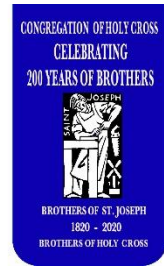


MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

Brothers of Holy Cross – Midwest Province - P.O. Box 460 – Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-0460

September 2, 2020



Brother Thomas Charles Henning, C.S.C. (September 30, 1934-August 29, 2020)



Brother Thomas Henning, C.S.C., age 85, died at Notre Dame, Indiana. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, the son of Charles Henning and Frances (Rasmus) Henning, the oldest of six children. Graduating from St. Andrew High School in 1951, he worked for a while as a trust insurance clerk in a Detroit bank. In 1957, he enlisted in the United States Army, and while serving as personnel assistant for the Presidio of San Francisco, attended the University of San Francisco until his discharge in 1962. Until 1967, he worked for Crocker Citizens Bank of San Francisco, when he then entered the Congregation of Holy Cross taking final vows in 1973.

From 1970 to 1985 and from 2002-2003, Brother Thomas served at Le Mans Academy, Rolling Prairie, Indiana as an administrator, treasurer, dorm counselor and teacher of reading, math and typing. During this time, he earned a MS degree in Special Education from the University of Indiana. In 1985, he was appointed the Assistant Business Manager of the Midwest Province of Brothers of Holy Cross, a position he held for the next ten years. In 1995, he studied at St. Meinrad Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana for a Master of Theological Studies. He then accepted the position of Business Manager for St. Pius X Church in Southgate, Michigan. His final assignment prior to retirement was working at Archbishop Hoban High School from 2003-2014 where he was the Attendance Director. Brother Thomas lived at Columba Hall on the campus of the University of Notre Dame from 2014 until his death.

Tom Henning was first a community member who enjoyed living with and serving his brothers. Even though he held many positions while at Le Mans Academy, formally St. Joseph Novitiate, he was most famous for his Saturday-evening soirées. Brothers from South Bend would often drive out to the Prairie for his elaborate hors d'oeuvres and drinks. When the Brothers' rec-room was closed because of school renovations, he personally relocated the parties to a room in the tower. Not only did he supply the food for the parties, but also the cards and poker chips. He was a kind and gentle man, meticulous about the details for his many tasks.

With a wonderful sense of humor, he was also a man who accepted the paradoxes in his life. While in Akron, he turned 75 and was informed that he needed to take a driver's test to assure that he was not a menace on the highway. This test would be administered in South Bend. So he loaded himself into his car and drove to South Bend, passed the test, then drove back to Akron. A 700-mile round trip. All in a day's labor for Tom.

His job at Archbishop Hoban High School was Attendance Director, one that he took on with the same penchant for detail as he had demonstrated as assistant business manager for the Province. Each morning, he would listen to an array of excuses for absences. "Where is the note from your mother?" No note—guilty! Once found guilty, there was no reprieve from the long arm of Tom's justice.

The attendance office was in the same room as the faculty xerox machines for which he also held responsibility for their immediate maintenance—unjamming the jammed. One faculty person wondered what Tom had done to deserve this job as just a few days of it assured that he would hold a high place in heaven. During these eleven years, he exemplified humble graciousness, always smiled at teachers and loved hearing about what they were doing in the classrooms.

Tom Henning was a quiet, self-effacing Brother, a real example of the early Brothers of Saint Joseph. He liked wide 1950-style ties and perogies filled with mashed potatoes. He liked long walks in the metro parks and the Cuyahoga National Forest. He liked the San Francisco Bay area and lighthouses of Lake Michigan. He liked all Polish food with an occasional cold beer. He liked his many friends and wrote to them frequently. He loved musical theater and had

personal favorites that he watched over and over. He nourished himself with communal and private prayer, always having a private prayer space in his personal room. He spent more and more time at prayer as he grew less and less capable of the physical activity demanded in schools.

During his last years, he became less verbal, which some might have interpreted as an inability to comprehend what was going on. Not so. Once one got his attention, he would look up and break into a smile that absorbed his entire face. He listened and responded in a few words, and you knew that he knew. He was liked by all who knew him.

