

BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

Newsletter of the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross

Fall, 2021

'Working brothers' were the salt of community life

In a Nov. 22, 1923, Circular Letter, the Rev. Charles O'Donnell, CSC, provincial, announced to the Congregation of Holy Cross that Brother Columba O'Neill, the shoemaker and Miracle Man of Notre Dame, had died. He praised the working brothers as having

"...an integral place in our life and work. This would not be so if there were not a class of men to whom this life should make its appeal. Who we are moved to ask, is to take the place of the men of this type, the grand old type of working brother in our community. They have been the salt of our community life. There is not one of us but knows this and is happy to recognize it on our knees. When all our philosophy comes to an end about the relative importance of our various religious activities, we can take off our hat to the splendor of a life that realizes in actual practice our finest theories of religious service."

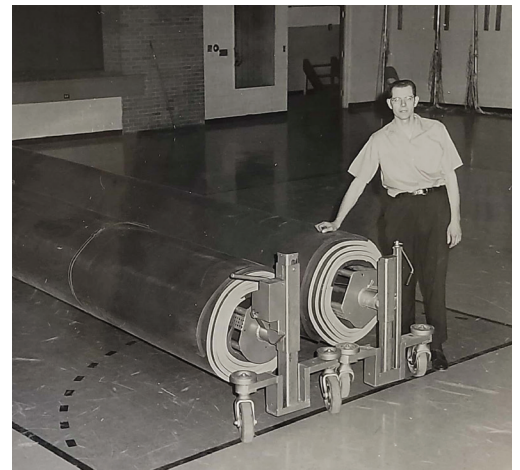
BY: BROTHER PHILIP R. SMITH, CSC, ED.D.
PROVINCE ARCHIVIST

The founder of Holy Cross, Blessed Basil Moreau, was enamored with the monastic life—a form of religious community whose members are distinctly equipped to handle any of the tasks needed to make the community self-sufficient.

And so, from the early 1800s, men were recruited for the Brothers of Holy Cross who brought to the community a multitude of gifts—the salt. Among the

six brothers who traveled with Father Sorin to South Bend, Ind., in 1842 were Brother Lawrence, a farmer and business manager, Brother Gaitan, a cook and tailor, and Brother Xavier, a carpenter and undertaker.

As Holy Cross in the States attracted more and more vocations to the brothers, many of the men were called, not to teach, but to provide the many ancillary services assuring



Brother Paul Rosonke, Maintenance
Holy Cross High School, River Grove, IL

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Legacy of ‘working brothers’ was to grow and sustain ministries

BY BROTHER KEN HADERS, CSC, PROVINCIAL

My first encounter with the Brothers of Holy Cross was as a student at St. Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio. There were lots of brothers at the school, and I was impressed by the breadth of talent among the brothers who taught different subjects, ran different clubs, and seemed to be doing anything and everything that needed to be done at the school. I learned how to strip and wax a floor from Brother Robert Siegel, my band director, who later became our principal. I remember seeing Brother Neil, who seemed ancient at the time, changing light bulbs all over the school, and was later impressed when I learned he had been a missionary, a physics teacher and a school administrator. And Brother Leo seemed to know everything about maintaining the building, but he was my favorite theology teacher and the moderator of the stage crew I had joined. The brothers were such a diverse group whose combined efforts provided an outstanding education, maintained the building and grounds, and successfully managed and inspired over 1,700 boys.

In Brother Philip’s article we are reminded of what some called the working brothers, the brothers who may not have had a college degree, but who were exemplary brothers who did so many things as individuals, or as part of a team,




Brother Flavius Ellison
Director of Corvillia House

that helped all kinds of people and just made things work. Work needed to be done, youth needed to be cared for and educated, food needed to be grown and cooked, books needed to be published, and sometimes there was work that earned money to support the Holy Cross brothers and priests and their ministries. (Did you know that the post office at Notre Dame was staffed by the brothers for over a century?) All were Holy Cross brothers, living an active life of work and prayer, guided by the vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience.

In my time as a brother, I have learned that most of us could be called “working brothers” because we have done what was needed to grow and sustain our life and our ministries. I love hearing the stories of the early days in our schools when the brothers taught all day, moderated cocurriculars, prepared their classes, graded papers, and then went to do what they could to maintain the building or the grounds. And many of the first teachers hired in our schools did the same, whether to supplement their meager salaries or to just do their part to help support the ministry they had joined.

