

BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

Newsletter of the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross

Summer, 2020

Thankful for 200 years of brothers serving

BY BROTHER KENNETH HADERS, CSC, PROVINCIAL

Celebrating the accomplishments of our brothers is a happy time for me. In my years as a Holy Cross Brother, I have been blessed to know many men who have been motivating examples and mentors in my life. They have shown me the way and challenged me to be better.

Among this year's jubilarians are brothers who have taught me, worked with me, hired me, been brother to me and inspired me in so many ways. Most of them are now in creative retirement, but some continue in active ministry to others or to their fellow religious. Knowing we do not retire from being brothers, all are still encouraging examples in the lives of many.

The year 2020 is also an anniversary for all the brothers. Two hundred years ago, Father James Dujarié, a priest in rural France, began to gather a group of men he called the Brothers of St. Joseph. They would educate boys who were growing up with a hunger to learn more about their faith as well as an eagerness to acquire the academic skills they would need to succeed in life. The men Dujarié gathered displayed a remarkable mix of talent and enthusiasm. Some brought a clean slate, ready to learn whatever they could to share with the boys who would come to them to study and

learn. Some brought skills and trades with them that would contribute to the health and well-being of the community. All were open to follow the example of St. Joseph as compassionate men living in familial brotherhood and ready to follow the call of the Lord to serve others – sometimes in surprising ways.

I thank you for joining me in celebrating the many years of faithful service of this year's jubilarians. All together they represent

580 years of service as Holy Cross Brothers. Though the pandemic has caused us to postpone our annual shared celebration, we still join in thanksgiving for all that these men have brought to Holy Cross and to the Church.

There has been a wonderful diversity of ministries among these gifted men, and we can learn much from the example of how they have lived their lives as well as how they continue to meet the challenges they encounter today. Please join me in prayers of thanksgiving for all they have given as well as for their continued well-being as they continue to live their vocation as brothers.



Brother Kenneth Haders, CSC

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from Provincial • Biographies of Jubilarians • Celebrating history while serving in midst of pandemic

80-YEAR JUBILARIAN

Brother Wilbert Leveling, CSC

Wilbert Leveling was born in St. Paul, Iowa. As a child, he and his family moved to Fort Madison, Iowa, where he attended St. Joseph High School. After graduating, he worked at the W.A. Schaeffer Pen Company and then at the United States Post Office.

Wilbert first learned of the Brothers of Holy Cross from an ad in the Sign Magazine. He responded and began his religious formation, first at Sacred Heart Postulate in Watertown, Wis., and then at St Joseph's Novitiate in Rolling Prairie, Ind.



After taking first vows, Brother Wilbert began undergraduate studies at the University of Notre Dame. Upon graduation, he received his first teaching assignment to Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, Ind. He later returned to Notre Dame for his master's in history, followed by postgraduate studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He also

received a grant to study at Loretto Heights College in Denver, Colo. Over the years he has taught at St. Joseph High School in South Bend, Ind., Vincentian Institute in Albany, N.Y., Holy Trinity High School in Chicago, and 35 years at Holy Cross High School in River Grove, Ill. In all, he has taught 11 different courses.

Brother Wilbert was invited to be a guide at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal for 11 summers and thoroughly enjoyed his time there.

"It was a wonderful experience," he said. "I got to meet people from all over the world. I would welcome them to the Oratory and then talk to them about Brother André, now St. Brother André."

On returning to the Notre Dame area, Brother Wilbert served as archivist for Holy Cross Brothers, Midwest Province, for over three decades. His interests include reading, cycling around the University of Notre Dame campus and listening to classical music.

Members of the Congregation of Holy Cross are very grateful and blessed by Brother Wilbert's 80 years of dedicated service.

70-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Brother John Benesh, CSC

When John Benesh was in seventh grade, he decided that he would be a teaching brother. In 1949, while he was a freshman at Marquette University, he visited the Holy Cross Postulate in Watertown, Wis.

"The men there were friendly and the food was good, so I joined Holy Cross!" he recalled.

Brother John spent many years in high school classrooms, but has also been a high school principal, a college teacher, a postulant director, a retreat director and a Notre Dame residence hall rector. The biggest surprise in his years in the United States was being a Notre Dame administrator.

