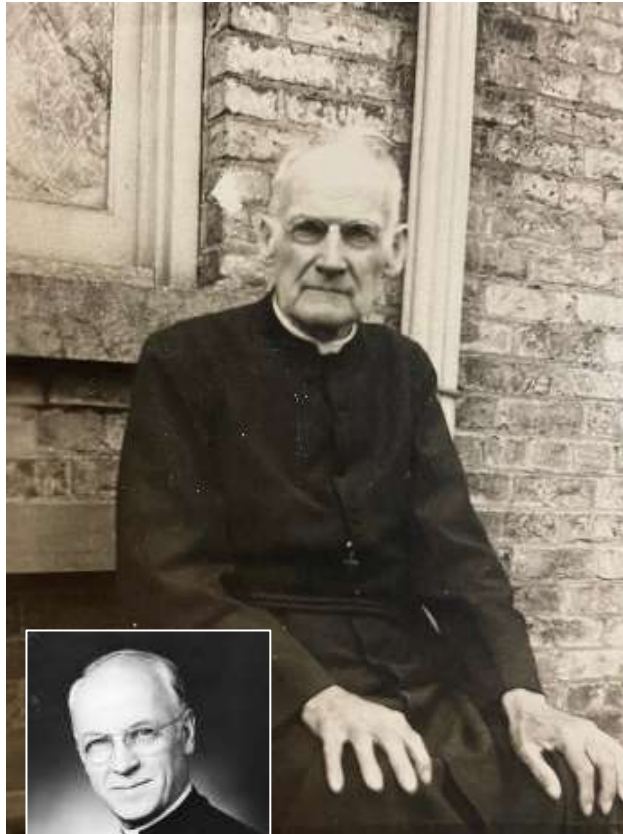


MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

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

January 24, 2024

Brother Columba O’Neill, CSC, Was Lost for Sixty Years



Brother Columba O’Neill, CSC (1848-1923) served as the cobbler and shoemaker at the University of Notre Dame from 1888 until his death in November of 1923. He was known as the Miracle Man of Notre Dame and the Divine Healer. In 1916, seven years before his death, he was given these titles in a *South Bend Tribune* news article that reported his devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and his “powerful intercessory prayers” on behalf of persons suffering from physical and spiritual distress.

Prior to his death on November 20, 1923, the *Brother*

Columba Apostolate was conceptualized and administered by Brother Columbanus Murphy,

CSC, the treasurer for the *Ave Maria Press* and a personal friend of Brother Columba’s. He saw to it that the Press “donated the printing for the apostolate.”



In 1948, Brother Columba’s biography *These Two Hearts*, written by Brother Ernest Ryan, CSC was published by Dujarié Press, at Notre Dame, Indiana. Many thousands of copies of this book were sold, and they can still be purchased on Amazon.com.

Brother Columbanus died in 1952. For two years, the *Brother Columba Apostolate* was without a leader. On February 2, 1954, *The Brother Columba Apostolate of Devotion to the Sacred Heart* “[was] officially begun” once again because the necessary provincial permission and episcopal *nihil obstat* were given. Brother Sabinus Herbert, CSC, assumed the role of director. Brother Sabinus entered the Congregation of Holy Cross with a background in publishing, and, as a young student brother, he was assigned to work at the Ave Maria Press, on the campus of the University of Notre.



In a lengthy letter to the superior general, Christopher J. O’Toole, written on April 14, 1954, Brother Sabinus reports a history of the apostolate. “Since Brother Columbanus’ death the thought has been sticking with me about reviving what Brother Columbanus started. To the leaflet which he circulated I added a letter and a Sacred Heart badge.”

It was on February 2, 1954, that Holy Cross Father Arthur Hope “[C]ame into the office and told me [Brother Sabinus] he had a trunkful of letters in his possession that belonged to Brother Columba – letters that were written to Brother Columba from all over the world, telling about their problems, requests for badges, etc. – wondered if I could use them!”

