

MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

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

May 16, 2018

Brother John Joseph Ptaszek, C.S.C. November 24, 1933 – May 10, 2018

Brother John Joseph Ptaszek, C.S.C., age 84, died on May 10, 2018, in his room at Dujarie House in Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame, Indiana. He was born in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Stanley and Catherine (Hendzel) Ptaszek. He grew up there and attended St. Boniface Elementary School and Holy Trinity High School, where he graduated in 1952. Both schools were within walking distance from the family home. It must have been the influence of the Holy Cross Brothers he had at Holy Trinity, because John decided to join them in September 1952 when he entered the juniorate program at Watertown, Wisconsin. He began his novitiate training at Rolling Prairie in February 1953 and pronounced his first vows as a Brother of Holy Cross on February 2, 1954. John was assigned to study at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, where he graduated with degrees in both English and social studies in 1957.



He then began a long and uninterrupted tenure as a teacher, first for a semester at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, then for four years at Archbishop Hoban High in Akron, Ohio, back to Cathedral for a year, then to Catholic Central High in Monroe, Michigan for three years, next back to Cathedral High a third time for eight years. His next assignment was one of his favorites and longest, for 30 years at LeMans Academy as a teacher and librarian. He was well loved by his students for his counseling and especially his enthusiasm. In 2003 he went to Holy Cross High School in River Grove, Illinois, to serve as librarian for a year. In 2004, The Brothers sold and left the high school, while the co-ed school, Guerin College Prep continued to expand. John stayed on at Guerin for seven years as the faithful and competent Librarian until retiring in 2014. Brother John's quiet and dedicated services as a teacher and especially as a competent librarian were a source of strength and satisfaction to all who needed help or worked with him in the community. John moved to Columba Hall at Notre Dame where he enjoyed his love of opera and also

inspired others to join in developing an “artist studio” in a large central area on the 4th floor of Columba. His love of painting and meticulous works of art have inspired and thrilled other residents. At his last jubilee, John said his love of art and opera had been “prayer” and a blessing for his 60 years as a Brother.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at Our Lady of Holy Cross Chapel in the Schubert Villa-Dujarie House complex from 9:30 to 11:00 am on the grounds of Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame. The Mass of Resurrection will then follow with interment afterward in St. Joseph’s Cemetery of the Village. Kaniewski Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Memorial contributions, in honor of Brother John Ptaszek, C.S.C., to support the mission and ministries of the Brothers may be sent to: Brothers of Holy Cross, Office of Development, P.O. Box 460, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

Brother Lawrence Stewart

Eulogy for Brother James Everett, C.S.C.
Given at Notre Dame. IN: May 12, 2018

“All this and heaven too.” I know that this is what Brother would have said about the wonderful services that have occurred in his honor this week.

I am so happy to be able to be with you all, the community he loved so dearly, to celebrate the life of a true servant of the Lord in Holy Cross. My name is Owen Williams. I am a 2013 graduate of St. Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio, where Brother James served faithfully for over forty years. I am blessed now to serve on the faculty at St. Edward in the Theology Department, which has been a dream of mine since I started there as a freshman in 2009.



To be honest, this is the first eulogy I've ever delivered, and it's certainly a daunting task. As I prayed about what I could say here to describe adequately the impact Brother James had on my life--and the lives of thousands of others--throughout his religious life in Holy Cross, God filled my heart with many memories of our dear Brother. I hope to use those stories as a vehicle, as I give my best shot to honor this wonderfully humble, beautifully loving servant.

He was first assigned to St. Edward in 1977, and one of his duties--along with counseling students and coaching swimming--was to take care of the grounds, and--man--did he take care of those grounds! Brother was absolutely meticulous about making sure St. Edward's campus looked beautiful at all times--whether it be the middle of winter or the middle of spring. He was especially dedicated to the grass field in what we call the “backyard.” Every summer, Brother would work quite diligently to ensure that the grass was as perfect as it could be for the start of football practice in August.

Brother James has been part of my family for as long as I can remember. It is through his work on the grounds that Brother first met the Lowe family. Each one of my nine uncles graduated from St. Edward and worked for Brother on the grounds crew. Brother became a huge part of our family; he was always, always present for every holiday, every birthday, every Confirmation, every First Communion, every wedding...everything; Brother was always there! He was God's gift to our family, and we are all forever grateful.

Brother was my mentor, my counselor, and on occasion my sounding board for

expressing frustration, and for some time my brother in Holy Cross. As some of you know, I spent close to five years in formation for priesthood and religious life in Holy Cross, and just this past October--in the peacefulness and beauty of the Novitiate experience--God called me away from Holy Cross, much to my surprise. Besides my parents, Brother James was the first person I called when I made my decision, because I knew without a doubt that he would be, as he always was, supportive and loving. I will always be grateful for that.

When I was first discerning Holy Cross, Brother was the first person I talked to. He imparted so much wisdom in our many conversations, but I will always remember what he told me about religious life in Holy Cross: "It is a beautiful life, Owen. A beautifully challenging life, and I thank God each day for calling me to it." James loved Holy Cross; his love for this community was absolutely one of the ways in which God reached me as I discerned my own vocation.