After leaving Notre Dame, Brother John thought he

would be a high school teacher in the United States for the rest of his life, but God had other plans. In 1978 Brother John moved from Notre Dame to Holy Trinity High School in Chicago. While there he noticed that many of the parents spoke only Spanish. He was motivated to learn Spanish and was able to attend a language school in Mexico during the summers of 1982-83.



Other Holy Cross men heard about his studies, and this led to an invitation to visit Peru. At first he was not interested in going there. Nevertheless, he visited Peru in the summer of 1984 and went to the

locations where Holy Cross religious were working. In all these places the people were poor and the living conditions were very simple. He doubted that he would be able to adjust to this different world.

After much thought and the encouragement of others, Brother John was able to move to Peru with a three-year commitment. He did survive and adjusted to Peru, both in Chimbote and in Lima. October of 2020 will mark 35 years in Peru.

“As I near 90 years of age, I am grateful that I still can be a helper,” he said. “I help with some things in the parish. I help with some things in the school. I help our Holy Cross men in four different residences. Thank you, Lord, for your help!”

Brother Ronald Christenson, CSC

When Ronald was in eighth grade at St. Mary’s School in Racine, Wis., a Holy Cross brother gave a talk to the class. Later, Ronald saw an ad for the brothers in Our Sunday Visitor and met with Brother Thomas More Beere at his home. In high school Ronald wrote to the brothers and received some literature. Later he visited the community at Watertown, Wis., and was impressed. The

brothers invited him to join the following February, and he stayed.

In his career Brother Ronald has taught in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Indianapolis, Ind. He has worked summers at boys homes in Terre Haute, Ind., and Milwaukee, Wis. He received a favorable impression of mission work, and was asked to obtain a passport with a visa for East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.



Brother Ronald left the United States in March of 1960 and spent 31 years in Bangladesh. There he taught in grade schools and high schools and ran a house of studies for college-age men who wanted to join Holy Cross. He turned that work over to a Bangladeshi brother in 1988.

In 1991 Brother Ronald returned to the United States for good. He did chaplain work in hospitals until 1998, when he retired to Columba Hall at Notre Dame.

Brother Ronald thinks that all his assignments prepared him well for the life of a brother. “I would not change it for any other vocation,” he said.

60-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Brother George Klawitter, CSC

George Klawitter was raised in Steger, Ill., the second of four children born to George and Caroline Klawitter. His father was a bookkeeper at International Harvester, and his mother a homemaker. Inspired by the School Sisters of St. Francis at Steger’s St. Liborius Grade School, he enrolled at Sacred Heart Juniorate in Watertown, Wis., at age 13 in order to become a teaching brother.

In 1956 the high school program at Watertown closed, so George finished high school at Holy Cross School in New Orleans, La. In his senior year he was the drum major and soloed with the band in Grieg’s piano concerto.

Graduating with a bachelor’s degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1963, Brother George began his teaching career at Monroe Catholic Central in Michigan. After four years he went to teach at Cathedral High School

in Indianapolis and then at St. Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio. In summers he completed a master’s degree in English literature at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

In 1981 Brother George completed a doctorate in English at the University of Chicago. He taught at Holy Cross Junior College until taking a position at Viterbo University in LaCrosse, Wis., where he chaired the English department for eight years. His final full-time teaching position was at St. Edward’s University in Austin, Texas, for 18 years, where he fell in love with the Texas hill country.



Brother George Klawitter continued on page 4

“I love teaching,” Brother George said, “and had wonderful students over my 57 years in the classroom. I tried to model my teaching philosophy on the excellent sisters I had in grade school, the hard-working brothers I had in high school and the inspirational teachers I had in college.”

A past president of both the South-Central Renaissance Conference and the Marvell Society, Brother George has published widely in 17th-century studies. He now enjoys retirement at Columba Hall, Notre Dame.

Brother Donald Kuchenmeister, CSC

Donald Kuchenmeister grew up in a small town in Wisconsin. After graduation from high school, he worked in Minneapolis, Minn., for four years before entering Holy Cross.

It was only after graduation that he learned about the vocation of a religious brother when a person from his hometown entered Holy Cross.

Donald had only heard of religious sisters and priests. He decided to give religious life a try to see what it was all about. From his first day he felt at home in the congregation.

After profession of vows, Brother Donald first worked as secretary for the vocations director. Then he went to Boysville of Michigan, a boarding school for youth who were victims of family disorders. He later taught at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago. Brother Donald has earned a bachelor of arts in English and a master’s degree in Social Work. In 1983 he asked to go to Chile to work with the congregation in a home for abandoned children. He studied cooking and prepared meals that were delivered to the elderly poor in one of the parishes.

