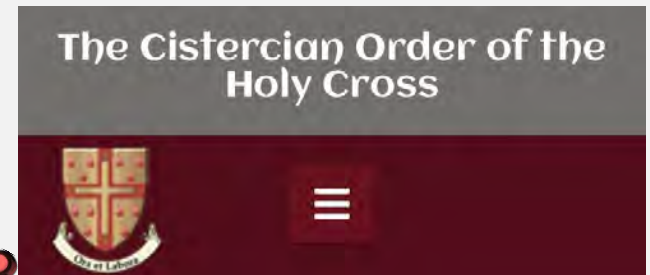
You can give to the emergency or general fund in
the following ways.

Goes into
emergency medical fund



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Goes into
general fund



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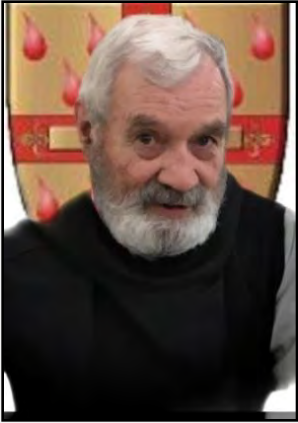
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Problems Can Give You Solutions by Br. Albert Joseph, OCCO

My title has been restated in many different ways by religious and secular counselors so I will complement the them by quoting a piece from the spiritual Christian writer Sarah Young and a reading from the Second Letter of Peter (1: 1-11).

From Sarah Young: *PROBLEMS ARE PART OF LIFE*. “They are inescapable: woven into the very fabric of this world. You tend to go into problem-solving mode all too readily, acting as if you have the capacity to fix everything. This is a habitual response, so automatic that it bypasses your conscious thinking. Not only does this habit frustrate you, it also distances you from ME.”

“Do not let fixing things be your top priority. You are ever so limited in your capacity to correct all that is wrong in the world around you. Don’t weigh yourself down with responsibilities that are not your own. Instead, make your relationship with ME your primary concern. Talk with ME about whatever is on your mind, seeking MY perspective on the situation. Rather than trying to fix everything that comes to your attention, ask ME to show you what is truly important.”

“Remember that you are en route to heaven, and let your problems fade in the light of eternity.”

From *The Second Letter of Peter*: “His Divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness. For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self- control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.”

Peace and Goodness my brothers and sisters,



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

MARIAN SCHOLAR
PUBLISHED AUTHOR
TV AND RADIO PERSONALITY



Mary the Mother of Jesus

Mary is an excellent example of many things such as motherhood, parenting and making of a home. For me her faithfulness is particularly inspiring.

Imagine yourself seemingly out of nowhere being given a message from a spiritual being, perhaps an angel, that you were being called to do an extra ordinary task that would change your life forever.

Imagine then going to your fiancé and tell this story to him hoping that he would not have you killed for being unfaithful or discard you for being simply crazy.

Imagine then having to place your confidence in that man as he drags you off to a little town in the middle of nowhere to go sign up for taxes. Sure he says not to worry. He knows people there and he will find a place to stay.

Imagine then upon your arrival that the so called friends said they had no place for you but there was a great cave just outside of town and you could stay there.

Imagine then you gave birth in that cave and had to trust him to provide not only for you but for this baby that was not his.

True faithfulness goes beyond human imagination.



Passion: A Driving Force

By

Janice Ariza, OCCO/Obl

Passion is a popular word in motivational thinking these days. I hear people say they are seeking their passion. That type of passion sounds like a career choice or a feeling that will replace a void in one's heart.

Last week I was talking with the Abbot about what I have been doing during Covid. I talked about the Zoom programs I host for St. Placid Priory where I work, and all of the interesting times of intimate sharing which miraculously occurs through the technology we all felt forced to use. I also gave many anecdotes about my grandchildren who are 4, 6 and 8 years old. I truly seemed to be bursting with enthusiasm which is when he replied, "I like your passion."

