

Obsculta

"Listen with the ear of your heart."



Celebrating Forty Years Ora et Labora



February 1981 - February 2021

June 2021

"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. Gentleness will lead others to God's eternal intent of true joy and freedom."

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



Greetings Dear Cistercians and Friends:

Please continue your prayers for our beloved Br. Brendan, OCCO.+



Br. Brendan, OCCO, has just returned home, May 19, from a laborious surgery of five heart bypasses and two valve replacements. He is healing as his MD expects, but he is exhausted. He is also experiencing the customary emotional "surges," which are both exhausting and confusing.

I was able to speak with him often and encouraged him in his pre-op preparations and now after his surgery. He is grateful to have someone local taking care of him.

Br. Brendan, OCCO, has assisted me often on many occasions and is currently a member of the Abbot's Advisory Council.

Please also pray for the daughter of Lance Key, another Advisory Council member. Shannon, recently suffered the tragic and sudden loss of her husband, Brandon. Please also pray for his soul. Lance and his family live near our Monastery in Winston Salem, NC, so I could be present to them and offer some comfort during this trying time.

The Cistercian Order is a genuine family that cares for its people. That care and gratitude spread to the Independent Anglican Church of Canada and its clergy. I invite them to visit our website and particularly read the "We Got Your Back" page that they might avail themselves of our gift of care. CistercianMonks.org

"There is *no other group* that can lay claim to our holy foundation, structure and government, programs, membership, formation opportunities and requirements, not to mention our longevity at 40 years! The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance is alone in its legitimacy, tenacity, and excellence."

Welcome Raphael, Postulant

“I’m so glad to be here”

by
Raphael



In 2018, I retired as Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies with Athabasca University. I was planning to get immediately to work on an unfinished writing project in my quiet home in rural Nova Scotia. However, I soon found that God had a different plan.

I had been a monk for several years decades ago and now that the freedoms of retirement took hold, I found myself drawn relentlessly to my prayer room rather than to my study. The phone and email began to go unanswered and Lectio Divina replaced my academic research.

I had been involved for decades in the Orthodox Church, but I found my prayer life drawn toward the Anglican and Benedictine influences of my youth. I began to ask myself how to unite my reawakened love for the English Church surrounded as a I was by the ravaged parishes of the Anglican Communion.

I was inspired by discovery of the Continuing Anglican movement, but there was very little monastic life there. A search for Anglican Cistercian orders with whom I might become an oblate revealed the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

Several weeks later, my most hoped for dream came true. I was accepted as a First Order Postulant and my plan to initiate the Hermitage of the Resurrection was also approved by Abbot Oscar Joseph and his Council of Advisors.

I look forward to joining with all of you in the Order’s *ora et labora* . It’s a homecoming I did not expect. *Deo gratias!*

How I Experience the Holy Trinity

by

++Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO



Br. Albert Joseph, OCCO+ and Oblate Janice Ariza, OCCO/Obl have joined me in attempting to describe our personal experiences with the Holy Trinity. Please know that we know that it is sheer foolishness to say anything about the Holy Trinity. We can only use metaphor, similes, and symbols in our attempts to describe the Infinite.

It is our hope that our experiences of the Holy Trinity might inspire yours.

My experience of the Trinity is more like giving each person a particular job description. Jesus points to the Father by giving us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus present and points to God the Father.

I meet **Jesus** in/through Scripture and the Sacraments. Mainly His personhood represents His and the Father's love, forgiveness, and acceptance. Jesus is genuine to me. I often speak directly to Jesus, and He often replies. I have seen His life in the Eucharist. I frequently look at His icon. It seems as though He genuinely responds. Jesus knows me.

The Holy Spirit is most real to me when I am praying with or for others. Particularly during prayers for healing, I receive instruction, inspiration, and often messages for the recipient. The Holy Spirit is my power, inspiration, and source of wisdom, all of which comes from Jesus and points toward the Father.

God the Father doesn't seem to have a specific job description rather, He is everything. He gives life to everything. God the Father often reveals Himself to me. When I experience Him, I no longer experience myself. It is about Him, not me. When God the Father reveals Himself, I am at quiet. I don't recall a sense of time spent. All in All, is God the Father.

