

BROTHERS OF HOLY CROSS

Newsletter of the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross

Spring–Jubilee 2025

Jubilarians' talents inspire others to follow in footsteps

BY: BROTHER KENNETH HADERS, CSC, PROVINCIAL

We asked how we might follow, and we found many footprints on the road. A great band of men had passed this way, men who had made and lived by their vows, men who had walked side by side in their following of the Lord. They beckoned us to fall in step with them. We wanted to be part of the family they formed in order to share in their life and work.

The footsteps of those brothers we celebrate in this issue of BROTHERS are varied in their paths and in how they intersected with my life. Brother John and Brother Ron were influencers with their vast experience as Holy Cross brothers. In fact, Brother John was one of those who were directly responsible for my formation when I first joined the brothers. Besides being a model and a mentor, he was my calculus teacher. Brother Ron's influence was less direct as he was one of those larger-than-life missionaries in Bangladesh.

Brother Joseph and Brother Daniel were among those who were famous for their excellence and talent. I first encountered Brother Dan when he was trying to coach us young religious into a respectable choir, while I learned about Brother Joe because he was an organizer who seemed to do so many different things so well.

Others in this jubilee group were coworkers in our

schools with excellent reputations that inspired me. The diversity of endeavors was amazing, and they were all so good at what they did.

I think this may be an important factor in my life as a Holy Cross brother, there were so many brothers with so many talents that I was inspired and encouraged every day to be my best

self. We were and are about the same mission, bringing our talents together to, as our constitutions say, serve “those whose lot we share, supporting men and women of grace and goodwill everywhere in their efforts to form communities of the coming kingdom.”

It is about the kingdom, it is about bringing God's ways into our world by bringing Jesus' teachings to life by what we say and what we do. Every one of us whose lives have been touched by this group of jubilarians can say thank you for the grace and goodwill they have brought into our lives in so many different ways. What an honor it has been to share in their life and their work! ✠



Brother Kenneth Haders, Provincial

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from Provincial • Jubilee Celebration • Remembering our deceased brothers • Biographies of Jubilarians

Mass of Thanksgiving as Jubilarians renew vows

Brothers of Holy Cross celebrate 630 years of religious profession

The Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross will honor ten Brothers celebrating their 75th, 70th and 60th jubilees of religious profession on Sat., May 3, 2025, with a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, in Notre Dame, Indiana at 10:30 am.

Eight of these brothers reside in the Notre Dame area, one in Lima Peru and one in San Antonio, Texas.

Also, the brothers will be remembering Brother James Reilly, from the Moreau Province who died March 2 just

two months shy of his 40th jubilee that he had planned to celebrate with his Midwest Province brothers.

Brother Kenneth Haders, Provincial of the Midwest Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross, will accept the brothers' renewal of vows. Dr. Andrew McShane will be the musical director and organist, with Ms. Halle McGuire Hobbins as the cantor. The Most Rev. William Wack, CSC, will be the celebrant.

Brother Joseph Fox, CSC, of Holy Cross Village, Notre Dame, Indiana is coordinating the event.



IN MEMORIAM

Brother James Reilly, CSC

Brother James Reilly would have celebrated 40 years of vowed religious life in May. He died on March 2. To honor his life and his service as a Holy Cross brother, here is a short biography of his life.



James was born to Francis and Mildred May (Carter) Reilly on October 12, 1939 in Lancaster, Ohio. He was the youngest of five children.

Brother James attended Saint Mary's Grade School in Lancaster, Ohio for eight years, before going to the Marianist Prep School in Beacon, New York, for the next four years, graduating in 1958. He later became a Marianist brother from 1964 until 1967 when he did not renew his vows and left at the age of 28.

In 1967 he became a counselor to students at Rancho San Antonio, Chatsworth, California. He loved working with the

students at Rancho, and with the Holy Cross brothers there.

He entered Holy Cross novitiate in Waterford, New York in July, 1984 and professed first vows August 10, 1985. He then continued to work at Rancho San Antonio, in Chatsworth, California.

