

MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

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

March 3, 2021



March
Week 1

Weekly Spiritual Reflections from the Early Brothers of St. Joseph

The Lord sends tribulations to his elect in order to enrich the immortal crown that He prepares for them. (Brother Andre Mottais 6/22/1826)

Lenten Lecture Series – 2021

2:00 PM in Geenen Hall - Wednesdays

Personal meeting ID: 891 491 9777 for Zoom
Passcode: 54515

And, for those who live at Holy Cross Village, on TV at
Touchtown Channel 86/951

Continued on next page:

March 3
CSC

Brother George Klawitter,



**“What the Notre Dame Pioneer Brothers can Teach us
about Sacrifice for Lent”**

Brother George Klawitter, CSC, retired in 2012 from the English Literature Department at St. Edward’s University in Austin, Texas. A frequent contributor to the Holy Cross History Conference, he has published books on the early Holy Cross Brothers in France, Indiana, and Algeria.

March 10

Brother Philip Smith, CSC



“Brother Columba—Another Holy Cross Saint”

Brother Philip Smith, C.S.C., Ed. D., entered the Congregation in 1964. Over the last 55 years he has ministered in high schools, a residency program for boys, and at Holy Cross College as a teacher and administrator. He holds master degrees in English, music and theology, and an educational doctorate in Curriculum Design for Special School Populations. Retiring from formal education in 2019, he came to South Bend and now serves as the archivist for the Midwest Province of Brothers.

March 17

Brother Benjamin Rossi, CSC



“The Logic of the Cross”

Brother Benjamin Rossi holds both a bachelor and master degree from the University of Notre Dame. After teaching religion for more than ten years at Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio, Brother Ben joined the Congregation

of Holy Cross making his first profession of vows on August 1, 2020. He currently participates in the formation program at Moreau House of Formation.

March 24

Brother Douglas Roach, CSC

“In the midst of the turmoil, what is God calling us to be?”

Presently celebrating his 67th year in the Congregation of Holy Cross, Brother Doug Roach is the superior at Columba Hall, a Brothers’ retirement facility on the Notre Dame campus. Prior to Columba Hall, he was involved in high school teaching and administration; a mental health counselor in a state prison; administrator of a priest-less parish; and director in a Brothers’ formation program.



Our Second Shot

Twenty-one brothers from Columba Hall were provided with a bus and driver (Greg) from Cardinal Transportation for travel to Elkhart. At our vaccination distribution site, nurses came onto the bus and administered our second shot of the virus vaccine. We were all hoping for a little celebration stop on the way back home. You know for ice cream or a brew. But it turned into a quick trip that had us arrive home in time for lunch.

We are grateful to all, and especially to John Guttman from our administration office, for making this event happen.

Thank
You





Brother Robert Eugene Berthiaume, C.S.C.



For at least 20 years, **Brother Robert Berthiaume** sang as a tenor in the Loretto Choir, in the front row between two laymen: Morgan Sweeney and Thomas Cashore. He showed up for the funerals of his Brothers, Jubilees, Feast Days for the Sisters of the Holy Cross and played the piano and lead the music for the 5:00 pm Mass at the St. Joseph Chapel. Music was a known characteristic in his life along with being a fine gentleman and devoted religious in Holy Cross.

Note: "Binder Camp" is a name that began to be used for the small group of volunteers who every Thursday morning gathered at the Church of Our Lady of Loretto at St. Mary's to prepare all the binders (as many as 60) with the sheet music for the coming Sunday 9:45 am liturgy. Brother Robert was a faithful member of this group and devised his own method of taking all the older music out first and quickly put in the new sheets and whatever was to be used again.

When Brother Robert became ill and couldn't attend "Binder Camp," Morgan Sweeney wrote a poem about it and then when he heard that Brother had left this world for his heavenly reward, he wrote another poem. The poems are attached below.

Poems: Next two pages

Poem 1: This was the last time Brother Robert sang with us, or joined us for Binder Camp.

Dear Brother Robert: Heard you were under the weather. I hope you are feeling better already. We look forward to seeing you at choir and Binder Camp soon.