The Lord has called Tom with, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!” (Mathew 25:23)

A private Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated for Brother Thomas Henning on Thursday, September 3, 2020, at 11 AM at St. Joseph Chapel, Holy Cross College.

Correction

In last weeks edition of *Midwest-Midweek*, the article “A visit to Dujarie House” lacks two pictures and has a picture mis-named. The edition has been corrected and may be reviewed at its location:

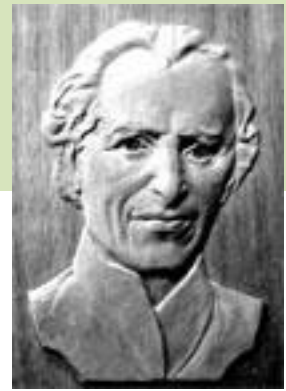
<http://brothersofholycross.com/bhc/wp-content/uploads/MidMid26Aug2020.pdf>

This Week

Information on individual early Brothers of St. Joseph for posting week by week in 2020.

August 23 – 29 On August 25, 1836, Brother Andre Mottais became the first of the Brothers to take Final Vows. He was novice master at Le Mans and the first of the early Brothers to persevere.

August 30 – September 5 On August 31, 1835, the Brothers moved their motherhouse from Ruille to Le Mans and came under the direction of **Father Basil Moreau**. On August 31 the following year the Brothers' motherhouse in Ruille, the Grand St. Joseph, was sold. It still stands but is now an apartment building.



CONGREGATION OF
HOLY CROSS
EDUCATION · PARISH · MISSION

View the two live streaming
programs listed below

With joy and thanksgiving,
the Congregation of Holy Cross
announces the

PROFESSION OF PERPETUAL VOWS
of our brothers

MR. FELIPE CAMPOS RESENDEZ, C.S.C.
MR. ROBERT JAMES LISOWSKI, C.S.C.
MR. GEOFFREY THOMAS MOONEY, C.S.C.
BR. PABLO JOSE QUAN LOPEZ, C.S.C.
MR. DAVID WARREN SMITH, C.S.C.

within Mass

Friday, September 4, 2020
2:00 p.m. (EDT)



Basilica of the Sacred Heart
University of Notre Dame
None Dame, Indiana

Please join us in praying for our brothers
and witnessing this momentous occasion
at

finalvows-live.holycrossvocations.org



With joy and thanksgiving
the Congregation of Holy Cross
announces the ordination
of our brothers

MR. FELIPE CAMPOS RESENDEZ, C.S.C.
MR. ROBERT JAMES LISOWSKI, C.S.C.
MR. GEOFFREY THOMAS MOONEY, C.S.C.
MR. DAVID WARREN SMITH, C.S.C

to the Order of Deacon
And

REV. MR. VINCENT HIEN NGUYEN, C.S.C.
REV. MR. MARK JOSEPH PEDERSEN, C.S.C.
REV. MR. ZACHARY WADE RATHKE, C.S.C.
REV. MR. GILBRIAN FITZGERALD STOY, C.S.C.

to the Order of Presbyter

through the ancient Christian sign of the laying on of hands
and the prayer of the Church

on Saturday, September 5, 2020
at 1:00 p.m. (EDT)

Basilica of the Sacred Heart
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

Please join us in praying for our brothers
and witnessing this momentous occasion at

ordination-live.holycrossvocations.org



Where is God in All This?
Another Look
Part two.

Joe McTaggart, csc



A while back I wrote something and shared it in this space mainly to help myself to understand better where God was in all the suffering and confusion around our current pandemic. Sometimes when you say it out loud, it helps. As arrogant as it might sound, it was an attempt to ease my deep disappointment in my understanding of God and why all the pain and suffering of the pandemic went on and on with no end in sight. I had to put into some framework the inexplicable pain so many were experiencing, which would help me not give up on the God I relied on and felt close to my entire life.

I sat on the original piece for a while and then found some courage to share it in *Midwest-Midweek*, our own publication, covering reflections and the goings-on in the Midwest Province.

I found a possible anchoring point in the midst of what I took to be, in my mind, the apparent turning of God's back on the cruelty of it all. I had taken a clue at that time from the profound faith and witness of Elie Wiesel and additional reflection from the Catholic theologian, Johann Metz. It was Wiesel's positing of his "and yet" response when faced with where God was in his own life during the Holocaust. He too had no answers. He refused though to give up on God in the midst of such horrible times. In fact, he said he needed to defend God. His "and yet" was instructive and a witness.