In 1989 he joined the healthcare services at Alexian hospital, San Jose, California, and in 1990 the healthcare services at Dujarie House in Notre Dame, Indiana. Under the direction of Brother Thomas Shaughnessy, Brother James provided services at Dujarie House and at Columba Hall at Notre Dame. Brother James' work ethic of service was always led by his joyful and happy disposition to those at Dujarie House and to the brothers at Columba Hall.

Throughout these past 40 years, Brother James dedicated himself to the care of the brothers in need as well as his own prayer life. Through this time, he found a very blessed life of prayer and contemplation in the chapels at Holy Cross Village and Columba Hall. He was always grateful for the peace and joy he found in the service of others. ✠

Remembering our deceased Brothers. May they rest in peace.

Brother Joseph Patrick LeBon, CSC, 81 • December 21, 2024 • 63 years a vowed religious

Brother Edward William Libbers, CSC, 84 • January 30, 2025 • 63 years a vowed religious

Moreau Province

Brother James Phillip Reilly, CSC, 85 • March 2, 2025 • 40 years a vowed religious



75-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Brother John Benesh, CSC

Brother John Benesh became a Holy Cross brother without ever having any personal contact with a brother. In 1949, while a freshman at Marquette University, he visited the Holy Cross Postulate in Watertown, Wisconsin.

He professed his first religious vows in 1950 and soon completed his studies at the University of Notre Dame to become a teacher.

He served the next several years as a teacher at St. Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio, the Holy Cross Postulate in Watertown, Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio, Holy Cross Junior College at Notre Dame and the University of Notre Dame. His last assignment in the United States was Holy Trinity High School in Chicago.

"During the summers of 1982 and 1983 I studied Spanish at a language school in Mexico," Brother John said. "This led to an invitation to visit the Holy Cross mission in Peru, South America."



As a result of this visit he moved to Peru in 1985. The people were poor and the living conditions were very simple. He doubted that he would be able to adjust to this different world. This coming October he will mark 40 years in Peru.

"I was in our parish in Chimbote for five years, and while there I was a teacher in a Fe y Alegria school," Brother John said. "Then I was moved to Lima and became the director of the Fe y Alegria School located in our parish in the section called Canto Grande.

"We had 2,000 students in the primary, secondary and special education levels. There were two shifts. It was very tiring and stressful, but I was able to complete six years in this position. Then I taught for two years in the same school."

Brother John was instrumental in the preparations for opening of the Holy Cross Spanish-speaking novitiate in a section of Lima called Huaycan. When it opened in 2001 he was the assistant novice director, and held this position for six years.

"In 2008 I moved back to Canto Grande. I am semi-retired but I still am able to be a helper in the parish and in the school."



Brother Ronald Christenson, CSC

As Brother Ronald Christenson nears his 97th birthday, one can reflect on his three quarters of a century as a professed brother of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He definitely has had an impressive life of service to the Church and with the Brothers of Holy Cross.

When Ronald was in eighth grade at St. Mary's School in Racine, Wisconsin, a Holy Cross brother gave a talk about the brothers, and the seed was planted in young Ronald's heart. He also had seen a small ad in *Our Sunday Visitor* that further sparked his interest.

"In high school, I visited the brothers at Watertown, Wisconsin, and I was impressed," Brother Ronald said. "Later, I was invited to come the following February, and I decided to stay."

After teaching for a few years in Brooklyn, New York, and Indianapolis, Indiana, he felt the call to do missionary



work. He asked for a passport and visa for East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.

Brother Ronald left the United States in March, 1960 and served in Bangladesh for the next 31 years. He served in the oldest part of Dacca, called Narinda, a poor and very crowded city where his transportation was limited to a bicycle, and much later to a motorcycle.

Brother Ronald taught in grade schools and high schools and ran a house of studies for college-age men who wanted to join Holy Cross. He turned the house of studies ministry over to a Bangladeshi brother in 1988. Today there are about 130 brothers and 130 priests in their own provinces serving in 25 schools and Notre Dame University in Bangladesh.

