

Obsculta

"Listen with the ear of your heart."

June 2022

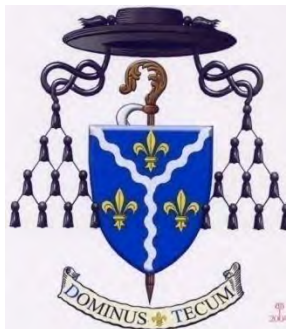
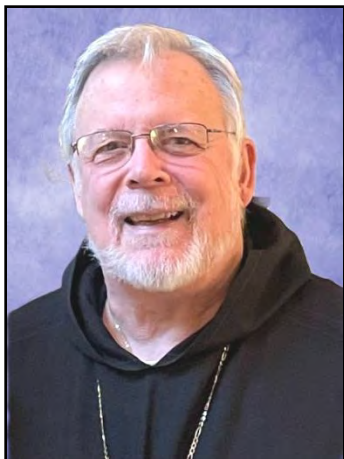


"Gratitude will open our souls to the unity of God, self, and others. Gratitude moves us from limitations and fear to expansion and love. Gentleness will lead others to God's eternal intent of true joy and freedom."

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

Celebrating Forty One Years



Celebrating 25 Years of Abbot's Service

Dear Cistercians and friends:

So far my twenty-fifth year in service to the Cistercians has been rather filled with many opportunities to help people fulfill God's call upon their lives. I have had a number of prayers answered for emotional and physical healings as well as spiritual growth in others and myself.

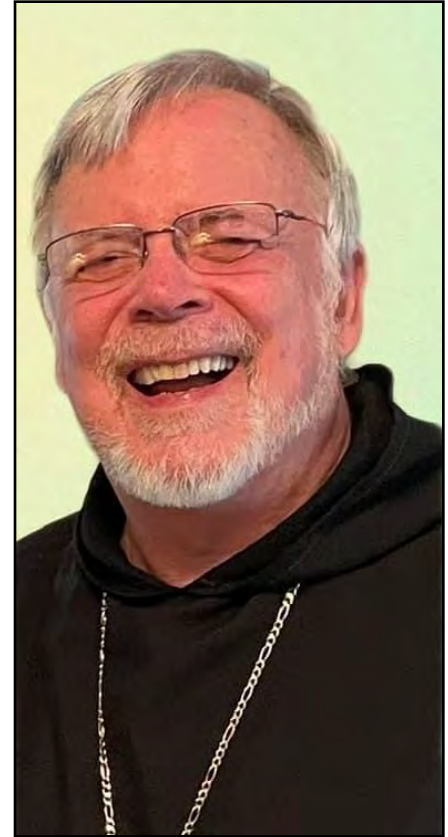
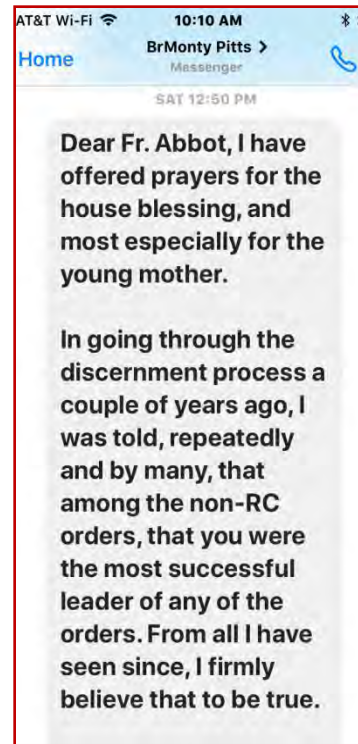
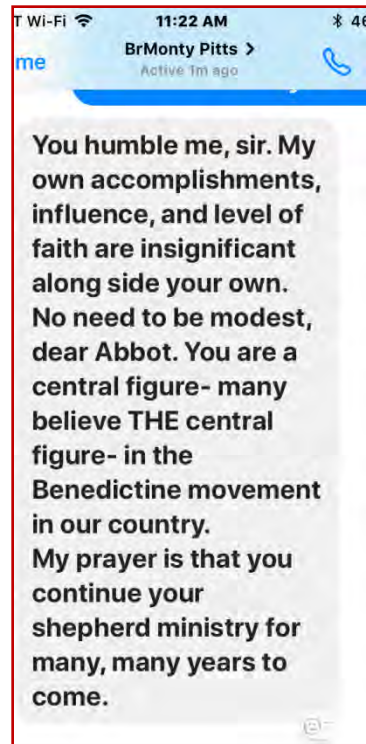
I am enjoying mentoring many of our members. Watching them grow spiritually is fulfilling for me also. I cannot compliment them enough. We have an excellent Order. I am confident that God is pleased with us. Following the Rule of St. Benedict and diligently keeping our vows of Stability, Obedience, and Conversatio is a sure means of spiritual success.

