



Obsculta

"Listen with the ear of your heart."

March 2025



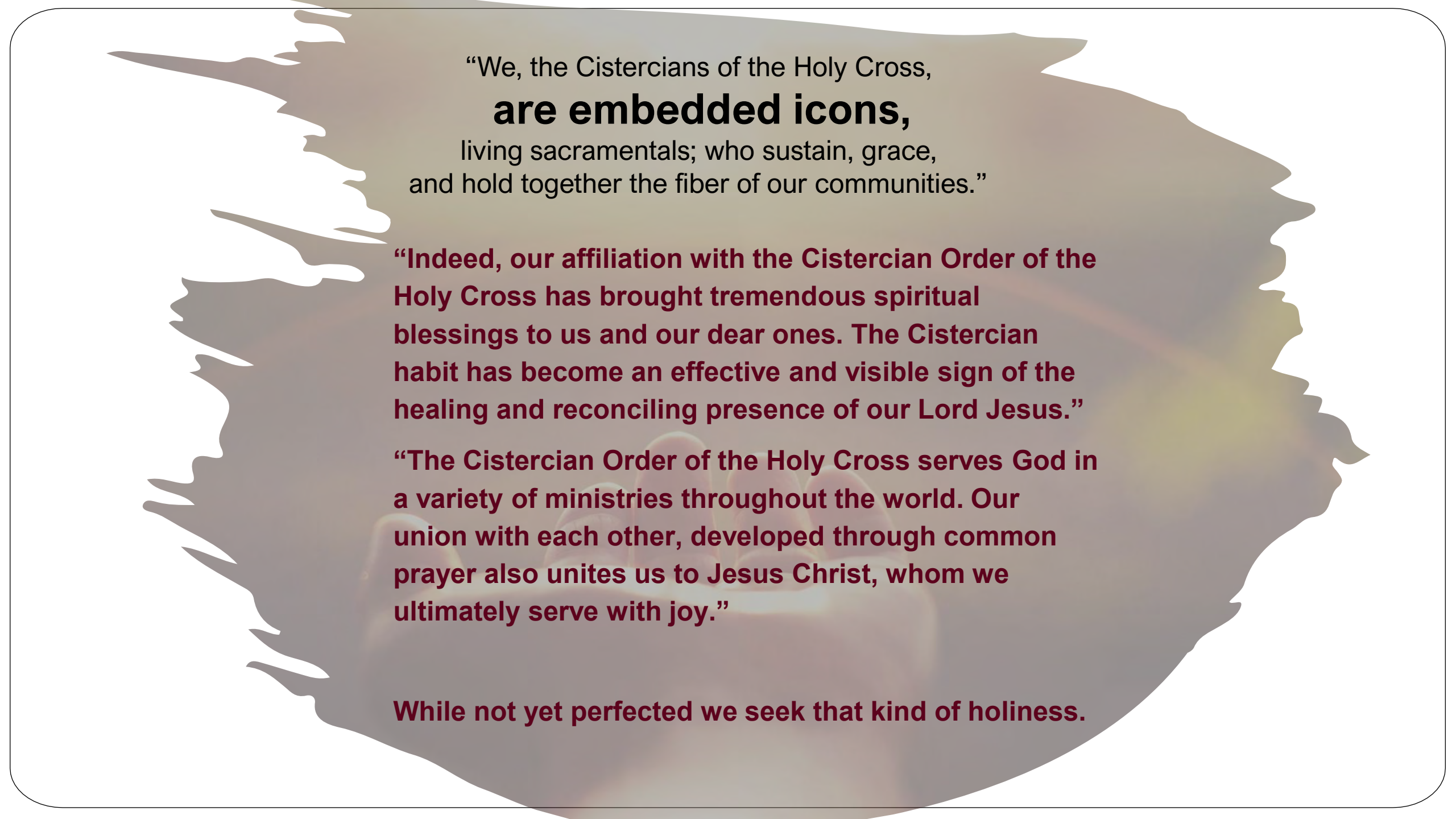
**"We, the Cistercians of the Holy Cross,
are embedded icons,
living sacramentals; who sustain, grace,
and hold together the fiber of our communities."**

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

www.CistercianMonks.org

Abbot@bellsouth.net

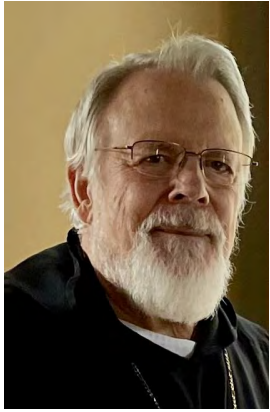


“We, the Cistercians of the Holy Cross,
are embedded icons,
living sacramentals; who sustain, grace,
and hold together the fiber of our communities.”