Today, there are few brothers in active ministry, but the tradition of the working brother continues with many who have taken up the responsibility to continue to be Holy Cross educators – not only being tremendous specialists in their field of study, but in doing so much more to support the ministry that is now theirs in every way. I am grateful to them and to those who support the brothers through generous giving. Being a Holy Cross educator is a lot of work, and the teachers and administrators of today are generous in their contribution. Those who contribute financially to the brothers are also generous and contribute to the quality of life of those brothers whose legacy we still share with you.

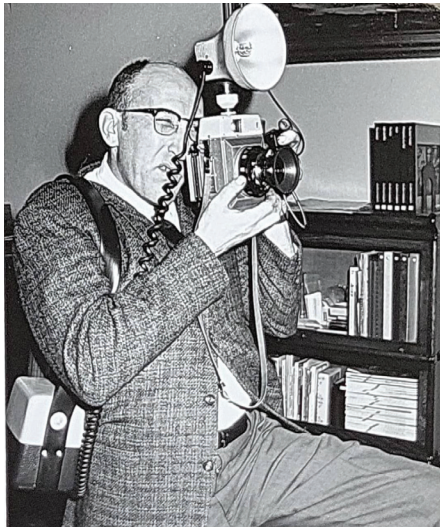
Thank you for being generous! Know that you are in our prayers on a daily basis. 



Brother Ken Haders, CSC
Provincial, Midwest Province

Continued from page 1

that the entire community was able to do all for the glory of God. Men in the 1860s like Brother Philip Neri, who as landscaper, laid out the campus of the University of Notre Dame as “a bit of Renaissance Paris in Indiana.” Brother Charles Borromeo, a master



Brother Martinus Bombardier,
Photographer

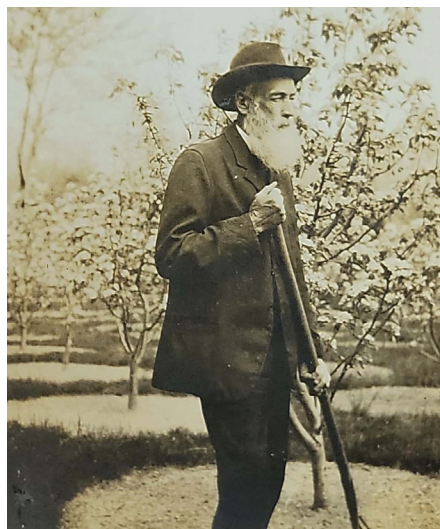
architect who, without any professional schooling, planned and built over twenty buildings on the campus, including the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and the main building.

At the time of Brother Columba’s death in the early 1920s, the brothers included Civil War veterans who became beekeepers like Brother John Chrysostom; and Brother Neil, the lamplighter; and the butcher, Brother Eustachius. There was also Brother Basil, the organist at the Basilica for nearly 50 years, and baker Brother Willibrord, famous for his “Brother Buns.”

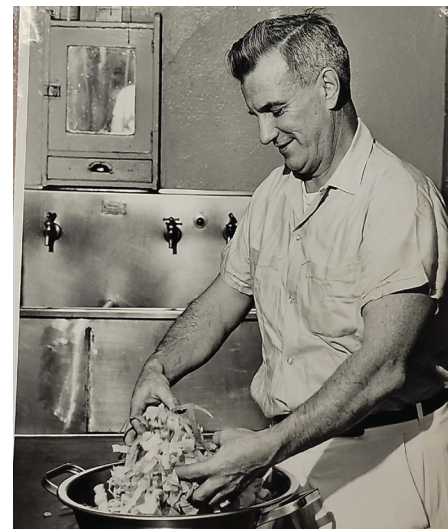
In the 1940s, farming the land and animal husbandry flourished among the brothers. There were farms on the Notre Dame campus, in Granger, Ind., and at the novitiate—Silver Lake Farm in Rolling Prairie, Ind. Many brothers worked the land and bred the animals that supplied meat and eggs and grew the produce for all Holy

Cross foundations within a radius of 100 miles of Notre Dame. There were Brothers like Nilus, who was a legend among the Indiana Amish for producing some of the finest breeding bulls in Indiana. Also, Brothers Sixtus and Florian, who ran highly efficient farms where men like Brother Paulinus became famous for his apple orchards.

