

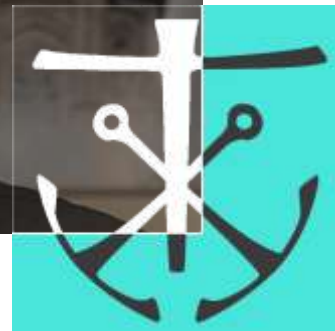
# MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

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

September 28, 2022

**Rev. Richard Warner, C.S.C.**

**Former superior general of the  
Congregation of Holy Cross**



*May he rest in peace*

## A reflection of the Life of Brother Donald Allen, CSC

It is not easy to summarize the legacy of a man who lived for 96 years and had been a brother of Holy Cross for 71 years. I never lived with Brother Donald Allen, but I think I have heard more stories about him than any other brother. I think of that because the stories I have heard are all so unique.

My first contact with Brother Donald was during my tenure at Holy Trinity High School. I was a new dean of students and Donald was teaching fulltime and coaching wrestling. At the beginning of the winter sports season we decided to have a pep-rally and include wrestling in the mix. The role of the wrestling team at the assembly was to put on a little demonstration that would show the students something about this challenging sport. Brother Donald began by explaining that beginners were welcome on the team and that they would learn how to be safe as they wrestled. He had two of the boys demonstrating holds and moves when all of a sudden one of the boys was flipped over and he emitted a loud scream. As we investigated, we learned that the boy had broken his collar bone. Of course, that caused something just short of bedlam, and several of the boys in the bleachers were challenging wrestlers to come out on the mat and fight them.



That was my personal experience of Brother Donald's surprising demonstrations. There are enough stories about the chaos caused by Brother Donald's poisonous snake demonstrations, that one wonders if they all really happened or if the stories were just so amazing that they developed a life of their own. There were snakes at schools, snakes at the novitiate, snakes with reporters, and snakes at home. My favorites were the

ones involving our young brothers from West Africa who, it is told, would always immediately distance themselves as far away from Donald and his snakes as they could get. They seemed to know better. Another favorite story was about the ball python that got loose when Donald was on a home visit. He could not find it before he left, so he decided to depart without saying anything. He just didn't want to cause concern about something that would probably die from the cold, eventually. The way I heard it, the snake eventually turned up and had to be killed by the local police.

These are fun stories to tell, but Brother Donald was more than snake stories. He was a dedicated teacher who wanted his classroom to be alive and interesting, with specimens that would expand the educational experience of his students. He was a coach because a coach was needed, and he thought he could do it. He was a missionary because that was where the greatest need was. He was a leader in areas where no one else was able or willing at the time. In Ghana, Donald and some of the other brothers formulated a plan to figure out how to better prepare their students for the national exams each student was required to take. He and the other brothers volunteered to be official examiners so they could get a better sense of what the students needed to know to excel on their exams.

Donald was a faithful, no-nonsense religious, who just did what was needed – when possible, with a flair for enhancing his surroundings, sometimes with an interest in what others might call dangerous, but always with a clear reflection of his own thoughts. To make the school campus more beautiful, he collected tree specimens from all over Ghana and planted them himself on the campus. Why have a rabbit or a mouse in the biology lab, when you could have a rare snake that had real poison? He worked very hard and expected his students to work just as hard. He loved it when they excelled, and that kept his creativity going.

His was a life of zeal in the truest sense of our founder, Blessed Basil Moreau – to fulfill his duties with eagerness, affection, courage and perseverance. The eagerness, courage and perseverance were easy to see in his life as an educator and in his life as a religious, but the affection required a little deeper look. I found that affection in his deep, but demanding, respect for his fellow brothers and in his intense loyalty to his family, his community and his country. He cared, though at times it was hidden by his deep commitment to the schedule and the structures of religious life, especially the vow of poverty.

To bring forward another story, there was the time he did not want to call an ambulance for one of the brothers

because he thought it would be cheaper to drive the brother to the hospital himself.

Brother Donald was a man of many interests and many talents. Beyond his training in science and math, he also pursued a master's in religious education and many postgraduate courses in science. As was stated in his community obituary, "He was consistently self-confident, often radiating a demeanor of invincibility as he worked as a missionary, chasing poisonous snakes, or teaching a wide variety of science and math classes."