If we want success in our actions, the best approach is to be patient and listen to God. What is His perfect will for you? If you are already walking in His general will, the Bible is clear on how to do that, then finding His perfect will for you will not be difficult. Listen and follow. Not only ask the what but the when and how.

God will bless you and give you the graces to complete what He has given you to do. He will not necessarily bless what you have decided to do on your own and then ask Him to bless it, or you get in over your head and ask Him to fix it.

Our walk should lead to a profound understanding that everything is prayer, everything is God, and that we live in, with, and through Him.

Celebrating 25 Years of Abbot's Service



My dear Abbot Monty Pitts even though you are now in heavenly celebration please know that your kind words continue to inspire me.



A Blessing That Changed Our Lives by Lucas Salinas:

(Lucas is a “We Got Your back” volunteer)

Me and my wife (Julie) have had our fair share of struggles.

For myself my life turned around when I decided to rededicate my life to God and a Christian life. I have noted an absolute 180 in my life since making that very important decision. I had no idea what I was actually missing out on.

So when we had an opportunity to bless our new home and cars from Satan's evil influence, both Julie and I jumped on it.

It was an awesome afternoon. We, with the Abbot and his wife, had some laughs and played with the kids before the business at hand took place. We laughed over cool glasses of apple juice and milk. Remember, our house has two new babies who have dominated our refrigerator.

The house blessing experience was surreal. The house felt clean, holy, and ready for us to raise our new family in a COMPLETE house of God.

The Abbot also blessed our cars.

I now have full confidence that Satan and his evil tendencies and influence cannot enter our home or our marriage.

THANK YOU, Abbot Oscar Joseph for blessing our home and cars. You mean a lot to us both. Thank you, thank you, and thank you. Praise God!

The Abbot writes: This family is a joy and a blessing to me.



Lucas and Julie Salinas. (Julie has received our highest honor, Companions of the Holy Cross.)



**Rev. Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO's
visit to the Holy Cross Monastery, May 16-20, 2022
by Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO**



Over the past 21 years, many people have visited the monastery. Most visitors were members seeking some time with their Abbot. I can happily report that each visit was rewarding to both the visitor and myself. Naturally, the visits represented the individual's personality and needs. We have a broad spectrum of members, thus a specific agenda for each meeting.

The principal agenda for our meeting with Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO was to conditionally ordain him into the diaconate, followed by ordination into the Order of Priests. Those goals were sufficient to fill our time and energies. However, the visit became much more, very much more.

Prior to the seventeen-hour drive from Lincoln, NE, to Winston Salem, NC, Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO, and his grandparents had to serve their other family members' urgent needs. This required travel to Florida and W. Virginia. Additionally, the grandmother, Mary, had fallen, broken her knee cap, and hurt her back.

These three heroes were able to pull it together not only to make the trip but to participate in all our activities fully. The grandparents are heroes and lovely people, we thoroughly enjoyed and loved dearly.

Br. Matthew, OCCO+, and I spent time in prayer, conversations on pastoral utilization and administration of the sacraments, and counseling techniques to best address common marital problems that his parishioners might encounter. We also set goals and timelines to achieve his personal and pastoral objectives. Naturally, there was the opportunity to chat and recreate.

God always makes Himself evident during the many monastic visits. During Br. Matthew's visit, our Good Lord was healing, inspiring, confirming, mystically revealing, and felt by all present. Neither time nor words would adequately capture the magnificence of our many Godly experiences. The experiences confirmed that God is indeed pleased with The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross.

I ask His continued blessings upon Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO+ and his family.



My Pilgrimage to The Holy Cross Monastery in Winston Salem, NC A Marvelously Mystical Journey with M&M

by Rev. Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO

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This week was an extremely busy but fruitful week. Before leaving my home in Lincoln, Nebraska I knew a few things, the first was the fact that I was going to take my final vows as a Life-Professed Cistercian Monk, the second was I had a Diaconal Ordination and a Priesthood Ordination coming up, and the third was we were going to accomplish all of that in three days. No pressure.

Each day at the Monastery honestly felt like paradise and time was almost nonexistent. Between morning prayer, study, and great conversation we found ourselves more than once asking what happened to the time as it seemed to flyby with little effort. All three days started with Abbot Oscar Joseph picking me up from my hotel at 10 am and returning to the Monastery for the day.