In 1991 Brother Ronald returned to the United States for good. He became a chaplain for the hospitals in the area until 1998 when he retired to Columba Hall at Notre Dame.

"I would not change it for any other vocation," Brother Ronald said. "Gracias, hallelujah."



70-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Brother Joseph Fox, CSC

Joseph Fox and his twin sister, Joann, were born April 15, 1935, in Sugar Grove, Ohio, the youngest of eight children. Joseph traveled with his parents in 1953 to Sacred Heart Juniorate in Watertown, Wisconsin, where he began his journey as a Brother of Holy Cross.



“I wish to thank my parents for a family atmosphere that fostered my vocation to religious life,” Brother Joseph said. “Without this I most likely would not be here today.

“I am grateful to the Brothers for my formation and lots of encouragement on my journey in religious life. I have had many opportunities, some assigned to me and others I chose. In every case, I was given the tools and education to achieve my objective. For this I am humbled and most grateful to my many religious superiors who encouraged me along the way.

Brother Joseph’s years in Holy Cross offered many diverse experiences including acting as the food service director and cook in Akron, Ohio, Watertown and South Bend, Indiana. He served in the Provincial treasurer’s office at Notre Dame, as the

treasurer at Archbishop Hoban and Cathedral High Schools and was a youth minister for the Archdiocese of Anchorage. While at Hoban, he took student volunteers to West Virginia to assist those less fortunate and also served as director of admissions and director of community service. He was the director of the Holy Cross Brothers Center and director of religious at Holy Cross Village Community, both at Notre Dame. He still remains active in projects assigned by the provincial.

As he approaches 70 years of religious life Brother Joe feels privileged to have served his fellow religious and laity in so many ways.

“I have met and interacted with people from all walks of life. Early on I realized that everyone has something to offer, and I did my best to help them realize this in themselves,” Brother Joseph said. “I give thanks to all those men of Holy Cross who have helped me along this journey. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I hope I was able to bring the presence of God into the life of those whom I have had the honor of serving.

“I give thanks to my God who has nourished my life through opportunities and challenges to make Him known and loved to those I met over these 90 years of life with Him.”



Brother Daniel Kane, CSC

Brother Daniel Kane, who will turn 90 in May, has been sharing his incredible dedication, talent and music for countless students, parishioners, brothers and friends for 84 years—since he was a 6-year-old playing the piano!

His pastor from St. Dominic parish in Cleveland in 2018 said, “Brother Daniel has served in the Cleveland diocese for more than 50 years. The last 16 years at Saint Dominic’s as our organist have been a blessing to our parish. Yet his spirit has been the greater gift to us: humble in his service, able to smile, and never drawing attention to himself.”

After graduating in 1953 with the first class from Saint Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio, he joined the Brothers of Holy Cross and took his first vows in 1955. He taught English and Latin for many years at Saint Joseph’s High School in South Bend, Indiana, and later was named the choral director at Gilmour Academy in Gates, Mills, Ohio. He also served as the director of choral ensembles at John Carroll University. He is self-taught on the organ.

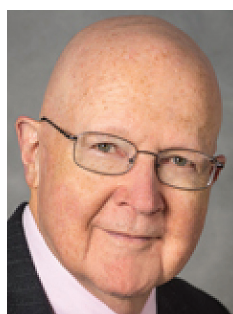
In 1989, Dan earned his RN degree and became an oncology nurse at Meridian Huron Hospital in Cleveland.

“I was attracted to being of help to others, especially the poor and the elderly,” Brother Daniel said. He was a registered nurse for 22 years while continuing to advance his music.

He has always been devoted to writing music arrangements for choir, piano, organ, instruments, and especially the annual brothers Jubilee celebrations at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame.

Brother Daniel is forever grateful to his loving God, his parents, and his blessed community of supportive brothers, for the gift of music to his life, and for its ongoing helpfulness to others—whether it be an audience or a church congregation.