Brother Donald is currently director of Casa San Juan XXIII in Santiago, Chile, where he is responsible for the welfare of retired religious. He also organizes workshops for adults in the local parish.

Brother Thomas Moser, CSC

Tom Moser was raised in Keokuk, Iowa, with one sister. His father was a machinist, and his mother was

a homemaker. He says he got his skills in building and craftsmanship from his father, and his cooking ability from his mother.

Tom came from a family of religious, five to be exact: one uncle became a priest, one a brother, and three aunts became sisters.

“In elementary school I had the Sisters of Charity and the School Sisters of Notre Dame, so when God came calling, I knew how to answer!”

“There were over 70 brothers’ vocations ads in *Our Sunday Visitor*,” Brother Tom recalls, “offering everything from missionary work to cloistered stability. I finally settled on the Brothers of Holy Cross because, among the many choice offerings, they included two weeks’ paid vacation. I have been on vacation ever since!”

Even as Brother Tom teaches, he is always a student. His professional interests include history, biology and community, analytic psychology, theology and spirituality. For him it all points to “formation and transformation.”

Four years in prenovitiate and postnovitiate work, two terms as provincial, 22 years on the novitiate staff and most recently his years at Columba Hall have allowed Brother Tom to continue his journey and appreciate more fully how it all fits together (*The Monk Within*). He says he now has an increasing sense of how his call worked itself out.

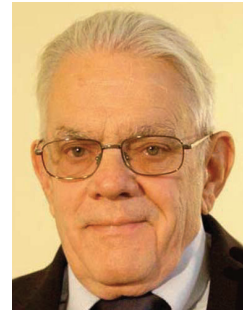
“I will soon set upon a new road on the journey of my call,” Brother Tom said. “Where that road leads, I leave for others to decide. Wherever I end up, I hope that I might continue the story of the monk within and develop the monk without.

“Thanks be to God for these 60 wonderful years.”

Brother James Newberry, CSC

For James Newberry, choosing the Brothers of Holy Cross was easy, once he allowed the Lord’s call to register.

“Brothers were teachers,” he remembers, “and I already held a bachelor’s degree and was teaching in a junior high school in my hometown of Downers Grove, Ill.”



Brother James's vocation in Holy Cross has placed him in a wide variety of ministries: teaching grades 5 through 12, in classrooms of Native Americans and Liberians, in a junior military academy and in a high school.

"I have mentored at-risk youngsters and recovering alcoholics," he said. "I have interviewed senior adults interested in Holy Cross Village and served the community as a local superior. All this in the name and company of my Brothers in Holy Cross, without whose support I could have not persevered. I have never regretted my answer to his call and daily thank God and Our Lady."

Being a consecrated religious with a daily prayer regime also provides Brother James many opportunities to prayerfully remember his family and friends. He thinks a brother's vocation is special "for the relationships we form with others as 'brothers.' Pray with us."



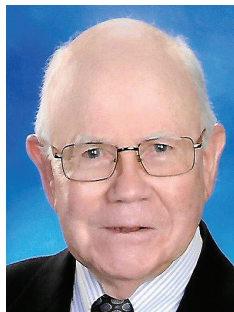
Brother Charles Smith, CSC

Charles Smith grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and took the path to Holy Cross that many graduates of St. Edward High School in Lakewood did: he joined in 1959 shortly after graduation. After taking first vows at St. Joseph Novitiate in August, 1960, he went on to earn a degree in English from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas.

In his first 10 years, Brother Charles taught at four high schools in the Midwest Province: Holy Trinity in Chicago, his alma mater St. Edward in Lakewood and Holy Cross in River Grove, Ill. He then taught for five years at the Prologue Alternative High School in Chicago and for the City Colleges of Chicago.

After a one-year renewal program at Sangre de Cristo Center in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1985, Brother Charles became director of the province office of life development at Notre Dame. For the next nine years he would serve the province as personnel director.

Brother Charles was again drawn to Chicago, this



time as associate director of the People's Music School from 1994 to 1995.

For the past 16 years Brother Charles has ministered at Gilmour Academy, Gates Mills, Ohio. There he served three years as assistant to the head of school, two years as director of student residences and the past 11 years as coordinator of the physical plant. He is now retired though he is still active on a few school committees and plants a large garden each summer.