So where could I find similar bedrock in my own faith life faced with the consternation I was experiencing with what I was seeing in this pandemic? Comparing such dreadfulness of our pandemic with the Holocaust is odious. But at that time reflecting on Wiesel's and Metz's firsthand experiences and how they not only survived but kept their faith alive sure helped me to ameliorate my own confusion and inability to find God's presence somehow in our own struggles with this world-wide pandemic. Their response showed me a way I might live with my own guilt as I was still healthy and cared for while the galloping death rate of Covid-19 continued the world over.

In so much of what Wiesel had gone through he was still able to hold onto a faith which countered the horror of it all. And Metz too, in experiencing such from the other side as a German drafted into Hitler's army, did not lose his faith either. Every member of his platoon was killed while he was out on a separate maneuver, leaving him the sole survivor. Both these men commented on the whole experience in the little booklet *Hope against Hope* I had been reading. Neither denied the shock or dreadfulness of such a dark period of human history.

Their response to the evil of their time was no simple thing either. It wasn't a feeble or halfhearted apology, excuse, or defense. It was also not without continual confrontation to this day with what, many would say, was one of the worst examples in magnitude of the misery and infamy of their own unique time in the world's history of the apparent absence of God. They kept the faith. My little protest of where God was in our current pandemic was an embarrassment reading the reflections of those two men.

Contemplating their experience and witness while numbers grew worldwide in our own challenge, I also found some additional solace in my reflection from scriptural

passages, the psalms, other writings and mainly further reading from that timely little booklet I happened to be reading during this period of pandemic. Some books fall in your lap at precisely the time you need them the most.

Seeing the daily death toll and the horrendous sight and display of it all night after night and day after day, as the numbers of deaths continued to increase and our own less than organized United States' response faltered tragically, kept the haunting question of God's presence alive in many people. Our own response could well have been otherwise with different leadership and cooperation from young people. The insights of scripture's wisdom and support for times of struggle and pain continues to help somewhat in processing the enormity of it all.

For a while.

Yes, it helped for a while until just days later I saw a television news clip of an emaciated little boy, bones protruding from his decaying body, with eyes as big as half-dollars sunken into his skull, making it worse all over again. It was haunting. So much innocence. I couldn't continue looking. This one brief scene made it all the more confounding. Maybe the thought of the previous deaths were anonymous until I saw this little boy. The general had become particular in a sense. All my words previously, all that I found for myself as something to lean on in thinking of the tragedy of our own times failed me. All the lift or support from bigger thoughts and hopeful anticipation vanished.

I was embarrassed for what I had written. My words seemed so hollow to me then, so audacious that I would even send that out for others to reflect on, something gleaned from my own desperate reach for answers and direction. I was no different though. We were all experiencing this evolving death threat spiral

together, even us or especially us in the clinically sounding “at risk population.” My own apprehensive self in the face of it all, and probably my excessive fears too especially in what I had previously written about some possible port in the storm, were decimated. Without being grandiose I thought of Thomas Aquinas and his ultimate evaluation of his own voluminous work as being—straw. So too my own words rang hollow faced with that anonymous little boy who had now become for me someone’s son, someone’s brother, a playmate, someone’s relative. His dying of the virus in some place unknown to me with little or no medical care was devastating to see, let alone dwell on.

The poor were getting the worst of it all over again. It caused even more sadness and feelings of emptiness. There were few words to describe how superficial and even small-minded I felt toward what I had written. It was never meant to be facile, but it sure felt like it now with that little boy’s image burned into my mind and the amplification of so many more.

There were all the elderly too dying in nursing homes, and those on hospital gurneys left alone in crowded hospital hallways, alone with only a very exhausted and courageous health care worker one more time holding one more hand of one more mainly anonymous soul in the demanding days of work. I had not dismissed or forgotten all that when I previously reflected and wrote of the situation, but their suffering too along with the children and the poor melded now into some very dark, impenetrable, and unsolvable mystery known only to God.