After contemplating passion and how I was personally exuding it, I wondered where the drive begins. How does it become a focus we cannot ignore?

I came to the conclusion that God instills in us that unique something and a graced desire to accomplish it.

Not everyone has the same motivation to write books, open a factory or become an engineer; however, there is an innate energy to climb our own mountain.

If our focus is on God first, then He will give us the passion to move forward to the satisfaction or our legacy.





The Abbot writes:

I have learned so much this year.

Writing and publishing three books in one year, leading a worldwide religious order into their 40th year, living a life of ministry and tending to a personal life was both overwhelming and exciting.

What I learned the most and wish to share with you is that passion drove these adventures. And despite the enormous personal effort and sacrifice that was needed they were filled with joy.

This year was fired with mystical prayer, the discipline of the Divine office, in depth Scriptural studies, the love of my wife and support of my friends.

I didn't always recognize that I was passion driven but getting up at 4:00 AM and working nonstop until 1:00 PM writing and then giving time to the rest of my life certainly was inspired by passion.

What drove me finally came together when I studied John 15. "Abide in my love." This was Jesus' last teaching moments with His apostles. He was filled with passion. When you add Hebrew with the Greek for "abide" you get: give place, state, relationship, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain and stand.

I can hear Jesus saying not only to the apostles but to all of us, "Abide in me, give me a place, never forget me, dwell in me and no matter what stand with me as I do with you and you shall have my joy."

May His passion and joy overwhelmingly embrace us all.

Writing and Publishing three books in one year is a bit of a crazy adventure. Below are some quotes that I hope will inspire you.

Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO

God has made you body, soul and spirit. You were made to be drawn to Him, your Creator. God pursues you regardless of your lack of interest in Him and despite your delusional efforts to run toward the satisfaction of what you believe are your true needs. Putting trust in things that rot will get you nowhere. Have you noticed that when you are in real trouble and seek comfort, power, direction and inspiration, you go to the unknown, to the mystical?

From: Listen With the Ear of Your Heart

Eventually he told me about his lower back ailment that he had suffered for many years. I listened silently. Again, without thinking but feeling moved by God, I asked him if his grandmother had given him a small brown and white bear when he was a child. He said, "Yes," and began to cry. He still grieved the loss of his grandmother. Again, without thinking, I said, she wants you to know that she loves you. He cried some more.

We were quiet for awhile. I asked him if he would like his back to be healed. He was eager and asked if he should kneel in the aisle. I said, "No, let's just pray quietly." Later when he walked to the restroom his back was healed, he no longer had pain. He was so joyful when he had returned to his seat.

From: Memoirs of a Divine Healer

Joy is an interior condition that transcends the immediate and brings stability to the individual.

Joy is not influenced by our success or failures.

Joy is not the absence of troubles or difficulties.

Joy helps us to focus on our true situation and to overcome adversity.

Joy is the product of having interior peace.

Joy is the fruit of a sustained Godly relationship.

Spiritual is a focus upon God's presence.

Spiritual is giving rightful importance to emotional health.

Spiritual is giving rightful importance on the material world.

Freedom is giving of ourselves over to God, a Supreme Being.

Freedom is other centered.

Freedom is the ability to overcome adversity.

Doubt is a product of self focus.

Doubt is a product of defining our reality according to our definitions.

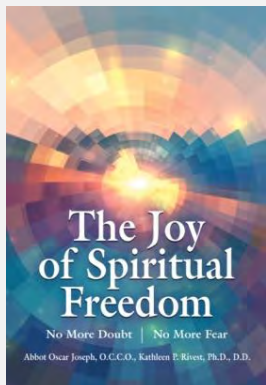
Doubt is a product of making ourselves gods.

Fear is a consequence of the failure of our self definitions.

Fear is a consequence of our emotional and social isolation.

Fear is a consequence of our lack of realizing God's loving presence.