Brother Sabinus gave the letters to Br. Ernest “to sort, investigate, and classify for whatever information there might be.” Sabinus concludes his letter to O’Toole: “May I have your personal blessing upon this work, for its success, and the eventual cause of Brother Columba, if it be God’s will?”

Father O’Toole responded to Brother Sabinus on May 15, 1954: “It will be very interesting to see what Brother Ernest discovers from the trunk full of letters that Father Hope brought in lately. Possibly, as time goes on, and we have the causes of Brother André and Father Moreau finished, we should begin to look into Brother Columba’s cause.”

Sadly, Brother Sabinus died on May 13, 1955, at age 37 from a massive stroke. The work on Columba ceased, and all his ephemera and other artifacts were

sent to the Brothers' archive where they sat on a high shelf for nearly 60 years. It was in March of 2020 that Brother Philip Smith, CSC, found what was lost, and, once more began work on the cause.



Cathedral Senior Ethan Trobridge Assists in Archives



Ethan Trobridge, a senior at Cathedral High School, Indianapolis, and a future member of Holy Cross College spent two weeks working in the archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross at Notre Dame, Indiana. “My Catholic faith drives my desire to assist the Brothers with their work on Servant of God Brother Columba O’Neill. I aspire to be a theology professor, as well as continue my work with the Brothers to canonize Brother Columba while studying at Holy Cross College”.

From January 9th through the 19th, Ethan experienced the many jobs of a working archivist. He contributed genealogical research on Brother Columba’s family and others associated

with the Brother that has made a serious impact on Columba studies.

During his first week, he was asked to focus his attention on Miss Agnes Velma Gorman, a young woman who was cured in 1921 through the intercession of Brother Columba to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was told by doctors that her arm had withered to the degree that it would need to be amputated. Velma pinned a Sacred Heart badge to her injured arm and began a novena to the Sacred Heart as instructed by Brother Columba. On the eighth day of the novena, her arm was healed. Velma wrote to Brother Columba on Feb. 18, 1921, that “This was the first time in two and a half years, the pain had stoped [*sic*]. When the bandages and glass shield were removed



that morning, the running sore had stoped [sic], there was not even a scab on it, only a scar. The D[octors] said they couldn't understand it. It was a miracle.”

Through Ethan's research, he was able to discern that Mrs. Gorman has four living grandchildren; contacted one of them and set up a meeting so she might provide additional information regarding her grandmother. Trobridge also spent extensive time working on Brother Columba O'Neill's family tree, the Dr. Nicholas Senn family tree, and the Dr. Edward V. Hug family tree. Dr. Senn operated on Brother Columba's club feet in 1898, and Dr. Hug was Mrs. Sarah Rath's attending physician. Mrs. Rath was cured by Brother Columba in 1921. Hug writes a detailed letter about her deadly illness, and he testifies that her cure “cannot be medically explained.”



Beyond Ethan's genealogy work, he also served as a transcriber for three interviews: two live in the archive and one on Zoom. The most important interview was a Zoom meeting with Mr. Frank J. Murray, who is one of the last living relatives of Brother Columba. Mr. Murray is 91 years old and lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. A 1960 graduate of King's College in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, he recalled that Brother Columba was a frequent visitor in his grandmother's home in Wilkes Barre. Murray's great grandmother is the sister of Brother Columba's mother, Ellen (McGuire) O'Neill.

Brother Philip Smith, the archivist for the Midwest Province of Brothers was delighted to have Ethan assist for two weeks. “Ethan brought enthusiasm and commitment to his work for us. Quickly, he showed his resourcefulness. He has contributed much new information about Brother Columba that is an invaluable resource for the canonization process. “Ethan said that “The work I did was difficult but fun.” Through his experience, he obtained a better understanding of what he wants to do following high school graduation. “I hope to continue to assist Br Philip Smith for the remainder of



my time at Cathedral, and then during my time at Holy Cross College.

For June, 2024, Ethan has been invited to deliver a paper at the 43rd annual Holy Cross History Association Conference at Holy Cross College about his research on Velma Agnes Gorman. He will be the youngest person to deliver a paper in the association's forty-three year history.