In 1945, the Brothers began opening more and more high schools. Along with the many teaching brothers assigned to these schools, working brothers were needed to cook, to maintain the buildings and to manicure the property. There were famous cooks like Brothers Leonard Siwierka, Amadeus Conner and Richard Keller. These men fed more than just the brothers—they were the essence of hospitality who always had an extra cookie for a student worker or a drop-in for dinner. There were maintenance directors too: Brother John Schuszler at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago, who cared for a school building nearly 100 years old; Brother Paul Rosonke, an inventor, who at Holy Cross High School in River Grove built whatever he could not buy; and Brother Richard Weber at Holy Cross College, who was a master at anything he laid his hands to, from



Brother John Chrysostom Will
Civil War Vet and Beekeeper




Brother Amadeus Connor
Cook, St. Edward High School

plumbing to building an airplane.

There were also the brothers who cared for neglected and troubled delinquents—Brothers Gregoire Bleau, Warren Shea, Flavius Ellison, among others. None of these brothers had professional degrees in social work nor child psychology. What they brought to their ministry was a desire to build healthy relationships with boys who had been tossed aside by family and society.

There are so many brothers who served in a vast array of other nonteaching capacities that they cannot be properly hallmarked in this short article: photographers, public relations directors for dioceses, linotype and pressmen at the Ave Maria Press, mechanics and brothers like Cosmas, who for over 50 years made sure there were candles to light at the Notre Dame Grotto.

As the salt—as the agents who supplied the tang, if you will, for the total community operation—these working brothers were like that first nonteacher, Saint Joseph. The vast majority of them led lives behind the scenes—silent lives that spoke loudly and eloquently of their unflinching vocations of dedicated service to Holy Cross and the Church. 

Annual Report

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Steadfast and generous donors give for personal reasons

BROTHER ROY SMITH, CSC,
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, MIDWEST PROVINCE

As I read the articles by Brothers Philip Smith and Ken Haders, two words that kept coming to mind about our donors and the brothers they mentioned were steadfast and generous.

You, our donors, have been very loyal and reliable over many years. Brother John McMuldren has spoken on the phone to many of you, expressing our appreciation of your giving and learning more of what your personal reasons and stories are that encouraged you to support the Brothers of Holy Cross.

Two letters included in this issue give voice as to why these former students express gratitude. In them, the



Brother Roy Smith, CSC

letter-writers share personal reasons for wanting to give to the Brothers of Holy Cross.

While I was at St. Charles Boys Home in Milwaukee, two of my mentors were Brothers Gregoire Bleau and Warren Shea. They had no formal degrees but they were indeed very effective with our students, although opposites in their approach. Brother Gregoire was built with full shoulders, a hockey-player-type of guy with a booming voice. When Brother Gregoire called a player on the football field at 50 yards away, it felt to the student as if he were only six yards away. Brother Warren was medium-build with a soft voice. Brother Gregoire communicated with the guys and talked to the older boys. Brother Warren used his interests in arts, crafts, go karts and costumes, and his desk showed it. I could say as Jim Chason (page 9) said—I benefitted from the example and sacrifice of Brothers Warren and Gregoire.

For all of the brothers, I say thank you for your example, sacrifice and steadfast generosity. ✠

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These are donors who have included the Brothers in their estate plans.

†Deceased, yet the legacy of these donors continues through their estate gifts.

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During the year, July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 we had 786 donors give for a total of \$654,150.91.

- ▲ Anchors of Hope Members—9 donors for a total of \$197,925.19
- ▲ Brother Columba O'Neill Club—15 donors for a total of \$250,960.23
- ▲ Columba Hall Society—251 donors for a total of \$163,656.34
- ▲ Cross & Anchors—511 donors for a total of \$41,609.15

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 Charles & Patricia Sasena
 Neil & Sandra Scalo
 Jerald Schaffstein
 Henry Schapker

Brothers break the cycle of troubled youth

A troubled young teen from an abusive environment is graciously placed with the Brothers of Holy Cross at St. Charles Boys Home in Milwaukee, Wis. For the first time in his life he experiences positive male role models. Under their guidance and direction his path in life is forever changed. He thrives in this new environment and takes each lesson to heart. Through the brothers and their staff he receives counseling and is shown kindness, love, caring and support. The lessons learned under the care of the brothers afford him a new normal.

He employs this new normal as he grows, marries and raises his own family. His children experience a childhood very different from his own.

I was that troubled young teen, and I am forever grateful to the Brothers of Holy Cross. Their selfless act of choosing a life of service to God and others made a tremendous difference in my life. Mine is but one of the many lives touched by the Brothers of Holy Cross. The one thing we all have in common is that each of us has benefited from their sacrifice.