On Tuesday, I was conditionally ordained to the Diaconate. During the Abbot's homily I was reminded that my job and vocation is to be a Monk first, after that everything else follows. Abbot Oscar Joseph also awarded both of my Grandparents the Companions of the Holy Cross which took them most definitely by surprise and to have them involved while I was clothed in my habit was no doubt a special moment for all of us. After the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, we had a small reception with delicious food and dessert courtesy of Miss Kathleen.



Wednesday, we celebrated a desert day and went horseback riding. I've been riding horses for most of my life but I couldn't help but make the comment when we were signing "our lives away" (thanks Melissa) that I had lost count of how many times I've been on a horse over the last three years. I'm an experienced rider but I wouldn't consider myself a professional by any stretch of the imagination. We ended the day with a delicious meal and I returned to the hotel with my Grandparents to wind down for the evening.

Thursday started early for me. Just like when I was ordained to the Priesthood for the first time no alarm was necessary. At 5 am I was "wide eyed and bushy tailed," as we would say in the South, and I didn't need coffee to get my day going. I spent an hour in silent prayer and contemplation, and the thing that stuck with me the most was whether living or deceased I have a lot of people to thank for encouraging me in my vocation as a Monk and Priest.

At 3:00 pm we began getting ready for the Mass. I knew to expect Bishop Scott, Jay, Miss Kathleen, and my Grandparents but what I didn't know was the Homily that Bishop Scott had prepared for the occasion. One of the things I will always remember is when the good Bishop said, "Matthew remember you are a Monk first and a Parish Priest second. As a Monk you are called to Sainthood"





Before I knew it, the time to prostrate before the Holy Altar during the Litany of the Saints was there and after that my hands would be consecrated and I would be vested as a Priest. But what I didn't expect was to literally experience what Saint Paul accurately described in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Saint Paul says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." (Hebrews 12:1)

Though there were only seven of us present at the time in my mind I felt like I was in a Cathedral surrounded by the Holy Men and Women that came and walked this path before me. I could almost hear them cheering, "Matthew, Matthew, Matthew."



When it came time to be vested I sprung up without assistance, and knelt before the Bishop ready to take my vows as a Priest. After the laying on of hands and sharing a silent moment with Abbot Oscar Joseph it was time for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Before I go any further let me say this, the opportunity to concelebrate with your Bishop is always a honor and a pleasure, but to concelebrate the Holy Sacrifice with two Bishops far exceeded any expectations I had at that moment. There I stood, a young Priest, concelebrating with two men I have come to love and appreciate as fellow workers in Our Blessed Lord's Vineyard, I teared up but to quote the band Queen, "the show must go on," and so we continued with the Mass.



Before I knew it the Mass was over and we were gathered downstairs for the reception where we were met with a delicious assortment of sliders, other various finger foods, and a Strawberry Crème Bundt Cake that I highly recommend. Holy Father Benedict states in our Holy Rule that no one should be given pride of place so I felt it right after all that had been done for me that I should gather everyone's plates and silverware, and make sure they made it to the kitchen sink.

Though time didn't feel like it existed for the last three days after about an hour and a half, came the time for goodbyes. First I walked Bishop Scott out to his vehicle, thanked him for everything, and sent him with one more small final blessing. Then came time to load the car with some of the things I had been storing at the Monastery and say goodbye to Abbot Oscar Joseph, Miss Kathleen, and Jay. I truly am terrible with goodbyes and in my case it's not goodbye but see you again, but that didn't stop me from giving tons of hugs before leaving.

So, the question I pose to you is this, do you feel called to be a fellow worker in the Lord's Vineyard and if yes, what is stopping you?





Have you ever experienced a literal healing?

By Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO+



Healings when they occur are always miraculous. It's literally God showing us His unfathomable mercy. Healings can be temporary but always the prayer is that if it be God's Will to heal the person permanently.

As someone who's lived with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) since I was ten years old, I know chronic pain. My Great-Grandmother had it, my Grandmother and Mom both have it, and naturally the torch was passed to me thanks to genetics. It's been part of my life for 18 years at this point and every now and again it reminds me who's who in the world of Brother Matthew Pius's organs. At best it can feel like a small cramp, and at its worst it can feel like a fully grown Armadillo is trying to dig its way out of your navel. Not pleasant imagery, I know.