Ethan enjoyed his time in South Bend, Indiana: "Everyone at Holy Cross was exceptionally polite and kind, and Brother Philip was incredibly helpful when it came to questions I had regarding what I was doing. I regard this experience as immensely valuable and have nothing but the utmost respect for the work that the Brothers are doing in the archives."



Despite the Years

Despite the years that kept us both apart,
as now we meet and share our common past,
close friendship's freshly forged, and in my heart
fraternal now means bonded—hard and fast.

That word is nuanced all because of you:
they're guessing you've some weeks at most to live;
assuring comfort now will have to do—
a service loved ones properly can give.

You face the *ultimate reality*
for which one spoke as his own death approached;
but very few have been as calm as he
in letting go, a skill that can't be coached.

He leaves, then, peace to you as his bequest,
while, standing by, I'll pray you to your rest.

—**Brother Philip Armstrong, CSC**
October 24, 2001



Midwest Holy Cross Associates
And the Midwest Province **Present**



Resiliency

Reclaiming the Legacy of Blessed Basil Moreau For Our Times

As we celebrate the 150 anniversary of Father Moreau's death, we recall and reclaim how much Father Moreau has given the family of Holy Cross women, men, sisters, brothers and priests. Some of his most far reaching gifts for our times include his promotion of a family spirit among all who call themselves Holy Cross, his dedication to a missionary call to send his religious to all parts of the world with many cultures making Holy Cross an international community beyond his local diocese, his vision of co-equality between lay and clerical members, and through accepting the crosses in life, its members will grow stronger and bring new hope to the world.

These gifts are influencing the whole Church today in its vision of synodality in which all its members have a part to play. Bringing people together from many cultures and many life experiences can only lead to a richness in its response to present day realities. With the ability of listening to the other, the Church will become closer to its people. Yes, the cross will be a part of its awakening, but with the resilience that comes with God's grace, all things become possible.

Who better to lead the way but Holy Cross whose legacy is planted in its foundation by Blessed Basil Moreau!

Schedule for Conference 24

**ZOOM
CONFERENCE**

**SATURDAY
January 27,
2024
EST USA**

- 10:00 Welcome and opening prayer
- 10:15 Moreau's legacy in spirituality and theology
Father Karl Romkema, CSC
- 10:50 Break
- 11:00 Breakout Session
- 11:20 "Personal Reflections on Moreau's Legacy for Educators"
Mr. Richard Bautch – President of the Holy Cross Institute
- 11:50 Presentations of contest winners
- 12:10 Lunch Break – with optional presentation on Holy Cross
Associates
- 1:00 "Practical Applications of Moreau's Legacy in Other
Ministries"
Sister Mary Ann O'Neill, CSC

Please register at our website:

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

Biography

Rev. Karl Romkema, CSC

Rev. Karl Romkema, C.S.C., is from Clarkston, Michigan. After graduating from Our Lady of the Lakes High School, he entered the Old College Undergraduate Seminary in 2009. He graduated from Notre Dame in 2013 and received his Master of Divinity degree in 2018. He then professed Final Vows in 2018 and was ordained a priest in 2019. He served as a Deacon and Associate Pastor at St. Ignatius Catholic Church and School in Austin, Texas. In 2021 he began as the Director of the Old College Undergraduate Seminary where he continues to serve.



“Moreau’s Spiritual and Theological Legacy”

Biography

Mr. Richard Bautch



A tenured full professor, my leadership skills in higher education have been honed as a department chair and then as a dean at St. Edward’s University - Austin. I am currently the executive director of the Holy Cross Institute, which serves the network of Holy Cross schools, colleges, and universities by delivering innovative programming to educators, administrators, and board members. Under my direction, the Institute has become a catalyst for mission integration on campuses nationally and internationally; with our support and consulting services, dedicated professionals transform their pedagogy with the vision and values of Holy Cross mission.