“I am always grateful for the opportunities to be able to inspire and help lift the hearts and spirits of others,” Brother Daniel said.



60-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Brother Lewis Brazil, CSC

Brother Lew Brazil was one of triplet boys born in Faribault, Minnesota. Lew graduated from St. John’s University in Collegeville Minnesota with a degree in Music education.



He entered the Brothers of Holy Cross in 1965. After completing a master’s degree in Theology from the University of Notre Dame, Brother Lew began teaching at St. Joseph High School in South Bend, Indiana before becoming the band director at Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio. From there, he went to St Edward High School in Lakewood, Ohio to teach music and begin a campus ministry program which continues to this day.

In 1985, he began studies in gerontology at the University of Minnesota while caring for his mother whose health was declining. After her death in 1986, he returned to the St. Edward community to begin a career in the geriatric delivery system. While working full time at the Lakewood Senior Center, he earned his master’s degree in social work at Case Western Reserve University. In 1992, he became a licensed clinical social worker

and joined the staff at Benjamin Rose Institute in Cleveland as a geriatric mental health case manager.

In 2001, Brother Lew moved to Phoenix to live in community with 11 Holy Cross priests and was employed at the Catholic Outreach Center in Sun City, Arizona. This agency provided social services to the five Catholic parishes in the Sun City area.

In 2007, with the encouragement of his Provincial, Brother Lew moved back to Notre Dame to develop social services for the independent residents of Holy Cross Village. Because music is such an uplifting gift that feeds the soul, he assembled musicians and formed the Village Jazz Ensemble to entertain the “Village People” twice a year. In 2009, with the increasing healthcare needs of brothers in the Midwest Province, he was appointed director of healthcare and aging. In this role he dedicated his full attention to developing the healthcare program for the province and tending to the needs of the brothers.

“I feel blessed by God and my community for the opportunity to learn, to have additional education, and be able to perform, in the Concert of Life,” Brother Lew said. “I thrived with the Score that was assigned to me—educating students and providing assistance and well-being to so many people, young and old.”



Brother Thomas Maddix, CSC

“God does first and best and most is to trust us with our moment in history. God trusts to do what must be done for the sake of God’s whole community.” —Walter Brueggeman.

For the last 40 years, Brother Thomas Maddix has used this quote in presentations around the world. For him it captures the essence of who he is and how he has lived his life. “Likewise, it’s an invitation to the people in the audiences,” Brother Thomas said.

This quote motivated him in good and bad times. Whether he was teaching high school at Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills, Ohio or graduate school at the School of Applied Theology in Berkley, California and St. Stephens College at the University of Alberta. Or perhaps when he was presenting workshops across Canada and other places in the world like the Vatican and Canberra, Australia.

Another quote that has inspired and sustained Brother Thomas over the years is by Carl Jung. It is the observation about spirituality “The soul in search of its proper path.”

“After 60 years in Holy Cross, I believe that I have lived my proper path to the best of my ability despite travails, illness, and prolonged hospital stays,” Brother Thomas said. “From Manly, Iowa to Vancouver, British Columbia and many places in between, I have been extremely blessed and fortunate to have been a part of Holy Cross and other groups. And I am thankful for the ongoing support of family, friends and colleagues.”

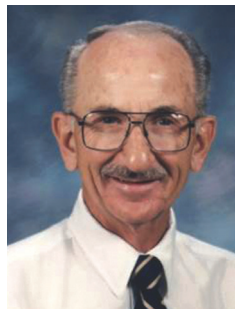
In his last presentation to a group he spoke of overcoming leukemia (CLL) and volunteering where he used to work. He concluded his talk with a quote from African American Theologian and Mystic, Howard Thurman (1899-1981).

“Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”



Brother Louis Mangini, CSC

Eighty years ago Brother Louis Mangini's mother gave him a wooden spoon and a pot, and told her son to go outside and make as much noise as possible. It was the end of World War II. Since then his life has been blessed in many ways. His family and childhood friends were all good, honest, and caring people. He went to a Catholic elementary and high school. In 1961 at the age of 24, he was drafted into the Army. He served two years, mostly in Germany, and was grateful it was before the Vietnam war began.



"I think the Army was the hiatus I needed to make a change in the direction of my life," Brother Louis said. "Shortly after my discharge, I began my life in Holy Cross at Watertown, Wisconsin, before moving to Rolling Prairie, Indiana, to begin the novitiate year to discern my call to religious community life."

Following his discernment, Brother Louis went to St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, graduating in 1968. His first assignment was teaching at Holy Cross High School in River Grove, Illinois, which was only a couple miles from

his family home. After 21 years there as teacher and business manager he learned that the Holy Cross school in New Orleans was in need of a business manager.

"So, without much hesitation, I packed my bags and golf clubs and traveled south," Brother Louis said. "On arrival I discovered the culture there required a bit of adjustment. In Louisiana they speak with a Cajun twang and their diet of crawfish, gumbo and jambalaya were not things on the Mangini menu.

"The school there is among the earliest of Holy Cross ministries in the United States and, although Hurricane Katrina tried to decimate the school, it has been rebuilt and now doing well."

In 1995 he was asked to go to the Holy Cross school in San Antonio, on the poor side of western San Antonio, to be the business manager. It was an offer the community allowed him to accept. "And I have been a Texan ever since."

"I certainly have no regrets regarding the past 60 years. I have lived and worked with some remarkable people and, worthy or not, I do have the feeling that we have helped do something meaningful. When Jesus comes again, I will be out there with my spoon and pot," Brother Louis said.



Brother John McMuldren, CSC

As Brother John McMuldren reflects on his 83 years, he heaps many thanks to those close to him.

"Gratitude to God for my vocation. Gratitude to my loving parents and loving sisters for their support and concern," Brother John said. "Gratitude to the Brothers of Holy Cross for their sharing and encouragement in my life and ministry to others. And gratitude to those whom I have worked with and served."

Brother John's first assignment was Holy Cross High School in River Grove, Illinois in January, 1967. There were about 35 brothers in the school with around 900 male students. He recalls that the brothers were quick to mentor a beginning brother on some tips of teaching in a high school classroom. "'Don't smile till Christmas.' 'Never do anything a kid can do.' 'Silently stare, don't shout.' Good advice. Plus I had the backing of 34 other brothers if I messed up," Brother John said.

He loved the experience. In his 10 years there, he led several 10-day canoe trips in Canada, he taught senior English and became director of guidance and counseling.

"I left the Grove to become the assistant director of formation for our candidates to the Brothers," Brother John said.

He was then invited by Brother Charles Krupp and Archbishop Francis T. Hurley to direct Saint Theresa's Camp in Soldotna,

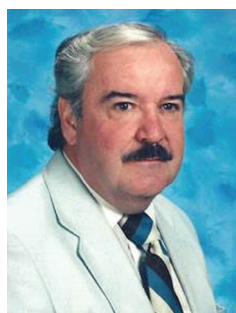
Alaska, and became director of youth ministries (for 10+ years) for the Archdiocese of Anchorage.

"It was a dream come true for someone who loves the outdoors," Brother John said. "The people of Alaska were very helpful and welcoming. Some of the families I am in close contact with till this day."

His next assignment was at Bishop T.K. Gorman High School in Tyler, Texas, as the director of guidance and counseling for 14 years. It was a combined middle school and high school. Many of the graduates, about 50 seniors, went to college on scholarships. A real change from Alaska, but the students and faculty made it very worthwhile.

"My final stop was here at Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame in 2007. Working with senior citizens has been a wonderful part of my life, along with working with Brother Roy Smith in the development office," Brother John said.

