BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS
Living the mission of Jesus.
November, 2011

Quiet, unheralded servants can use your help

By Brother Chester Freel, C.S.C., Provincial Superior

There is an old saying:

We have all prayed in churches we didn't build;
we have all drunk from wells we didn't dig.

We owe much to those who came before us. As I sit in the back of the chapel in Columba Hall on the Notre Dame campus and reflect on these words, I see many "builders and diggers" right in front of me.

Looking at the backs of my fellow brothers, I recall stories of these men figuratively (sometimes literally) setting the foundations and building churches and schools, and taking shovel in hand and to dig those wells.

More importantly, they also formed hearts and minds by educating generations of leaders, ministering to aging generations and helping spread development, education and Christianity throughout the world. Sitting here in front of me are dozens of Brothers, including:

Brother Thomas More Beere	50 years in Bangladesh
Brother Ronald Christenson	40+ years in Bangladesh
Brother Raymond Trottman	36 years at Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Indiana
Brother Robert Dierker	33 years at St. Joseph High School, South Bend, Indiana
Brother John Schuszler	20 years at Holy Trinity High School, Chicago, Illinois
Brother Albin Kuzminski	37 years at Holy Cross Services (Boysville), Clinton, Michigan

The list goes on. Their backs, as they begin morning Mass, tell their stories. These backs are not just rounded from decades of service, but reverently bowed in humble supplication. *These are lives spent in quiet, unheralded service.*

Their backs tell their stories.

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Today, it is for these men who have dedicated their lives to helping others that I ask your help.

Each morning since professing vows as Holy Cross Brothers, these men have awakened to take on the mantle of their commitment. They have lived lives as examples of Jesus Christ—Jesus the carpenter, Jesus the teacher, Jesus the servant to others, Jesus the evangelist and Jesus the example of simplicity, charity and love. As these brothers age, their commitment has only grown. But the will of their hearts and souls is chastened by the limits of an aging body.

Like all men their age (average age 75) they are challenged by the wear and tear of the years. Life's changes are inevitable, however many of these changes are within their ability to mold into positive, life-giving events. Living accommodations, health care, meals, exercise, mental and spiritual development are but a few of the changes that can help make their senior years more fulfilling.

> *"These backs are not just rounded from decades of service, but reverently bowed in humble supplication."*

Being active, not passive, is important to all people. Volunteering weekly in area soup kitchens, driving brothers to medical appointments, attending cultural, educational and athletic events at Holy Cross College, St. Mary's College or the University of Notre Dame all play a part in keeping the mind and body stimulated.

In the past few years since I have been writing to you, we have been greatly blessed by your charity. You have helped renovate Columba Hall and have given each of the Brothers of Holy Cross a safe, functional place to live.

Brother Chester Freel, C.S.C.

Today, as I write to you, the Brothers are focusing on a new commitment, to reenergize their own bodies. As many of you know, the fastest rising cost for any organization in America today is healthcare. This is especially true for our senior brothers.

However, we have come to learn that there is much we can do to help lower these costs through diet, exercise and healthy living, and we have been making steady improvements in this area. In fact, one brother lost over 50 pounds and has been able to completely forgo insulin. We have discovered that walking has helped lower blood pressure and cholesterol. Weight lifting actually helps improve mobility and balance. We are making better choices in the dining room and seeing the benefits in measures like blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.

We have been aided by a full-time nurse and a part-time nutritionist. Now I hear the frequent refrain of Brothers teaching Brothers: "Portion control is how I'm losing weight." "Meat is OK, but in smaller amount." "But you have to exercise, that's the secret!" "On a good day, I can walk to the grotto with the nurse. She's wonderful!"

One of our brothers, who is 93, shared this story: "Yesterday, I went to the doctor's office, and the nurse asked me if I had ever been vaccinated. I told her yes, and she asked how long ago? I thought for a moment and told her "90 years!" Well, it may have taken a while, but we are learning that we can *remain active in our various ministries*, if we do more to improve our own health.

I am writing at the start of the blessed Advent season to ask you for a gift to help provide the Brothers with preventive care, exercise tools, and the health advisors they need to stay fit, healthy and *active in service to others regardless of age. With your assistance, our brothers can continue their ministries as "builders and diggers."*

We thank you for your generosity and pray that you and yours have a blessed and healthy Christmas.

Donor Recognition

Levels of Giving

There will be opportunities for you to be recognized for your contributions.

Brother Columba O'Neill Club Members

Gifts of $5,000 and above will have their names on a special plaque in the lobby of Columba Hall

Columba Hall Society Members

Gifts from $200 to $4,999 will have their names on a memorial plaque in Columba Hall

Cross & Anchors Members

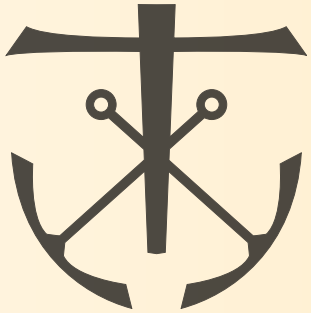
Gifts up to $199 will have their names recorded in a memory book in Columba Hall

Wellness program is focus of brothers' Annual Appeal

By Brother Roy Smith, C.S.C., Director of Development

Our focus for the Annual Appeal is to fund a wellness team and program for the brothers in Columba Hall, in Holy Cross Village and in the South Bend area. The goal for this year is $200,000.

For the past two years we have begun developing a wellness program for the brothers in the Notre Dame area. We have worked to provide for the physical, mental and spiritual health of our brothers, whether active in full-time ministry or active in retirement. Though some are slowing down physically, their minds are as sharp and quick as ever. In addition to ongoing preventive health care, the primary focus has been on education in the areas of exercise, diet and health management. Gradually we have moved from responding to problems to supplying the knowledge and tools to avoid some of those problems. We need to go to the next step, forming a comprehensive interdisciplinary wellness team made up of various specialists and professionals who will help us provide a healthy, active lifestyle for our senior brothers. Here are our goals:



1. To expand on-duty nursing care to seven days a week
2. To expand education on healthful living
3. To improve the Columba Hall exercise room, including more equipment
4. To expand activities that get brothers out of the house for ministry, enrichment and recreation

Having completed the physical renovations at Columba Hall, we are now focusing on quality-of-life issues that will allow brothers to remain in independent but supportive living situations like Columba Hall, leading active and healthful lives for many years.

On behalf of all the Brothers of Holy Cross, I thank you for your generosity.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your most welcome gift, or contact me:

Brother Roy Smith, C.S.C.
Director of Development

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"Columba Hall is fortunate to have the daily services of a trained nurse, Elizabeth Cecil, R.N., who serves the health needs and provides medical advice to the brothers.

She was trained at two universities and is always ready to provide medicine and arrange doctor's appointments as often as needed. Her office and emergency assistance is always here and she is ready to listen and answer questions and offer important advice as needed.

Her presence here has been most helpful as I deal with wellness and health issues."

—Brother William Schu, C.S.C.
Columba Hall Resident

Brothers Donald Morgan, Jerome Kroetsch and Richard Huber work out in the Columba Hall exercise room, which needs to be upgraded with equipment designed for elderly users.

Barbara Dzikowski from the Alzheimer's Association makes a presentation, "Early dementia signs and symptoms and normal aging," to the brothers from the South Bend area.

Ms. Angela King, the balance class instructor, leads the brothers in their weekly class.