“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.”

“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.”

While not yet perfected we seek that kind of holiness.



**“We, the Cistercians of the Holy Cross,
are embedded icons,
living sacramentals; who sustain, grace,
and hold together the fiber of our communities.”**

Greetings with Charity and Courage:

This March 2025 Obsculta is particularly exciting as we explore how our beloved Religious Order has fulfilled God's spoken will.

Twenty-seven years ago, I joined the Cistercians with a simple desire to pray better. Little did I know that this journey would lead me to a profound sense of joy and peace. The discovery of how God sees me, not as my reflection but His, has been a source of great inspiration. Since then, our membership has experienced the same fruits.

Our community is a rich tapestry, woven from the diverse church, educational, and vocational backgrounds of our members. It is a great joy to be part of their lives and to learn from their unique perspectives.

Every day, we begin our Cistercian prayers with, " Lord, that everything I do may be prompted by your inspiration so that every prayer and work may begin from you and be brought to completion by you." "Lord, help me to be an icon, a living sacramental, who sustains others, gives Your grace, and holds together and inspires the fiber of my family and community." "Lord, please give me the gift of charity and courage, so when people gaze upon me, they see You as the Source of all Hope."

As you read through this issue of Obsculta, I encourage you to reflect on your own journey with the Cistercians and how God's will has been fulfilled in your life. May this reflection deepen your engagement with our Religious Order and inspire you to continue living out our shared mission.



This is what we are Seeking

One fashion or another, we are all seekers. We seek safety, security, love, and community. It is easy enough to know when what we seek has been achieved. Seeking a Godly life and doing His perfect will seems fraught with confusion and often despair. That need not be the case.

Scripture and tradition are filled with direction. Essentially, God calls each of us to seek perfection and holiness. Unfortunately, we make it difficult to understand and practice because we fill the journey with unrealistic expectations.

Some of us want God to speak directly to us. Others wish to receive a level of peace and certainty. And most want the short easy road to perfection and holiness. Let us use common sense and reason.

Scripture is clear. God wants every one of us to seek perfection and holiness. It is reasonable that He would provide the grace to empower us and a methodology whereby plain folks can achieve the seemingly impossible. We can conclude that our role is to cooperate with God's grace.

We use the Holy Rule of Saint Benedict to aid in developing a lifestyle that sets the stage for our Godly cooperation. We can teach you how to do the same.

Read the information and listen to the videos. It all makes perfect sense. For more information go to our website. If you want to join, the application is on the website. Blessings.

- 1. Consecrating to a religious life and live outside of a community. (Living your life at home with a loving family and good employment can make becoming a monk very fruitful.)**
- 2. Third order oblate program. (There is less required with this option. You can begin here if you like and move up to monk formation later.)**
- 3. Supporting men with a call to the diaconate and priesthood through ordination, or incardination. (Men, single or married can be ordained. Ask the Abbot for more information.)**
- 4 Associates: Religious communities (residential or dispersed), jurisdictions, parishes, small or home-based communities. or individual(s) who desire to be under our Abbatial and Episcopal oversight and be autonomous. (Visitors)
Requirements can be flexible and dependent upon a group's or an individual's application.**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEgDX7eh1xQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y28MRtRBx8o>





Below is a brief description of several items that afford success.

Leadership:

“The Abbot General is the bond of unity within the Order. He fosters good relations among the communities and with the external members. Above all, he is to be a pastor who promotes the spirit of renewal and harmony within the Order.”

Speaking as the Abbot General let me say that my leadership is facilitated by my Council, Bishops, Priors, priests, Life Professed monks and countless others. Each of us tirelessly devotes themselves to our Cistercian family.

Structure:

Our structure is a culmination of Cistercian history, The Rule of St. Benedict, and Holy Scripture, which gave birth to our governing documents, contemplative lifestyle, and community service, Icons of Hope.

Formation:

Our lifetime formation programs have been thoughtfully created to be the very best and flexible for each person's background, interest and abilities. Our dispersed members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, educational levels and Christian perspectives.

Upon acceptance each person is assigned a mentor that can answer questions, give leadership, and guide the individual on their formation/spiritual growth.

This educational formation is also supported by St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary, and several ongoing theological papers written by the Abbot and other leaders.