*Others will sing the song, finish what we began.
What matters? I or they? Mine or another's Day?
So the right word be sung, And life the purer made.*



Brother Philip Smith, CSC

Born in East Chicago, Philip's family soon moved to Miller, Indiana where he attended St. Mary's Grade School conducted by the Sisters of the Holy Cross. These Sisters were very influential in his decision to become a Brother of Holy Cross. During his junior year at Andrean High School, a Brother gave a vocation talk. Young Philip was intrigued and gave his contact information to the brother.



"Within a few weeks, I visited the University of Notre Dame, stayed for a day with the scholastics, and returned home knowing I had found my calling—educating hearts and minds," Brother Philip said.

"Over the years, I have had the honor of serving at a number of Province schools," Brother Philip continued. "My best years were at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago as a classroom teacher that provided enough experience to become the president of Holy Trinity in 1995.

"When I left the school in 2003, I knew that I had been privileged to work with great students, parents, teachers, school staff and board members. All of the adults relentlessly worked to level the playing field for our worthy and

wonderful students.

He felt the same way when he retired from Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio in 2019.

"I had a wonderful time teaching AP English, steel drums and percussion ensemble to many boys and girls who truly understood what it means to be persons with hope to bring to whomever they encountered," Brother Philip said.

Returning to South Bend in 2019, Brother Philip began working in the Province archives. In March of 2020, he discovered thousands of letters written by and to Brother Columba O'Neill who is known as the Miracle Man of Notre Dame. It took several months reading the correspondence for him to become aware that he had found so much evidence of this Brother's holiness, he needed to inform the bishop. Now in 2025, the cause for the canonization of Servant of God Columba is well on its way.

"My life in Holy Cross has been blessed by the Holy Spirit. I have been provided with every opportunity to gain personal confidence, the tools to become a minister to others, and the support of my Brothers to cross all sorts of borders so I could bring hope where there might be little or none," Brother Philip said. "I have truly enjoyed educating the minds and hearts of students. May the days that lie ahead allow me to continue to be a Brother with hope to bring."



Brother James Spooner, CSC

In June 2022 on entering the driveway at Notre Dame Brother James Spooner said to himself, "I am home". Indeed, he had returned after 55 years in seven ministries across four states. He also returned to living in a community of brothers after years living alone.

His formative years were at Our Lady of Angels Elementary School, in Cleveland, Ohio, an apostolate of the Order of Friars Minor. He continued his education at St. Edward High School where the Brothers of Holy Cross were his teachers and mentors—men who would become friends and colleagues in ministry.

Brother James enjoyed teaching science and math for 21 years. Summers were spent working at the schools and continuing his education, earning a masters of arts in Nonpublic School Administration. This led to ministry as associate principal at Archbishop Hoban High School.

In 1988 he was appointed president and principal of St. Edward High School serving in the dual roles for five years. After handing over the principal duties to a layman, he became president of St. Edward's, serving until 2001. Two

years as president of Holy Cross High School in River Grove, Illinois, followed. He completed his ministries, with eighteen years as associate principal at Archbishop Hoban.



"I enjoyed the years of ministry. Many Holy Cross educators continue to be friends," Brother James said. "Visits to the schools are reunions."

Another great joy for Brother James was watching students grow from being timid to being confident and becoming socially responsible people who would live Holy Cross core values throughout their lives.

"As a religious, my spiritual life was nourished by prayer, meditation, liturgies, and retreats, including a 100-day spiritual renewal program in New Mexico," Brother James said.

"Sixty years as a Holy Cross Brother has been filled with opportunities for growth and enrichment. I am grateful for everyone who has been with me on this journey."

“I sat in my usual seat in the chapel at Columba Hall, and after a short prayer, reflected on my past years in Holy Cross. Stillness prevailed. Slowly, I became more aware of the PRESENCE of the 12 to 15 other brothers in the room who had come to pray together. I was surrounded by men of prayer. Men who had spent their entire lives in the very quiet service of others throughout the world. They have come into this chapel to pray quietly to God. These are holy men.”

~Brother John McMuldren, Jubilarian-60 years

