

## Homily: July 18, 2022

By Fr. Virgil Petermeier, osc

Today is the Solemn Feast of St. Odilia, who declared herself to Br. John as the patroness of our entire Order [as depicted in the window behind the piano]. Centuries later, we Crosiers chose her as patron of our conventual priory in the United States.

One of the primary inspirations we receive from Odilia is her alleged courage to be faithful to our God of Love by saying, "I have chosen the Cross." For the times our courage has dimmed or flickered, we confidently call on our Merciful God, "Lord, have mercy."

A window on the south side of our church reminds us of the healings which occurred through the intercession of St. Odilia, beginning at the time of the transference of her remains from Cologne, Germany to Huy, Belgium. So one major takeaway [for me] from this feast is the healing ministry these healing invite from us Crosiers—and our Associates.

Healing is such a huge, huge every-person desire. This touches upon so many aspects of our life. Just physical health is hailed and experienced as so essential. "If you don't have your health, you don't have anything," some say. For some people, who seem a bit too casual about their health, or to confirm certain people's protective steps for their health, we will say, "Your health comes first, so do what you have to do to guarantee your health."

The emphasis usually is on physical health, but surely mental and relational health, on personal, inter-group, and international levels is of high value, too. An aspect of health that is rising to high profile today is trauma. Workshops, articles and books are helping people in various social services, especially education, to be trauma aware. We need to realize how deep trauma affects not just our mind, but even our whole body.

Therefore, I find the references to St. Odilia as helpful reminder of our vocation to nurture good health in all these areas on all levels. This vocation of healing and promoting good health is one important aspect of a wider call we have, namely, to be compassionate and holy as God is compassionate and holy. Succinctly put – to continue our growth as people of love. I was reminded more clearly about this latter wider call when I reread a reflection by master general emeritus, Fr. Glen Lewandowski, osc, for us Crosiers and our associates for this feast.

"God's holiness has to do with the perfecting of love in ordinary lives, in ordinary relationships, in cultivated care for one another. God's holiness is available to us, as human persons, by participation in the life of God, through the pattern and image of Jesus Christ, by the dynamic life-giving power of the Holy Spirit of God. We participate in Holy God, when we participate in holy communion, sealed and initiated as the chosen body of Christ. Religious orders remind the whole church that it is called to holiness.

On this feast of the holy woman, the sainted Odilia, it is an appropriate time, in the Order of the Holy Cross, to ask you, brethren of the Holy Cross (Crosier Associates): 'How are you busy about the lifework, your proper business enterprise, of appropriating the holiness of God, to which you are personally and communally called?'

I close this reflection with St. Odilia's statement, "I have chosen the Cross."