

# MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

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

March 4, 2015

## **Brother Henry Peter Skitzki, C.S.C.**

*September 26, 1938 – February 28, 2015*

Brother Henry Peter Skitzki, C.S.C., age 76, died on February 28, 2015, at Dujarie House, in Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame, IN. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on September 26, 1938, the son of Henry and Florence (Jankowski) Skitzki. He attended Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School for four years in Garfield Heights, Ohio, and following a family move, attended St. Angela de Merici Elementary School in Fairview Heights, Ohio. He graduated from Fairview Park High School in June 1956. For the next six years, Henry was employed as a banquet chef at the Statler Hilton Hotel in downtown Cleveland until 1962. He must have been



influenced by his younger brother, Lawrence, because Henry decided to join Holy Cross as a Brother, a year after Lawrence had. Henry went to Sacred Heart Juniorate in Watertown, Wisconsin, and received the habit of the Brothers on August 15, 1962, at St. Joseph's Novitiate, Rolling Prairie, Indiana. He made his first profession of vows as a Holy Cross Brother on August 16, 1963.

Henry's outstanding skills and talents were as a professional chef. His assignment after pronouncing his first vows was to stay at the novitiate for the next 4 years to serve the community in the kitchen and train future cooks. In 1967 he was assigned to join the staff at Archbishop Hoban High in Akron for 2 years and in 1969 he became the Director of Food Services at Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills, Ohio, for 8 years. In 1977 he moved to Chatsworth, California, to serve in the kitchen at Ranch San Antonio for 6 years. In 1983 he moved to Notre Dame to join the food service staff at Moreau Seminary and then at Saint Mary's College. In 1985 he was the head chef at Columba Hall where he oversaw other cooks to help provide wholesome and appetizing meals for the large community for 13 years. In 1998 he moved across Michigan Avenue to join the food service at Dujarie House and also worked as a cake decorator at a Dairy Queen facility in

South Bend. In 2001 he worked for Marriott Food Services at Saint Mary's College as a specialty display chef for 6 years.

Due to health reasons, Henry had to retire from active leadership and assistance in kitchens, but he continued teaching others his talent to provide attractive, appropriate and economical foods. He taught classes each semester at the Forever Learning Institute on gourmet cooking. He also would hold special sessions (Brother Henry's Cooking Classes) in his Riverside apartment in Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame. A small group would gather each spring and fall to learn how to prepare tantalizing meals. Each person was assigned a particular menu item with Henry making sure that the person prepared the food just right. The evenings were one of enjoyment and merriment. Henry also was famous for his Wine Pairing Sessions where wines from around the world were paired with appropriate foods of the culture or country.

Henry's other talents and generosity were evident in the way he befriended a Vietnamese refugee who came to South Bend from the boat people episode. Henry helped with the family needs to be sure they adjusted to the new urban culture. Henry made sure the education of the young girls, his "grand-daughters", was looked after at St. Joseph High School and Holy Cross College. With Henry's passing, that wonderful family, as well as our wide Holy Cross family at Notre Dame, has lost a talented professional chef, and a most kind, generous, and devoted friend.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the St. Joseph Chapel, Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, IN, from 9:30 to 11:00 AM. The Mass of Resurrection will then follow with interment afterward in St. Joseph's Cemetery of Holy Cross Village. Kaniewski Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Memorial contributions, in honor of Brother Henry Skitzki, 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 Henry Skitzki, csc

Whenever I am asked to give a eulogy I am confronted with the reality that it is simply not possible to sum up a man's life in a few short minutes. At best I can only hint at the reality of what God has been able to accomplish in and through our Brother, Henry. The important, usually unasked question, always is: what is the relationship that exists between Henry and God? This is both a difficult and not so difficult question to answer. Ultimately, the only gift a person can give to God is to return the gift that God has already given. In this context we find the answer to the difficult and not so difficult question. Henry lived a life rich in experiences of many kinds. He worked in many places and loved to travel. I choose not to dwell on any of this. I want to reflect on two of the gifts that I believe God gave him, how he used these gifts, perfected these gifts and returned them to God.

The first gift that everyone is well aware of is his talent for cooking. Henry quite simply loved anything and everything that concerned food. Here he was an expert. He entered Holy Cross after giving up his job as a chef in a hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. He brought his skills and all his culinary implements with him to Holy Cross and continued with great love to ply his trade in many of our communities. Henry was very neat, very precise in all that he did. He was a chef in every sense of the word. When he retired and came to Holy Cross Village he continued his work. He had cooking classes and wine pairing sessions. During his last illness he told me about his cooking classes, a work that he genuinely loved. The class would meet for 30 minutes to discuss what they were going to prepare for supper. Then he assigned groups to prepare various parts of the meal and at the end when they all sat down to enjoy what they had prepared, a small community was formed. Several weeks ago when it was determined that he needed more physical assistance, he would agree to leave his apartment only if he could continue his cooking classes in the hospitality room at Riverside. He told me several times that he really wanted to do more for the people living at Holy Cross Village. I believe it was just three weeks before his death that he had a wine pairing class at Riverside. He found great joy in doing this for the village. It was his way of sharing the gift God had given him, a gift he had perfected so carefully, and by creating community he was giving the gift back to God.

