

ADVENT SEASON

*provides opportunity for all to reflect
and prepare for our Savior's birth*



By Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc

Advent is a time to prepare for the “coming” of the Lord. I would dare say that the spirituality of the Advent season is about waiting for Christ’s coming. We wait for his coming in history at Christmas. We wait for his coming in the mystery in our daily lives. And we wait for his coming in majesty at the end of time.

The first coming of Jesus that we anticipate is the one we celebrate at Christmas: the coming of the Son of God as a human being, born of Mary in a stable in Bethlehem. It is this coming that the prophet Isaiah looks forward to with anticipation, “Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down” (Is 63:19a). Why does he cry out this way? Because we need our God—don’t we?

We need our God to come visibly among us so that he can help us to straighten out our lives, so that we may see more clearly in what direction our lives should go, so that we can restore our relationship with our God and with those around us. Our cry for him to come among us is answered in the stable in Bethlehem.

We also wait for the coming of Jesus in our daily lives. Jesus comes in every person, in every experience, in every happening. We are invited not to be so busy looking back at the Christmas event that we fail to be aware of his presence here and now. St. Paul rejoices that Jesus has already come and what it means for our daily lives. He tells the Corinthians, “I give thanks to my God always on

your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus” (1 Cor 1:4). We too can thank God for all that Jesus has done to help us lead a good life. We do that by always being aware of his presence and actions in the people around us.

We also wait for the coming of Jesus at the end of time. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus says, “Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come” (Mk 13:33). Jesus is promising that he will return in glory, and he wants us to be attentive for his return. We have no idea when the Lord will come. He may come at the end of time or at the end of our time.

Jesus doesn’t want us to wait with anxiety, but to wait with hope and calmness. He wants us to keep alert and to be prepared. How do we do that? Very simply.

We keep alert each day by doing our best to live a life of love, compassion, forgiveness, honesty and integrity. We keep alert through a life of prayer. And the simplest and deepest prayer is to be aware of the active presence of God in every moment of every day.

If we live in this way, we will have nothing to fear or be anxious about as we wait for his final coming. We will be ready for the Lord whenever and however he comes. ✠

Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc,
is a member of the Crosier
Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.

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LIVING TOGETHER FOR GOD ALONE

takes on special meaning for new conventual prior



By Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc

Anima una et cor unum in deum (one mind and one heart in God). These words echoed through my mind as I walked to the front of the sanctuary to be confirmed as the next conventual prior. “Do you accept your election?” asked Master General Laurentius Tarpin, osc. “I accept with the help of God,” I heard myself say. At the time of my writing this article, it has been 90 days since my confreres entrusted me with the role of being their major superior.

As I reflected on these past three months, I can say there has been a lot of growing, learning, stretching and maturing into my new role. As our Crosier Constitutions state, “The principal responsibility of the conventual prior is to unify, inspire, lead and sanctify his confreres in the pursuit of the Order’s ideals” (38.1). Unify, inspire, lead, sanctify—these are some hefty goals. As I seek to serve my brothers in leadership, I pray that God will help me pursue these ideals and lead me to lead them in being one in mind and heart in God.

UNIFY

As we all know, unity can sometimes be a challenge. For example, in 2017, members of the U.S. Crosier province went through a reorganization of its structure and governance. This was to be done ad experimentum, that is, on an experimental basis as directed by the 2015 General Chapter. Instead of being organized as a province, the Crosiers moved to a conventual priory model. Under this model, the province was reorganized into one entity, the Conventual Priory of the Holy Cross, with a conventual prior and a conventual chapter to include all members living in the United States.

It removed a layer of governance between the major superior and the members. In a province, a prior provincial is not a member of the local community and normally lives at a provincial residence, whereas a conventual prior is a member and lives in community with his confreres. Another internal distinction is that a provincial chapter meets every three years, while under our new structure, our conventual priory chapter meets every month. Only elected delegates participate and vote in a provincial chapter, but every member participates and votes in a conventual priory chapter. Thus, the chapter has the responsibility for the life of the community (Const. 27.3), meets more often, gives everyone a voice and gives everyone a vote.

Naturally, there are some challenges to work through in unifying our two communities. The conventual priory headquarters is in a bustling part of South Phoenix. There, we offer active pastoral ministries to the larger community. Our filial priory in Onamia is in a very rural part of Minnesota, where our ministry tends to be more contemplative. With each site, there are differences in ages, culture, opportunities and ministerial needs.

Yet, despite all these differences, we are still called to live with one mind and heart in God. As I reflected on this, I realized that it was in the life of God, as Trinity, that we find our unity. God is three persons—individual, unique, united—in relationship. In a similar manner, there is a dynamic relationship between three entities—the Phoenix priory, the Onamia filial priory and the Crosier ideal of a priory as described in our Constitutions. In thinking of that interplay among the differences, uniqueness and limitations of each priory, I became aware of an abundance of gifts, strengths and values that reflect the ideal.

INSPIRE

As to inspiring the confreres, I realized that it is more than just motivating people to act; it is also about connecting with people and their values. As Crosiers, we value community, fraternity and collegiality, so inspiring community involves being present at prayer, at recreation, at meals and at meetings.

It means contributing to the work of the community—not only formal work, but the work of our day-to-day living like cleaning up after dinner, taking out the trash, helping to set up before events and taking things down after. It means giving time and energy to things that others may not be aware of.

Inspiring fraternity also means living a life of joy, laughter, teasing and being teased. It means being present to listen, to affirm and to encourage. It involves being patient, kind and compassionate, being supportive, accountable and consistent. It means not being afraid to ask for help, guidance and forgiveness, facing adversity, setbacks and challenges with grace and determination. It allows for vulnerability, the sharing of one’s authentic self and the acknowledgment of struggles and imperfections among us all. Above all, it recognizes that all these moments are opportunities for growth, sharing life and learning.

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Already I can see that inspiring collegiality entails helping my brothers take ownership of the community through their actions and decisions. It means building a sense of belonging by creating an environment where collaboration and teamwork are valued, holding a positive attitude, even in the midst of limitations. Sometimes it requires reminding them that no matter how difficult things may seem, better days are ahead if we keep pushing forward together.

LEAD

Regarding the call to lead, often when we think of leadership we think of a business approach as a model. The business leader must get the group to follow a vision and complete tasks that will help the business achieve its goal. Essentially, the leader is to offer a blueprint for how the company operates to sell the most product or service and achieve its goal of financial success.