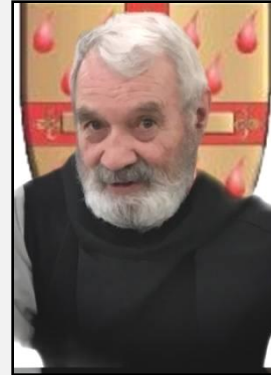
My words are failing.

What I have come to realize is that I don't need more of God. After all, I received the Holy Trinity at baptism. Instead, I need to become more actively aware of God's presence here and now. Indeed I am doing all in, with, and through Him.

My Personal Experiences with the Persons of the Trinity

by

Br. Albert Joseph, OCCO+



This is a tough one, so I met try and draw a word picture to set up a response. In the classic movie “Elmer Gantry”, Burt Lancaster, a carnival preacher, makes a dramatic tent entrance, sliding onto the stage like a ball player stealing second base, saying to his congregation “How many ballplayers can make a slide like that, but how many folks have the guts to play ball on God’s team, and listen to this, the captain of that team is Jesus Christ Himself”.

The Father - I experience the Father more in the totality of the realization of God as creator, standard setter of who we are in creation, the ultimate receiver of my petitions and thanksgivings, appreciations of the outside world. My comfort in knowing the Father comes from Jesus teaching us that to see me is to see the Father. On the mental side of things, my experience of the father comes from reading Scripture.

The Son –Oh boy, thank God for sending the Son. You must find and read a piece called the “Experience of God According to St Bernard of Clairvoix”, an attachment that served as the basis of this little piece. My experience of Jesus comes in opposites. He is near and far. There are moments of intense presence and peace. I get glimpses of clarity, sprinkled with clouds. Everything in the St Bernard piece I can relate to. What is tough for me to handle is the idea or the experience of the Son through His absence. Let me put it this way, for me Jesus is the springboard to the Father and the Holy Spirit. The moments, and I mean moments, of His presence, peace, and comfort give me hope and then there are moments of my own when I must be let alone, resting spiritually and mentally.

The Holy Spirit – Among other things, how do we get off you know what. The Holy Sprit is action- spiritual, mental, physical. I, by choice, had been estranged from an old friend for four decades. It bothered me greatly and the self-imposed anguish would pop up periodically. It came to a resolution a few weeks ago. It was one of these episodes. Back and forth, anger and regret and yearning. Got up one morning, this being on my mind the night before, walked over to the phone and called. The years of distance disappeared just like that. And that was the work of the Holy Spirit.

Peace and Goodness my brothers and sisters,

How do I Experience the Holy Trinity

by

Janice Joy Ariza, OCCO/Obl



God in Three Persons: Blessed Trinity

As a child, I loved to sing in church. My absolute favorite part of the Sunday service was looking forward to the hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy!” I looked forward to the infusion of happiness praise brings.

***Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning, our song shall rise to thee;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and Mighty,
God in three persons, Blessed Trinity***

My enthusiasm would soar with every note and the result of singing this worship was God growing in love and understanding of the power of the Blessed Trinity deep within my heart. The experiences I have had with God as my Father began in a simple weekly attendance.

The way **the Father** makes His presence and influence known to me is in a solid caring way. He gives me his hand of protection keeping me from perilous decisions and situations that will hinder my walk. He is always reminding me of His care for me. I hear, “Trust me”, when the job did not work out or a disappointment seems too hard to shoulder. The Father of the Trinity knows what is good for me and my heart is touched with His wisdom.

Jesus, is daily at my side with His comforting presence and loving encouragement. I can count on His perfect counsel during very painful and lonely moments when he sits with me watching clouds part and to reveal the bright, hopeful moon. Jesus provides the relief from the daily emotional torment calming my tired soul. He truly understands me and that love penetrates my very being.

The amazing blessing of **the Holy Spirit** is so unique and sacred that the experience with this person is almost indescribable. A profound wonder occurs when the Spirit moves bringing infinite glory to what was once a very ordinary day or night. It is a unifying force making the unclear very clear. It is the merciful and mighty presence the hymn refers to filling me with direction, comfort and wonder.