The second gift that I want to reflect upon is his outreach to a family in South Bend. When Henry was cooking at Columba Hall, he hired a young man from Vietnam, Tuyen. They became very close friends. I don't know if Henry adopted

Tuyen or Tuyen adopted Henry, but the reality is they became family, another community formed. Tuyen, Kim, Christina and Selena, my condolences to you on the loss of a member of your extended family. This is a great loss for all of you. I know how much Henry cared for you and how much you returned his love. I was deeply impressed when I saw Henry on several occasions at Andre Residence in the hobby room working with the youngsters on their school assignments. I am sure that there was great interaction within your family that only you know about. We all thank God for that.

I have spoken about the two great gifts God gave Henry—his love of cooking and his love for the Nguyen family. How did he give these gifts back to God? When one speaks about someone's relationship with God, there is a tendency to check out the person's prayer life—does he go to church—does he fast? I think a more effective method would be to look at his relationships with others. Henry reached out to many people with his cooking and in so doing he reached out to God to return the gift that had been given to him. When he reached out in compassion and love to the Nguyen family, he was only returning to God the gift that God had given him, a love for others. We find God in the people we reach out to while at the same time becoming more aware of His presence within us. This is the golden proof of God's working within us. Henry received great gifts from God, used them well, and in using them for others, returned them to God. Henry, you have used your gifts well, for others, not yourself. There is a lesson here for all of us to contemplate. Gifts from God that are not shared with others are lost. Sharing them with others is a way of thanking God for the gifts and returning them to Him. Henry, we thank you for the gift your life has been.

To all those who will miss Henry and especially to the Nguyen family I share a poem:

I share with you the agony of your grief —  
the anguish of your heart finds echo in my own.  
I know I cannot enter all you feel  
nor bear with you the burden of your pain.

I can but offer what my love does give:  
The strength of caring,  
the warmth of one who seeks to understand  
the silent storm-swept barrenness of so great a loss.

This I do in quiet ways,  
that on your lonely path  
you may not walk alone.

*Howard Thurman*

I can understand your sorrow, but I want to end on a different note, one from Henry's point of view. He is now enjoying the gift of God in a very direct and wonderful way. I like to imagine him preparing a great banquet for all his family and friends that have gone before him, that greeted him on his entry into heaven. That would seem just about right. One last thought. There is a fine film called *A Rumor of Angels*. It is about an elderly woman who helps a young boy get over the tragic loss of his mom. She tells him that death is nothing to be frightened of, that when the soul leaves the body it goes as a schoolboy jumps from a classroom door—suddenly and with great joy! Let's not mourn Henry, but celebrate the great joy he now enjoys.

**Brother Raymond Papenfuss**

## **In Memory of Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, CSC**

The Midwest Province joins with the entire family of Holy Cross in expressing our prayerful sympathy and heartfelt condolences upon the passing of Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, CSC. Fr. Hesburgh was always a supportive force in assisting the Brothers of Holy Cross and our ministries. It was Fr. Ted who was instrumental in the development of Holy Cross College and in continuance of the working relationship between the University of Notre Dame and the College. More recently, it was Fr. Hesburgh who was the key driver in the University of Notre Dame's one-million dollar gift to the Brothers' capital campaign in 2006.

It was our Founder, Blessed Basil Moreau, who insisted that the mission of educating the minds and hearts of students is to impart in them the "competence to see and the courage to act" as people of faith. Fr. Hesburgh personified these values not only through the education provided students at Notre Dame, but also in his life's work by which he influenced the Congregation of Holy Cross, championed civil rights, served as a leader in higher education, and was truly a man of the world.

To see the many ways Fr. Hesburgh displayed the courage to see and the courage to act, visit this link to the University of Notre Dame website: <http://hesburgh.nd.edu/>



# Come And See Program: A weekend with Br. Andre

Saint Joseph House  
Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, IN



Br. Paul Bednarczyk & Br. Chris Torrijas (Behind Paul) giving a blessing with St. Joseph oil from the Oratory at Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel. Picture in the forefront from the left are guest Greg Fean, aspirant Brandon Turk. Behind them Br. John Paige & Br. Jesus Alonso

Meal preparation with Br. Jesus Alonso, "Come and See guest" Armando Tamez and Aspirant Kyle Fritzsche





Meal preparation with aspirant Jacob Eifrid, “Come and See guests” Greg Fean, George Sutherland, and Br. John Paige

Our Holy Cross Saint, Bro. Andre, was the focus of a weekend retreat at The LaPorte Center for the discernment community and 10 HCC students. Bro. Paul Bednarzyk, CSC, joined us from Chicago to lead us in our reflections by presenting an overview of Andre’s life and giving us insights into the person and qualities of the man. During the weekend, retreatants were challenged to live a life of virtue and to appreciate what can be accomplished in spite of personal weaknesses and external barriers.