This type of leadership can be overly transactional; members are given clear roles with expectations that will help the company achieve its overall goal. A system of rewards and consequences is often put in place to ensure high performance.

What makes a leader of a religious community different from a leader of a business? It is one's horizon. In religious leadership, the goal is something that transcends this world—eternal life, a deepened relationship with God, communion with those in heaven and earth. This is not quantifiable, like counting how much money a company makes. It is not transactional, like doing this or using that to secure a certain, predictable outcome. There is nothing we can do or buy that can guarantee our way into heaven. We cannot reward a person with heaven or hell for what they do or don't do.

Akin to the business world, leading sometimes means making difficult decisions. Other times it means leading by example. But most of the time it means being present to one another, providing accompaniment, walking with others in the gray areas of life, wading through the muck with one another and figuring it out together. It is about living with the good and bad choices we make, sharing in our joys and sorrows and picking up others when they fall. There is no blueprint to follow, other than what we call Crosier Religious Life, which at its heart is about being brothers to one another. And that is how I hope to lead, first and foremost—by being a good brother.

SANCTIFY

Lastly, our Constitutions call for the conventual prior to sanctify. This means to help others grow in holiness, to help them grow closer in their relationship with God.

One of the most powerful ways to do this is through prayer: praying for my brothers as they pray for me; praying for healing where there is hurt; praying for grace to forgive and be forgiven; and praying for the grace of conversion, charity, wisdom and virtue in work and in life. Equally important is believing that God hears my prayers and is at work in all of us.

Sanctifying also involves fraternal correction. It is about helping others recognize the areas in their lives that need transformation. This sometimes requires the help of the community, for we are all accountable to one another. The goal is not to condemn but to be charitable, to be firm but loving and to be helpful, not hurtful, when a brother is acting in a way that goes against our way of life and values.

Sanctity can also be achieved by fostering a supportive, loving and spiritually focused community. Our motto is "Together for God alone." As men of different ages, cultural backgrounds, languages and life experiences, we are all still called to be Crosiers. Something mystical has happened and continues to happen by this intersection of our lives that calls us to live harmoniously intent upon God. When we live in the awareness that God has called us together and is ever present in ourselves, in every encounter and in our life as Brethren of the Holy Cross, we grow in sanctity individually and collectively.

Above all, sanctification requires action. It means doing something, and that "something" is living a life of fraternal love so that through this love, others can experience the love of God through our actions.

These past 90 days I've learned a lot about myself, about my confreres and about God.

I continue to learn how to unify, lead, inspire and sanctify my confreres. But I also continue to discover how they do the same for me. In the end, it's not about me or what I can do, but what God can do through me. God has called me to be the conventual prior in this time in our history, and it is really God who is at work.

I am just an imperfect vessel, as we all are. Yet, despite my imperfections, I continue to give my all. It is in this mystical gathering of imperfect souls that we form a communion of persons known as the Brethren of the Holy Cross, vowed religious who carry our crosses, seek the will of God and persist together—despite our challenges. That is where we find our unity, as community—one that strives to live in oneness of mind and heart in God. ✠

Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc, is the conventual prior of the Conventual Priory of the Holy Cross.



Fr. Marcos reflects on his diaconate in-service

By Fr. Marcos Leles, osc

A few months ago, I began an incredible journey of service to the Crosier community in Onamia and to the local church, a journey that began with learning what a deacon's role is in the Catholic Church, which I learned in my liturgy classes.

I soon discovered that it is one thing to see and take classes about it but completely another to actually practice it! The first time I participated in a liturgy, I got butterflies in my stomach. I was shaking a lot and was very anxious. However, the adventure was just beginning.

During these months serving as a deacon, many people asked me about the role of a deacon. I always began the explanation with the biblical text that describes the words of Jesus, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mt 20:28). Given this foundation, we can define that deacons are men—married or celibate—chosen by God who generously respond to the vocation (calling) confirmed by God and the local bishop and the community. Filled with the Holy Spirit and led by that same Spirit, deacons dedicate themselves to carry out the mission of the Church in the ministry of service. The role of the deacon is to be a sign of Christ the Servant— animator of the "diakonia" of the Church—of the vocation to service of each community and of each Christian. With the exception of consecration, confession and the anointing of the sick, the deacon can perform the following duties: distribute Communion, grant blessings, assist in and bless marriages, preside over baptisms, perform funerals outside of Mass, give homilies, preside at celebrations of the Word and preside over sacramentals. In Masses presided over by the priest, the bishop or even the pope, it is the deacon who proclaims the Gospel.



Then-Dcn. Marcos smiles in anticipation of proclaiming the Word of God.

I had the opportunity to serve the communities around our filial priory in Onamia, Minn. It was a great challenge because I had to improvise my English a lot, and I heard from some parishioners that they could not blink because they had to pay attention to my Brazilian Minnesota accent when I spoke! One of the moments that always moves me is when I put the water and wine in the chalice and pray, "Through the mystery of this water and wine, may we participate in the

divinity of your Son, who deigned to take on our humanity." Likewise, I feel compelled to lead the entire community to participate in the Paschal Mystery that we celebrate. When I proclaim the Gospel and share the homily that I prepared and prayed for that day, I realize people thirst for the Word of God, to hear and understand and to live the teachings of Jesus. It is a great responsibility, and I sought to prepare my homilies with care, connecting them with local culture, social events, Church events and historical biblical facts. I believe it is necessary to build bridges between the New Testament and the Old Testament at all times so that the homily is fruitful. One thing I always do before a worship service is to pray to the Holy Spirit for the light and guidance to prepare my homily. I pray for this so that I may proclaim the Gospel in a way that will resonate with people.



Then-Dcn. Marcos Leles, osc, incenses the Gospel book during Mass in Onamia.



Celebrants and servers gather in the church nave for the Entrance Procession.

I have also experienced several interesting moments during some of the liturgies.

Sometimes the celebrants forget they have a deacon assisting them. They recite my part during the liturgy and then remember I am standing there saying, "Oh! Sorry, you should have said that!" This

happens even when I am sending the community out into the world to announce the Good News. Later in the sacristy, I receive an apology from the celebrant, which is always appreciated.