A Cloud Received Him: *An Analysis of the Ascension of Jesus Christ*

by Bishop Seraphim Mary, OSF.

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." (Acts 1:9)



The fortieth day after Easter Sunday commemorates the Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven. The term used in the Western Church, *ascensio* signifies that Christ was raised up by His own powers. Within the Eastern Church this feast was known as *analepsis*, the taking up, and also as the *episozone*, salvation from on high – denoting that by ascending Christ completed the work of our redemption. Holy Tradition designates Mount Olivet near Bethany as the place where Christ left the earth. As an Ecumenical feast it ranks with the feasts of the Passion, of Easter, and of Pentecost as being amongst the most solemn of the liturgical calendar.

The Ascension is the capstone of the life of Jesus Christ, and is made up of three key events: (1) Christ's final departure from the earth; (2) His going up into heaven; and, (3) The taking of His place at the right hand of the Father. These events are affirmed in the *Nicene Creed* and in the *Apostles' Creed*, and implies Jesus' humanity as being taken into Heaven.

The historical observance of the Ascension is located in the time of the Church Fathers, and although there is little evidence of it prior to the fifth century, St. Augustine affirmed that it is of Apostolic origin and claimed that it was of universal observance before his time. Mention of the feast is also found in the writings of St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and in the Constitution of the Apostles.

Certain local customs are connected with the liturgy during this feast, such as the blessing of beans and grapes after the Commemoration of the Dead in the *Latin Canon*, the blessing of first fruits within the English *Book of Common Prayer* on Rogation Days, and processions with banners outside the churches to commemorate the entry of Christ into heaven. There is also a uniquely English custom of carrying at the head of the procession a banner bearing the device of the lion, and at the foot the banner, an image of a dragon to symbolize the triumph of Christ in His ascension over the evil one.

The story of Christ's ascension can be found in the *Gospel of Luke* and the *Book of Acts*.

The Cistercian Order: a True Blessing

by

Janice Joy Ariza, OCCO/Obl



My experiences with the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross have been filled with blessings. At times it reminds me of the Blessed Trinity having three integrated parts. The Abbot Oscar Joseph is like the wonderful Father giving direction and guidance while lovingly keeping me on track with my faith and life choices. He sets the standard for spiritual success with a solid knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

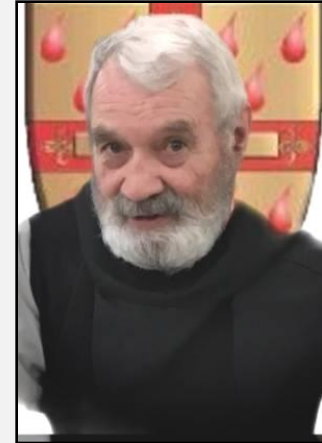
The second piece is the prayer and support of the Oblates and members. Their devotion to the Order is invaluable. A caring and dependable group of believers who demonstrate Christ like grace and friendship. This community lifts up one another and carries each other's burdens and celebrates their joys.

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit is the miraculous force keeping us all connected from every part of the world living the Benedictine way. Reaching out in hospitality and keeping a daily balance in how we all relate to each other, is proof that God is at work in each one of our lives.

In addition the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross is a very personal connection for me because my son-in-law, Br. Benedict, was so devoted to this organization of monks who do not live in a monastery. He dearly loved the Abbot. Before he went onto rest in peace, he requested that I stay involved with the Order and assist the Abbot in his ministry and support his vision. It has been a time of insight and challenge. My faith has deepened and as I continue to stay committed, I find it a joy to be a part of such an accepting monastic order.