—*Jim Chason*
St. Charles Boys Home

Herbert Schilling
 John & Diana Schliesing
 William & Catherine Schmitz
 Ruth Schmitz
 James Schmuckal
 David & Susan Schnieders
 Raymond Schnorr
 Hugh & Marilyn Schoeffler
 Charles & Janet Schooley
 Bernard & Winifred Schorle
 Paul Schraff
 Lawrence & Marilyn Schweizer
 Evelyn Scott
 Robert Sedlack
 George & Penny Sent
 Ronald Sersen
 Mary Jane Severyn
 William Shaffern
 Dave Shivinsky
 Kurt Shuttler
 Timothy Siebel
 William Sienko
 Joseph & Maureen H. Sikora
 J. William & Wendy Sikora

Donald & Lynn Simantz
 William & Diane Simmons
 Alan Simon
 Robert & Marjorie Sindy
 Br. Thomas Sisung
 Gregory & Mary Siwicki
 Br. Roy Smith, CSC
 David Smith
 Thomas Smith
 Paul & Celeste Smith
 Joseph & Brenda Smith
 Sr. Demetria Smith, MSOLA
 Dr. David & Rosemary Srebalus
 Ted Staniec
 Robert & Nancy Stebbins
 Mark Steinmetz
 Charles Stevens
 Michael & Catherine Stevens
 Mark & Theresa Stewart
 Dr. David Stowe
 Kenneth Strouse
 Thomas Stuecheli
 Thomas & Patricia Sullivan
 Hon. Frank & Cheryl Sullivan

Robert Sumner
 John Swisher
 Dr. Martin & Patricia Szakaly
 Joseph & Catherine Szczurek
 Henry & Kathleen Szott
 Barry & Susan Szymanski
 David Tarr
 Stephen & Ruth Taylor
 Dennis & Patricia Testa
 Anthony & Jane Tietz
 Andrew Tomczyk
 Vincent & Zorina Torres
 Edward & Marcia Toth
 Joseph & Patricia Toth
 James & Marybeth Trunk
 Mary Tulchinsky
 Dr. James & Delia Tyler
 Louis Ullenberg
 Michael Urie
 Margaret Van Der Gracht
 Vincent & Betty VandenHeuvel
 Bradley Vite
 William Vogt
 Chas & Janice Von Spiegel
 James & Jacqueline Wagner
 Robert Walpole
 James & Theresa Walsh
 Eugene & Margaret Wantuck
 John Welsh
 Leo Wieszka
 Joseph Wickham
 Hon. Charles & Jeanne Wiles
 Dr. Craig Williams
 Patrick Willams
 Dolores Williams
 Helen Williams
 Charles & Kathleen Wilsbacher
 Kathleen Wirth
 John & Judy Wirtz
 William Wisnor
 Donald Wittgen
 Harold Wolf
 Raymond & Shirley Wyzguski
 Michael & Patricia Youngblood
 Alex and Nancy Yovanovich
 Richard & Jean Zahn
 Denis Zamirowski
 Leonard & Susan Zandrow
 John Zarem
 Hon. Gerald & Debra Zore


‘Working brothers’ used talents in unusual roles to serve others

BY BROTHER PHILIP SMITH, CSC, PROVINCE ARCHIVIST

The first Notre Dame post office was established in 1851 with Father Edward Sorin serving as postmaster. Sorin was appointed by President Millard Fillmore, a position he held until his death in 1893. Because Sorin was almost entirely bed-bound for the last two years of his life, it is uncertain who fulfilled his duties as postmaster. Upon his death there were two Holy Cross priests who held the position: William Corby, appointed by Grover Cleveland, and Andrew Morrissey, appointed by William McKinley. In 1915, the first brother postmaster, Brother Emilius, was appointed by Woodrow Wilson. He would be followed by seven other brothers: Theogene Merlin, Marcellinus Fahey, Eli Pelchat, Thomas Balaz, Ramon Purzycki and Francis Meduri. The first non-Holy Cross postmaster, Mr. P. C. Calwell, was sworn in, in 1980.