During these months as a deacon, I have received feedback after the celebrations. People tell me about what caught their attention in that particular homily. One mother mentioned that it was the first time her son paid attention to the entire homily! A couple shared that I was able to make them understand the text in an easy and livable way. Another person said my homilies sound like a dialogue, that I wait for people to answer my questions and that they get a little uncomfortable—but in a good way. A parish priest mentioned that when he sees me at Mass, he can't go out after the Gospel to smoke because he expects to hear me during the homily. He said I got his attention with the way I preach the Good News. Some of the comments have really warmed my heart: "Deacon Br. Marcos has a beautiful style of preaching that makes the Gospel applicable and relatable to our everyday life." Once, after Mass, a woman said to me, "Deacon, I was asking God something, and today I got the answer!" Afterward she thanked me for being God's channel for her.

I can say that each Mass when I served as a deacon was a unique moment in which I sought to serve wholeheartedly. Being a deacon prepared me for the next phase of my vocation—as a priest—to continue serving my community and the people of God. Being a priest does not stop me from being a deacon; rather, the service continues in a more profound way. It is necessary to continue announcing the Good News of the Kingdom to everyone. And if a person prays better, feels more connected to Christ, celebrates the Paschal Mystery with joy and understanding, then I will have fulfilled a small part of my mission as a Crosier. My service continues, and there is much work ahead of me as a Crosier. The first of this is to continue growing the Crosier community with new vocations and to serve the larger community however it is needed. ✠

Fr. Marcos Leles, osc, is the post-novitiate formation director for the conventual priory and a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Onamia.

FR. DAVE EXPLAINS DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN DIOCESAN AND RELIGIOUS PRIESTLY FORMATION



By Fr. Dave Donnay, osc

Crosiers are known as the Brethren of the Holy Cross, a designation that emphasizes building fraternity and community in our life. In our Constitutions, it is stated that we aspire to “proclaim the Gospel and share in the life of the Church through a diversity of ministry, where all are equal and where all are brothers in the crucified and Risen Christ” (1.3). One of these ministries is ordained ministry, “a significant expression of the Crosier charism and of the common priesthood shared through baptism in Christ” (Const. 21.4).

While there is a foundational unity in ministerial priesthood between diocesan and religious priests, the formation required for ordination and the focus of subsequent ministry is distinct. For all priesthood formation, the Church calls for substantial human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation. For a Crosier, the vocation to Crosier Religious Life is the fundamental vocation that shapes Crosier priestly life and informs these different dimensions of formation. A few examples can serve to highlight the differences.

Academically, all candidates for priestly ordination complete a program of study in the philosophical, theological, biblical, sacramental, liturgical and pastoral beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Much of this study is the same for diocesan and religious priesthood candidates, but there are distinct accents and specific areas that religious pursue in order to deepen the understanding of what it means to be a Crosier priest: the historical tradition of canons regular (a particular kind of religious order), the spirituality of the Cross, and Augustinian fraternal community life, and the liturgical dimension of the Crosier charism. It is the Crosiers’ “special vocation, one handed down through the ages by our predecessors, to foster the liturgy of the Church...” (Const. 17.1). These particular traditions and emphases are unique to the Crosiers and are part of the program and formation for Crosier priests.

Ministerially, diocesan priests need to be prepared for ministry in a diocese, directly under their bishop, in parishes. While religious priests can serve in parishes and the bishop of a diocese is the authority over parochial life, the most immediate superior for a Crosier priest is his Crosier superior. He determines the Crosier’s community and ministry assignments, which can be in a variety of contexts, including service in other areas of the Order (i.e., as missionaries). Formation for Crosier priestly life includes the internationality of the Crosier Order and its internal ministerial needs in their potential future ministerial work. My own life and service demonstrates this reality as I serve as the general econome (treasurer) for the worldwide Order in Rome. Other Crosier priests throughout the world serve as teachers, Order leaders, pastors and in other roles for the life of the Church and Order.

Whether a diocesan or religious priesthood candidate, all priests are formed to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in their life and ministry, serving God’s People in the unique context of their vocation and in a variety of ministerial roles. ✠



Fr. David Donnay, osc, is general econome for the
Crosier Order and lives in Rome.

Diocese of Phoenix bishop invites Crosiers to serve on formation team



By Fr. Jude Verley, osc,
with contributions by Fr. Tom Enneking, osc

Service to the local Church is one of the ministries of the Crosiers. A couple of years ago, Bishop John Patrick Dolan of the Diocese of Phoenix invited the Crosiers to serve on the formation team for the Spirituality Year that is part of the official Program of Priestly Formation approved by the U.S. bishops. The Spirituality Year is for men of the Diocese of Phoenix who are discerning a call to the priesthood before they move on to study philosophy and theology in the major seminary.

Fr. Tom Enneking, osc; Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc; and I were selected to be involved in this ministry with the diocese. Twice a month one of us participates in an evening of sharing. It begins by praying Vespers with the young men. Dinner follows (wonderful food usually prepared by a couple of the young men) and then the presentation either formally or through interactive dialogue among those present. This year eight men are in formation; last year there were nine.

Topics for our formation sessions have included forgiveness, the evangelical counsels, the Sacred Triduum (towards Holy Week), devotions, Ignatian prayer and friendship among clergy. The topics are determined in consultation with Fr. Will Schmid, the diocesan priest in charge of the Spirituality Year.

After more than a year and a half, at least from the Crosier point of view, it seems to have gone well. We Crosiers bring our *Crosier spirit* of community, ministry and a sense of the vision for the Church articulated at the Second Vatican Council. We are pleased that Bishop Dolan has invited us to share our presence and spirit with these men who desire to minister in a significant way in the Church.

As we planned for our participation in the Spirituality Year with Fr. Schmid, we agreed it would be helpful to invite the men to Crosier Village and our priory for Evening Prayer, social and dinner once each semester. The experience of being in our priory church and home makes an impression on them as they see how we Crosiers pray and live together on a typical evening.

We hope and pray that we may continue to be a part of the formation of men to the priesthood in the Diocese of Phoenix. We love to share with others the gift God has given to us in Crosier Religious Life. ✠

Fr. Jude Verley, osc, and Fr. Tom Enneking, osc, are
members of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.