On a personal note, over the past few years, Donald lived at our Dujarie House Infirmary. Because he was blind, he had to be told who was present. Whenever he was told I was there, he greeted me with warmth and respect and asked me about my life and how things were going. He knew who I was and cared about me.

Perhaps we can summarize the legacy of Brother Donald Allen – he cared, he was creative, he was faithful, he wanted to make things better, and he was willing to do a lot of work.

**--Brother Kenneth Haders, C.S.C.**

## The Rothko Chapel

When I saw the Rothko Chapel  
I didn't understand  
I was supposed to sit  
on wooden benches and stare for  
hours at huge canvases of black black  
black.

I gave a quick look at all the walls  
and wandered back into the foyer  
where I was tempted to reach  
into the fishbowl for my dollar  
still floating there,

but the Medusa at the door  
kept her eye on me as if she  
half expected me to dip into the dish  
and maybe take a little extra  
for my loss of a good afternoon.

Later when I learned  
that there were colors hidden  
in the black, I wanted to return  
and live inside those massive things,  
swim inside the wine dark seas,

rush into the depths of hell,  
where Rothko lived just  
months before he ended it  
inside the darkness of his soul,  
with all his bleakness bled

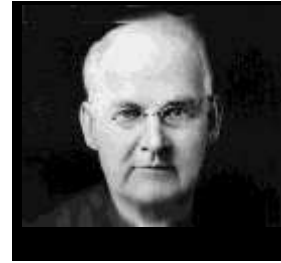
to those chapel walls  
where we're supposed to take  
a little bit away each time  
we live the rich and subtle shades  
of purple, red, magenta,

until the white of hope  
fuses with the black of hope  
and all is one with us  
inside the Rothko chapel  
in Houston.

--**Brother George Klawitter, CSC**



Brother Columba O'Neill, C.S.C.  
Servant of God



Website

<https://brothercolumba.com/>



Brother Philip Smith, C.S.C.  
Postulator of the cause for Brother Columba

Click  
Link

Added to the Newspaper article section of the *Brother Columba Website* is an article that appeared in the October 2-8, 2022, issue of *Our Sunday Visitor*.

September 27, 2022



**Brother Paul Bednarczyk, C.S.C.  
Superior General  
Congregation of Holy Cross**

The entrance to Columba Hall contains a picture of our present superior general. It was drawn from a photo by artist Brother James Kane.

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# Sharan Palmer 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Columba Hall, Notre Dame, was the venue for Sharan's anniversary celebration of twenty years of service working as a member of the provincial business office for the Midwest Province of Brothers, Congregation of Holy Cross.







Missed Picture from the September 14, 2022, publication



**ND Trail Pilgrims gathered along with brothers from Columba Hall to remember Brother Larry, a former pilgrim himself. They gathered around a tree and its marker to pay tribute a second time to Brother Larry.**

## Holy Cross Roads Writings for the Journey

### Afraid of Holiness?

Somehow, we continue to get the impression that pursuing holiness means giving up some of our freedoms and living a rather “boring” life. It is just the opposite. It is through our relationship with Christ who loves unconditionally that we are truly set free. We become free from trying to live up to the expectations of what others consider to be successful. Our relationship with Christ allows us to not be consumed with the many ways we can become addicted as a means of escaping the challenges of modern life. To be holy means to pursue wholeness and being true to our deepest self which longs for what is true, good, and beautiful as we discover the love that makes this possible.

Holiness has very little to do with our ego. It enables us to take a leap of faith into what God has in store for us. God can accomplish God’s will through us. God relies on our uniqueness in achieving God’s purpose. Our longing gives way to fulfillment in our intimate relationship with God’s presence in us and God’s acting through us. God uses the positive and negative experiences of our lives to lead us to our destiny as part of God’s plan of bringing about the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Rather than be afraid of our holiness, we can see it as a way of surrendering to a source of love satisfying our deepest longings.

- What does “being holy” mean to you?
- Is living a holy life something that you want to pursue?
- How does your relationship with Christ help in living a holy life?

**O God, let my relationship with you lead to living a holy Life.**

**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.



Emmanuel Health...A vital community of health, healing and hope  
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Brother  
James  
Kane,  
CSC



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Please send material to the link below by Thursday the week before *Midwest-Midweek* is published.

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