From: The Joy Of Spiritual Freedom



The Abbot Just Published Three New Books



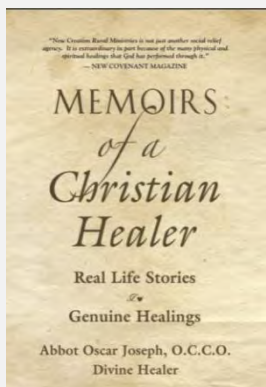
The Joy of Spiritual Freedom leads and inspires the reader to enter into a joy filled relationship with a loving God. It is grounded in Biblical wisdom revealing how to remove debilitating doubt and fear. It also draws from inspirational letters and case studies that illustrate the Gospel path toward freedom.

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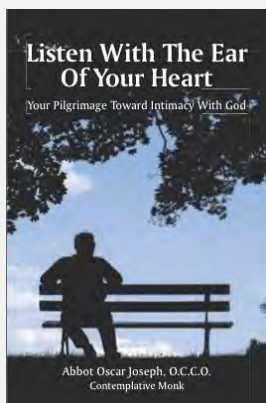
Memoirs of a Christian Healer will inspire and empower the reader to walk in God's mercy. The Abbot recounts real stories and genuine healings. This is a book that you cannot put down. **Memoirs of a Christian Healer** chronicles the miraculous works of God. As you walk with the Abbot through his own difficulties you will experience the joy of victory and the sorrow of human weakness. Incorporated within the many stories the Abbot includes reflective lessons on the Healing Ministry.

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Listen With The Ear Of Your Heart captures the joy and interior peace available to everyone. It transcends denominational differences. Regardless of where you are or what you think about yourself, God is pursuing you and is already present to you.

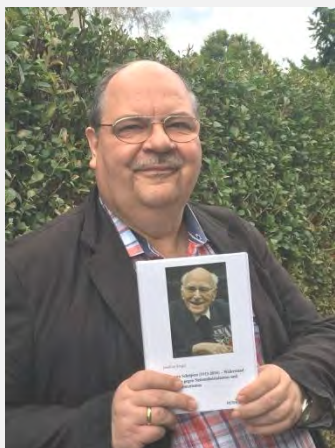
God created you to yearn for intimacy with Him. Yet few know the road to such intimacy. **Listen With The Ear Of Your Heart** presents a dynamic pilgrimage utilizing Scripture, the teachings of the Church Fathers, The Rule of St. Benedict, prayer, meditation and contemplation. The Pilgrimage begins by helping you to release your fears born from the lies and misconceptions that have been rooted in you from infancy. You can listen to God in a down-to-earth sustainable prayer life that is immune to the heretic nature of our culture and the stress of daily life. The book concludes with aids on creating a life structure that will enable you to walk in, with and through Him. Everything becomes prayer. Abbot Oscar Joseph shares some of his captivating life experiences which make **Listen With The Ear Of Your Heart** a life-changing experience.

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**We congratulate Dr. Joachim Seeger, OCCO/obl
on his recent academic accomplishment.
*A second new book***



Priests from the Münsterland fight against National Socialism and GDR Communism - new book published by Peter Lang
author Joachim Seeger
Hermann Scheipers (1913 - 2016) - Church resistance to National Socialism and GDR communism

A biography

The present study, which was accepted as a rigorous dissertation at St. Elisabeth University in Bratislava, deals with a Catholic cleric from Münsterland, Hermann Scheipers. His life and work are shown here biographically. He belongs to the minority of Germans who do not simply accept the National Socialist and then the Communist regime, but actively resist it. Hermann Scheipers knew how to stage or celebrate the symbolic power of his biography. He knew the impact of his biography, his reputation, because he was the "concentration camp priest" par excellence. Hermann Scheipers was a man of convictions and a symbol for the multiple struggles that Catholic dignitaries faced in the 20th century. This work serves the church-independent contemporary history research to work up the National Socialist past of the Catholic church.