DIRECT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

helps neighbors in need

By Elisabeth Wisthoff

For the past two years, Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc, and the Crosier Companions (the Phoenix-based lay association) have served neighbors living at the adjacent UMOM (United Methodist Outreach Ministries) senior living facility with the unique direct assistance program. UMOM is a well-respected Phoenix-based nonprofit organization dedicated to housing and caring for vulnerable people. Once a month, the direct assistance team visits the UMOM apartments to greet residents and provide grocery store gift cards, bus vouchers, bread and hygiene kits. The UMOM facility houses low-income seniors, the majority of whom are women.

Together, UMOM and the Crosiers collaborate in supporting residents. Within the facility, UMOM has dedicated space for the Crosier program. For seniors on limited incomes, the monthly infusion of grocery store cards and other items helps them stretch their dollars through the end of the month.

Approximately 40 residents are served per month. The goals of the program are to help meet the basic needs for community members in a dignified way and to help reduce food insecurity. While the direct assistance program does not meet every need, nor can the Crosiers offer a traditional food bank, it alleviates pressure on our underserved senior neighbors and helps prevent hunger.

Program volunteers gather at UMOM on the last Saturday of the month, when residents' budgets traditionally become strained. They meet with residents, distribute \$20 grocery store cards, \$4 bus vouchers and bread from Noble Bakery, a local artisan bakery that donates bread to the program. As Fr. Stephan says, "All of this serves to bridge the gap between months, helping to ensure no one goes hungry."

Program funding comes from individual donors and nonprofit foundations. Costs are direct and obvious, as all proceeds become the gift cards and vouchers provided to residents. Additional help and support are welcome and needed; for the program to continue to serve the vulnerable in a loving, dignified way, Crosiers rely on the generosity of those whose hearts are moved to care for our neighbors.

Many of the residents have gotten to know the Crosiers and Companions and learned about the spirituality of the Cross. Genuine friendship has grown, which represents a convergence of both temporal and spiritual outreach. As this demonstrates, the program meets needs in both expected and new ways, proving that it is much more than a food distribution program. ✝

Elisabeth Wisthoff is the chief development officer, for the conventual priory.

YOUR YEAR-END GIFT COULD BE THE SOURCE OF A HAPPIER NEW YEAR FOR ALL WE SERVE.

If you can help the Crosiers help our neighbors, especially in this holy season, please contact Elisabeth Wisthoff, Chief Development Officer at 602-443-7115 or ewisthoff@crosier.org.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT in Central Minnesota comes full circle for Fr. Dave



By Fr. Dave Donnay, osc

I participated in my first Central Minnesota TEC (Together Encounter Christ) retreat as a junior in high school in March 1984.

Through my high school and college years, I returned often to serve on different TEC weekends. Some years later, when I was living in Onamia, Minn., (about 30 minutes away from the TEC center in Belle Prairie, near Little Falls), I reconnected with the program and began to work as a spiritual director. More than 37,000 people have attended a TEC retreat since its inception in central Minnesota in 1978. From its beginning as part of the founding group and through the years, numerous Crosiers have served on TEC weekends and in related programs, namely REC (*Residents Encounter Christ*), a two-day retreat for jail or prison residents, and Koinonia (*an adults-only program, also offered in Spanish*).

TEC originated as "Teens Encountering Christ" in 1965 as a retreat experience for high school students and became "Together Encounter Christ" to reflect the mix of adults and teens who participate in the retreat. There are TEC centers throughout the United States. Central Minnesota TEC is a separate non-profit corporation affiliated with the Diocese of St. Cloud, following its procedures and policies, and is a member of the National TEC Conference. Participants in the TEC program come mostly from Minnesota and surrounding states, but people from across the United States and from other countries have also made the retreat.

The initial TEC experience made a lasting impression on me, helping to shape my Christian faith and the understanding and experience of the Paschal Mystery—the suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ—as a pattern for my own life and spirituality. Each day of the retreat is focused on a different aspect of this foundational Christian belief: **Die Day, Rise Day and Go Day.** This framework aligns well with the Crosier spirituality of the Cross that I seek to embody in my own journey of faith. The TEC website (cmtec.org) describes a TEC

weekend as working "to build spiritual growth through participation in group activities. Although some time is given for prayer and reflection, the emphasis throughout the weekend is on group participation."

The communal dynamic of a TEC weekend also matches the Crosier value of community—**together for God alone.**

There are different avenues by which I witness and share my Christian faith as a Crosier and a priest: through the daily living of the religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in the context of Crosier community life and service and through ministry as a presider at Mass and the sacraments. Serving as a spiritual director on TEC weekends has afforded me the opportunity to work with an incredible group of committed lay and ordained volunteers to offer an experience of God's love and encounter with Christ for new generations of retreat participants. I pray that their experience of encounter with Christ is as formative and enduring for them as it was more me! ✝



TEN TO TWELVE TEC WEEKENDS ARE OFFERED EACH YEAR. If you are interested in participating in a TEC weekend, more information is available at cmtec.org.



RETAZOS SEWING MINISTRY

serves as tapestry of healing and hope

By Cynthia Corral,
guest contributor

Grief comes from “dolus,” which means pain; pain is love, it hurts because we love—“love hurts.”

Life, much like a quilt, is woven together from patches of our experiences, stitched with memories and colored with emotions. Each piece—*whether bright and vibrant or muted and somber*—contributes to a beautiful whole. In every scrap, we find stories that remind us of the divine gift of life. The colorful, joyful moments are no more valuable than the quieter, gray ones. Together, they create a fabric that tells our unique journey.

At **Abrazo Ágape Foundation**, our mission is to support the community by offering resources, education and services to those grieving. In partnership with the **Crosier Fathers and Brothers**, we help individuals channel their pain into something meaningful. We offer workshops focusing on a variety of areas such as grief and loss, healing childhood wounds, forming attachments and Retazos, which is a sewing workshop.

We offer the grief and loss workshop to those in mourning as a tool to give new meaning to pain. We begin with the analogy of threading and weaving a quilt with our stories. From this, the idea of offering a sewing workshop—Retazos (“remnants” or “fragments”)—as therapy emerged. This analogy of sewing—of quilting together our joys and sorrows—perfectly illustrates the healing process. The workshop, which merges creativity with emotional and spiritual healing, allows participants to channel their feelings into tangible creations using the talents and gifts God has given them. As they sew, they heal. Each stitch becomes an affirmation of resilience, each patch a symbol of their story. It is both therapeutic and empowering, fostering self-esteem and security.