Maybe that was it. It *is* all a mystery. But that too was hardly sufficient to salve my being stunned by the enormity of it all, all over again. I don’t believe that my feelings on the matter are all that unique, separate, different, or personally more sensitive than anyone else’s in contemplating the destruction to human life from

this pandemic the whole world over. I am also not that different from the vast array of men and women everywhere pondering their own lives in the face of such loss. They too must be probably asking themselves as well where their God is in all the suffering brought upon, through no fault of their own, by tiny droplets and aerosol spray of invisible disease which could also render them in line for the next death from the Grim Reaper somewhere, someplace, just another statistic.

I kept the new feelings of my additional fears and lack of answers to myself except for one or two friends, but what I had written was still out there printed and published even in our limited circulation. I felt empty and taken aback. I had no comments face to face with that helpless, suffering child, the result of the same pandemic which had caused my worry ironically right in the safety and security of my own “monk’s cell” and community.

My Lord, I cannot see the way. There are no words, no consolation, no solution for any meaning or purpose in this suffering, and the predictions are that it will only get worse as we head into winter. Where, my Lord, are you? And who am I to be so bold stating this gnawing question in print yet again?

What was it that knocked me off kilter this time? Was it that little boy’s innocence? Was it the horrible sight of his senseless suffering? Surely there were hundreds of others. I was silenced. Silenced because he was not just one, but one of hundreds and hundreds of children, and other young people as well who were also succumbing to the disease right in our own backyards, not in some far-away, unknown country. At the time of this writing children make up an incredible 10% of the cases and it is rising. And now infants were dying too. It was all getting worse, not “flattening out.”

The entire population from elderly to infants was now within the scope of this dreadful disease. No one was spared. No one was exempt. No one can escape and if you test positive, you may never really know where you contracted this monster. It's all overwhelming at times. And now added to this we also had hurricanes likewise taking life, limb and property. It's devastation in another mode, devastation all the same.

A couple of weeks later, though, something did come to my rescue. It was the feast of the Assumption of Mary and with it our house celebration. We sang hymns from our childhood, simple, gentle lyrics, innocent and tender. It was consoling and harkened to a time of real child-like faith. And the readings...Here comes the "huge red dragon with seven heads and horns; its tail sweeping away a third of the stars and hurling them down to the earth; and then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth to devour her child." But no! "The child was caught up to God and his throne." Could this make sense for our time? In all its gruesomeness and import of what we were experiencing in the pandemic, this part of the Feast of the Assumption's readings somehow spoke to the reality of the pain and loss in our own day as well. Something gentle began tugging at my heart. Could I listen? Would I yield to something so simple yet profound?

But that faint tugging at my heart and hungry head was not all that began to turn that head and especially my heart around. There was more to come, help even. In the evolution of the Old Testament story that same day we heard, "Now have salvation and power come and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his anointed one."

Didn't the anointed one himself say in effect so many times, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me." And later, "I go to prepare

a place for you, and then I shall come back and take you with me so that where I am you may also be.” Wouldn’t those words and promise be just as true for our circumstances now as when they were first written and spoken by Jesus?

That little boy too was home now and safe in all his preciousness just as God had created him—loved, embraced, whole and entire. And so were the hundreds of thousands of other losses. “I send forth my word, and it shall not come back to me empty.”

Perhaps there is always somewhere we can still find a melting away of a cold take on things—the power and softening of our souls and quanderaiies from gentle words and that oft quoted, “the still quiet voice within” speaking in the midst of whatever catastrophic experience we can imagine. That help and those reminders come from scripture, hymnody, and other spiritual writings. I hear those consoling words a bit more deeply now while I still recall the haunting picture of that little boy and think of him especially and so many others still dying with little let up in sight.

I also know, if only from afar, the pain among us in the Congregation of Holy Cross deaths from this virus and in the lives of those who loved and knew their own deceased all over the world. Parts of my own family are quarantined too because a parent tested positive. My nephew and wife have three children at home too. My brother cannot hug his wife on hospice in a nursing home. His children, all six of them, cannot hug their mother either. And there are others. Those who knew and loved their own deceased, they too are grieving and looking for some kind of solace in the midst of their tragic losses as well. Still the scriptures tell us that somehow, incredulously so, the gentle reed will not be broken. Those words of hope offer direction for all of us.