Community:

Although we are a dispersed group we have a strong sense of community. Each individual is supported by monthly contact with their Mentor, emails from the Abbot, and the “ We Got Your Back” program, which offers additional member contact, learning opportunities and even emergency financial support. The quarterly Obsculta, newsletter is a further opportunity to learn from each other.

Frequently individuals have visited the Abbot and frequently the Abbot has travelled and lead regional group meetings. Most members think of the Cistercians as family.

Let us celebrate our members as Icons of Hope in their Communities.

St. Benedict encourages monks to participate in their communities at large.

Most of our members have contributed as such prior to membership. However, their seeking perfection and growing in spiritual skills have added much to every area of their lives. The articles that follow illustrate such contributions.

Here is a partial list of activities:

Many of our members are performing educational tasks. Some are college professors, public school teachers, teach Zoom groups, seminars, retreats and directing choirs. Others are community leaders developing community growth, civil rights, working with children, developing artistic skills and working with the disadvantaged or incarcerated.

Some members are professional counselors, some are exorcists, healers, pastors and prophets.

Some others use their mechanical skills in building maintenance, environmental protection.

We are proud of our members who are disabled or otherwise not abled. They are the holiest of us all. We covet their prayers.



Lance Key, Trustee



My journey with the Cistercians and Abbot Oscar Joseph began about 10 years ago. I'm 72 years old and have been a Christian since I was 12. I am actively working and attending church.

I had reached a point in my life when I felt I needed to have even a closer, more in depth relationship with God. That's when Abbot Oscar Joseph showed up with a comprehensive program of spiritual direction. I realized then that I had many questions about living a spiritual life.

The first thing that I learned was I needed not only to profess Christianity, but I needed to learn how to BE a Christ follower.

Prayer to me at that time was a complete mystery. Does God hear what I say? Does God speak to me? Or how do I develop a vocabulary that is pleasing to God and not man?

Through many hours of study and searching the answers began to appear. Sure, God hears us when we speak or petition Him but it is not what or how we say it, it's what we don't say.

We need to meditate on His Word in quietness and listen with our hearts' ears. In other words, shut up and listen. Then God has a clean chalkboard to work with. Another way we don't get prayers answered is unforgiveness. Forgiveness opens the door for Him to work in our lives.

With the Abbot's help and through the Cistercians, I have met many people who to me are the salt of the earth - people who know how to be a Christian in works and not just in name only; people who have stood with me in very low times in my life. I have seen actual miracles take place in my life through the prayers of the Cistercian Order.

Please keep Abbot Oscar Joseph in your prayers and remember that the Cistercians are always here to pray on your behalf.

HOW DOES MY BEING A MONK HAS CHANGED ME AND HOW DO THE ENVIROMENT RESPOND

FREEDOM!!!!

This word “ Freedom” explains what means for me to be a Monk, to belong to a Cistercian family and to work for and to God.

Knowledge = Freedom.

Has given me a sense of knowledge, of my life, knowledge of myself inside and outside. Knowledge of my sins and learning how to leave them behind.

Knowledge that being different is not bad, it is wonderful. “Not fitting in“ is great, not awful, as always, I was dictated by my surroundings. Feels great to know they look differently at me, an icon of hope.

Knowledge of the power I got (not human power), is more like a very strong feeling inside me since I carry wearing my habit on my shoulders, more than 2000 years of sacrifice, sainthood, martyrs, miracles. My own responsibility.

Gratitude:

Total gratitude, compromise and surrender to God, Jesus, religious life, to my Cistercian family, my Abbot and myself.

Weightless compromise to all of them. Because I am one of the chosen and I follow God’s will and commands so I know I can’t make a mistake anymore.

Acceptance:

Since being a monk and part of a Cistercian Family I’ve learned to accept everything in my life, my shortcomings, accept them because everything is from the hands of our Lord and Father.

Then, if people around me don’t accept me and my following God’s will and my Cistercian rules and orders, then people will have to talk to them. I just follow the rules and follow my heart.

**Prior Jorge, OCCO
St. Joseph the Worker Priory**





Oblate Linda, OCCO/Obl

Joys of Being a Benedictine Oblate by Linda Ebersole

The Rule of Benedict is totally faithful to the teachings of the Bible. That is very important to me. I am so thankful for the Rule of Benedict. It provides a concise, practical guide for how to live.