Each garment sewn and each stitch made represents a new beginning. In these fabrics, emotions and feelings are captured—love, nostalgia and gratitude for the beautiful gift of life in the present.

It’s inspiring to see and hear the participants of Retazos—*children, teens and the elderly*—come with enthusiasm, forming friendships, sharing smiles and taking pride in their creations. One participant said, “*This workshop is wonderful! Here, I’m not just someone’s mother, daughter or wife; here, I am simply me.*” And the playful banter among older women that you hear, “*Friend, you make my wedding dress, and I’ll make yours!*” speaks to the sense of community that’s formed.

On Oct. 21, we hosted an exhibition to showcase the garments and quilts created by participants. Now, the project is expanding to make blankets and hats for the homeless, further weaving together dreams, compassion and hope.

We are all made of scraps, as Brazilian writer and poet Cora Coralina so poignantly expressed in her poem, “*...Each encounter, each memory, each lesson, sews itself into the fabric of our souls.*” At **Abrazo Ágape**, we invite you to join us in stitching together lives, stories and dreams, one patch at a time, and weaving dreams and hope together, one thread at a time. ✕

Cynthia Corral founded the Abrazo Agape ministry and is a friend of the Crosiers in Phoenix.



Retazos participants embrace this ministry of sewing, healing and bonding.



Fr. Daniel Hernández, osc, tries his hand at crocheting with one of the workshop participants.



Cynthia Corral (center) organized an artisans’ market at Crosier Village for participants to showcase their creations.

EL MINISTERIO DE COSTURA DE RETAZOS SIRVE COMO TAPIZ DE SANACIÓN Y ESPERANZA

Por la Cynthia Corral,
escritora invitada

La vida es un hermoso regalo de Dios, que vamos entretejiendo día con día como un hermoso tapete confeccionado con los retazos de nuestras historias enlazadas; algunos pedazos son coloridos y alegres, otros grises y opacos pero no por ello menos hermosos.

Cuando aprendemos a ver la belleza en cada retazo de las memorias vividas aprendemos a amar la creación de Dios y por ende la vida en todas sus figuras y colores.

Fundación Abrazo Ágape tiene la misión de acompañar y brindar a la comunidad servicios, educación y recursos de apoyo en duelo, para ayudar a encontrar de nuevo la paz y la esperanza de los que sufren; Es ahí donde se unifican la misión de los Padres y Hermanos Cruzados y Abrazo Ágape, uniendo esfuerzos para ayudarlos a convertir la pérdida en una ganancia, y darle una re significación al amor que ha quedado contenido.

En el Taller de Duelo y Pérdidas que ofrecemos a los dolientes, como herramienta para resignificar el dolor; empezamos con la analogía de hilvanar y tejer un tapete con nuestras historias, surgiendo así la idea de un taller de costura a manera de terapia; donde las personas expresen de manera artesanal sus emociones, mientras aprenden, sanan, y crean; usando los dones y talentos que Dios les ha otorgado, convirtiéndose en una herramienta de apoyo

integral donde se conjuga lo emocional, y lo espiritual con la seguridad y autoestima, sin olvidar que es un oficio remunerado.

En cada prenda confeccionada, en cada trazo, hay un nuevo comienzo; en esos tejidos quedan plasmadas las emociones y sentimientos, inspirados en el amor, la nostalgia y la gratitud por el bello regalo que Dios nos ha entregado—LA VIDA en EL PRESENTE.

Es motivador ver y escuchar a los participantes de Retazos; niños, adolescentes y personas mayores, que con gran entusiasmo acuden; la amistad establecida, sonrisas y charlas amenas; el orgullo que sienten de sus creaciones y el gusto con el que las visten el domingo en misa.

Alguien cometo, “Es maravilloso este taller! Aquí no somos a mamá de...la hija de...o la esposa de...aquí solo somos personas.” Y que decir de las simpáticas bromas entre las señoras mayores, “Amiga, tú me haces mi vestido de novia y yo haré el tuyo!”

El 21 de octubre tuvimos una exposición con las creaciones; y ahora el proyecto es confeccionar cobijas y tejer gorros para los desamparados.

Vengan todos a hilvanar tejiendo sueños y esperanza! ✕

LES COMPARTO UN FRAGMENTO DEL POEMA DE CORA CORALINA:

*Estoy hecha de retazos!
Pedacitos coloridos de cada vida
que pasa por la mía,
Y que voy cosiendo en el alma.
No siempre son bonitos,
ni siempre son felices,
pero me agregan
y me hacen ser quien soy.
Estoy hecha de retazos!
en cada encuentro, en cada contacto,
voy quedando mayor...
En cada retazo una vida,
una lección, un cariño,
una nostalgia... que me hace mas
persona, mas, humana,
mas completa.*



Crosier Apostolate couple in Onamia share love of Jesus with others



By Fr. Kambale Sambya Zawadi Jean-Marie, osc

Ten years ago, I came to know Barbara and Richard Schmidt. We have become one family, and they even consider me their son! They invite us Crosiers to their house in Brainerd, Minn., for a grand and delicious dinner during Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving.

We share food and gifts and play games together. They have been so generous and kind to me personally and to all the Crosiers. We met for a reason, and I hope to continue our friendship for many years to come.

I remember one day Richard mentioned that his brother, Ron, had made several visits to Africa. My immediate reply was, "Let us plan to visit him!" So, in his kind spirit, Richard gave me the opportunity to get to know Ron's family as well. Every year our connection becomes even stronger. Thanks be to God for putting Richard and Barbara on my path as a missionary here in the United States.

Richard and Barbara actively support our ministries as members of the Crosier Apostolate. They are part of a large circle of family and friends who share a call to discipleship, friendship and sharing. Their contributions help the Crosiers by supporting our Crosier Religious Life and mission to touch suffering with hope. They have helped us to serve the poor around the world, especially in the Congo, my home country, which remains one of the most complex and long-standing humanitarian crises.



Kasoki is eager to put her medical knowledge to work in her village of Vusorongi in the Congo.



Barbara and Richard Schmidt

Through their generosity, for many years, they sponsored a student, Kasoki, to allow her to complete her education through our scholarship fund. She is now the first medical doctor in her village of Vusorongi. Her dream came true because of Richard and Barbara. They joined our vision, our dream and our hope for change and transformation of life in a positive way. As I have always shared with Richard and Barbara, "You have made a difference in Kasoki's life, and you have changed her life for years to come. She will never forget your heart of generosity and kindness."