One of the many things I admired most about Brother James was his dedication to seeking out and ministering to those students who had an especially difficult time in high school. He always made his office a place for students who maybe struggled to make friends, who didn't have anywhere to sit at lunch—a terrifying experience (trust me on that)—and anyone else who just needed someone to talk to. Brother had this wonderfully calming presence about him. He was able to comfort people in their most challenging times and celebrate with them in their most joyful times. I spent many, many hours talking with Brother in his office.

Freshman year, to be quite honest, I was terrified of eating lunch in the cafeteria, which at an all-boys school--as a freshman--is a pretty daunting ordeal! On my first day, I got my food, looked around for some people I knew from football, but couldn't find anyone. I didn't know what to do, so I kept looking, and finally--by the grace of God--I saw Brother James standing in one of the corners (probably making sure guys disposed of their garbage in the proper container). Right when he saw me, he gave me a big smile and thumbs up. I found some of my friends at a table, and that became the place where we sat in the cafe for my entire four years of high school. I could always count on Brother for a smile and a thumbs up, especially during that challenging freshman year.

James absolutely loved the young men of St. Edward High School. He dedicated his entire being to serving each of us—as a counselor and as a swim coach. He was always the first one in the building, and during my senior year, I was lucky enough to have a parking spot right outside of his window. Each morning, I would look forward to being welcomed by Brother's office light shining brightly into the dark parking lot. As I walked in, he'd always greet me with his Holy Cross hospitality and maybe a reminder to button the top button on my dress

shirt and pull my tie up. This may seem trivial to some, but to Brother, it was a challenge to me to do the little things in life that would allow me to live up to the standards of a true Holy Cross man of character. I always tried my best to take that daily challenge from James quite seriously, and I still encourage my students to do the same. It's a calling for each one of us too as we work to continue Brother James' legacy.

In class this past week, I've been sharing stories of Brother James with my students. The central, recurring theme of each one of those stories is deep, unconditional love. Brother James cared deeply for the young men of St. Edward High School, and he loved each one of us with the greatest, most sincere love. As I sat with Brother just about a week ago, his primary concern was our students. "I know this is a stressful time of year for them," he said to me. "Make sure they know I am praying for them. Always."

Thank you for everything, Brother, Watch over us. I know you will. PEACE be with you all.

Owen Williams

Recounting the Cherished Lessons and Memories
Br. James Everett, C.S.C., left to the St. Edward Community

**From: Article from St. Edward HS, Lakewood, Ohio
*Best of the Week, May 7- May 11, 2018***

On Sunday, May 6, St. Edward High School lost a pillar of our community and a model of the Holy Cross mission and servant leadership through Br. James Everett, C.S.C. Having spent over 40 years at St. Ed's, Br. James was always there to welcome anyone into the St. Edward community and served as a beloved counselor, coach, mentor and friend to our students, faculty, staff and families. Br. James' lasting legacy at St. Edward High School can best be honored through the lessons and memories he left behind to those who had the pleasure of knowing him. Below, members of the faculty and staff at St. Edward High School share the cherished lessons they learned from Br. James.

"Br. James has always been what St. Ed's is all about - from my freshman year when I can still see him cleaning up the tables, pushing in the chairs, watering the flowers and telling me to tuck in my shirt to these past few years when he would give me advice about everyday life, how to handle the students, and simply how to be a good person," says Coach Eric Flannery '90. "Br. James always acted with integrity, discipline, and was humble. To me, he is the definition of a servant leader."

"Br. James knew everything about his students, and he always amazed me with his thoughts and insights about them. He epitomized the pillar of relationships for me," says Principal James Reed

"Brother James taught me - in many, many ways - what it means to be a Holy Cross educator. His genuine, unconditional love for the thousands of Edsmen he served over the years is something that I strive to embody in my own teaching each day. He was my mentor, my teacher and my friend; I will always be grateful for his love and support," says theology teacher Mr. Owen Williams '13.

"Over the many years we worked together in the Counseling Department, one of the things Br. James taught me was to always believe in the potential of all students. One of Br. James' missions was to work with our students who have ADHD. He wanted those students to see their diagnosis not as a liability or a detriment to learning, but simply as a different way to learn. When a student changes their view of ADHD, it can change the trajectory of his life to one of success and accomplishments instead of one of struggles and frustration. This approach from

Br. James really helped me change my approach in helping students succeed," says School Counselor and Counseling Department Director Mr. Tom Carey.

"Br. James was a true lifelong learner. He would always leave me articles in my mailbox about business and things he thought would help the students. He would ask questions and have really invigorating conversations about business and the world. He taught me a lot about learning and humility," says Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Mr. David Keehan '90.

"Br. James played the role of Br. André. He often gave sick people a small vial of St. Joseph's oil along with a prayer card with Br. Andre's picture and a prayer to St. Joseph for healing. Br. André always said it was St. Joseph who did the healing," says Br. David Martin, C.S.C.