As I try to live my faith in Jesus Christ in such a terrifying, confusing, and dangerous world, the Rule of Benedict is reassuring. I am less tempted by the newest trends that purport to be of spiritual value, because the Rule provides an anchor which is simple and easy to understand and follow. I refer to the age-old wisdom provided in the Rule. I find there a source of stability, a quality that is sadly lacking and even absent in our tumultuous world. I am less likely to be distracted or driven away from my focus on Jesus Christ and serving and loving Him. This is comforting to me. I feel stability within.

The Rule also provides a practical guide for living among others. I am carefully evaluating what I say: how I respond, what words I choose, when I say them. I am learning to respond redemptively, choosing productive solutions to life's problems. All these things are encouraged as I strive to develop in the discipline of conversatio. "What does the Rule say about this?" is applicable to any life situation I may encounter.

Obedience to anyone or anything is a concept that is out of fashion in our world today. I am thankful that as an oblate I am called to obedience to the Lord. In any circumstance, to contemplate and respond in obedience to what pleases Him is life and peace. I pray I may be obedient, that others may see Christ in me.

Since 2018, I have been a member of a visioning team at my home (Baptist) church. For the past three years I have served as the team's leader. Coincidentally (or maybe not) that period of time almost exactly overlaps my association with our Abbot which grew into my current involvement in our Order as an Oblate and Trustee. I had a recent experience where I applied what I have learned through the Cistercians in a very successful church event involving the vision team.

The event was church-wide gathering designed to bring the congregation as a whole into the visioning process. It took place on a Sunday morning during our regular Bible Study time and, as you can easily imagine, a great deal of planning and preparation was needed. As the team leader I could have assumed the role of "project manager" and taken on responsibility for every aspect of the event. But I didn't do that. Instead, I actually tried to "listen with the ears of my heart" in an effort to see the situation as God was seeing it.

Two of the main themes in my spiritual formation during this time have been increasing my awareness of the presence of God and learning to really trust God in every part of my life. In doing so, I'm finding myself in kind of a virtuous circle in which becoming more aware of His presence has made me more willing to trust Him and seeing the results of that trust have made me even more aware of His presence and more willing to trust Him.

So instead of assuming that I needed to be the "project manager," I prayed, meditated and contemplated about what we were doing and saw that there were others on the team who were not only perfectly capable of organizing the event but who are much better at that sort of thing than I am. So, what I did was remind the team of what we were doing and why and how we had seen God at work in our midst in all of our previous work together. And I pointed out that the outcome of what we were going to do would be the work of the Holy Spirit so that we did not need to be concerned with any particular outcome. In fact, at the end of the process we were almost surely going to realize that God was already there and already at work.

Following the event, my pastor sent me this note:

I know it is your m.o. (modus operandi) to downplay your leadership role of the vision team, but today was the fruit of seeds you planted a long time ago. Thank you for your wisdom.

While it was difficult to give my pre-conceived ideas about what a project leader should do, I did so intentionally and willingly. And I found that in truth and in fact the His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

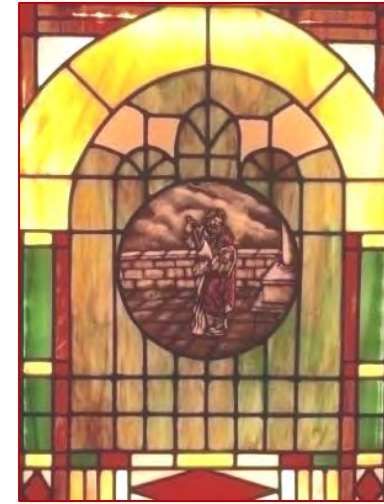
By

Jay Van Nostrand, OCCO/Obl, Trustee





Monks make great Priests



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

While we require the traditional qualifications for ordination/incardination, the 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.



Celebrating 25 Years of Abbot's Service
My dear friend Br. Monty sent me this.
It is clear evidence that staying focused on our
mission great things can be accomplished.