As Crosier Apostolate members, Barbara and Richard have shown their love in the name of Jesus. They put into practice these words of Gandhi, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

We are hoping to sponsor another student to attend the Crosiers' Holy Cross University. I contacted our university staff, and they identified Mariam, who is working toward achieving her clinical psychology degree. Once she graduates, she will be able to help at our Crosier clinics, which regularly serve those impacted by extreme violence. People in need receive both the medical aid and pastoral care and guidance that are needed for survival.

For those who wish to make a difference and a lasting impact, please join the Crosier Fathers and Brothers as an Apostolate member. We are grateful for the friendship and support of all our Apostolate members. I love being a Crosier and we love what we do, but we can't do it alone. ✝

Fr. Kambale Sambya Zawadi Jean-Marie, osc, is the senior development officer for the conventual priory and a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Onamia.

13-DAY PILGRIMAGE THROUGH Portugal | Spain | France MAY 19 - 31, 2025

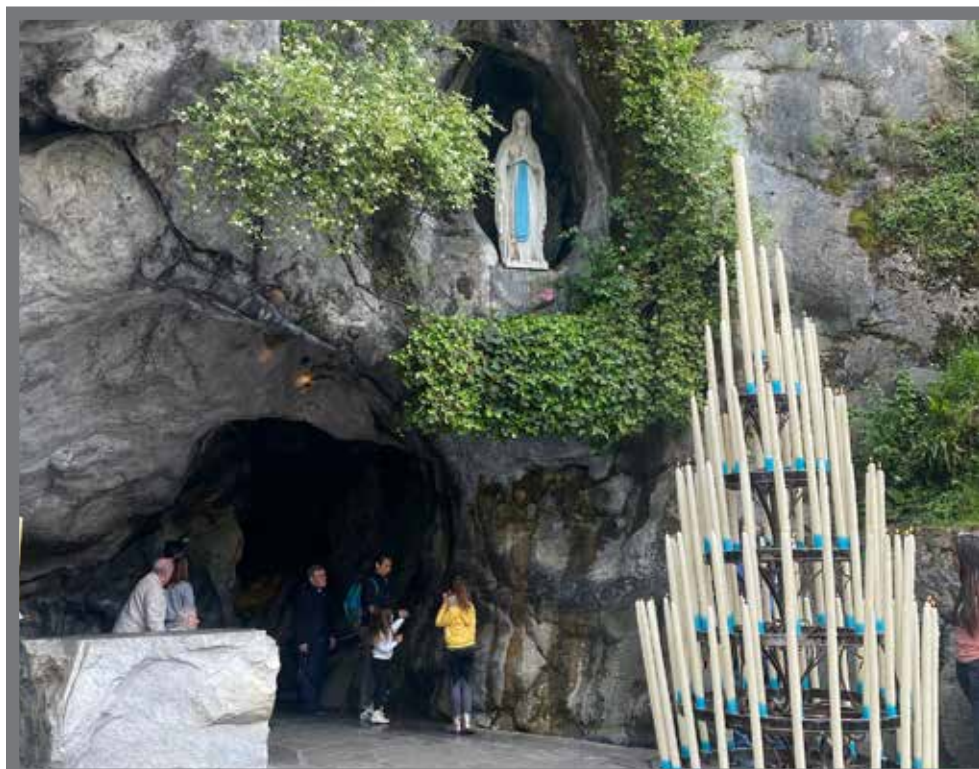


OUR OWN CROSIER FR. KERMIT HOLL, OSC, WILL BE THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR ON A 13-DAY PILGRIMAGE THROUGH PORTUGAL, SPAIN AND FRANCE, MAY 19 - 31, 2025.

The tour will include visits to Fatima, Lourdes, Barcelona and Paris (optional add-on). Highlights will include:

- An evening candlelight procession in Fatima
- The medieval old town of Oviedo
- A visit to the Black Madonna of Montserrat
- A visit to Porto
- Mass at the Grotto of Our Lady at Lourdes
- The monastic cell of St. Theresa in Avila
- A UNESCO world heritage site in Spain

If you wish to join in this prayerful adventure, call the tour coordinator from ABM Tours, Ace Consolacion, at 425-512-8583 for prices and details.



Crosier alumni gathered for potluck picnic in Minnesota

By Pete Sherrard, guest contributor

About 30 years ago, a few Crosier Alumni came up with the idea of getting together on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend. We did it casually for about four or five years, and then it faded out.

We decide to resurrect the idea, so in 2023, we organized a Crosier alumni potluck picnic which took place at beautiful Ellison Park in Monticello, Minn., on Sunday, Sept. 1! The park, which is adjacent to the Mississippi River, provided the perfect backdrop for the occasion with rolling hills of green grass, large shade trees and a nice picnic area. Our committee provided the brats and hot dogs and everyone was asked to bring a shareable side dish. We enjoyed each other's company, lots of laughs, some fun activities and a bit of music.

Twenty alumni showed up! It was a beautiful day and everyone had a great time catching up.

We plan to continue, and grow, this tradition every year. If you attended a Crosier school, you are invited to join us! In 2025, the picnic is scheduled for Sunday Aug. 31, from 2pm – 5pm at Ellison Park. We will send out a reminder in *Crossview* and on *Facebook*.

We would love to see more alumni attend. If you are interested in attending, please add the date to your calendar. *Thank You and God Bless.* ✕

Pete Sherrard is an alumnus from Crosier College and a friend of the Crosiers.

50-YEAR REUNION PLANNED

for Crosier High School
Class of '75
and Crosier College
Class of '77!

The Crosier High School Class of 1975 and the Crosier College Class of 1977 are currently planning a 50-year high school/college reunion for late spring or early summer 2025. If you were ever a student in these classes, regardless of whether you completed your studies at Crosier schools, we would like to invite you to attend this celebration! We are currently using email to reach as many fellow students as possible.

If you have NOT heard from us and are interested in attending, please email:

BERNIE HESSE

bernie.hesse@gmail.com

JOHN DONLIN

donlin.john@gmail.com

or call 320-980-0565

CRAIG HOLL

craig.holl@outlook.com

Spouses/significant others are welcome to attend as well!

Want to make a difference in 2025?