“Personal Reflections on Moreau’s Legacy for Educators”

Biography

Sister Maryanne O’Neill, CSC

Sister Mary Anne has been a vowed religious for many years. She has taught in elementary schools in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, and taught high school Spanish at St. Joseph High School in South Bend. She has served in congregational leadership at the regional and general levels as well as in formation of young religious and has done spiritual direction. Sister Maryanne has served in El Salvador and Peru in a variety of ministry settings. Her last ministry before retirement was as director of the Brother Andre Outreach Center at St. Agnes Parish in Los Angeles for 20 years. At present Sister Maryanne resides at Saint Mary’s.



“Practical Applications of Moreau’s Legacy in Other Forms of Ministry”



Jesus As Messiah

Throughout the Old Testament is the narrative of the Jews anticipating the prophetic expectation of a promised messiah – an anointed savior king who was to bring about the ultimate triumph of the people of Israel as a nation.

Because the expression of the promise was often couched in political and militaristic rhetoric, many, even until Jesus' time, developed an erroneous notion about messiahship.

Inasmuch as the term “messiah” connoted violence (militarism), Jesus, who categorically abhorred and rejected violence, purposely refrained from any personal identification with referencing Messiah with himself. His sole objective in preaching was to announce the reign of God and prepare the people for it. Even in his behaviors, Jesus consciously avoided giving the impression of kingly ambitions: recall his choice of riding on a donkey up-on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Of the four Gospels, only Mark cites the sole instance where Jesus actually and purposefully identified himself as the Messiah: upon Jesus' appearance before the Sanhedrin, the high priest officially questioned Jesus: “Are you the Messiah?” To which Jesus immediately replied, “I am.” (14:61-62)



Old Testament kings were always anointed. The name *Christ*, meaning “anointed,” was attributed to Jesus by the early Christian Church to verify and signify Jesus' identity and role as the truly promised Messiah.

Holy Cross Roads Writings for the Journey

Seeking God throughout our day

Life at times can be chaotic with many possibilities and some disturbing thoughts crossing our minds. Sometimes these can be a shot down as we seek direction for our lives.

There is a solution. By seeking God at the beginning of our day, listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, things could become simple. Daily putting our lives in God's hands can make all the difference. It requires a trust in the love that God has for us and that God will lead us in the direction that in the long run will be fulfilling. God will guide us in what we need to do and what we should wait in doing. Many things have a way of resolving themselves outside of our limited understanding.

When we seek God's love and direction each day, we are able to begin with a sense of peace that will carry us through the many circumstances that may come our way. We will have the assurance that God is with us through all of the twists and turns. We become content to being present in this moment as we experience God's presence. We develop an intimacy with God which is unique to our relationship. Like the merchant in Christ's parable, we are willing to sell everything to purchase this "pearl of great price." Jesus says, "Seek God first and all of these things will be added unto you."

- What are some of the "pressures" that you are experiencing now?
- How are you dealing with them?
- In seeking God's direction have you been able to put things in God's hands?

O God, help me to seek you in facing the challenges of each day.

Brother Carl Sternberg, C.S.C.



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



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



Hatred paralyzes life; Love releases it.
Hatred confuses life; Love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life; Love illuminates it.

Martin Luther King, Jr.



© 2014 by Brother Thomas Maddix

Emmanuel ↓

 Providence Health Care

**You don't have to
see the whole staircase, just
take the
first step.**

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

The reflection is courtesy of Mission, Ethics & Spirituality • Providence Health Care
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada providencehealthcare.org

January 15, 2024

Past Copies of *Midwest-Midweek*

Since February 2006

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



View Website at: www.brothersofholycross.com	View <i>Midwest-Midweek</i> at: http://brothersofholycross.com/publications/midwest-midweek-newsletter/
Webmaster Proofreader	Br. Richard Johnson Br. George Klawitter
Please send material to the e-mail address below by Thursday the week before <i>Midwest-Midweek</i> is published. Midwest-Midweek@brothersofholycross.com	

Save this link in a **SHORTCUT**