11:22 AM
BrMonty Pitts >
Active 1m ago

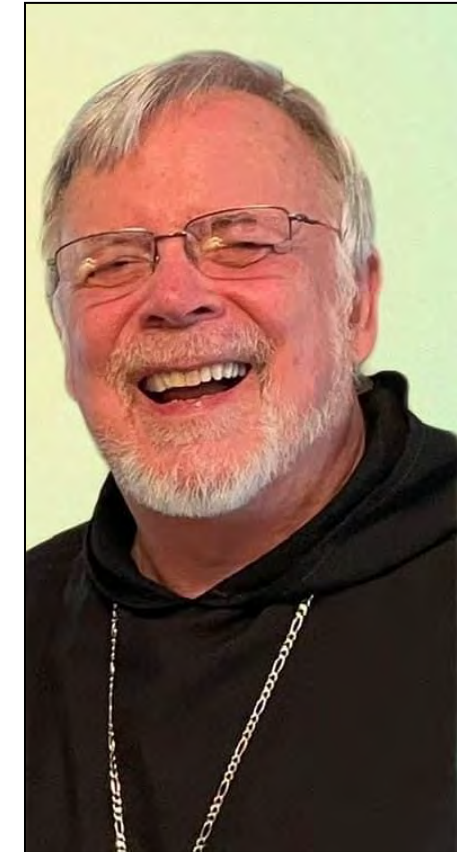
You humble me, sir. My own accomplishments, influence, and level of faith are insignificant along side your own. No need to be modest, dear Abbot. You are a central figure- many believe THE central figure- in the Benedictine movement in our country. My prayer is that you continue your shepherd ministry for many, many years to come.

10:10 AM
BrMonty Pitts >
Messenger

SAT 12:50 PM

Dear Fr. Abbot, I have offered prayers for the house blessing, and most especially for the young mother.

In going through the discernment process a couple of years ago, I was told, repeatedly and by many, that among the non-RC orders, that you were the most successful leader of any of the orders. From all I have seen since, I firmly believe that to be true.



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



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 have made it their true spiritual home. Amen

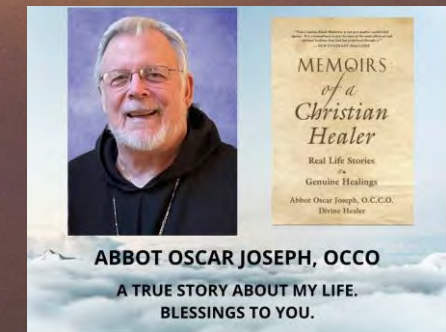
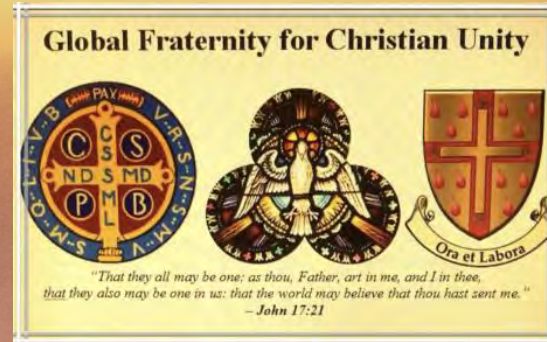
Br. Columcille, OCCO writes, *“I believe Cistercians, and all contemplatives to be the heart of the Church. Our intentions, made perfect through the Holy Spirit, support all of the apostolic work around the world. Perhaps the stars would fall from the sky were it not for men and women dedicated to a life of prayer and sacrifice. We are a part of something holy, and are being made holy in the process.”*

Our Facebook sites total 15,000 people.

Totalling other social media and groups that we are members of

every month over

1,000,000 hear from us.



See us on Facebook



The “We Got Your Back Program” 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



These are Your Volunteers



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

Honorary Doctoral Degrees

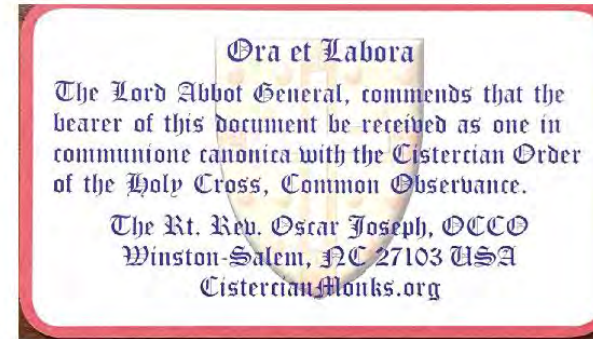
St. Stephen Harding Theological College and Seminary offer these degrees for the purpose of rewarding or advancing outstanding persons. Honorary degrees may be awarded to a person deserving of honor by virtue of scholarly distinction, noteworthy public service, or significant contribution to the church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

