



## BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

*Men with hope to bring*

November, 2022

# Being provincial to these brothers is a joy-filled job

BY BROTHER KENNETH HADERS, CSC, PROVINCIAL

**I**t seems I get several appeals to donate to some good cause every week. Some are places where I or the Brothers of Holy Cross have had a very long relationship. Though most go without receiving the requested donation, a few are important enough to me that I send something. It is a process those in the fundraising business might call setting giving priorities, and I am humbled by how many of you have included the Brothers of Holy Cross among your charitable giving priorities.

Over the past few years the brothers have asked you to support us with gifts that, for the most part, are unrestricted. This year, however, we have a special project that needs your support. The elevator at Columba Hall, our largest community house, is just not



Columba Hall is believed to have been built around 1900, with a number of physical improvements made over the years including electrical lights in 1914 and an elevator in 1948. Although it stands out for its beautiful location on the campus of the University of Notre Dame and resembles a stately academic building, it is actually home to 26, mostly retired, brothers. Columba Hall is both a traditional and appropriate one for a residence which houses so many religious of varied occupations but who have a common goal—the glory of God.

reliable and we need to give it a major upgrade. Though we are keeping our vintage elevator cab, we are replacing and upgrading pretty much all of the workings and mechanics. It is a big project, but one we can achieve with your help.

I wish to thank Mr. Richard Hesse, who has been a good friend of the brothers since he spent time among us in the 1960s to explore a vocation, for getting us started on our campaign. He has offered a match of the first \$101,000 of our goal of \$250,000, and we are grateful.

Sometimes, when I speak with people about being provincial of the brothers, they just assume it's a big job. In many ways it is, but in many more ways it is a very fulfilling and joy-filled job, because the brothers I serve are such good men. I feel very blessed to serve at this time in the life of the province because I am surrounded by men who have been my teachers, my mentors, my brothers and my most inspiring examples of how to lead my life. I am truly blessed to serve so many brothers who inspire so much pride, even as we know our own imperfections.

As we approach the holiday season, be assured of my prayers for many blessings. Let's pray for each other, that we may be ready to celebrate the presence of God among us.

*Fraternally yours in Holy Cross,*  
*Brother Kenneth Haders, CSC* 



Brother Kenneth Haders, CSC  
Provincial

What goes up, must come down. Though of late that doesn't always happen at Columba Hall, Notre Dame, Ind., where 26 Brothers of Holy Cross call home. The average age of the brothers living at Columba Hall is 83.6 years old.

We are talking about the elevator in Columba Hall that was installed in 1948 and was most recently upgraded in 2007. It is the main mode of transportation to get from one floor to the next for many of the mostly retired brothers who live there. Columba Hall, built in 1900, has four floors.

To get from their rooms to the dining room on the first floor or to chapel on the third floor, a number of brothers must ride the elevator because they are using a walker, cane, scooter or wheelchair.

Yet sometimes the elevator breaks down leaving the brothers caught in the elevator or stranded on one floor in the building.

"For the most part the elevator breakdowns have not resulted in any traumatic events," said Brother Roy Smith, director of development. "However, one of our elders got stuck on the elevator with two others for almost an hour, and now he goes up and down only by a chairlift on our secondary stairwell."

"The chief concern is getting stuck on the elevator," Brother Chris Dryer said. "The elevator is unreliable at this point. It's not necessarily dangerous." Brother Chris is the assistant superior and oversees purchasing, maintenance and housekeeping for Columba Hall.

"Although the elevator is serviced on a monthly basis, Columba Hall had to request three after-hours service calls in the past two months because people were trapped on the

## Antiquated elevator is hazard for retired brothers

By MARY ANNE DeCENZO, EDITOR

elevator," Brother Chris said. "The Otis Elevator Company had to find replacement parts, which because of their age, were difficult to locate. The elevator was thus inoperable for days at a time."

The demand for using the elevator has been increasing as the brothers age. It is used constantly, not only by the brothers, but also by the nursing, housekeeping and maintenance staffs.

Brother Roy was the youngest brother living at Columba Hall when he came up from St. Edward's University in 1965 to start his first assignment at St. Joseph High School in South Bend.

"If someone would have told me then that at the age of 79 I would still be one of the youngest brothers in

### How can you help?

A generous benefactor, Richard Hesse, has offered a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$101,000 to jump-start the Columba Hall Elevator Restoration Project. The cost of this initiative will be about \$250,000 and is an unfunded expense. Please help us reach the Richard Hesse match amount. Check the box for this project on the accompanying envelope. Also if you would kindly consider this donation in addition to your usual annual appeal gift, the brothers would be grateful.

Columba Hall, I would not have believed them," Brother Roy said. "Presently, there are only three brothers younger than me!"

"Due to the age, condition and obsolescence of parts, there have been continued service disruptions," Brother Chris said. "There is also the possibility that the elevator may totally shut down and the repair parts to get it running again cannot be found resulting in being out of service for an extended period of time."