Part of the focus of the weekend was community building which was accomplished in three ways. First, all participated in a variety of prayer experiences including Office and Adoration. Each person was given a vigil candle which he lit each time we gathered in the chapel. It was a reminder for each of us that we are called to be “a light to the world.” Each took their candle home as a reminder of this “call.”

Social activities were another way we built community. For example, Bro. Chris organized a form of the game *Jeopardy* which included information he previously gathered from the participants. Each had been asked to send him a list of 5 things nobody knew about him. There were many interesting surprises!

The tastiest activity centered on food preparation. On Friday night the group was broken into teams who were each assigned food prep activities like making cookies, chopping vegetables, cracking eggs. Each team was then assigned to



prepare one of the meals on the weekend. The Saturday night meal was unique in that each person created his own pizza. A fun and delicious activity for all.

Our appreciation of Brother Andre grew throughout the weekend as did our sense of brotherhood as members of the HCC community.

## Love

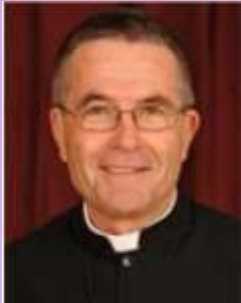


*Instead of looking for love, give it;  
constantly renew it in yourself and you  
will always feel its presence within you.  
It will always be there smiling at you,  
gazing on you kindly.*

*Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov*

Lenten Lecture Series – 2015 – Reminder  
Wednesday Evenings – 7-8 PM  
Geenan Hall

March 4th  
Brother John Paige, CSC



**“The Pope Francis Challenge”**

Brother John Paige CSC, a native of Albany, NY, is currently in his fourth year of service as President of Holy Cross College at Notre Dame, Indiana. Brother John has worked with youth and young adults as a teacher, coach, and administrator in secondary schools; as a college professor and administrator in higher education institutions in the USA and East Africa; as a formator of young religious in the Congregation of Holy Cross; and as a member of the General Administration of the Congregation. He resides at the St. Joseph House Formation Community on the Holy Cross College campus.

March 11th  
Brother Carl Sternburg, CSC



**“Readings and Songs Celebrating Thomas Merton's 100th Birthday”**

The evening will include readings of Thomas Merton's wisdom on the spiritual life taken from some of his most famous books. The response to each reading will be song led by the Columba Hall Singers. Although written many years ago, Merton's work is very relevant to our spiritual growth today. A Holy Cross Brother for over 55 years, Brother Carl has served as a teacher at all levels of education. He has an MA in theology from Notre Dame University and an MAS in spirituality for the University of San Francisco. He has served as youth consultant for the Archdiocese of Louisville. He was an adjunct faculty member for the masters program in ministry from Loyola University-New Orleans. He founded Spiritual Life Ministries, an interfaith organization, and is very involved with the Midwest Holy Cross Associates' groups around the country.

## View Midwest Province Missions

If anyone uses a map program or Google Earth especially and would like to visit the locations of Holy Cross in Ghana, you will find them below — Holy Cross locations and their coordinates. Just enter the coordinates in your map program or Google earth and you can see where we are.

<b>Brafoyaw - Cape Coast Area</b>			
Brafoyaw	District Office	5 08 14.33 N, 1 12 32.94 W	188 ft.
Brafoyaw	District Center Residence	5 08 14.70 N, 1 12 33.00 W	186 ft.
Brafoyaw	St. Bro. Andre Chapel	5 08 11.97 N, 1 12 32.34 W	202 ft.
Brafoyaw	St. Bro. Andre Novitiate	5 08 16.25 N, 1 12 30.50 W	181 ft.
Brafoyaw	Dujarie House	5 08 11.09 N, 1 12 30.90 W	202 ft.
Brafoyaw	Holy Cross Continuing Formation Center	5 08 10.39 N, 1 12 33.02 W	209 ft.
Brafoyaw	District Maintenance Shop	5 08 14.24 N, 1 12 28.61 W	188 ft.
Brafoyaw	Our Lady of Sorrows Cemetery	5 08 16.32 N, 1 12 27.87 W	177 ft.
Brafoyaw	Jesuit Community Residence	5 08 07.96 N, 1 12 33.47 W	207 ft.



. The above information has been gathered by **Fr. Robert Gilmour, C.S.C.** The co-ordinates listed above are for the District Center. From time to time other locations will be listed.



## Prayer Requests

Brothers,

One of our members is a new entry to Dujarie House:

**Brother Thomas Henning** is now at Dujarie for a period of rehabilitation after breaking his wrist due to a fall in his room at Columba Hall. Tom is in good spirits and the wrist is in a cast. The physical therapy is to address issues of balance and to strengthen leg muscles.

Please remember in prayer Tom Henning and all members of our Province who are experiencing health and aging difficulties.

Thank you.

**Brother Chester Freel**

## Past Copies of Midwest-Midweek

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

<http://www.brothersofholycross.com/midmid.htm>



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Please have material to **Br. Charles McBride** by Thursday the week before *Midwest-Midweek* is published.

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