Get Well Soon, Brother Robert

By: Morgan Sweeney, 3/18/2019

Get well soon, Brother Robert, get well soon!
Rumor has it you collapsed and had a swoon.
That trip to the E.R.,
So annoying and bizarre!
Stay in tune, Brother Robert, get well soon.
Need your help, Brother Robert, need your help.
The Tenors are in trouble. Hear us yelp?
We need your supervision,
Help us find that sweet religion!
We're young whelps, Brother Robert, needing help.
Binder Camp, Brother Robert, Binder Camp.
The Binder Fairies need your O.K. stamp.
Says our favorite Choir Curmudgeon:
"All green music shall be bludgeoned!"
You're the champ, Brother Robert, of Binder Camp.
Miss your cakes, Brother Robert, those cupcakes.
Your confection reputation is at stake.
We love them, all and any.
How come Bernie gets so many?
Hey what shakes, Brother Robert, with those cakes?
Pray we will, Brother Robert, pray we will.
And keep bugging God again and then until.
So that when you read this letter,
You'll be feeling so much better!
Take a pill, Brother Robert, and then chill.
Feeling old, Brother Robert, feeling old?
No reason to, if I may be so bold!
You're as old as you may feel,
Have another Happy Meal!
Rise up bold, Brother Robert, rise up bold!

Poem2:

CODA

Written 2/19/21, on the occasion of his death.

By: Morgan Sweeney

Now you're gone, Brother Robert, now you're gone.
We miss you and your love for singing songs.
Our Brother you have been. We are proud to call you "friend."
Sing along, Brother Robert, tenors strong.

You'll be missed, Brother Robert, you'll be missed.
Though your influence will subtly persist.
A gentleman and scholar, you made us hoot and holler!
E'en in jest, Brother Robert, you were best!

Fare thee well, Brother Robert, fare thee well.
In a life of caring service you did dwell.
This world where death must stand, our God has other plans.
Fare thee well, Brother Robert, it's been swell.

Tenors' boon, Brother Robert, tenors' boon.
You left our earthly chorus much too soon.
The Lord did beckon: "Higher! Come and join the Heavenly Choir!"
Thus attuned, Brother Robert, thou shall croon.

Live in song, Brother Robert, live in song.
With all the saints and angels you belong.
Enjoy that astral plane, where the music's unrestrained!
Life goes on, Brother Robert, in endless song.

Eulogy for Brother Robert E. Berthiaume, C.S.C.

by
Brother Joe McTaggart, csc
February 27, 2021

Brother Robert Eugene Berthiaume, a regular guy, ordinary fellow, a faithful Brother, an structured teacher—consistent, predictable and usually unwavering. (Ask anyone from the past who had authority over him.) His close colleagues at St. Ed’s lauded Robert as the consummate educator-administrator. The choir members at St. Mary’s loved him. One wrote beautiful poems about him, his declining illness, and later about his new-found choir in heaven. He also taught me, and I still remember much of it fifty-three years later.

As a sophomore in his English class I learned his ways of consistency and order, first hand. Wednesday—Vocab-Spell. Friday—library-book-day. And more too, clever acronyms for the quirks of the English language. I before E, except after C, or as sounded as A as in neighbor or weigh.

Robert even formulated his own exception to the i-e rule, in a sentence no less. *Neither financier seized either species of weird leisure.* There it was, a way around grammatical inconsistencies, and I never forgot those tips and other tricks as well. As unstructured and impromptu as I am by type, Robert’s type brought order and discipline to my learning. And then, in the final days, the teacher reversed the order and put it simply to the student. “Do my eulogy.” No subject, just predicate, subject understood, a declarative sentence really.

Yes, Robert was perhaps the epitome of the old fashioned “regular discipline,” his own discipline. “What you are in the novitiate, that will you be for the rest of your life?” A terrible prediction, but the old canard had some truth to it.

Concerning discipline, you could definitely rely on BRB in all his career assignments: high school teacher, extra-curricular moderator, administrator, college teacher, musician. Many in the Village may have known him as the music coordinator for Sunday liturgies in this very chapel.

Ultimately, though, and aside from characterizations, (my own included), Robert in his simplicity, candor and straightforward-self reminded me of a comment from Jim Finley, a “Brothers’ product” and a graduate from Hoban where Robert also taught. (Finley later became a monk at Gethsemane, a novice of Thomas Merton, author, therapist and retreat leader.) He made an important point and said this about all of us and our real identity beyond, and *other than*, our skills, talents, quirks or personality types: “We are only who we are,” Jim said “yet who we are is God being God—God knowing and loving himself in us not as vessels of his knowledge and love, but as his very love and knowledge itself in us as persons.”