My Experience With of the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross

by
Br. Albert Joseph, OCCO+

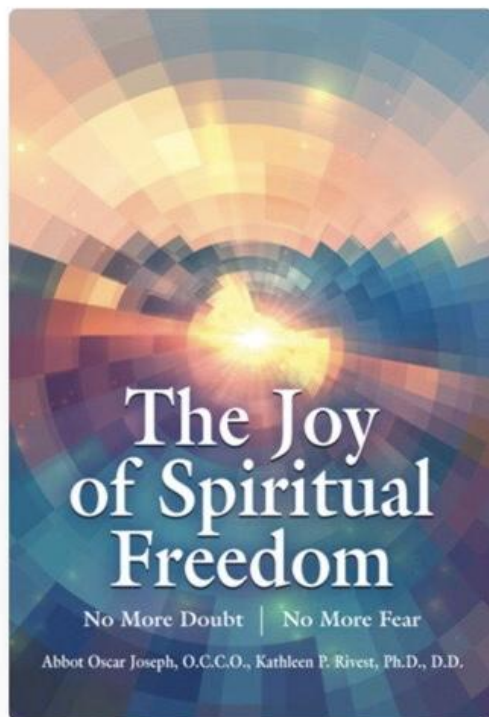


There are three areas that I would like to share regarding my experience with the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross: history, expectations, and development.

My history –My journey toward religious life probably started about seventeen years ago when I was first attracted to a form of spirituality as practiced in the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church and in the Churches of Orthodoxy. At the same time, I started attending a free adult school of Philosophy, The Aquinas School, sponsored by two retired professors of philosophy from Niagara University. What is the connection? The combined interest in Orthodox spirituality and Philosophy led me to surf for online information and schools dealing with both. The result led me to the OCCO, having an order and a school. I applied and was awarded an honorary degree via the OCCO, having to meet strict standards part of which involved letters of recommendations from two PhDs.

Expectations – I eventually became an orthodox subdeacon being attached to a small Orthodox Monastery. Being married, I was assigned to serve the monastery as best I could. The arrangement was fulfilling spiritually. I was able to merge family life, secular life, and religious life. As things sometimes go, the monastery closed, due primarily to the health needs of the monks. The door opened wide to the OCCO. A monastic order, life being external of walls, spiritual guidance, having its own college seminary, a history and a constitution, embracing Anglican - Catholic- Orthodox traditions, clerical Apostolic Succession, God providing another path to Him.

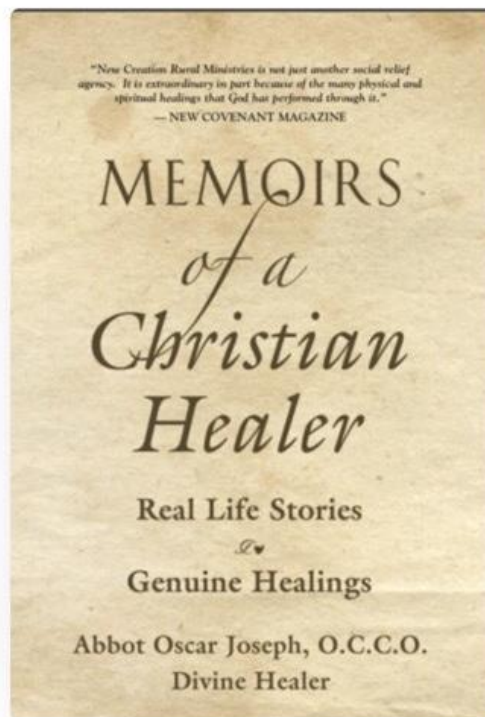
Development -- My experiences and participation in the Order have opened a path to living the Gospel and this is the best of the best - to put the other first, to serve first. It took a lifetime to see it this way. My saint to follow is the good thief next to Jesus on the cross. Just remember me when you come into your kingdom. Needed- nothing more.



The Joy of Spiritual Freedom

No More Doubts | No More Fear

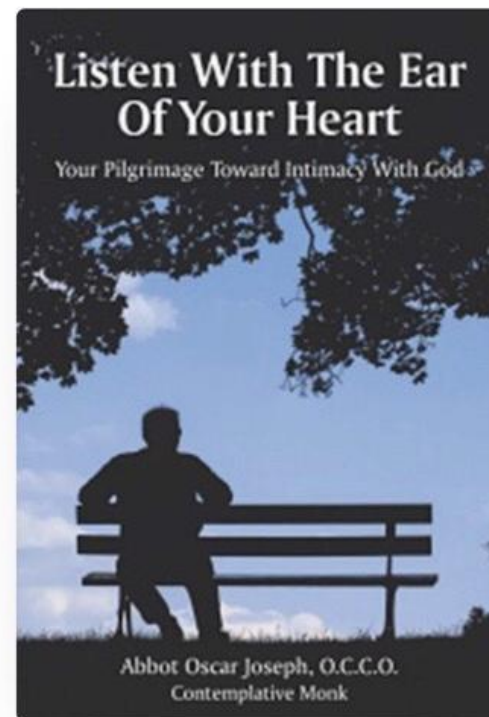
The Joy of Spiritual Freedom is the first of a trilogy that leads and inspires the reader to enter into a joy-filled relationship with a loving God. It is grounded in Biblical wisdom revealing how to remove debilitating doubt and fear. It draws from inspirational letters and case studies that illustrate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