Well, low and behold, day two of my trip to see Abbot Oscar Joseph in Winston-Salem IBS decided to come on the scene because it hadn't made an appearance in a while, and I knew that day we were supposed to go horseback riding. I wasn't going to miss it and I had been praying for a miracle all morning. At 10am, the Abbot arrived to pick me up and I had already informed him of my sufferings of that morning. When I got in the vehicle he informed me that we could cancel the trail ride if I didn't feel up to it, but he also said he had an idea.

At that point I would've drunk a gallon of Apple Cider Vinegar if I had been told it would fix my malady. After Morning Prayer, the Abbot said (to paraphrase) "let's try healing prayer."

The answer was obviously yes. I had been praying for a miracle all morning, and if there's one thing I trust as much as my Gastroenterologist it's a Christian Healer and the Sacramentals of the Church. I anointed my stomach with Holy Oil above where it felt like I had an Armadillo trying to kill me and with a gentle touch Abbot Oscar Joseph rested his hands on my shoulders and started praying. I honestly don't know how long we sat there together, me silently listening to his prayers and waiting for the Holy Spirit to say or do something. As suddenly as the pain had set in that morning, a warm feeling overcame where my pain had been and I literally went from a pain level of 10 to 0 in what could've been as little as 3 minutes or as long as a half hour. The point is my pain was GONE!

If I were a better dancer, I probably would've danced an Irish jig but I stumble over my own feet on a good day so instead I sat there in absolute awe that I had experienced a genuine healing and a miracle from Our God.





Your Excellency,

I cannot thank you enough for this week. I am so filled with joy and I am so humbled by the massive amounts of God's Grace that we experienced this week.

I'm so thankful for my Cistercian Family. I'm humbled that I get to be part of the next generation of Monks and Priests. I feel extremely privileged to have stood at the Altar with you and Our Lord. I will never forget Tuesday or today as long as I live.

Much love,
Brother Matthew Pius, OCCO+





**Rev. Br. Matthew Pius, OCCO
Greets and welcomes you to join him as he
shares his visit with the Abbot**



**Hi!!!
Come visit with me
A short video series
10 great videos about my visit with the
Abbot, ordinations, and events.**

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9539540>





The Companions of the Holy Cross is a medium for the Cistercians of the Holy Cross to give their highest honor to those individuals who demonstrate extra ordinary love for the Holy Cross through outstanding qualities of character. We have given this honor to:

Michael and Mary Hagood



Reflections on the Ordinations of Brother Matthew Pius, OCCO+

By Jay Nostrand, OCCO/Obl



I had the great good fortune to be present at the ordinations of Brother Matthew Pius to the Diaconate on May 17 and to the Priesthood on May 19. One drawback to being a dispersed order is that we cannot gather together to experience and celebrate significant events and ceremonies such as these ordinations. I live near Winston-Salem, only five and a half miles from our Monastery, and I was able to accept our Abbot's kind and gracious invitation to attend and participate. I hope to give you some sense of what it was like to be there.

In addition to Brother Matthew and our Abbot, the attendees included, Kathleen, Bishop Scott (who joined in conducting the ceremonies), Matthew's grandparents, Mary and Michael, and myself. Upon arriving at the Monastery, which is located in a peaceful, residential neighborhood surrounding a large pond, we were guided to the chapel.

The Abbot began the services by standing at the altar, lifting up his hands and praying, as he puts it, until the heavens open up and grace descends. These were powerful moments where I had a sense of the presence of God and the Saints there in the room. In that place and time, the Abbot seems to be the conduit for those presences and you can see it and feel that movement as it affects him physically. He would say, and I would agree, that his bodily reactions and responses are the manifestation of the Holy Spirit moving in him and through him into the room and out to us.

In both ordinations, Matthew was provided teaching and encouragement. The Abbot, during the Diaconate, and Bishop Scott, during the Priesthood, had simple, yet deeply meaningful, messages. Those messages had similar themes about the importance of Matthew tending to his relationship with God before tending to his responsibilities as a priest. In other words, he is to remember that he is to be a monk before he is a pastor. Although those teachings were directed to Matthew there is truth in them for all of us.

I won't take time to recap the details of the services. Many of you, no doubt, are already familiar with those details through experience or knowledge or both. What I can relate is the sense of majesty, power and continuity that comes from performing the rituals in the presence of God and Christian witnesses both seen and unseen. The actions are simple but the context is profound. Matthew was joined in a succession that began with Christ and His Apostles and that will continue through eternity. His ordinations affirm his current relationship with Christ and empower him for the work God has for him in the coming years.