The manifestation of God then in Robert, whom we come to honor, laud, and bury today, was a quietly accomplished one, and of the deepest part of him in his self-effacing ways it might well have been said that was content to blend into the woodwork. Bob was himself, just himself, so very clearly. He got the hay to the horses in every work he did, unceremoniously so and without any fanfare at all.

Robert Berthiaume was a multi-faceted gift of God just like all of us, true to form right out of the womb. He loved the Church. In fact, he probably knew every bishop’s name from almost every diocese in the United States. It seemed like a hobby of his.

He came to us from Collegeville, and he came as an engaging man too. In later years of his retirement he used to come for lunch at Columba, and Robert was a welcomed and delightful guest. He always participated in table conversation and was interested in all the goings-on here and there, this and that. He came to chapters, and kept himself updated. He attended many workshops in liturgical music and studied liturgy itself, studied psychology too. But lately when Covid came and his illnesses began taking over more and more of his life, his engagement was significantly curtailed.

Covid has put the damper on all of us adding to the illness which would eventually make Bob even less conversant. When his last admission to a hospital came and his underlying diagnosis advanced, especially under the pall of Covid, Robert of

necessity was isolated even more. His Brothers in community were cut off from hardly any interaction with him at all.

We too have been pretty much cut off from each other as well. The two sides of 933 North have become our own “wall.”

We haven't seen much of one another either except for funerals like this one and even socially distanced at that. As I recall, all this started last March, right around St. Patrick's Day. Each of us will mark for ourselves when that day began and we ceased being social. I think that was also particularly hard for Robert in all kinds of ways, including his own little extracurricular. He knew every bar tender at all his favorite haunts in his own unique “tavern ministry,” a light meal and a drink. Manhattan, rocks, twist, lots of ice, light on the vermouth, and an extra glass of ice on the side. But even with this simple pleasure, he was cut off here as well, this gregarious though introverted man. Contact diminished more and more, and admission to the hospital and Dujarie too had to say “stay out!”

Still, there was the phone.

During one of those phone calls, when I actually got through the palace guard and managed to reach Robert, he showed a side of himself probably not many saw but what I was blessed to observe and which, I think, was God manifesting himself in Robert as Finley says, “not as a vessel of his knowledge and self but as God's very knowledge and love itself.”

The call was without frills. He was very weak, even partially confused as to time and place, and he knew it and said it. Something was quickened though in Robert's life, pared-down and a bit more revealing as happens to most as decline and failing health take their assigned toll. It showed itself then even more powerfully in Robert's revealing of his deeper self. On that call Bob was understandably a bit confused but still conversant enough. He spoke explicitly of the end times he had experienced in the decline in his physical body. “This is it, huh? The end.” Robert said bluntly with the little energy he could muster at that time. But true to form again he was his staccato-self then as well, not quite monosyllabic, but tight little sentences. He even mentioned hospice in that conversation

but could not recall what it was. He knew though, and he eventually said yes to hospice care himself. He would also forget that in the days ahead before he actually was admitted to hospice. As he spoke in that call ever more haltingly, I knew it was a sacred moment and paused to treat the solemnity of it all with respect and even awe, both of us honoring the grace of that moment. “Looks like the end,” he repeated.

“What does it feel like to you, Robert?” I asked hoping the question was not too intrusive or inappropriate.

Silence. There it was again as the powerful, God-like serenity and hushed silence fell upon the conversation. It was similar to a moment we will all experience one day when the hold of earth’s tethers loosens and heaven awaits, all hastened by energy drain and physical strength easing out of our bodies, slowly but surely. We talk less, converse little. It’s a private time.

Our conversation then was over. To go any further would profane the tender, even precious moment he had arrived at. Robert, in effect, was teaching me again, his former Sophomore English student, how one man walks through that chapter of his life.

There were other equally revealing and privileged moments too.

Fortunately for me, and quite significantly as well, in one of the previous phone calls to Robert, I had mentioned something I thought might be appropriate and supportive.

I indicated that we both might take solace from lines of a hymn from the church music he so dearly loved and was especially versed in. I offered part of one of its lyrics as perhaps some solace. “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, what God has promised for those who love him.”

Robert, true to form even then, interrupted whatever it was I thought I was trying to offer him as comfort or support, and said in his forthright way, getting right to the point he had in mind, “Yes, I like that song.”

I remembered that later. That comment of his proved prescient, and Dan played it, and we have sung it for you, Robert, just a few minutes ago. “I will instruct you in the way you should walk,” the psalm instructs us. All we need do is listen.