Sacred membership cards that have an Apostolic Blessing

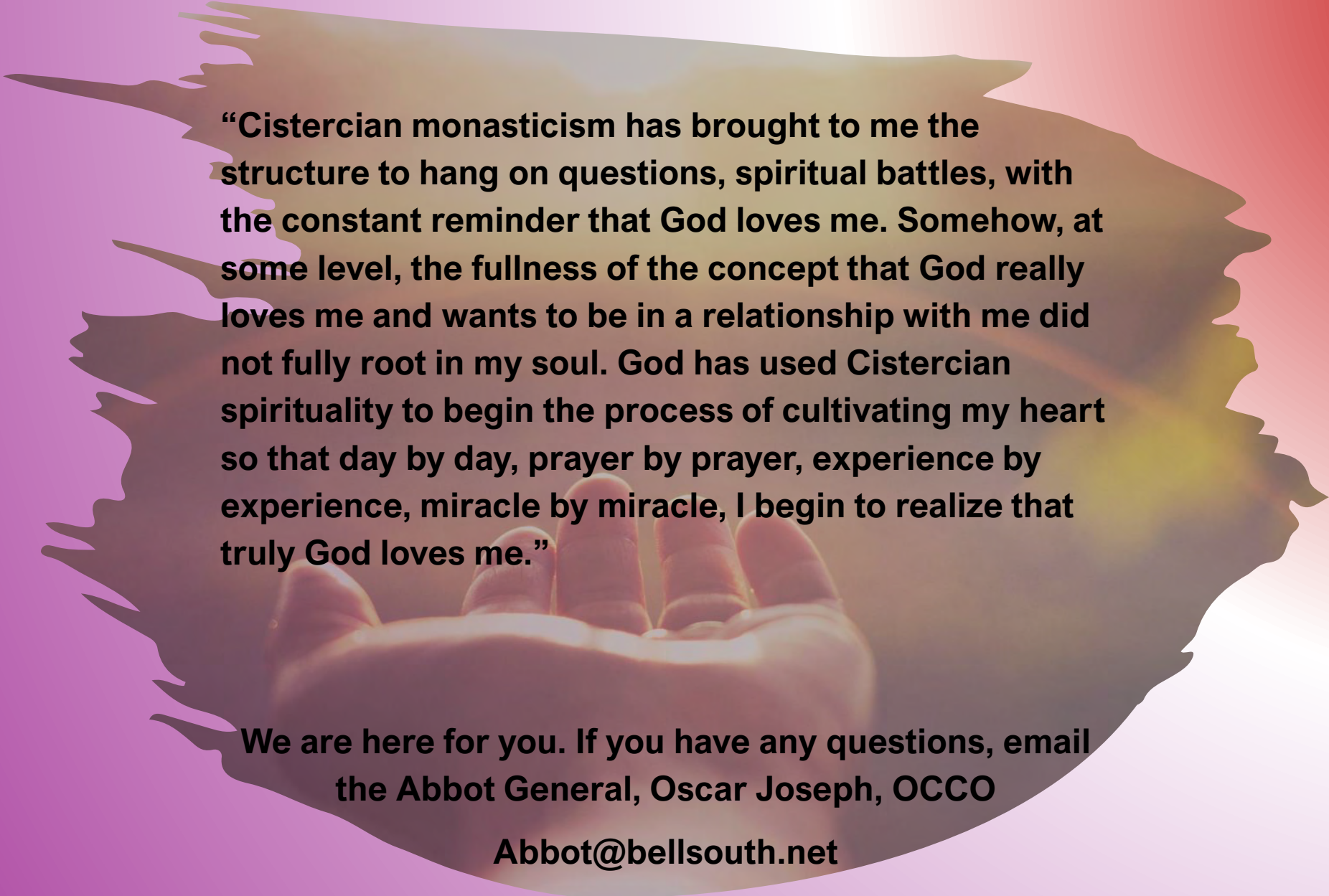


This Identification card celebrates and honors your association with the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross. Whether you are a life vowed member, or a valued friend of the Order please know that I embrace each of you and dispense upon you the riches of the Lord's blessings.

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.