Thank God then, despite all we see and experience, we also hold to the promise for those and so many others who have died that they are experiencing in heaven right now what “eye had not seen, nor word heard, nor had the goodness awaiting them entered into their hearts.”

Resurrection matters. This whole catastrophe still tugs at one’s sense of justice and compassion and continually calls out for some kind of meaning beyond the factual misdeeds and mismanagement of this crisis in our own country. I must join Wiesel much more seriously and say to myself my own “and yet” hoping and praying this death spiral ends in our world soon. Didn’t Noah get a tender gentle sign after the destruction of the then known world? He and his kin saw a tiny bird let loose from their ship of hope returning with a twig and piece of greenery indicating life to come and verdant fields to be inhabited by the living.

Paul’s words had something helpful to say too that same day in the readings for the Assumption. “For just as in Adam all die, so too shall all be brought to life.” Analogously I could hear faintly in the background those hopeful words and melody. I recalled the chorus in part of the *The Messiah* which brought to my mind an even deeper awareness in my soul and in my emotions. “So too shall all be brought to life.”

I repeated the words in my imagination and heard in my head over and over its reminder. It was a distant recall but still capable of soothing what is so inscrutable to minds and hearts in these days of pandemic.

So forget the mind, Joe. Merton said the mind is a menace to wisdom anyway, and the classic *Cloud of Unknowing* consistently tells us, “By the intellect never.” And as antidote it offers in its place, “With the sharp spear of your love, never stop

beating on the cloud of unknowing that is between you and your God.” It is really all about love the anonymous author claims. “Don’t give up, for any reason, regardless of what happens.”

Poetry has to fill in the gaps in the mundane and the challenged inability of logic and reasoning to help us. Not much else makes any more sense or is capable of soothing some of the indignity of it all, or the sense of scandal even.

Give up the need to know. Just maybe what we’ve been told from the Good Book is not only true but sustaining. If while we witness with eyes wide open the destruction of so much and so many, if we can give in a bit, surrender the heavy burden of our limited sense-making and let a Simon of Cyrene, imagined or real, relieve us of all we carry in contemplating enigma and inscrutable mystery, maybe then we can hear again, “My ways are not your ways; and your ways are not mine.”

In hunger for meaning and purpose in these days it may well be that in the final analysis it is ultimately the poet’s craft and the songster’s sentiment, the soft, tender and gentle things that speak *their* word to us much more powerfully than logic or some kind of proof when it is just too dark and challenging to take it all in.

“On this day oh beautiful mother; On this day we ask to share, dearest mother, *thy sweet care.*” I am not strongly enough connected to Marian devotion. Still, at a time like this, the truth, tradition, and abiding presence of this gentle, graceful woman in our history and her place in our salvation begins to speak to me more powerfully than ever. There was something new at this time when hearing those readings on her feast day as she herself is assumed into heaven. Singing those hymns too and feeling its sentiment at this celebration in the midst of such

challenge and reckoning touched me very differently freeing much of my own struggle and identifying the needs and consternation of so many at this time. Yes, “thy sweet care,” Mary, especially for the poor and the dying, just as you showed us with your witness right there at the foot of the cross without spectacle or drama at your own son’s bloody and cruel crucifixion.

Maybe we all need to come to gentleness too, even at this time, and hear and even embrace what is still precious and untrammelled in the midst of so much darkness.

For is it not true that in our deepest and most vulnerable selves what really touches us, caresses us even, and lets us bear humbly the heaviest of crosses and burdens of life on this earth is something gentle and salvific? It is to that which we must yield I think. A place for gentleness and tenderness ought well reign in our hearts, or at least in our imagination and begin the yielding over of the Gordian knot of confusion and bewilderment as we too walk humbly with our Lord.

“Hear, O daughter and son, see, turn your ear.”

Help us do the same, Mary. Help us live in the tension, embrace this current cross, and still in faith keep room for what is sweet and tender from our scriptures, our hymns, and our recall of the promises your son Jesus himself left us face to face with his own death and resurrection. There it is again in Second Corinthians. “We walk by faith and not by sight.”