*Join the
Crosier Apostolate!*

When you participate in the Crosier Apostolate annual membership program, you engage in the life and ministry of the Crosiers. Apostolate members make an annual commitment, starting at \$100 per year, and become extended members of the Crosier community.

Apostolate gifts ensure that the Crosiers in Onamia and Phoenix do what they do best—touch suffering with hope—without interruption. Apostolate members receive a unique Crosier cross pin and are invited to events that honor their support. Plus, members are remembered at a weekly Mass for their special intentions and enrolled in the **Crosier Book of Life** for perpetual remembrance.

Just fill out the form and mail back the envelope included here to activate your membership in the Apostolate—it's fast, easy and makes a real contribution to the Crosiers and the spiritual accompaniment they provide, 365 days a year.

Now, that's a resolution we can all keep!

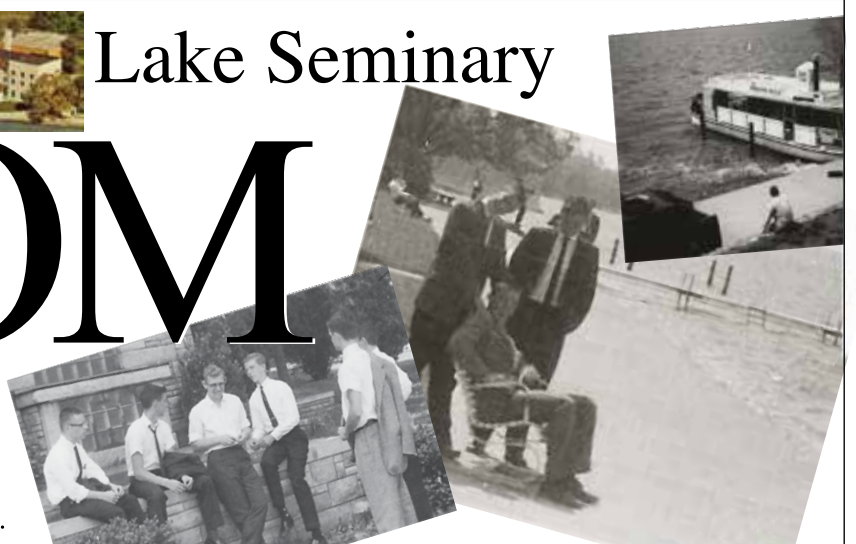
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT Elisabeth Wisthoff, chief development officer, at 602.443.7115

Our Lady of the Lake Seminary

Students from Our Lady of the Lake Seminary, at Wawasee, have zoom gatherings. They are scheduled for the first Sundays of **January, March, May, July, September, and November** at 7pm Eastern Time. We are reaching out through "Crossview" to fellow alumni who may want to join us -- to share memories of our days at Wawasee and/or to share about their life journey in all its variety.

If you are interested please contact: Walter Lukaszek (walukaszek@gmail.com), Joe Hartman (joekinnyhartman@gmail.com), or Mike Martin (mdccmartin@gmail.com).

join us! ZOOM



Welcome

The Crosier Apostolate



We are pleased to welcome the newest members of the Crosier Apostolate who joined Aug. 15 — Nov. 25, 2024.
We hope you will consider adding your name.

Judith Bridges
Wolcottville, Indiana

Phyllis Bylander
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Robert & Barbara Carnes
Maple Lake, Minnesota

Sandy Demenge
McGregor, Minnesota

John & Brenda Fowler
Shoreview, Minnesota

Allan & Grace Gertken
Richmond, Minnesota

Anita Jackson
McGregor, Minnesota

Allen & Julie Keller
Saint Cloud, Minnesota

Mary Lewandowski
Heber Springs, Arkansas

Crosiers mourn the loss of Fr. John Joseph Vincent, osc

By Lisa A.M. Cassidy



Fr. John Joseph Vincent, osc 1932 – 2024

Fr. John Joseph Vincent, osc, was born July 31, 1932, in Gary, Ind., to John and Albina (Likavec) Vincent. He was one of two children.



Fr. John died peacefully at Mille Lacs Health System Long Term Care facility in Onamia, Minn., on Nov. 16. He was 92.

John attended elementary school in Gary. His first two years of high school were at Bishop Noll High School in Hammond, Ind., and he graduated in 1951 from Our Lady of the Lake Seminary, which was operated by the Crosiers in Syracuse, Ind. He continued at Our Lady of the Lake for junior college and then attended Sacred Heart Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., from 1953–1955. He attended the Crosier House of Studies in Fort Wayne from 1955–1959 and then went on to earn a master's degree in classics from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., in 1964.

John entered the Crosier novitiate in 1952 and made his first profession of vows Aug. 28, 1953, in Hastings, Neb., and professed solemn vows in Fort Wayne on Aug. 28, 1956. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Leo Pursley of Fort Wayne on May 31, 1958.

Fr. John spent many years in parish ministry, including at Sacred Heart in Fort Wayne; Immaculate Conception and Most Holy Trinity, both in Yonkers, N.Y.; Immaculate Conception in Port Jervis, Neb.; St. Andrew in New York; St. Catherine in Hammond; St. Michael in Schererville, Ind.; and St. Joseph in Martinsburg, W. Va. He served on the faculty at Our Lady of the Lake Seminary; Archbishop Stepinac High School in White Plains, N.Y.; Blessed Sacrament in Yonkers; and Frederick Academy of the Visitation in Frederick, Md. He also served as a hospital chaplain at Our Lady of Mercy Hospital in Dyer, Ind., and Mercy Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago.

He enjoyed living Crosier Religious Life with his confreres in Onamia, Phoenix, Hastings, Chicago and Beallsville, Md.

Due to his health, he retired from full-time ministry in 1994. Following his retirement, he continued ministering within his Crosier community until he moved to Lake Song Assisted Living in February 2009. He lived at Lake Song until August 2024, when he moved to the Mille Lacs Health System Long Term care unit.

He is survived by his sister, Theresa Dougherty, his nieces and nephews and his Crosier confreres in Onamia and Phoenix and around the world. He was preceded in death by his parents.

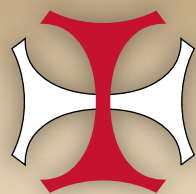
The Mass of Christian Burial for Fr. John took place Dec. 2, at the Crosier Priory in Onamia, Minn., with a vigil and visitation beforehand. A private inurnment is planned for the priory cemetery columbarium.