I was privileged, honored and humbled to be part of the proceedings and I thank our Abbot for including me. I look forward with great anticipation to what God will accomplish through His newest priest. I pray for him and for those he will shepherd Nebraska and wherever else the Lord may place him. I also pray that each of you are experiencing the presence of the Living God wherever you are and in whatever you do.
Dominus Tecum.

The way I understand my priesthood

By Br. Raphael Foshay, Ph.D. OCCO+



Monastic vows frame and define the way I understand and see my way in the priesthood. I will attempt to explain this by viewing monastic vows as they are understood in the Eastern Church, namely, as being themselves sacramental and therefore, like priesthood and baptism, indelible.

The Church in the last half-century has been attempting to address its responsibility toward the current, dominantly secular, state of the world. However, the increasing dismissal of the relevance of the monastic tradition to the contemporary church (for instance, the current attack in the Roman Church on the cloistered women's orders) indicates that a fundamental breach has taken place with the tradition of the church, such that the values of the interior life in our time have been dangerously sidelined.

As Thomas Merton observed in the 1960's regarding our pursuit of space exploration: "What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we are not able to cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves? This is the most important of all voyages of discovery, and without it all the rest are not only useless but disastrous."

Cistercian monastic life has from its inception in the 11th c. has been uncompromising regarding the foundational importance of the contemplative life. As the anonymous Cistercian text of the 12 c., "Treatise on the Interior Mansion," expresses it: "No discipline is better than that by which a man comes to the knowledge of himself."

In the Vatican II documents and in the post-conciliar period, it seems that we have forgotten this fundamental teaching of the monastic centuries. Instead of bringing its contemplative understanding to bear, the Churches have instead accepted the self-understanding of secular modernity on its own merits, and thus our attempt to bring the Church into better communication with the prevailing society, to make itself more understandable to the world, has resulted in the abandonment of our own birthright.

We have joined the world in its externally focused values, and thus have remade ourselves in the image of the world, rather than bringing to the world a fresh expression of the timeless message of the Gospel, a Gospel that speaks by its vital example of the life in Christ. Such a life is nourished first of all by prayer, and prayer originates in an interior effort ("when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret" Matt. 6:6), in face to face communication with God, in listening to his Son, the Logos, in whose image all is made, unfolds, and finds its purpose (John 1:1).

The Abbot replies: Br. Raphael, OCCO+ has called to our minds and hearts an essential charism of our Cistercian Order, developing our inner life which is focused on God. Twenty-one years ago God told me that we, the Cistercians would be to the USA what the monastics were to Europe during the Dark Ages. Meaning they brought light into the darkness and saved Europe. What Br. Raphael, OCCO+ unearthed is the current battle for our inner mind which is the source of our light/life. Thank you.