Another “unusual” obedience for a brother, yet an absolutely essential task, was being assigned to the Notre Dame Fire Department, which was organized in 1879 and completely staffed by brothers and laymen through the late 1980s. The most notable brother-fireman was Brother Borrromeo (Thomas) Malley who worked as fire chief for nearly 50 years. Born in 1913, Borrromeo entered the congregation in 1931. Journalist Phil Loranger wrote: “[Brother Borrromeo] became only the third man since 1870 to hold

the title of director of utilities, a post that made him manager of the tiny, ill-equipped university rail system [N.D. & W. Railroad]. In his nearly 60 years as head of the line, Borrromeo never missed the opportunity to improve the track, cars or equipment. The 65-ton, 400-horsepower diesel engine No. 5332, still resplendent in its blue and gold colors, was his proudest contribution. During World War II, military trains were a common sight on the tracks, and until 1962, when the last passenger trains brought Fighting Irish fans to the campus for drop off, as many as five trains would be birthed on the tracks. It was Borrromeo and his staff who would lay out more than 5,000 yards of hose to provide water and fuel for the steam and diesel engines while the passengers watched the Irish football team play in the stadium.”

Upon his death, Holy Cross Bishop Daniel Jenke said about him. “A ‘patriarch,’ according to the dictionary definition, could be described as ‘a venerable old man’ or ‘a revered senior member of a community’ or ‘a respected elder.’ Well, in our Holy Cross family here at Notre Dame, Brother Borrromeo rather aptly and completely fulfilled this role.” And Father Edmund Joyce, CSC, homilist, commented that “For all of his consummate professionalism in his duties at the university, what Brother Borrromeo will be remembered for by most of us was that he was first and foremost a true religious—faithful to his God and his vows.” 



Holy Cross priests and brothers served as postmasters in the Notre Dame Post Office beginning with Father Sorin in 1851 and ending with Brother Francis Meduri in 1980. There were 14.



Brothers working in the Notre Dame Post Office. The first Brother Postmaster was Brother Emelius, CSC in 1915.



Brother firemen at the turn of the 20th century. Brother Peter Claver Hosinski, CSC (front row right) was also the first principal of Holy Trinity High School and a Bengal missionary.



Brother Borrromeo Malley, CSC, the last Brother Fire Chief of the Notre Dame Fire Department.



Mail from home was often the highlight of a Notre Dame student's week. The brothers were instrumental in delivering these notes from home to Domers for many years.

Brothers respected students while nurturing confident, resilient men

I came to St. Joseph High School in 1966. I wasn't a great student or a good athlete, I was just an average kid. I knew that I was going to try every day to be better than I felt I was. Some days I even succeeded!

Like most kids, I would talk to my friends about the different stages of life growing up. There were times, though, that it helped when I could talk to someone at a higher level, even just to feel respected. There were three Holy Cross brothers, Andrew Sukenic, Daniel Kane and Roy Smith, who filled this need for me. I don't remember having in-depth discussions with them. I do remember feeling like I was listened to and respected. That feeling was repeated when I attended Holy Cross College. Brother John Driscoll was every student's mentor.

I firmly believe that at St Joe's, I learned to be resilient. That resilience has seen me through some tough times. When I was in the Navy, we were in the last couple of years of the Vietnam War. I was stationed on the East Coast, but we were constantly reminded that military members were being attacked in town.

I was eventually sent to Camp Lejeune, and was the senior hospital corpsman with a helicopter assault company. Our company was comprised of blacks and whites and Hispanics, most with no combat experience. Our noncommissioned officers and officers had all been to

Vietnam, and I learned a tremendous amount from them. There was a constant sense of distrust and anger within certain elements of the company. I had to make sure that all my men knew that the corpsmen were there for all of them. I will never forget my NCOs and fellow corpsmen.

When I got out of the Navy, I was lucky enough to get hired as one of the City of Mishawaka's first EMTs when they started its ambulance service. Three years later, I became one of their first paramedics. I feel that resilience really came into play, not only with keeping up with changes in the field, but also in surviving the medical politics of doctors from different hospitals. For 30 years, that resilience has gotten me through.

Now retired, I use my resilience to live with the results of a stem cell transplant, caused by my blood cancer from drinking the water at Camp Lejeune in the 1970s. I also live with the frustration that I have not been able to find any information about any of the men I served with there.

I will always be grateful to those who helped me become the man I am today. I will always try to be a little better than what I think I am.