Memoirs of a Christian Healer

Real Life Stories | Genuine Healings

Memoirs of a Christian Healer chronicles the miraculous works of God. 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. The many stories are of real people and genuine healings.



Listen with the Ear of Your Heart

Your Pilgrimage Toward Intimacy with God

God created you to yearn for intimacy with Him. 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.

For more information on 20% discount and Newsletter go to
AbbotOscarJoseph.com

Public Ministry of Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO

***This service will deepen the life of your church
and give others an opportunity to come and meet your community.***

Description of Seminars

***The Abbot lives and proclaims God's Love and Mercy
He is a dynamic, inspiring teacher and healer.***

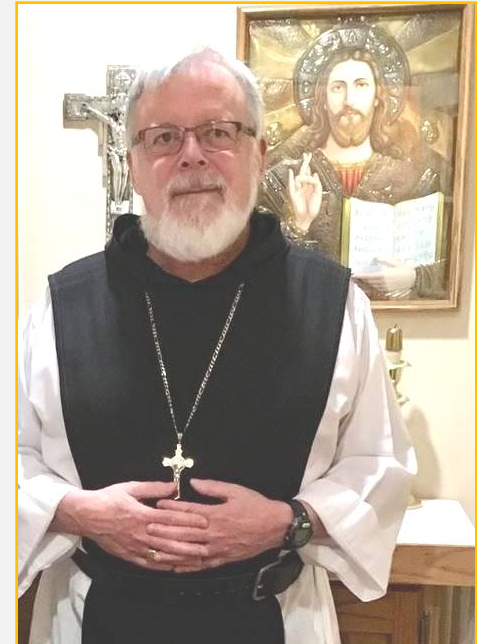
Retreats, Seminars can be for one day or several days in length.
Excellent for small groups (10-30 individuals)

General topics

Spiritual Freedom no more fear, no more doubt
(The Joy of Spiritual Freedom)

Creating and maintaining a sustainable prayer life
(Listen with the Ear of Your Heart)

Developing a healing ministry
(Memoirs of a Divine Healer)



Retreats and Seminars presentations could be ongoing or for a specific period depending on the group's needs.
Retreats and Seminars are excellent for Bible study groups, Sunday school classes, and other Christian Community events.
Spiritually based topics can vary depending on the group's needs and include marital communication or sexual addiction/pornography.

Healing Services

Excellent for large groups or congregations

Healing services begin with an inspiring sermon on God's Love and Mercy followed by persons who seek physical, emotional, or spiritual healing who come forward for prayer. The service is reverential.

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction consists of individual meetings to aid in spiritual growth. Meet one time per month via video or in person. The program is specifically designed for the individual's personal needs and Christian denominational background. (For men only)

Contact

Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO
AbbotOscarJoseph@aol.com
Winston Salem, NC

**For more information on 20% discount and Newsletter go
to AbbotOscarJoseph.com**



Meet the Abbot



Abbot Oscar Joseph, O.C.C.O. holds a Master's of Science in Education, doctoral degrees in Sacred Theology (Scripture) and Christian Counseling, as well as several honorary doctorates.

He has been a TV and radio personality, former pastor of a local conservative Anglican Church, college educator, retreat master and seminar leader.

Abbot Oscar Joseph is currently a Bishop in the Independent Anglican Church, Canada Synod and serves as the Abbot General of the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross. The Cistercian Order is a contemplative worldwide religious Order and one of the oldest of its type. Abbot Oscar Joseph has been called a leader in the Benedictine movement in the United States.

Abbot Oscar Joseph has been a Christian Counselor and Spiritual Director to hundreds over the past thirty-five years. He has authored a number of books, including the trilogy *Memoirs of a Christian Healer*, *The Joy of Spiritual Freedom* and *Listen with the Ear of Your Heart* along with numerous articles on spiritual direction, liturgy, emotional fitness and leisure.

He has also conducted healing services throughout the East Coast of the United States.

Abbot Oscar Joseph has an extensive background as a college educator. He taught psychology, sociology, Old and New Testament, English literature and ethics. He is the Founder/President of St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary, which provides a scholarly and classically Anglo-Catholic educational experience.

Retired from his counseling practice in 2019, Abbot Oscar Joseph is currently focused on his duties as leader of the Cistercian Order, providing spiritual direction, conducting seminars and healing services.

**For more information on 20% discount and Newsletter go to
AbbotOscarJoseph.com**



Over the past twenty years God has spoken to me directly and often regarding the Cistercians.

He has always been encouraging.

Clearly He has sustained us through His grace.

Below our Good Lord's describes what He wants us to be.

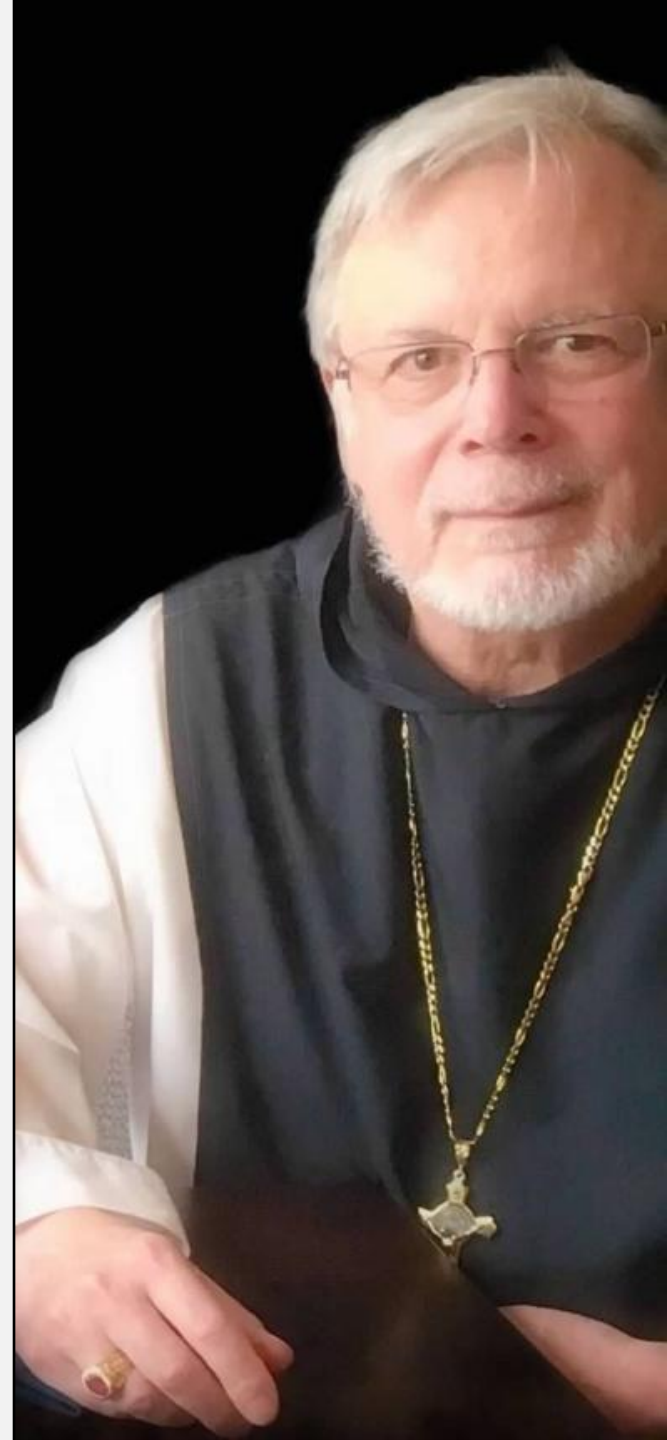
“We, The Cistercians of the Holy Cross, are embedded icons, living sacramentals; who sustain, grace, and hold together the fiber of our communities. Our martyrdom is conversatio, stability, and obedience.

We live in and are influenced by the heretic nature of our culture. However, while clothed in our holy habits we become sacred icons. When people gaze upon us they look into their hope and see reflected back the Source of all Hope. We become sacred signs, living sacramentals.

The Pax of our contemplative lives provides the necessary stillness to speak without words. The rhythm of ora et labora and the earnestness of our vows are our martyr’s cross.

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.

Gentleness will lead others to God’s eternal intent of true joy and freedom.”





Br. Columcille, OCCO+

Br. Columcille, OCCO+ was ordained to the Holy Priesthood of Christ in April of 2006 thus making him the very first monk in the Order to be ordained by a bishop of the Order.

In the photo on the right Rev. Br. Columcille, OCCO is giving ++ Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO his priestly blessing.

Summary report of findings from research project commissioned by Lord Abbot General researched by Br. Columcille, OCCO+

As the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross approaches our 40th anniversary, ++Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO asked for research regarding any other religious orders/communities based in the United States that are like ours. The following information sketches my methods and results.

There are approximately 140 internet search engines and web directories available today. I decided to limit myself to the five most commonly used in the United States: Google, Yahoo, Bing, Ask, and Duck Duck Go.

Then, I made a list of descriptors for our Order, our mission and the opportunities/services provided to members. These included (but were not limited to): *dispersed, non-residential, religious order/community, apostolic succession, Independent Anglican, Independent Catholic, conservative, monastic, monks, vowed religious, priests, ordination/incardination, brothers, sisters, novice, life-professed, formation, postulant, oblate, seminary/theological college, extern, rule, constitution, abbot.*

With these descriptors identified, I began the process of searching for them singularly, or in conjunction with one another, using my five search engines one at a time. I started with directories and continued on to individual sites. With the vast results, I limited my time for each group, concentrating on any "about us" information that could provide structure, membership and mission statements. I used this data in comparison with the aforementioned descriptor criteria related to the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.



Continues on the following page

Over the course of about seventy hours, I collected, categorized, and edited a pool of religious groups. The vast majority of these groups were easily culled by failing to meet the key descriptors of our Order. Many were exclusively Roman Catholic or Anglican, etc. so failed in comparison to our more ecumenical membership. Others were extremely liberal, ordaining women to the priesthood, having no claim to apostolic succession, etc. These were removed when compared to our more conservative charism both socially and liturgically. Others failed by a lack of clear structure and/or mission statement. These were more like loose confraternities made up of mostly laypeople. More of a Third Order aspiration, but without any guiding Rule or discernable leadership. And of course, there were dozens of dead links and references to groups I could not find, or that had a severely outdated “cover page” and nothing else. One has to assume that these groups are now defunct, if they ever existed in the first place.

Lastly and sadly, there were the pretenders. And there were *a lot of them!* These groups usually had very few members and seemed more to be *role playing* at being monks, hermits, even priests and bishops. I shudder to think of the people they have misled into grievous spiritual harm.

To conclude, I can proudly say this to you: Father Abbot, Brothers, Sisters, Oblates and friends; we are *unique*. There is *no other group* that can lay claim to our holy foundation, structure and government, programs, membership, formation opportunities and requirements, not to mention our longevity at 40 years! The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Common Observance is alone in its legitimacy, tenacity, and excellence.

My God bless and protect this Order and all of the earnest, holy people who that make it our true spiritual home. Amen

Dearest Brother Columcille, OCCO+ the Cistercians will always be grateful for your labor of love and faithfulness.