All Shall Be Well

By Janice Joy Ariza, OCCO Obl



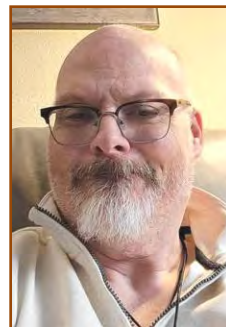
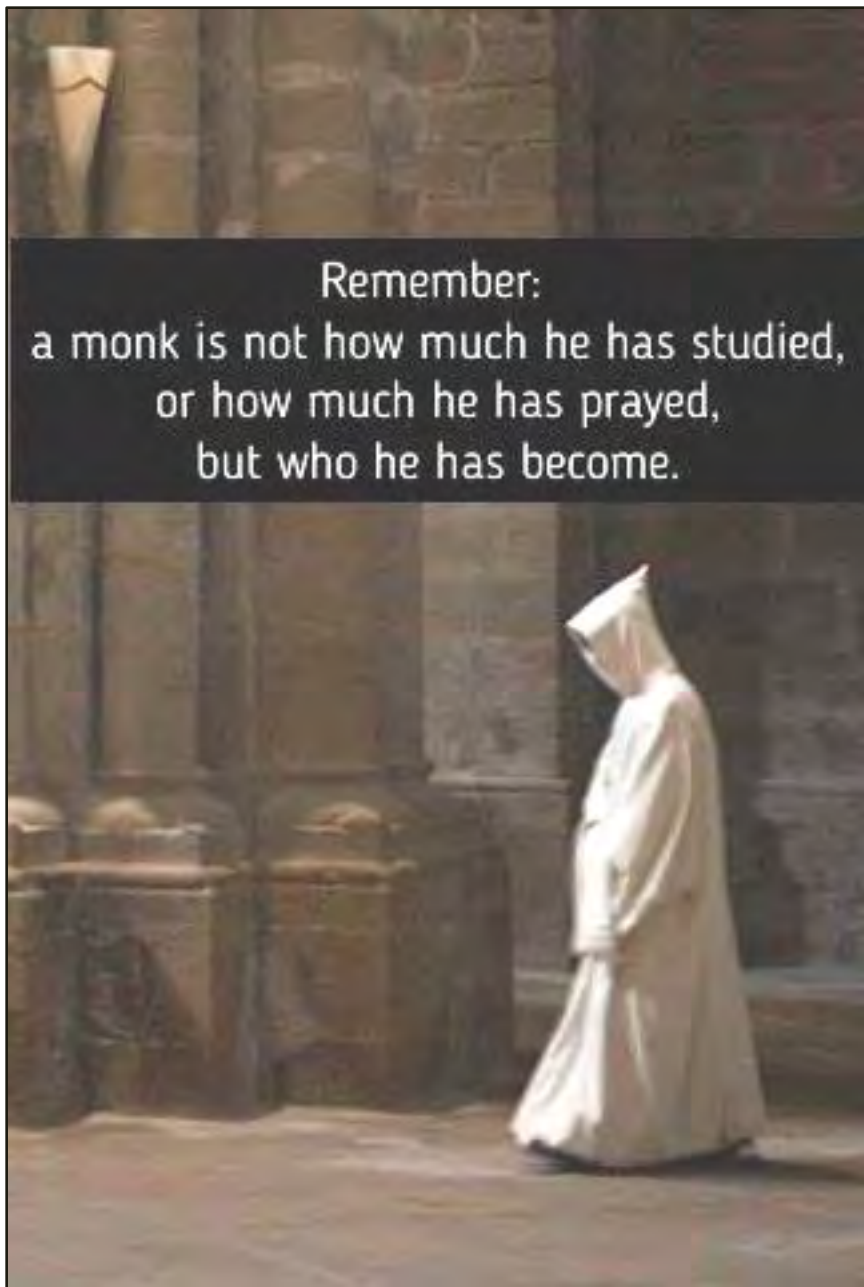
I recently was exposed to covid and had to quarantine. Although most of my work can be done at home, many arrangements needed to be made for my absence from the Center. The Benedictine Sisters I work for at St. Placid Priory have hospitality at the top of their list, so who would be there to greet retreatants and care for them instead of me? Others did come to the rescue in various shifts, but the importance of the presence a door keeper provides is valuable.

While in quarantine, one of my duties was to facilitate a program on Julian of Norwich. It was so appropriate to study an Anglican nun who was also Benedictine and had gone through the black plague at least twice, not to mention, she was an anchoress much like I am during the week. A support to the clergy and her community, she and her cat could be found at her cell window which was attached to the church to give encouragement and offer prayers.

I came to realize during my time away from my office reception window, that being there for others is valuable. The insights gained from listening to God deepens all relationships. Actually, the life of an oblate has these elements of stability and assistance.

Julian spent many years being an anchoress, and her most encouraging words she is remembered for are, "All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." I find that very comforting in the midst of all manner of things.





**A love note
from Allen, postulant**

"Just do it"

"Do not aspire to be called holy before you really are, but first be holy that you may more truly be called so." RB

"Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."

-- Matthew 6:2-4 NKJV

This is a paradox that St Benedict is laying out. It's just what's often called "the now and the not yet" of the Christian faith. In fact, it's not at all about HOW you get saved. It's about what you are free to do AFTER you are saved!

In other words, St Benedict is telling his monks -- and is also telling us -- and every single baptized Christian as well --to not go about uselessly taking up time and energy to make oneself into this super duper holy person that everyone admires and sets up on a pedestal. No, just do naturally what Christ has set you free to be able to do. Be who you already are by God's grace given in Holy Baptism. Or to paraphrase that old, well-known slogan from Nike: just do it. See RB4 for a holy list of doings.



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

For detailed information go to; www.CistercianMonks.org



These are Your Volunteers



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.



Brother Elias Rivas, OCCO

Sexuality in the Bible. A book that presents us with how to approach sexuality in connection with spirituality without prejudice and in accordance with the message expressed by the various authors that make up the various biblical texts in a simple and taboo-free way. Through it, the author takes us on a historical journey in its different contexts, demolishing myths and confusing concepts around sex as a grace from God for the exaltation of Love.