"As a lay educator, I have developed a deep sense of duty to our Holy Cross mission at St. Edward. But the Brothers on our campus are always the greatest and most direct reminders of our Holy Cross mission and the daily duty and zeal of the Brothers who have been pillars of this community for so long. Br. James was a direct link for me to the Holy Cross way: gracious, kind, friendly, genuine, helpful, mentoring - all with a smile on his face. In practice, the St. André way," says English teacher Mr. Mark Urban. "Thus, Br. James was a spiritual guide for me and so often a reminder of the beautiful and complex challenge and call of Holy Cross education. Every encounter with him always left me with a reminder of the gentle strength with which I must strive to approach each and every student. Thank you for being such a great mentor and beacon of hope, Br. James."

Thank you, Br. James, for all you have given to us and the legacy you've left us. Rest in peace.

37th Annual Conference of the Holy Cross History Association at Holy Cross Village



Vincennes to Notre Dame, last summer's commemorative walk, will be the first of eight presentations at Holy Cross Village, Notre Dame, IN, May 31-June 1.

Brother Larry Stewart, CSC, (Congregation of Holy Cross), archivist, will incorporate a history of the first missionaries' travels with his personal experience hiking and biking last summer's 175th anniversary trek of the CSC missionaries from Vincennes to Notre Dame.

Louis Baroux, former Holy Cross missionary and fundraiser, who lived the latter part of his life as a stabilizing force for the Michigan Pokagon Indian community, is the subject of Holy Cross college student Colin Crawford's presentation. A visit/trip to the Potawatomi Learning Center and Silver Creek Mission in Dowagiac, MI, is on Friday's afternoon schedule.

Award winning historian, (whose presentation at last year's conference on the "minims" was published in the ND alumni magazine) Marion Casey, will speak on "The Work of the Holy Cross Brothers in the Manual Training School, 1844-1919."

Former President of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, missionary, and faculty member of the Kellogg Institute at Notre Dame, Francis O'Connor, CSC, will address "Educating Bengali Women."

Lisa Loughran's second conference presentation will laud the Lauth family's contributions to Holy Cross: three brothers were ordained Holy Cross priests and two sisters joined the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

Military veteran, convert, professor of law, social activist, Holy Cross priest and former provincial superior, William McIntyre Lewers will be the focus of the presentation by Doug Smith, CSC.

David Burrell, CSC, emeritus professor at ND and author of a Zahm biography, will trace Zahm's career as scientist and explorer.

"A Threat to the Union of Brothers and Priests" will be the presentation of Ghanian Brother Francisco Gillette, CSC.

Registration: 4 to 6 pm Thursday and meetings will be at Andre Place, which is adjacent to Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, IN. Registration Fees:

- \$200-presentations, meals (except breakfast) socials, tours and banquet
- \$150-presentations, meals (except bkft), socials (no tour and no banquet)
- \$25-presentations \$35-banquet (Sat evening), \$20 bus to Silver Creek

Reflection

National Nursing Week *May 7-13, 2018*

*May you see in what you do
The beauty of your own soul*

*May the sacredness of your work bring
healing, light and renewal
to those who work with you...
to those who see and receive your work...*

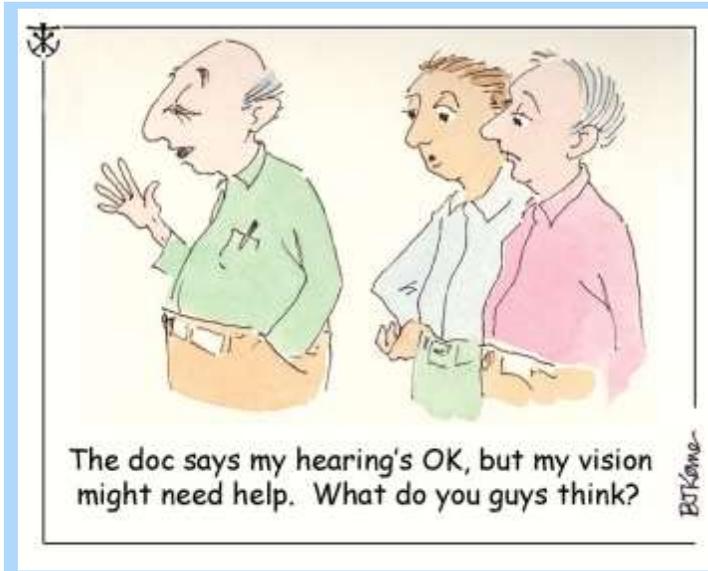
*May you be present in what you do...
May the day never burden.*

*May you go into the night blessed, sheltered and protected
May your soul calm, console and renew you*

John O'Donohue



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Cartoon
By
Brother
James
Kane,
CSC

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Editor **Br. Kenneth Kane**
Proofreader **Br. George Klawitter**
Webmaster **Br. Richard Johnson**

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