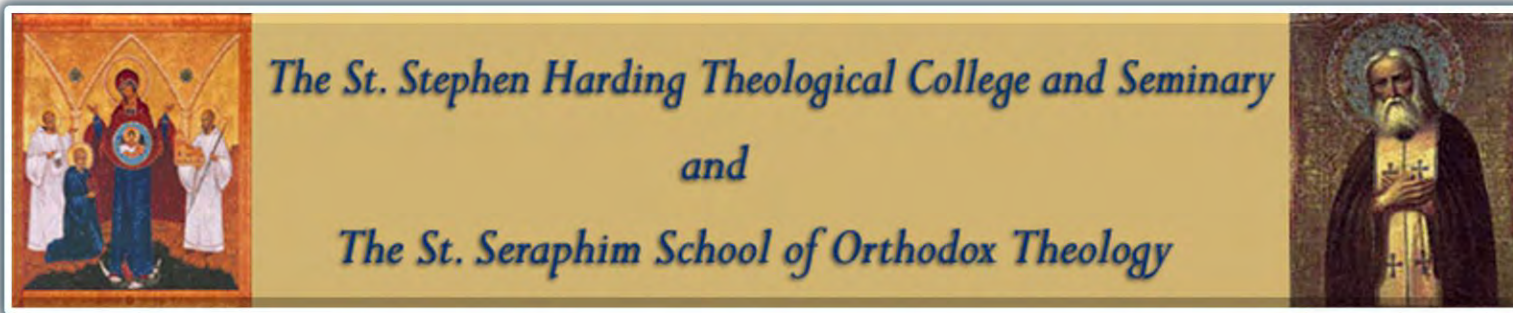
I have blessed this document with Holy Water and my Apostolic Blessing thus making it a sacred source of grace for you and reception of St. Benedict's protection.

A hand is shown from the bottom, holding a glowing, golden orb. The background is a gradient of purple and pink, with a large, dark, irregular shape that frames the text. The text is in a bold, black font.

“Cistercian monasticism has brought to me the structure to hang on questions, spiritual battles, with the constant reminder that God loves me. Somehow, at some level, the fullness of the concept that God really loves me and wants to be in a relationship with me did not fully root in my soul. God has used Cistercian spirituality to begin the process of cultivating my heart so that day by day, prayer by prayer, experience by experience, miracle by miracle, I begin to realize that truly God loves me.”

We are here for you. If you have any questions, email the Abbot General, Oscar Joseph, OCCO

Abbot@bellsouth.net



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 Application.

Off Campus Study Programs, Something for Everyone
Students may enroll at any time.

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

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.”

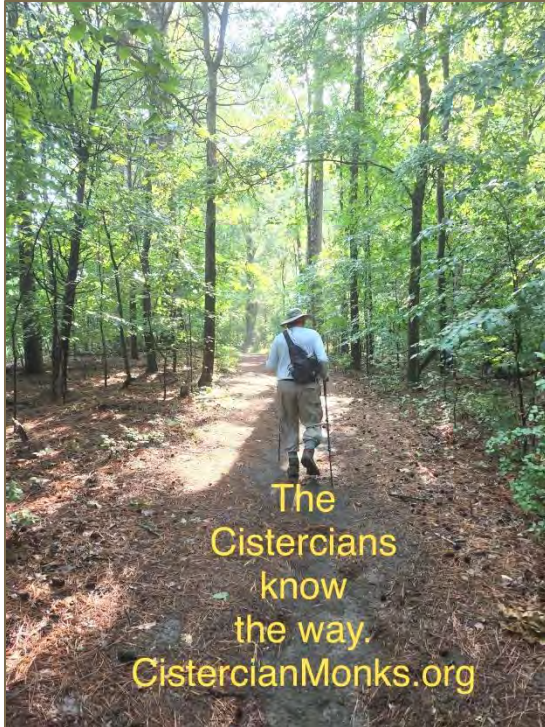
“A wonderful by-product of education at St. Stephen Harding is the relationship one can develop with the personalized focus. Frankly, I want to continue studying as a result and that’s the best compliment I can offer anyone involved with St. Stephen Harding, or any student considering the pursuit of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

“I am led 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.”



Spiritual Joy

How to live and maintain a joy filled prayer life.
By Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO



The
Cistercians
know
the way.
CistercianMonks.org

A short video series
Welcome to the Cistercian Order
What is a Monk?

Where do we go from here?
(How to Maintain a Prayerful Life)

The Rule of St. Benedict
Habit of Prayers

Protecting your vocation

Perfectionism
(Gold Medal Monk)

Lectio Divina
(Praying the Scriptures)

Building Courage and Charity through Humility

Stability
Obedience
Conversatio

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9316848>

https://youtube.com/channel/UC8n9vm_1zLZ72ylj2RoH2Vg



Set The Captives Free

*"God himself will set me free
from the hunter's snare."
"From those who would trap me
with lying words and from the hunter's snare."*

By

The Most Rev. Abbot Oscar Joseph, Ph.D., D.S.T., OCCO

www.AbbotOscarJoseph.com



**Praying Unceasingly
Problems and Solutions
by Abbot Oscar Joseph, OCCO**



Cistercian Life

The Benedictine/Cistercian values will help you contemplate the real meaning and experience a simple life of utmost good and happiness in your present day, time, and circumstance.

