



BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

Living the mission of Jesus.

Please join us in our great road-raising project

BY BROTHER CHESTER FREEL, C.S.C., PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR

November, 2012

Dear Friend,

I hope this letter finds you well and prospering in this blessed season of Thanksgiving. I am writing to you to ask for assistance for our brothers. We need a structural “miracle” at the front door of our home. A ramp would not be practical, so we are planning to raise the road! Let me explain...

As you may know, the campus of the University of Notre Dame is the temporary home to students from across the country and over the world. They come for four years and are transformed forever.

It is also the permanent home to many Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross, most of whom live in community at one of the oldest and most stately buildings

on this lovely campus—Columba Hall. Unfortunately, stately buildings were never built with handicapped access in mind.

Unlike the other buildings at the University, Columba Hall is completely self-sufficient. Brothers who work and earn outside salaries pool their small incomes to maintain it and support each other.

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Artist rendering of Columba Hall renovations



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Seven brothers accompanied Father Sorin to the original site to start the University of Notre Dame in 1842, and we have lived in this community ever since. Historically, brothers have done much to build and maintain our great university. Brothers were cooks and cobblers, builders and farmers, brick makers and brick layers, tailors and barbers, as well as professors, missionaries, librarians, and residence hall directors.

Named for Brother Columba O'Neill, the hall is located on one of the most historic sites on campus, a hill overlooking St. Mary's Lake in the front yard and St. Joseph's Lake in the back yard, facing St. Mary's Road. Here the Brothers of Holy Cross built the first permanent community house for priests and brothers. Each of the seasons surrounds Columba Hall, displaying its own natural beauty. However, the real beauty lies within its very stout walls and 15-foot- high ceilings. It has been home to hundreds of brothers for the past century and more. Each brother has left his mark here in countless ways, and remembering them and their lives has been the source of community legends, stories, pride and laughter through the decades.

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We are men called by God to serve the Catholic Church and the Congregation of Holy Cross who take vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience. Today, many have returned to Columba Hall to live together in community and semi-retirement.

Residents of Columba Hall include Brother Donald Fleischhacker, who taught at Holy Cross High School, River Grove, Ill., for 20 years; Brother Donald Allen, who worked as a missionary in Africa and served during challenging times; Brother Robert Dierker, who continues to volunteer at St. Joseph High School in South Bend; and Brother Raymond Trottmann, who worked for many years at Ave Maria Press. In all, 40 brothers make Columba their home.

Some brothers have Social Security payments, and others have small pensions. If you have older relatives to care

for, you know it is never enough. And many brothers did not begin earning salaries and therefore contributing to Social Security until the 1980s.

Thankfully, we have served many thousands of good people like you throughout our careers, and so we ask for an annual donation to help us meet our basic needs.



Brother Chester Freel, C.S.C.

Over the last three years your generosity has helped to remodel many rooms with bathrooms, putting safety bars in showers, new safer wiring, bringing fire alarms up to code, rebuilding parts of our kitchen and fixing the walk-in freezer.

However, for men like us who have spent so much of our lives on our feet, the cement staircases at our front and rear entrances are becoming major obstacles especially in snow and rain. We have consulted architects about building ramps, but they say it is not practical. The solution they recommend is to raise the roadway to meet our front door and a handicapped parking lot nearer the building.

In addition to raising the road, we also need to replace the worn and hazardous carpeting in the dining room. Also, we need to remodel the six bedrooms with baths that were upgraded 20 years ago. These are ambitious projects, and we pray that you will be able to join us in this effort.

Columba Hall has been our home for over 115 years, but it needs repairs. Please continue to join us in this effort. Columba Hall still is a great and joyful place to live. And maybe with your help (and the “luck of the Irish”), we will have our miracle this year. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brother Chester Freel, CSC

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

PS: Your generous donation helps support the Brothers of Holy Cross Midwest Province. We are asking primarily for funds to support our elderly brothers and establish a building fund for Columba Hall. Thank you for caring. We will remember you in our prayers. And I know with your help we will raise the road!

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 \$10,000 and above will have their names on a plaque at the main entrance to Columba Hall

Gifts of \$5,000 and above will have their names on a plaque on the door of a private remodeled room

Columba Hall Society Members

Gifts from \$200 to \$4,999 will have their names on a plaque in the lobby

Cross & Anchors Members

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

Accessibility and accommodation are the focus of brothers' Annual Appeal

BY BROTHER ROY SMITH, C.S.C., DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Most of us can picture ourselves trying to gain access to a building using a few steps. However, at Columba Hall, the steps present a major barrier for some residents and guests. Upgrades to the building are needed, and we are hoping you can help.

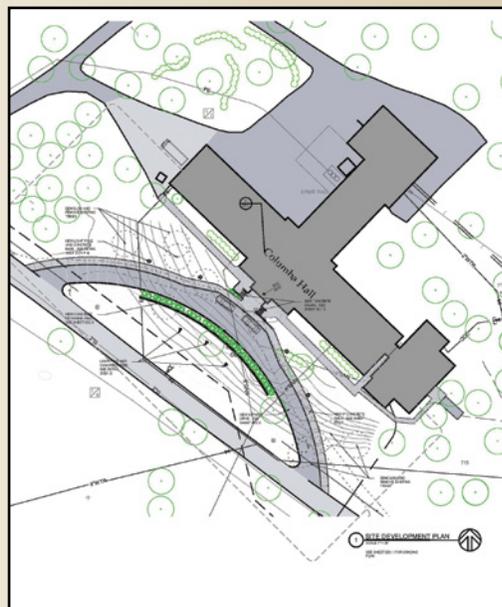
Our goal for this appeal is \$200,000. This amount would allow us to create a safe new entrance to Columba Hall for its residents and guests and to do the necessary improvements that Brother Chester has described in his letter.

We ask you again to partner with us in the continual process of keeping Columba Hall a safe and attractive residence for the Brothers of Holy Cross.

On behalf of all the Brothers of Holy Cross, I thank you for your continued generosity and for accepting this invitation to help us again. Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift, which is most welcome, or contact me:



Raising the road will make Brother John Kuhn's entry safer and easier. Brother Roy looks on and assists him.



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

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**Aerial drawing
of Columba Hall**

Brother Thomas Moser maintains a building 115 years old

BY: BROTHER THOMAS MOSER, C.S.C.,
RELIGIOUS SUPERIOR OF COLUMBA HALL

I am pleased to take the leadership here at Columba Hall. This is a community that goes all the way back to the beginning of Brothers of Holy Cross here in the United States. A part of our building is second in age only to the Old College on the Notre Dame campus. The community of brothers has been on what is known as St. Mary's Island, which once stood in the middle of St. Mary's lake, only to be divided later into St. Mary's Lake and St. Joseph's Lake.

I am grateful to Brother Walter Gluhm, C.S.C., and you who have made contributions to our previous phases of

upkeep and renovations. Any building whose foundation is a century old has to be well maintained.

Our community here is the heart of the Brothers of Holy Cross and the central focus for our province as it ages. We are a house for visiting community members and for retirement of our semi-retired Brothers. As the membership continues to grow here, we are able to assist fellow community members. We are in the process of increasing access for brothers with special ambulatory needs. Some other brothers and I have been directing young men working in various home repair projects to update our facilities. For larger projects we rely on outside professional craftsmen. Our hope is that we become barrier-free. —Thank you.



Brother Thomas Moser directs and discusses with worker Frank Gonzalez the tools needed for today's work.

Brother William Schu looks on as Brother Roy Smith points out the carpet in the dining room that needs replacing, especially to insure safety.