In good times and especially bad, maybe we can take up another poet’s urging, “Think first from the heart before letting the mind interfere.” And in that process the classic *Cloud of Unknowing*, (Unknowing!) exhorts us in its ancient wisdom to still “beat on that cloud of unknowing above with the sharp spear of love,” and, holding it in our hearts like Mary, lean into the love that remains forever at the

center of the world, the love Jesus reminded us of again and again. For him
“darkness and light are the same.” “For his love endures forever.”

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See to it that you are not troubled; for
all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding.”

Mary, Queen of Contemplatives and Mother of Sorrows, pray for us.



Midwest Holy Cross Associates
Holy Cross Roads
Writings for the Journey #22

Giving Up Control

Dear Associates and Friends,

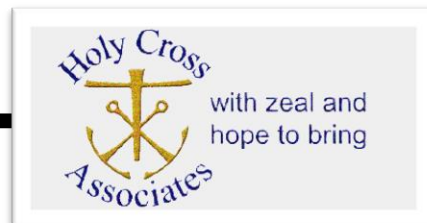
The spiritual life is not about gaining control of your life, just as falling in love is not about controlling another person's behavior or wanting to change her or him. The spiritual life like love requires a leap of faith into the unknown. It asks of us to be open to receive an ever new way of living. It is like letting go of what one has in search for "the pearl of great price."

Holy Cross Associates are asked to make a promise to grow spiritually. What does that imply? It requires not being satisfied with the status quo. God is constantly inviting us to quest for the fullness of life. That could mean God is convicting us to let go of certain ways of thinking that keep us from expanding our notion of who God is and what our destiny could be.

When Jesus invited the fishermen to join him, they were willing to lose control of their present circumstances so that they could pursue a life that they could not fully understand. Eventually they were led to a significance that has lasted 2,000 years. "By losing their life they found it." At this stage of our life, are we still open to new horizons in our commitment to God?

God, help me understand what growing spiritually means for me now.

Brother Carl Sternberg, CSC
<http://holycrossassociates.org/>





Reflection

Reflection(s) sent in by

Brother Thomas Maddix, C.S.C.:



*If we make our goal to live a life of compassion and unconditional love,
Then the world will indeed become a garden where
All kinds of flowers can bloom and grow.*

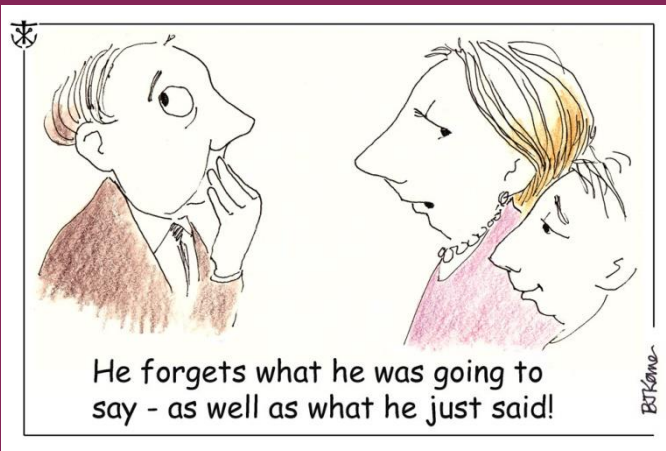
Elisabeth Kübler-Ross



A Catholic Health Organization

This reflection is courtesy of Mission, Ethics and Spirituality Office, www.emmanuelcare.ca

flowers(ccc)pxhere



Brother
James
Kane,
CSC



Past Copies of *Midwest-Midweek*

Since February 2006

Past copies of *Midwest-Midweek* may be viewed by scanning the icon or clicking on the link below.

<http://brothersofholycross.com/publications/archived-publications/>



View Website at:

www.brothersofholycross.com

View *Midwest-Midweek* at:

<http://brothersofholycross.com/publications/midwest-midweek-newsletter/>

Editor

Webmaster

Proofreader

Br. Kenneth Kane

Br. Richard Johnson

Br. George Klawitter

Please send material to the link below by Thursday the week before *Midwest-Midweek* is published.

Send material to this address:

Midwest-Midweek@brothersofholycross.com