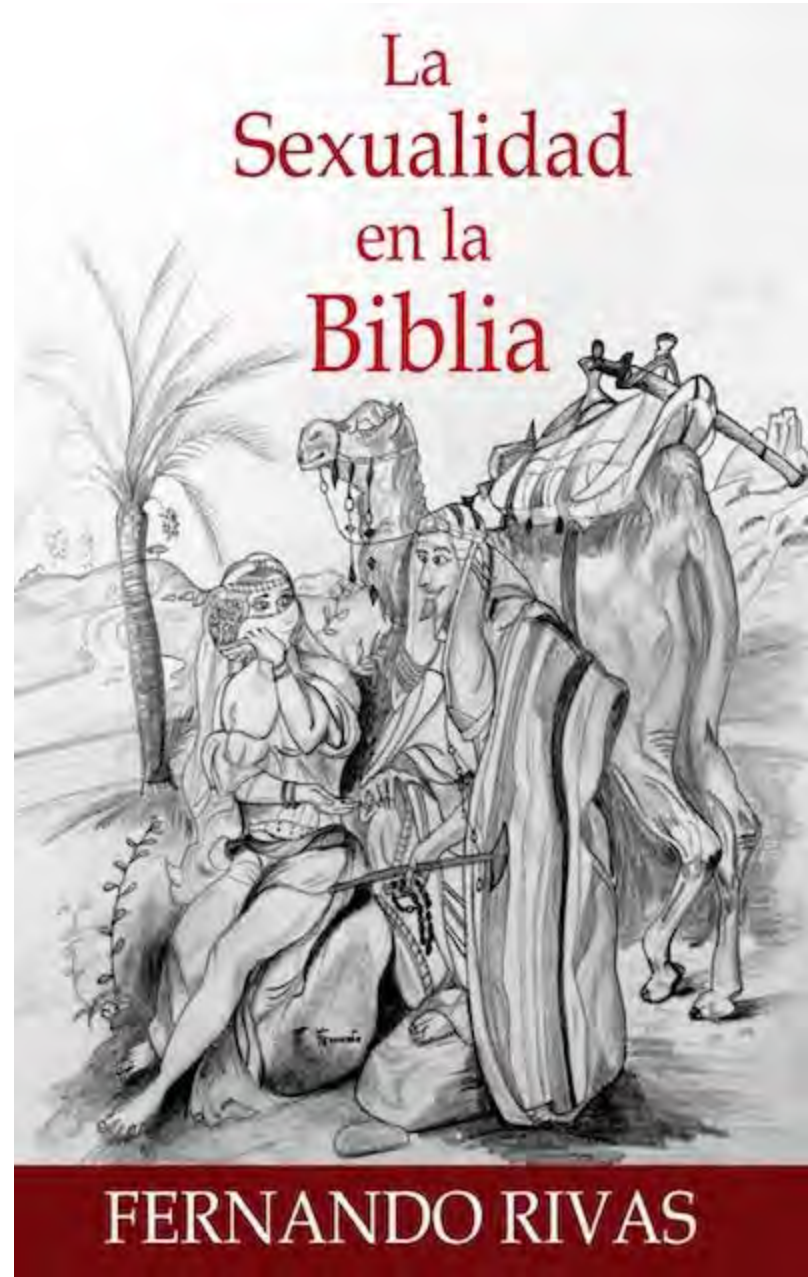
Brother Elias Rivas, OCCO

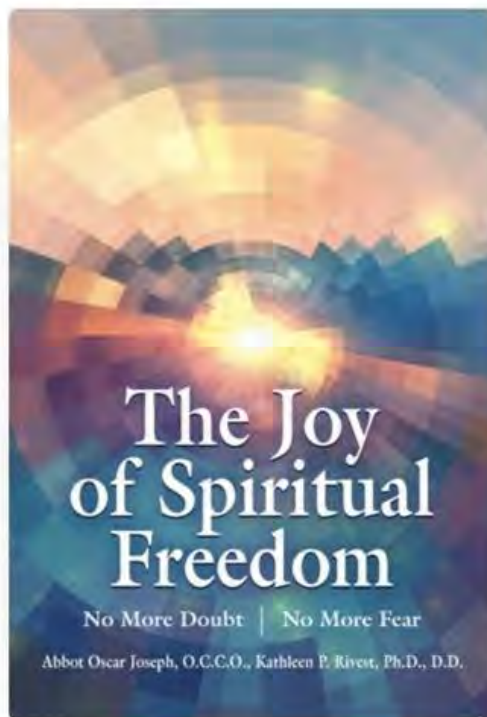
Is a man of many talents. He is a scholar, author, pastor, and now we celebrate his marvelous singing voice as he sings a power rendition of **“How Great Thou Art.”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3n9GMFbeu7Q>