And so it was likewise on a final occasion when Dan and I had what was called “an end of life visit,” that I asked Robert if we could offer a prayer. He, weaker and even less verbal, simply smiled in an affirming and touching way, giving his permission when so few other opportunities for any control in his life had left him.

Yes, let us pray, his smile said. With the prayer completed, silence followed again, those moments when a sacred presence bids one pause.

In that visit Robert also gave us direction that time was up. He took charge again, one last time for us, no more visits, no more phone calls, no more conversation. “Thank you for coming,” he simply announced. And that was the end of our time with Robert. (There was only room for one on the inside now. All others bow out. A private sacred time had come.)

He had given us our exit clue. His countenance said it all. His spirit was totally in the hands of God now, and no further conversation was necessary or even desired. Yes, time was up as it will be for all of us one day too.

About that time in everyone’s life, Thomas Merton gave us insight when he wrote that, “The child in the womb does not know what will come after birth. He must be born in order to live. I am here,” Merton said of himself, “to learn to face my death *as my birth*.”

And so too it will be for all of us, the narrowing down, constraint and the yielding necessary to face that new birth which will jettison us all to the home from which we originally came. It will be our time then. Robert gave us his time now. It was one example of how one man went home to God.

Robert, in your gentleness and humility and by just being yourself, without any fanfare or drama, you witnessed innocently and powerfully the great insight of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin when he wrote the following prayer.

When the signs of age begin to mark my body
(and still more when they touch my mind);
when the ill that is to diminish me or carry me off
strikes from without or is born within me;
When the painful moment comes in which I suddenly awaken
to the fact that I am ill or growing old;
and above all at that last moment
when I feel I am losing hold of myself
and am absolutely passive within the hands
of the great unknown forces that have formed me;
in all these dark moments, O God,
grant that I may understand that it is You
(provided my faith is strong enough)
who are painfully parting the fibers of my being
in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substance
and bear me away within Yourself.

You lived that, Robert—especially in your last days on this planet.

And in character you might still say, in one last word to us, “Thanking you.”

But it’s our turn now, and *WE* thank *YOU*, Robert Berthiaume, for your life, and your life’s work for the Gospel, shared with your family, friends, students and colleagues but especially your own Brothers of Holy Cross.

Holy Cross Roads

Writings for the Journey

Poor in Spirit

Dear Associates and Friends,

Are we thirsting for something that goes beyond what we are experiencing? The day-to-day routine can become so automatic that it takes little awareness of what we are doing and its significance. When we step back and observe what fills our days, we might be tempted to say what singer Peggy Lee sings, “Is That All There Is?”

Maybe we are thirsting for a “drink” that not only quenches our thirsting but brings refreshment and a spark of new life. Jesus says, “Happy are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.” This kingdom is not Karl Marx’s critique of Christianity, “pie in the sky when you die.” Jesus says the kingdom is here on earth as it is in heaven. In Christ’s kingdom there will be riches for those who are poor in Spirit. The riches that God wants to give us will make for an adventurous life. God wants us to have a life of love. It is only God’s love that can quench our deepest desire as we let go of superficial longings. In sharing God’s love with others, we will have a significant life. Giving that love to others in a sacrificial way we will not only enrich them but help us to uncover God’s kingdom in our daily lives.

- Do you feel the routine of daily life dampens your spirit at times?
- What revives you during these times?
- How can being “poor in spirit” bring about God’s kingdom in your life?

**O God, help me to be poor in spirit so that
it might receive the riches of your Kingdom.**



Brother Carl Sternberg, C.S.C.

For more reflections to grow spiritually
please visit our new blog
<https://weeklspiritualinsights.org/>

From the *Voice of Moreau Website*

The website features a Holy Cross sister, a brother, or a priest, with a weekly story on the blog. Check the following link below.



Website: <http://www.voiceofmoreau.org/>



**Brother
Philip
Smith**



**Brother
Ben
Rossi**

Spring Teleconference Sponsored
by the Midwest Holy Cross Associates

Saturday, April 24, 2021

Click below for the conference program and registration:

<https://holycrossassociates.org/chapters/national-and-regional-conferences/>





Reflection

Reflection sent in by
Brother Thomas Maddix, C.S.C.



Emmanuel Care....With you on your journey toward health, healing and a better quality of life.

emmanuelcare.ca





Brother
James
Kane,
CSC



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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