ISBN-13: 978-3631826362

Selling price

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Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Warszawa, Vienna, 2020. 246 pages

Content

Introduction - Childhood and Adolescence - Between Adaptation and Resistance - The Experience of National Socialism and War - Postwar Period in Germany - Relocation to the GDR, an Existential Decision - Pastor in the GDR - Honor and Dignity - End of Life - Conclusion and Overall Appraisal

Author information

Joachim Seeger, born in Recklinghausen in 1959, studied Catholic theology, history, pedagogy, German studies, philosophy, practical philosophy, social sciences, psychology and literature. He holds a doctorate in theology and a doctorate in history, a theologian, a pedagogue and a master's degree in applied ethics. He works as a teacher at the West vocational college in the city of Essen. Now he holds a third doctorate in philosophie (PhDr.) from the St. Elisabeth University in Bratislava (SK).

The Cistercians honor their members and friends in a number of ways.

Honorary Doctoral Degrees

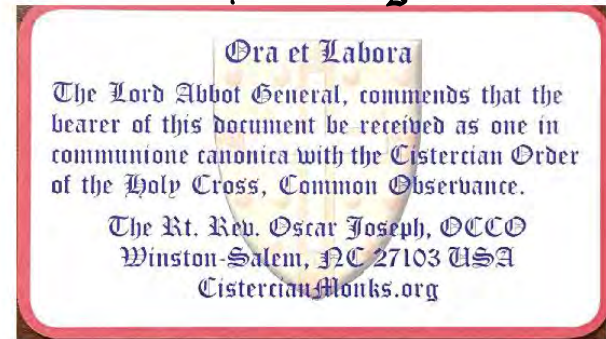
St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary offer these degrees for the purpose of rewarding or advancing outstanding persons. Honorary degrees may be awarded to a person deserving of honor by virtue of scholarly distinction, noteworthy public service or significant contribution to the church at large.

The Companions of the Holy Cross Comites Sancti Crucis

Is a medium for The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance to give their highest honor to those individuals who demonstrate extraordinary love for the Holy Cross through outstanding qualities of character.

If you are interested in receiving our blessings please contact Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO for more information.

Sacred membership cards that have an Apostolic Blessing



This Identification card celebrates and honors your association with the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross. Whether you are a life vowed member or a valued friend of the Order please know that I embrace each of you and dispense upon you the riches of the Lord's blessings.

I pray that this document will remind you of our shared life of prayer, work and that you are in a communion of persons who celebrate a common faith and discipline, The Rule of St. Benedict.

I further authorize The Cistercian Order's vowed and promised members to honor their valued friends who have shown such affection for our work with this same sign of communion.

I have blessed this document with Holy Water and my Apostolic Blessing thus making it a sacred source of grace for you and reception of St. Benedict's protection.

Do your holiday shopping at [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

The Companions of the Holy Cross

Comites Sancti Crucis

Is a medium for The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance to give their highest honor to those individuals who demonstrate extra ordinary love for the Holy Cross through outstanding qualities of character such as:

Dedication to personal or corporate spiritual growth:

Demonstration of Spiritual Giftedness through evidence of genuine Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Personal courage to overcome overwhelming odds through the use of:

Godly wisdom

Dedication to Justice

Uses temperance, humility, meekness, discipline

Self Sacrificing:

Charity (love and generosity) towards the Cistercian Order, or a specific member of the Order, social, physical, emotional, spiritual needs of others

Generous with their time, talents and resources

Genuine care for the unlovable.

Nominations

Nominations** for receiving the highest honor of companions of the Holy Cross may be given by Members (those under vows), Postulants, Oblates, leaders, Council Members, faculty, and others directly associated with the Cistercian Order.

The petitioner should send to the Office of the Abbot General:

The contact information including, mailing address and e-mail of the petitioner, and the candidate. Include several paragraphs describing the candidate's biography and reasons for the nomination.