—Greg Dolezal
Class of 1970
St. Joseph High School, South Bend

Remembering our deceased brother

Brother Richard Lynn Huber, CSC, 92 • September 14, 2021 • 71 years of vowed religious life

For more information on the

Brothers of Holy Cross

visit our website at:

www.brothersofholycross.com

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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Midwest Holy Cross Associates
and the Midwest Province present

Reaching Out

Touching Minds and Hearts through Information,
Formation and Transformation

The Holy Cross tradition invites anyone connected with
Holy Cross Communities to join in a

Zoom Conference
Saturday, Jan. 29, 2022 EST USA
10 am to 2 pm

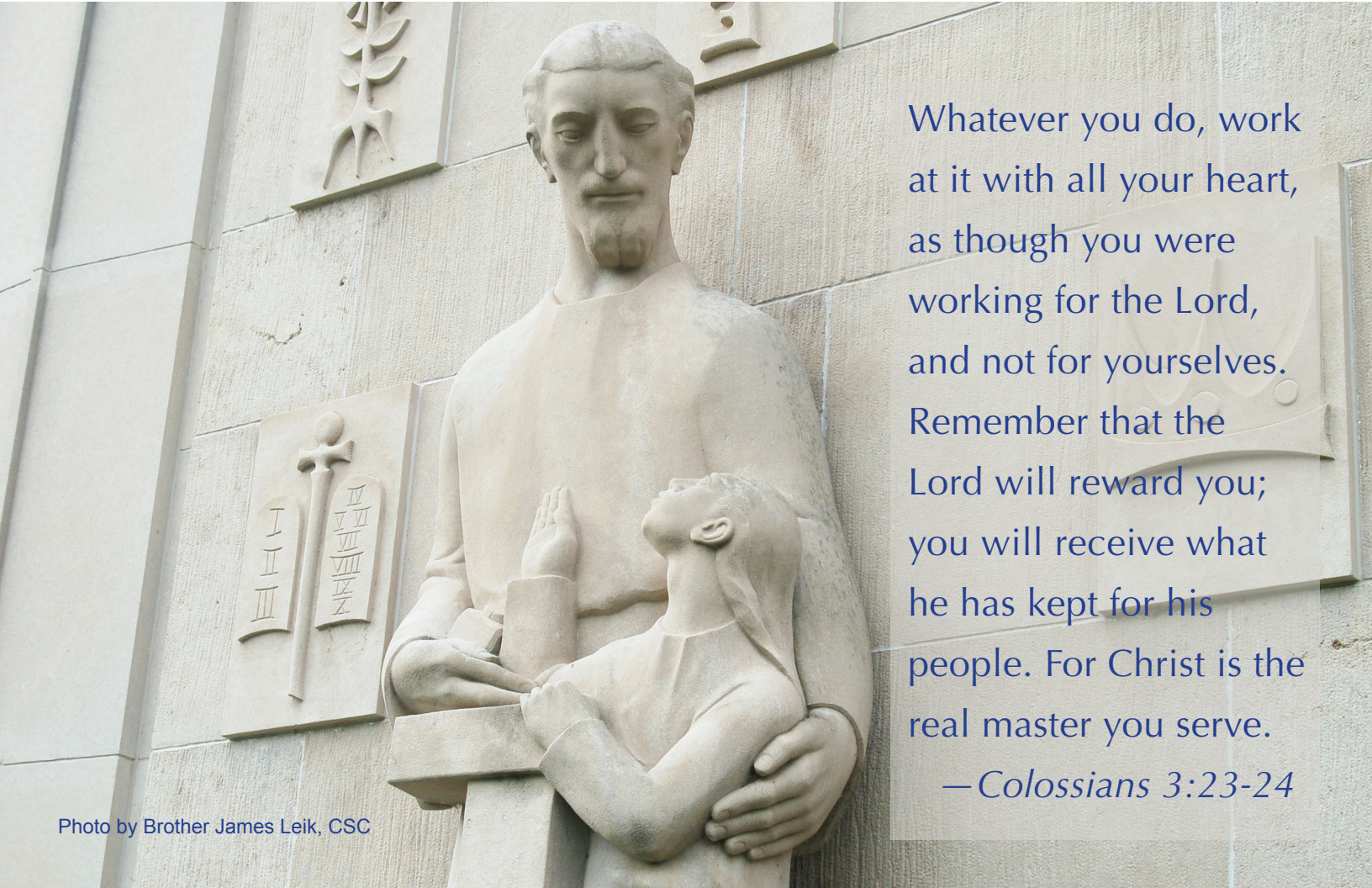
Register at:
[https://holycrossassociates.org/
chapters/national-and-regional-conferences/](https://holycrossassociates.org/chapters/national-and-regional-conferences/)



BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

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Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord, and not for yourselves. Remember that the Lord will reward you; you will receive what he has kept for his people. For Christ is the real master you serve.

— *Colossians 3:23-24*