*Memorials are preferred to the
Crosier Fathers and Brothers
Box 500, Onamia, MN 56359-0500*

*Lisa A.M. Cassidy is the director of
communications for the conventual priory
and editor of Crossview.*

The Crosier Fathers and Brothers

Bearing our gifts of community, prayer and service to the Church and world for more than 800 years



Living Together for God Alone

OUR NEXT GENERATION OF CROSIERS:

FROM BACK LEFT: Br. Christopher Erran, osc; Br. Rio Lefaan, osc; Fr. Efron Lumban Gaol, osc; Fr. Moïse Kisonia, osc; Fr. Zawadi Sambya, osc; Fr. Daniel Hernández, osc
FROM FRONT LEFT: Fr. Herry Sailon, osc; Fr. Jean-Marie Vianney, osc; Br. Salama Vivalya, osc; Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc; Fr. Hubert Kavusa, osc; Fr. Marcos Leles, osc



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CROSIERS,
PLEASE CONTACT US

602-443-7100 • crosier@crosier.org • www.crosier.org

FOLLOW US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



For more information or to register for our upcoming events,
please visit our website, www.crosier.org.

REST IN PEACE

Please join us in remembering in your prayers the following
Crosier alumni and relatives who recently died. We send our
heartfelt condolences to their families and friends.

Note: The Crosier Fathers and Brothers founded and operated Crosier Seminary in Onamia, Minnesota (1922–1989), Sacred Heart Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana (1939–1948), and Our Lady of the Lake Seminary and Wawasee Prep in Syracuse, Indiana (1948–1975).

Dean T. Buttrick

Crosier High School, 1955

J. Nick Demuth

Crosier High School, 1952

John R. Hesch

Crosier High School, 1968

Arthur J. Hetherington

Crosier High School, 1966

Francis L. Hirl

Our Lady of the Lake
Seminary, 1958

Duane N. Lieser

Crosier High School, 1963

Thomas A. Marko

Crosier High School, 1958

Adam D. Schmitt

Sacred Heart Seminary, 1949

Fr. John Joseph Vincent, osc

Our Lady of the Lake
Seminary, 1953;
Crosier College, 1959

Tom Welch

Crosier High School, 1956

Clarence J. Zachman

Crosier High School, 1940

✠ An IRA Charitable Distribution — the Gift that Keeps on Giving!

How? If you are at least 70 ½ years of age and considering a gift to the Crosiers, consider making one from your traditional IRA. Why? Because gifts made directly to a qualified charity are recognized as Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) and can be given tax-free, up to \$100,000 per person, per year through 2025. Once you reach 70 ½, you must take the required minimum distribution (RMD) from your IRA. These of course, are taxed. But a QCD serving as your RMD, is not! (*While you can't claim a QCD as an itemized deduction, you can make a positive difference and avoid additional taxation.*)

It is worth remembering that itemizing charitable deductions is hampered by the fact that the standard deduction has increased dramatically, but making a tax-free QCD from a traditional IRA is the equivalent to a 100% deduction—because you will never be taxed on the amount given directly to the charity.

So, if you are thinking of a year-end gift for the Crosiers, ask your tax advisor if a QCD from your IRA might be right for you... it could be a wonderful opportunity to support the life and ministry of the Crosiers and take advantage of personal tax benefits, too!

This is not to be considered as tax advice; always consult your professional advisor before making any financial decisions.

For more information, please contact
Elisabeth Wisthoff, chief development officer, at
602-443-7115 or
ewisthoff@crosier.org

SUGGESTED MAXIMUM GIFT
ANNUITY RATES
[SINGLE LIFE]

AGE	% RATE	AGE	% RATE
5-11.....	3.8	69.....	6.2
12-24.....	3.9	70.....	6.3
25-31.....	4.0	71.....	6.4
32-37.....	4.1	72.....	6.6
38-41.....	4.2	73.....	6.7
42-44.....	4.3	74.....	6.8
45-47.....	4.4	75.....	7.0
48-49.....	4.5	76.....	7.2
50-52.....	4.6	77.....	7.4
53.....	4.7	78.....	7.6
54-55.....	4.8	79.....	7.8
56-57.....	4.9	80.....	8.1
58.....	5.0	81.....	8.3
59.....	5.1	82.....	8.5
60.....	5.2	83.....	8.7
61.....	5.3	84.....	8.9
62-63.....	5.4	85.....	9.1
64.....	5.6	86.....	9.3
65.....	5.7	87.....	9.5
66.....	5.8	88.....	9.7
67.....	5.9	89.....	9.9
68.....	6.1	90+.....	10.1

CROSIER GIFT ANNUITY APPLICATION,
WILL AND STOCK INFORMATION

☐ I wish to apply for a Crosier Annuity*

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

PHONE _____

FIRST ANNUITANT SS# _____ BIRTH DATE _____

SECOND ANNUITANT SS# _____ BIRTH DATE _____

If you wish to take out an Annuity, please indicate payments desired.

ANNUALLY _____ SEMI-ANNUALLY _____ QUARTERLY _____

☐ Please send me more information about including the Crosiers in my will.

☐ I would like a representative from the Crosiers to contact me about including the Crosiers in my will.

☐ Yes, I have already included the Crosiers in my will.

☐ I would like to make a gift of appreciated stock. Please call me.

☐ I am interested in making a direct gift from my IRA account. Please call me.

Make checks payable to the

Crosier Fathers and Brothers and send to:

Crosier Fathers and Brothers

attn: Annuities

PO Box 500 • Onamia, MN 56359-0500

* Currently, Charitable Gift Annuities are not available in Arkansas, California, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, New York, South Dakota, Tennessee or Washington.



The season of Advent prepares our hearts and minds for the coming of our Lord.

Visit our website www.crosier.org



Fr. Marcos Leles, osc, reflects on his diaconate in-service in preparation for his ordination to the priesthood. May God continue to guide Fr. Marcos in each phase of his journey as a Crosier religious.

We invite you to join the **Crosier Apostolate** and become a part of this special community.

**THE
CROSIER
APOSTOLATE**

is an annual giving program for people who share this mutual call to discipleship with the Crosier Fathers and Brothers.



Find out what's happening in the **ALUMNI CORNER** section of this issue!
Our alumni are gearing up for some special events in 2025.

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