Upon making a decision the Office of the Abbot General will advise the petitioner on further actions.

From the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross you will receive a number of wonderful benefits.

You have an "Associate Membership* into the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

We will give you a pin representing the shield of the Cistercian Order that may be worn.

You will have our apostolic benediction and spiritual covering/protection.

You and your intentions will be prayed for during the monks/Oblates morning prayers.

You will have access to The Cistercian leadership for personal prayer and spiritual guidance.

You may use the letters CHC after you name as a declaration that they are Companions of the Holy Cross.

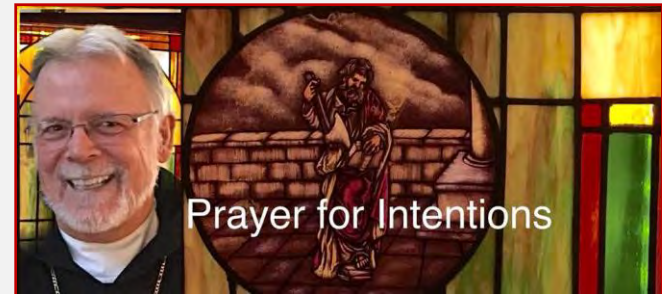
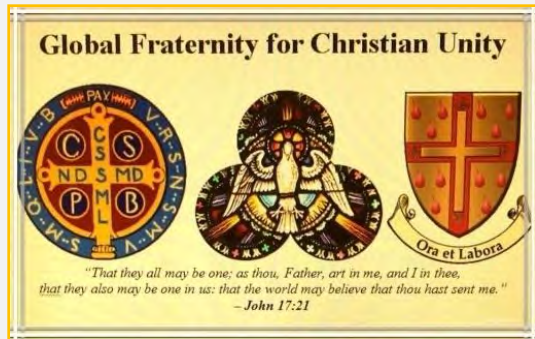
You will be invited to retreats and events.

*"Associate Membership" is a non-voting participation in the Grace and Charism of the Cistercian Order

** Members (those under vows), Postulants, Oblates, leaders, Council Members, faculty and others directly associated with the Cistercian order are not eligible for nomination to the Companions of the Holy Cross.

**The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross sponsors two Face Book Groups.
Each group consists of 500+ active members. The groups are closely monitored to stay mission focused.**

We invite you and your friends to participate



The Global Fraternity for Christian Unity.

This group offers a private forum for MEMBERS ONLY In order to provide a venue of encouragement for continued spiritual formation of individuals and groups invested in the discipline of prayer in a safe environment free of criticism.

We are encouraged to develop personal prayer lives for the purpose of spiritual personal and corporate growth in unity with God and each other.

For more information about The Global Fraternity for Christian Unity please go to CistercianMonks.org. and click the link to the Global Fraternity.

**This is a one of a kind program for
Christian Unity**

Prayer For Intentions/Global Fraternity of Christian Unity

An online ministry of the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

Prayers for sincerely personal needs.

This group has a supportive family environment. Where "strangers" sincerely pray and give support to each other.

**I cannot compliment this group enough. If
you need prayer or wish to be a prayer
partner with others please join.**

Both groups have ministered for over two years.

Do your holiday shopping at SmileAmazon.com and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



Want to Learn About Life? Talk to Your Cat



Stability/Obedience/Conversion of Life

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 and my need to change my behaviors.

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.

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 to take only an action that is endorsed by those who show wisdom and understanding.

Conversation of Life

Is openness to possibility of changing behaviors to respond to God's plan for your lives and your vows of stability and obedience by practicing the presence of God and keeping your death always before your eyes.

Do your holiday shopping at [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smileamazon.com) and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

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. We adhere to 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.

Do your holiday shopping at [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

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."

"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.
Abbot@bellsouth.net**

Do your holiday shopping at [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and help support the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

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, 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*

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