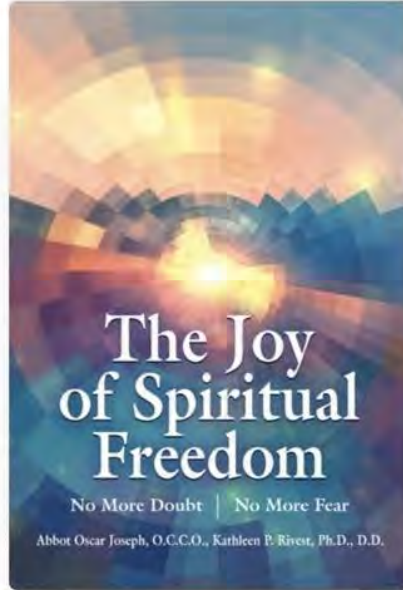
The following pages are intended to motivate you in your spiritual growth by illustrating God's call to everyone toward holiness and how the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross will help you to respond to God's grace in your call to the Oblature or a Monastic.

These pages also present brief but helpful and inspiring information explaining the Rule of St. Benedict and how you can apply it to develop a lifestyle more responsive to and blessed by God.

Our wonderful, tireless Abbot frequently writes life enhancing materials which are available to everyone.

**You find the free PDF downloads at:
www.AbbotOscarJoseph.com**

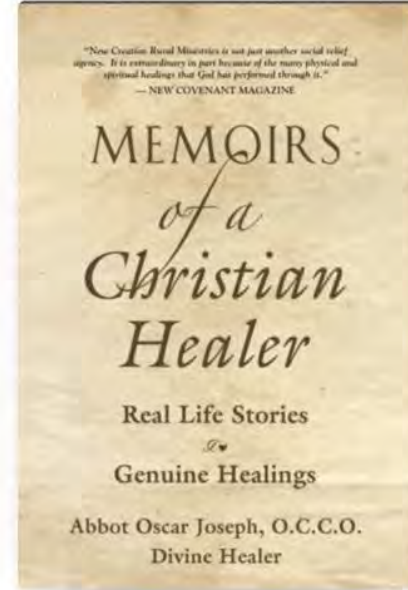




The Joy of Spiritual Freedom

No More Doubts | No More Fear

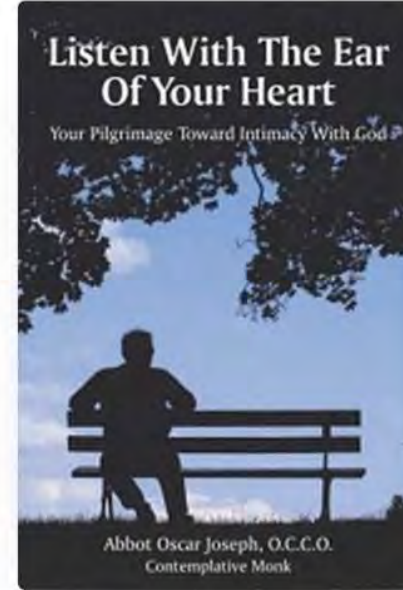
The Joy of Spiritual Freedom is the first of a trilogy that leads and inspires the reader to enter into a joy-filled relationship with a loving God. It is grounded in Biblical wisdom revealing how to remove debilitating doubt and fear. It draws from inspirational letters and case studies that illustrate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

**20% discount on each
of the three books**





**A better life begins
and ends
with a truly intimate
relationship
with God.**

**Come visit with me
and learn
how to have real joy
with your
creator.**

Abbot@bellsouth.net



What we have given to others.

<https://youtu.be/y28MRtRBx8o>

Description of the Cistercians

<https://youtu.be/vh6OG8bn3AI>



CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY CROSS, COMMON OBSERVANCE



43 years

Ora et Labora

**Cistercian Order
of the
Holy Cross**

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



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.

- 1. Consecrating to a religious life and live outside of a community**
- 2. Third order oblate program.**
- 3. Supporting men with a call to the diaconate and priesthood through ordination, or incardination**
- 4. Associates: Religious communities (residential or dispersed), jurisdictions, parishes, small or home-based communities. or individual(s) who desire to be under our Abbatial and Episcopal oversight and be autonomous. (Visitors)
Requirements can be flexible and dependent upon a group's or an individual's application.**

“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.”

One doesn't enter the religious state because he is holy but because he wants to become holy.