Brother Lawrence Unfried, CSC


By the time Lawrence was in seventh grade, he had decided that he wanted to be a teacher. He was not yet certain about his areas of interest, but after getting to know the brothers at Reitz Memorial High School in Evansville, Ind., he concluded that his vocation was to serve God as a teaching brother. Then as a result of his friendship with Brother Charles Beck, he focused on biology as a primary area of academic interest.



Brother Lawrence's first teaching assignment was Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio, where he had the good fortune to work with and learn from Brother Marius Wittner, a master teacher of biology. After two years at Hoban, he went to Bishop David High School in Louisville, Ky. His experiences there were rewarding in that he developed friendships that have lasted over the years.

After having worked in high schools for 11 years, Brother Lawrence came to Holy Cross College, where he has been teaching for the last 45 years. As a result of living in the South Bend area for so long, he has had the privilege of getting to know not only many students, but eventually some of their spouses and children.

Brother Lawrence says his experiences in Holy Cross have been positive and spiritually fulfilling.

"I have good friends within and outside the Holy Cross community," he said, "and I consider myself exceptionally blessed. I look to the future with hope." 

Celebrating brothers and making a difference in the midst of a pandemic

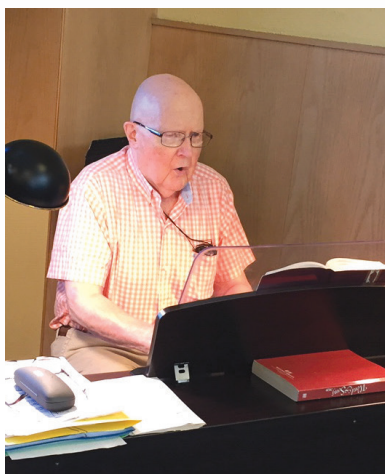
Celebrating 200 years

Just as a special group of men came together 200 years ago to serve others in the small French village of Ruililé-sur-Loir, today their spiritual descendants continue in unprecedented circumstances to serve others and each other during this global pandemic. In 1820, an energetic priest named James Dujarié started a group of religious brothers to teach in village schools. Those schools had been neglected during the French Revolution and greatly needed revitalization.

In July of that year, a young man who would become the first Brother of St. Joseph arrived at Dujarié's rectory. His name was Pierre Hureau. Within a month Louis Duchêne arrived.

Then in October came André Mottais from the town of Larchamp. It was this young man who became the day-to-day director of the brothers. He was also the first Brother of St. Joseph to pronounce final vows. When the brothers eventually moved their novitiate to Sainte-Croix (Holy Cross), a suburb of LeMans, they became known as the Brothers from Holy Cross. Brother André was among the first missionaries sent to Algeria.

This year the brothers at Columba Hall on the Notre Dame campus have been commemorating the foundation of the Brothers of St. Joseph 200 years ago.



Brother Dan Kane continues to entertain the brothers with his music during quarantine at Columba Hall at Notre Dame.

Under the direction of Brother Christopher Dreyer, a huge blue banner has been put on the front of the building to proclaim the anniversary of the founding of the brothers. A smaller version of the banner hangs in the Columba Hall chapel, and others were sent to our schools and to the novitiate in Colorado.



The second floor of Columba Hall, a retirement community for brothers at Notre Dame, highlights the life of Brother Vincent Pieau, the patriarch of the brothers at Notre Dame.

Each month at Columba Hall a different floor or common room has a special ceremony with the unveiling of a permanent plaque.

- The first floor ceremony in January honored Brother André Mottais.
- In February, the second floor was dedicated to Brother Vincent Pieau, the patriarch of the brothers at Notre Dame. He is buried in the community cemetery just up St. Mary's Road from Columba Hall.
- The third floor now honors Brother Leonard Guittoget, who was important among the early brothers for his administrative skills.
- The fourth floor honors Brother Hilarion Ferton, who led the brothers on their second mission to Algeria in 1845.
- The house library was recently dedicated to Brother Rémi Mérianne, a man who chronicled the early struggles of the first Brothers of St. Joseph.
- And the rec rooms will soon be dedicated to Brother Lawrence Menage and Brother Anselm Caillot, two men who were among the first Holy Cross religious to found the University of Notre Dame.