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

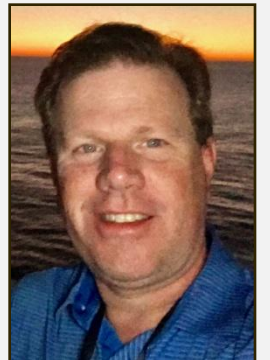
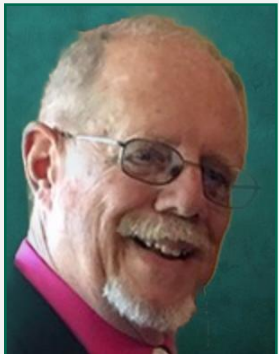
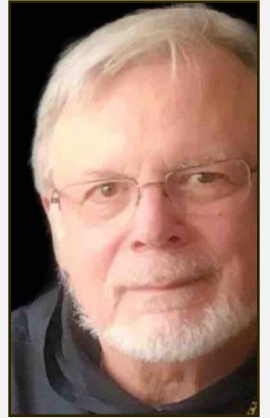
The “We Got Your Back Program”

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

Honorary Doctoral Degrees

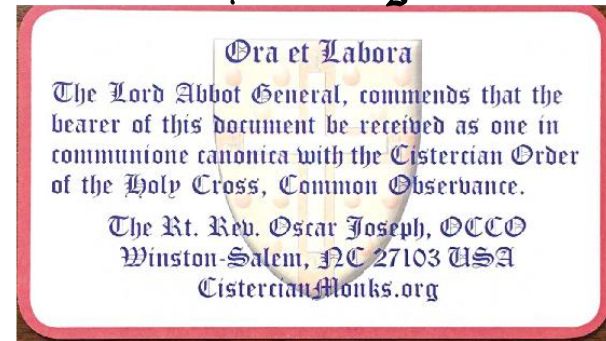
St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary offer these degrees for the purpose of rewarding or advancing outstanding persons. Honorary degrees may be awarded to a person deserving of honor by virtue of scholarly distinction, noteworthy public service or significant contribution to the church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

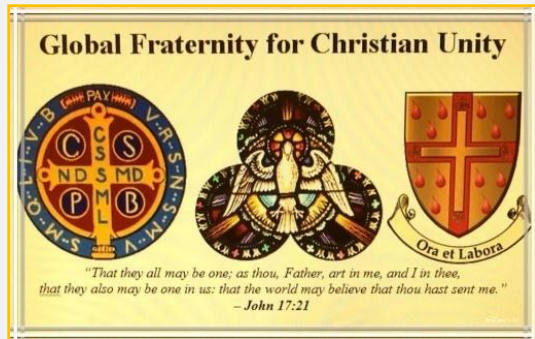
I pray that this document will remind you of our shared life of prayer, work and that you are in a communion of persons who celebrate a common faith and discipline, The Rule of St. Benedict.

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.

**The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross sponsors two FaceBook 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

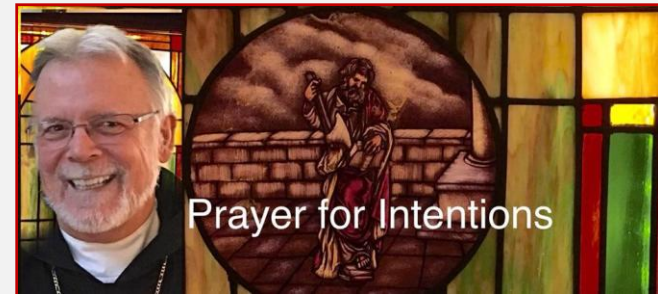


This group offers a private forum for MEMBERS ONLY In order to provide a venue of encouragement for continued spiritual formation of individuals and groups invested in the discipline of prayer in a safe environment free of criticism.

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.

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

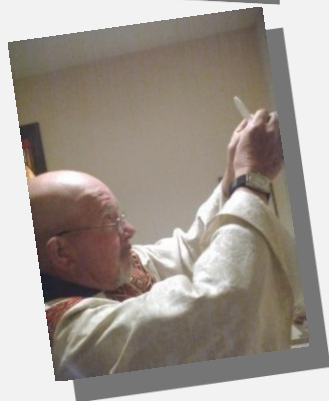
Both groups have ministered for over two years.

Monks can also be deacons and priests



Deacon Monks can

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



Priest Monks can also

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



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

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

- We celebrate valid apostolic lines of succession, the seven sacraments and liturgical worship consistent with the historical churches. 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.

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

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**

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*