I used a Spanish to English translator app on an eBook version of Br. Elias book. I can endorse it as an excellent scholarly presentation. Well worth the read. Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO

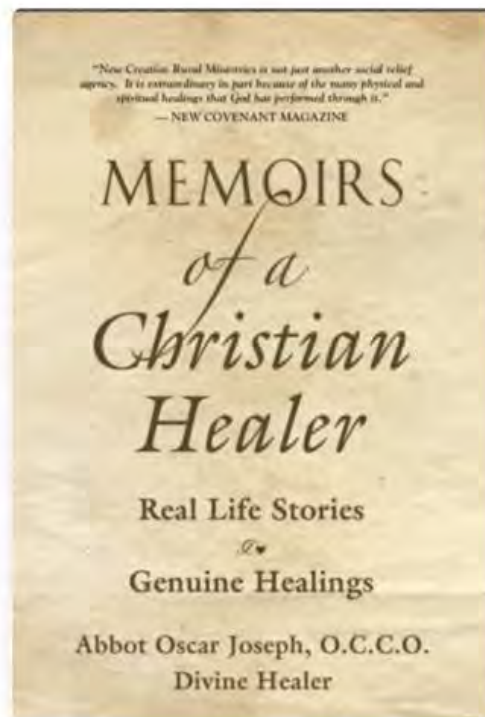




The Joy of Spiritual Freedom

No More Doubts | No More Fear

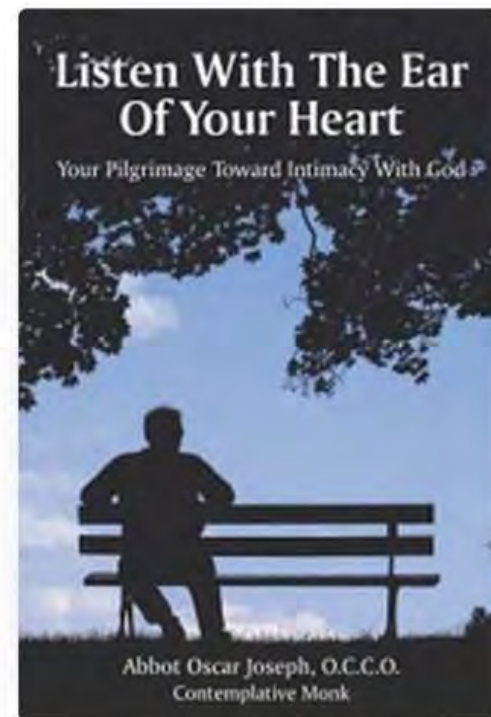
The Joy of Spiritual Freedom is the first of a trilogy that leads and inspires the reader to enter into a joy-filled relationship with a loving God. It is grounded in Biblical wisdom revealing how to remove debilitating doubt and fear. It draws from inspirational letters and case studies that illustrate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



The St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary
and
The St. Seraphim School of Orthodox Theology



St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary
welcomes students to a wide variety of degrees,
programs, and continuing educational opportunities.
Check our section at the Cistercian website or
www.StephenHarding.College for more information and
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*Off Campus Study Programs, Something for Everyone
Students may enroll at any time.*

**You choose the Programs and Courses that best meet
Your goals.**

**Continuing Education, CE
Certificate of Studies and Advanced Studies, CS/CAS.
Bachelor of Theology, Th.B.
Master of Theology, Th.M.
Doctor of Theology, Th.D.
Honorary Doctorates D.D. or LL.D.**

Saint Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary
is a Religious Order affiliated educational institution under
the authority of The Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, a 501 (non-
profit corporation. Our degrees are classified as
ecclesiastically accredited.

“Indeed, it has been a great, fruitful experience to have studied at St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary. I had finally attained one of my dreams, to have a theology doctorate, and I had done it thanks to the guidance and encouragement of the Abbot.”

“A wonderful by-product of education at St. Stephen Harding is the relationship one can develop with the personalized focus. Frankly, I want to continue studying as a result and that’s the best compliment I can offer anyone involved with St. Stephen Harding, or any student considering the pursuit of a degree. Bravo! Rev Oscar Joseph, may God continue to bless your endeavors and seminary – they have certainly blessed me!”

“I am lead to boast about the education received as well as „free“ insight offered from the Abbot. I must admit, I wasn’t sure I could pull this off – a Master’s degree while juggling so many other things in life, but thanks to his gentle, always humorous guidance, I was able to realize a long term ambition.”

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
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