The Otis Elevator Company has installed and serviced elevators throughout Notre Dame's campus and wants to standardize the equipment such as control system, traction machine, and door


equipment in order to increase the efficiency of a restored system.

"The Notre Dame Fire Department, which is automatically summoned when a breakdown occurs, has had a very difficult time opening the elevator doors because the firemen are unfamiliar with the old mechanisms. This delay prolongs time of entrapment," Brother Chris said.

The estimated cost to upgrade the elevator will be about \$250,000, including expenditures to enlarge the control room for a larger motor, to upgrade the air conditioning for the control room and to bring the electrical and smoke detecting systems up to code.

A long time friend of the brothers, Richard Hesse, has offered a matching challenge gift of the first \$101,000 towards the estimated costs. Hesse is a graduate of St. Edward's University and spent time with the brothers in the 1960s exploring the possibility of a vocation.

"The Brothers of Holy Cross provided me with an education and an environment of virtue and calm in which to pursue that education, and they built on those values I received in my earlier youth," Hesse said. "I consider them the finest men. Without them I would not have pursued a career in education, earned an advanced degree, done volunteer work in Laos during the Vietnam War, and probably not have married my wife, or, her me. I owe the Brothers of Holy Cross a debt I can never repay."

"Columba Hall has a homey feel to it," Brother Chris said. "It does not feel institutional. It's home for the brothers and it is important the brothers feel safe and secure in their home." 



Close to 50 percent of the brothers use a walking aid such as canes, wheelchairs, scooters or walkers making an elevator an absolute necessity.



Brother Jim Reilly is waiting for a bus or car to pick him up. He uses a walker to move around the house. When the elevator is not working, it is difficult for some brothers to move from floor to floor.



One of our CNA's brings fresh water to some brothers' rooms twice a day. If anyone got COVID, the brothers had to stay in their rooms and their meals were brought to them by the staff.



Brother Richard Armstrong must use a scooter inside and outside the house. Here he is moving into an elevator. To get to the dining hall or to chapel he must use the elevator.



Brother Michael Becker sometimes uses his walker with wheels to move the laundry from all four floors down to the main floor for pickup by the Notre Dame laundry services.



The maintenance staff uses the elevator often—moving heavy loads, house supplies and large tools to help in repairs around Columba Hall.

# Care of the elder brother is so important

BY BROTHER ROY SMITH, CSC, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Care and security of the elder brothers is one annual request you have given generously to for several years. As our brother population ages it has been most appreciated.

Our present request is a bit more specific: to help us update and make safer the elevator in Columba Hall. The one elevator serves not only the residents of Columba Hall, but also the housestaff, guests, paramedics and others who visit Columba Hall.

While there are a few brothers who only use the stairwell, it is reassuring that the elevator is available or accessible when needed.

The other day one of our brothers, a Columba Hall resident, said “the elevator is slow compared to some hotel elevators, but it works.”

Many of the brothers living at “the House” depend on the elevator as a mode of transportation. It gets them to chapel, to the dining and rec rooms and then back to their rooms. It will be comforting to the brothers to know that the elevator will be more reliable with the suggested improvements.

I smiled the other day as I wrote this note musing that I never thought I’d be writing an elevator speech about an elevator.

We have the incredible opportunity to double our funds with the generous dollar

for dollar gift from our friend, Richard Hesse. Please consider accepting his challenge in this humble request.

On behalf of all the brothers and others who ride the elevator—  
**THANK YOU!**

*Gratefully,*  
*Brother Roy Smith, CSC*



Brother Roy Smith, CSC  
Director of Development



The housekeeping staff use the elevators to transport their equipment.



Brother Robert Mosher chooses to use the chairlift rather than the elevator although it moves slowly.



Brother Michael Becker gathers the laundry in the lobby for pickup by Notre Dame laundry services.

*Please use the enclosed envelope to make your thoughtful gift or contact:*

**Brother Roy Smith, CSC**  
**Director of Development**  
**P.O. Box 460, Notre Dame, IN 46556**  
**574.631.2928**  
**rsmith@brothersofholycross.com**

# Showing our Appreciation

As a small token of our gratitude for your generosity to the Annual Appeal, we will inscribe your name in the St. André Registry, a book in which the Brothers honor those who support our mission. The registry is prominently placed at the entrance of Columba Hall.

In addition to inscribing your name in the registry, the Brothers of Holy Cross are honored to remember you in our daily prayers.

You will also be recognized in our 2022 Annual Stewardship Report according to the level of support. We do not specifically indicate the amount of your gift. Our annual giving levels are:

**Brother Columba O’Neill Club Members**

**Gifts of \$5,000 and above**

**Columba Hall Society Members**

**Gifts from \$200 to \$4,999**

**Cross & Anchors Members**

**Gifts up to \$199**