Responding to today's challenges

While the Brothers of Holy Cross are celebrating those selfless men that came before them, they have also found ways to support one another and serve others during this pandemic crisis.

Holy Trinity High School in Chicago began the school



Brothers Michael Becker and Phil Smith sew masks for the brothers living at Columba Hall and for residents of Holy Cross Village.

year focusing on the Holy Cross value of zeal. Blessed Basil Moreau, the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, noted, “Teachers who possess [the virtue of zeal] fulfill the duties of their profession with enthusiasm, love, courage and perseverance.”

Brother James Van Dyke, a history teacher at Holy Trinity, shared what it was like to switch to online teaching in mid-March, when schools closed due to the pandemic.

“Little did we know how much zeal we would need for the entire last quarter of the year!” he said. “When e-learning began on March 16, adaptability became the name of the game. While recognizing that learning requires stable standards and routines, we also saw the need for creativity and flexibility.”



Brother George Klawitter practices his violin prior to an engagement with the Niles Michigan orchestra.


Students were expected to sign on by a certain time each day, and work for all classes was due by another time. Teachers offered live

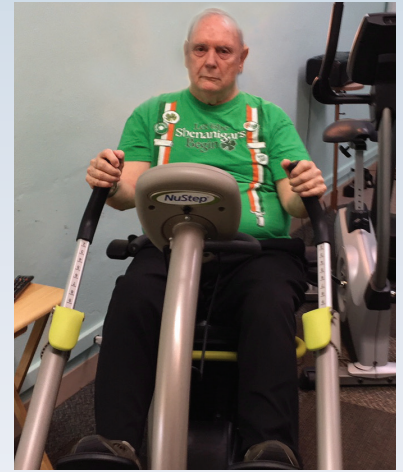
classes using Zoom or similar options.

“Despite our best efforts,” Van Dyke said, “certain things were difficult or impossible to do remotely: the dynamism of a class debate or discussion, the collaborative creativity of group work, the ability to read facial expressions or watch for flagging involvement. Some students had the responsibility of caring for younger siblings while parents worked, so teachers adapted plans to meet their needs. Teachers soon learned that a good number of students logged in early in the day, as required, but their assignments were time-stamped between midnight and 4 a.m.”

At Notre Dame, the brothers living at Holy Cross Village made regular phone calls to other residents to check on how they were doing.

The Holy Cross men in northeast Ohio scheduled a Monday evening Zoom meeting each week to keep in touch with each other.

As the pandemic continues, the brothers have found creative ways to serve others, just as the early Brothers of St. Joseph did 200 years ago. 



Brother James Reilly continued his exercise routine during the imposed Covid-19 quarantine at Columba Hall.



Brother Charles Smith tends to a garden at Gilmour Academy, continuing his passion for gardening.

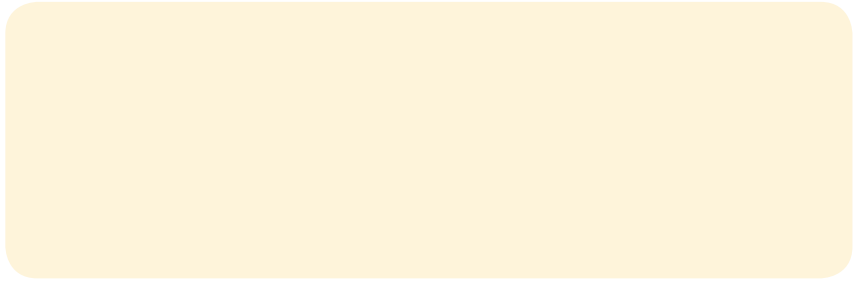
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The Brothers newsletter is a publication of the Development Office of the Midwest Province. For questions regarding the newsletter, address changes or other matters related to the development office please contact:

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Remembering our Deceased Brother in Your Prayers

Brother Vincent Anthony Gross, CSC died in Ghana at the age of 82 on May 12, 2020 61 years a vowed religious



A POEM CELEBRATING
200 YEARS OF BROTHERS

200 Years of the Brothers of Holy Cross!
Wouldn't it have been our great loss,
If they hadn't the will to persevere
Through all their trials, year after year
Then, finally, by the power of God's grace
Make a beautiful home for us at Andre Place.
Thank you!

~Barbara Dillon

Resident of Andre Place, Notre Dame, Ind.



Andre Place features independent living apartment homes on the campus of Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame.