



LIFE OF ST. ODILIA THROUGH ART

Final in 4-part series



By Br. Jim Lewandowski, osc

In part four of this series of St. Odilia's life, I focus on the devotion to St. Odilia and the miracles resulting from her intercession.

I think it is important to remember that after hundreds of years, St. Odilia continues to live in the devotions of her followers and through her response to human events, which include many accounts of miracles.

Devotions to St. Odilia often begin with religious articles, objects that help us become centered and focused on our prayers to her. They also help us develop a level of devotional concentration, which is necessary for prayer.

One of the finest devotional paintings of St. Odilia, along with St. Augustine, is richly colored and filled with the minute detail that was characteristic of Northern European artists at the time. The painting was part of an altar piece that hung in the chapel of the Crosier monastery in Hoorn in The Netherlands. **IMAGE 1** We notice that the saints are on this side of the wall. They have left the physical world, as seen in the sky, clouds and trees. Silent communication occurs between them. St. Odilia stands in a demure pose, holding the banner of the Crosier cross, symbolizing her protection as the Crosiers' patroness. St. Augustine approaches her with his heart in his hand. As we know, he is the saint who inspires Crosier community life. As he extends his heart, he seems to be reminding Crosiers that the heart, or center, of our life together is found in fraternal charity.

IMAGE 2 This well-known image, created by Ade Bethune, is the cover art for the book, "St. Odilia," written by Fr. Bernard Mischke, osc, in 1991. The illustration shows St. Odilia as a princess wearing her ornamental jewelry. The arrows indicate how the young virgin was martyred, and her love of the Holy Cross is represented in the Crosier banner, which she holds in a strong, confident manner.

One of the most unusual images was drawn by artist Lilian Asmussen. **IMAGE 3** She depicts St. Odilia hovering in the air, appearing not to visually impaired people but to victims of polio. The disease affected thousands of people during its outbreak in the first half of the 20th century. Here we see some of the victims praying to St. Odilia for themselves and their families. The young boy on the left seems quite emotional because he had been healed and was able to put down his crutches. (At the bottom of the scene, we see his grandmother approaching, eager to embrace him.)

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CROSIERS GUIDED BY COMMUNAL PRINCIPLE:

“One Heart and One Mind on the Way to God”



By Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc

The words *cor unum et anima una ad Deum*, to be of “one heart and one mind on the way to God,” have long been at the heart of our Crosier identity. Rooted in the Rule of St. Augustine, this guiding principle reminds us that our vocation is not lived in isolation but in communion. As Crosiers, we are called to journey together, encouraging one another in faith, service and charity as we seek God.

As our Order begins the gradual process of consolidating into one community in Phoenix over the next few years, these words take on renewed meaning. Change naturally brings a mixture of anxiety, uncertainty and hope. Yet it also offers an opportunity to deepen the bonds that unite us as brothers. While our addresses may change, our mission remains the same: to live as one community centered on Christ and dedicated to the service of God’s people.

One Heart, One Mission

The Rule of St. Augustine begins with a simple yet profound instruction, “Before all else, dear brothers, love God and then your neighbor, because these are the chief commandments given to us.” This call to love is the foundation upon which authentic community is built. Augustine continues by urging us to “live together in



together will require patience, understanding and a willingness to grow. We recognize that every transition involves adjustment, but we trust that God is already at work among us, preparing the way for new opportunities in ministry, fraternity and prayer.

The strength of our community has never rested in a particular building or geographic location. Rather, it is found in the relationships we nurture, the prayers we share and the mission we embrace together. As Augustine reminds

us, we are to “call nothing [our] own but let everything be held in common.” This spirit of generosity extends beyond material possessions to our time, talents, wisdom and compassion.

As we look forward to the years

ahead, may *cor unum et anima una ad Deum* continue to inspire us.

United in faith, strengthened by our common vocation and sustained by God’s grace, we welcome this new chapter of our history with confidence. Together, with one heart and one mind on the way to God, may we continue the Crosier mission of community, prayer and faithful service for generations to come. ✠

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

harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God.” These words are not merely an ideal; they are a daily invitation to place the common good above personal preference, to listen with humility, to forgive generously and to rejoice in one another’s gifts.

The Phoenix community looks forward with gratitude and excitement to welcoming our confreres from Onamia. Each brother brings with him a lifetime of ministry, experiences, traditions and friendships that will enrich our common life. The memories formed in Minnesota are an important part of our shared Crosier story and will become part of the story we continue to write together in Arizona.

Hospitality has always been a hallmark of Christian community. As we prepare to receive our brothers, we do so not only by opening our doors but by opening our hearts. Building a new chapter

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St. Odilia even has a special place where we would least expect it! We find her in this 16th-century monstrance, one of the most sacred vessels in the Catholic Church. **IMAGE 4** She appears on the main body of the monstrance, in a niche on the right-hand side. **IMAGE 4a** Over the centuries, additional pieces were added to the monstrance, along with another image of St. Odilia. This one was included on the base, but with greater detail. **IMAGE 4b**

Because of her prominent place in this piece, we can see what devotion and honor were given to St. Odilia in the 1500s. This monstrance is a great treasure for the Dutch Crosiers at St. Agatha Monastery in Cuijk, The Netherlands. Because of its great historical value, it is also officially protected by the Dutch government.

Statues also have been important instruments for devotional prayer. The statue of St. Odilia that is housed in the Crosier church in Uden, The Netherlands, watches over the Crosiers at prayer. It shows her with a very peaceful expression. Anyone with a devotion to St. Odilia is encouraged to see the statue in our filial priory in Onamia, Minn. **IMAGE 5** . It is a beautiful piece, with St. Odilia's head slightly tilting to the side, almost as if she is listening to anyone who stands before her. What is most realistic about this statue are St. Odilia's eyes. It is difficult to gaze into those eyes for any length of time without being moved by them. It seems as if she's looking back at you with a certain concern and personal understanding.

Leaflets and holy cards have been devotional guides for centuries. This image **IMAGE 6** first appeared in a 32-page leaflet titled "The Legend of St. Odilia" by Charles Vande Vyvere of Bruges, Belgium. It later appeared on holy cards as well. The Neo-Gothic design features curvy lines and a gold background. In the image we see St. Odilia blessing a blind girl while protecting two others under her mantle. What's interesting about this



image is that St. Odilia appears significantly larger than the other girls. This technique was often used in religious art to highlight the importance of a particular character. At the very bottom of the image is a statement that reads, "St. Odilia bid voor ons." (*St. Odilia, pray for us.*)

We come now to the shrine at St. Odilia Catholic Church in Shoreview, Minn., with one of the most contemporary images of our saint. **IMAGE 7** It reminds us that we are on our way to joining St. Odilia in the communion of saints. She is sculpted in the center of the shrine where she and the other saints are pictured as young, running and full of energy. They are free of human concerns as they are carried along by God's love. The saints are drawn from darkness toward light, into a warm light that transforms them and reveals the many wonderful colors of each person. They appear to be growing and developing as they get closer to the light.



Our last example of devotional art is displayed in our filial priory in Onamia, Minn. Produced by Robert Pinart & Rambush Co., the stained-glass image of St. Odilia seems to glow with a kind of spiritual beauty. **IMAGE 8** It captures our attention because of the radiance that surrounds the saint's entire body. This radiance is called an "aureole," and it has been reserved in art for special images of Jesus and Mary. Here, the aureole seems to indicate to us that St. Odilia is also at a very sacred level of holiness. We see her positioned over the symbol of her martyrdom, the palm frond. It demonstrates that St. Odilia continues to live on as protectress of the Crosier Order, despite her martyrdom. ✝

Br. Jim
Lewandowski, osc,
is a member of the
Crosier Fathers and
Brothers in Onamia.

*May St.
Odilia's life,
devotion
and witness
continue to
deepen your
faith long
after this
series
concludes.*



VOCATION TEAM WORKS TO GROW CROSIER FUTURE IN U.S.



By Fr. Daniel Hernández, osc

Over the past several conventual chapters, the Crosier Fathers and Brothers have reaffirmed the importance of fostering vocations in the United States. The Order continues to pray and work toward a future in which new generations of men embrace the Crosier charism and carry forward a tradition of faith, fraternity and service that has endured for more than 800 years.

In 2018, Fr. Alex Juguilon, osc, was appointed director of vocations, and he continued to serve in that role in addition to his duties as major superior. Earlier this year, he appointed me to serve as the new director of vocations as well as director of the Crosier Discernment House for the conventual priory, a program established in late 2025.

With the support of the Crosier community and many collaborators, I have worked to expand opportunities for men to explore a possible vocation to religious life. One of these initiatives is a men’s faith sharing group, which gathers every other Wednesday at Crosier Village. The group provides a welcoming environment where men can grow in faith, build authentic friendship and reflect on God’s call in their lives.

Another important initiative is a quarterly discernment night. During these evenings, the Crosier community welcomes men who are interested in learning more about religious life. The program includes dinner, a keynote presentation and an opportunity for questions and conversation and concludes with Night Prayer. These gatherings often encourage participants to take the next step by attending a Come and See Weekend.

During such weekends, participants experience the rhythm of Crosier life through the Liturgy of the Hours, daily prayer, community life, shared meals, service opportunities and conversations about vocation and discernment. More than simply learning about the Order, they are invited to experience what it means to live as a Crosier and to listen attentively to God’s invitation.

Our next Come and See weekend retreat will be held Nov. 5–8, 2026. We warmly invite single Catholic men (18+ years old) who are open to discerning a religious vocation to join us for one of these weekends of prayer, fraternity and discernment.

A significant milestone in the vocation ministry was the establishment of the Crosier Discernment House in the fall of 2025. The house offers men who are seriously discerning religious life the opportunity to live in community while continuing their work or academic studies. Residents participate in liturgy, community life,

ministry and ongoing discernment, allowing them to experience the Crosier way of life in a deeper and more intentional way.

The vocation ministry is also strengthening relationships with parishes, campus ministries and youth groups throughout the greater Phoenix area. By visiting these communities, the Crosiers hope to plant the seeds of awareness that religious life remains a joyful and meaningful path for young men seeking to follow Christ.

Recognizing the importance of digital evangelization, the vocation office maintains an active presence on social media. While social media can sometimes distract from personal relationships, it also provides an opportunity to reach young people where they are. Through Facebook, Instagram and TikTok under the handle @crosiervocations, the Crosiers seek to share the Gospel, tell vocation stories and invite young men to participate in in-person events where authentic relationships and discernment can flourish.

If you or someone you know is discerning God’s call, we encourage you to contact us or join us for one of our upcoming Come and See weekend retreats. For more information, visit www.crosier.org or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok@crosiervocations.

As we continue this important ministry, we ask for your prayers.

Every week, a Crosier and a Crosier Associate intentionally pray for an increase in vocations to the Crosier Order in the United States. We invite you to join us in praying that more men will generously respond to God’s call to serve his Church as Crosier Fathers and Brothers.

Together, with faith and hope, we trust that the Lord continues to call laborers into his vineyard. ✠

Fr. Daniel Hernández, osc, is director of vocations for the conventual priory and a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.

PRAYER FOR
CROSIER VOCATIONS

Blessed are you,
O God of Cross and Glory;
you call and we hear,
you lead and we follow.
We desire to live together for you alone.

Inspire others with that same desire
and call them to join our consecrated life.
Grant them the courage and vision
to proclaim the Cross of Christ
through our life
of community, prayer and ministry.

Hear us, Faithful God,
and send your Spirit upon those
discerning your call
to Crosier Religious Life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Father St. Augustine, pray for us.
Founder Blessed Theodore, pray for us.
Patroness St. Odilia, pray for us.

BROTHERHOOD • VOCATION • PRAYER
DISCERNMENT NIGHT FOR MEN 18+

Have you considered a vocation as a religious brother or priest?
Come and See.

October 14, 2026

Gather: 6:00 p.m.
Talk: 6:30 p.m.

Crosier Village
717 E Southern Ave
Phoenix, AZ 85040

FOOD
Good food, great conversations.

PRAYER
Time to grow closer to God.

BROTHERHOOD
Build lasting friendships for the journey.

For men (18+) discerning God’s call or wanting to learn more about religious life.
All are welcome!

Food, Prayer and Brotherhood
Call or text: 320-362-4789

CROSIER
FATHERS & BROTHERS
*Touch
Suffering
with Hope*

BR. CHRISTOPHER ERRAN, OSC, RENEWS VOWS AND COMMITMENT TO CROSIER RELIGIOUS LIFE



By Lisa A.M. Cassidy

In 2023, Br. Christopher professed his first vows on the Feast Day of St. Odilia, patroness of the Crosier Order. In 2026, on the eve of his anniversary, he confidently renewed his vows to Conventual Prior Alex Juguilon, osc, in the presence of his Crosier confreres, family, members of the Companions of the Holy Cross and Crosier friends. The renewal took place on July 17 during Evening Prayer at the Priory Church of the Holy Cross in Phoenix.

“Br. Christopher’s renewal is a beautiful witness to faithfulness, growth and trust in God,” said Fr. Alex. “This brings us such joy and hope. His example encourages all of us to listen for God’s voice and remain open to where God is leading us.”

As part of his post-novitiate formation, Br. Christopher completed an extended clinical pastoral education (CPE) program at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center in Minnesota and is currently serving in a three-month, summer intensive CPE experience at a hospital in Phoenix. His other ministries include ministering to elder Crosiers, serving as a spiritual director and assisting in the conventual priory’s development office.

A native of Phoenix, Br. Christopher is the son of Linda and Raymond Erran. He attended St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Elementary School, South Mountain High School and Arizona State University (ASU), from which he graduated in 1999 with Bachelor of Science degree in recreation management. In 2003, he earned his master’s degree in counseling psychology from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Ariz.

Before entering the Order, Br. Christopher worked in various higher education roles, including student services, recruitment, outreach and retention. He also worked at ASU and for different campuses within the Maricopa Community College District, including Rio Salado College, Phoenix College and South Mountain Community College. He has three brothers who all reside in Phoenix: Raymond, Gary and Eric. Br. Christopher’s interests include the arts, music, seeing good movies, spending time with family and enjoying outdoor activities. ✝



Br. Christopher Erran, osc, renews his vows to Conventual Prior Alex Juguilon, osc.



Fr. Alex joyfully congratulates Br. Christopher.

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

EL H. CHRISTOPHER ERRAN, OSC, RENUEVA SUS VOTOS Y SU COMPROMISO CON LA VIDA RELIGIOSA DE LOS CRUZADOS

En 2023, el Hermano Christopher profesó sus primeros votos en la Fiesta de Santa Odilia, patrona de la Orden del Crucero. En 2026, en la víspera de su aniversario, renovó con confianza sus votos ante el Prior Conventual Alex Juguilon, osc, en presencia de sus confratres de la Orden, familia, miembros de los Compañeros de la Santa Cruz y amigos del Crucero. La renovación tuvo lugar el 17 de julio durante la Oración de la Tarde en la Iglesia Prioral de la Santa Cruz en Phoenix.

“La renovación del H. Christopher es un hermoso testimonio de fidelidad, crecimiento y confianza en Dios,” dijo el Padre Alex. “Esto nos da tanta alegría y esperanza. Su ejemplo nos anima a todos a escuchar la voz de Dios y permanecer abiertos a hacia dónde nos guía.”

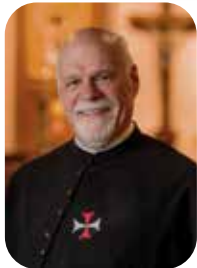
Como parte de su formación post-noviciado, el H. Christopher completó un programa extendido de educación clínica pastoral (CPE) en el Centro Médico VA de St. Cloud en Minnesota y actualmente está realizando una experiencia intensiva de CPE de tres meses durante el verano en un hospital en Phoenix. Sus otros ministerios incluyen atender a los Cruzados mayores, servir como director espiritual y asistir en la oficina de desarrollo de la prioría conventual.

Nativo de Phoenix, el H. Christopher es hijo de Linda y Raymond Erran. Asistió a la Escuela Primaria Católica St. Catherine of Siena, a la South Mountain High School y a la Universidad Estatal de Arizona (ASU), de la cual se graduó en 1999 con una Licenciatura en Ciencias en gestión recreativa. En 2003, obtuvo su maestría en psicología de consejería en la Northern Arizona University en Flagstaff, Arizona.

Antes de ingresar a la Orden, el H. Christopher trabajó en diversos roles en educación superior, incluyendo servicios estudiantiles, reclutamiento, extensión y retención. También trabajó en ASU y en diferentes campus dentro del Distrito de Colegios Comunitarios de Maricopa, incluyendo Rio Salado College, Phoenix College y South Mountain Community College. Tiene tres hermanos que todos residen en Phoenix: Raymond, Gary y Eric. Los intereses del H. Christopher incluyen las artes, la música, ver buenas películas, pasar tiempo con la familia y disfrutar de actividades al aire libre. ✝



CROSIERS WALK WITH VETERANS THROUGH PRESENCE AND LISTENING



By Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc

One of the privileges of serving at the City of Phoenix Veterans Court is the opportunity to be present to men and women who have served our country and who are now facing significant challenges in their lives. While every veteran's story is unique, many share common experiences of struggle, loss, trauma, addiction, mental health concerns, broken relationships or difficulties adjusting to life after military service.

The City of Phoenix Veterans Court is more than a legal process. It is a place where veterans are offered support, accountability and encouragement as they work toward healing and rebuilding their lives. It recognizes that many veterans carry wounds that are not always visible and that recovery often requires the support of a caring community. The judge always mentions to the veterans that Veterans Court is a "family."

Serving in this ministry as a priest has taught me that one of the greatest gifts we can offer to another person is our presence. We do not always have solutions to the problems people face. We cannot erase painful memories or instantly heal deep wounds. But we can accompany people on their journey, letting them know they are not alone.

Many veterans have stories that need to be heard. They have experienced things that most civilians can scarcely imagine. Sometimes what they need most is someone willing to listen without judgment, to acknowledge their struggles and to recognize their dignity. Listening may seem like a small act, but it can be a powerful expression of compassion and respect.

This ministry reminds me of how Jesus encountered people throughout the Gospels. He listened to their stories, noticed their suffering and met them where they were. Before offering healing, Jesus often offered his presence. He walked alongside people, helping them discover hope and new possibilities for their lives.

Veterans Court provides many opportunities to witness courage and resilience. Recovery is rarely a straight path. People face setbacks and disappointments along the way. Yet there are moments of growth, perseverance, reconciliation and success. It is inspiring to see veterans continue moving forward despite the obstacles they face. The judge invites all who are present to applaud the veterans who have completed their treatment and who are doing well.

As a Crosier, I am reminded that our mission is often one of accompaniment. We are called to stand with people at the crossroads of life, especially those who are struggling. We seek to be signs of God's compassion, mercy and hope. Serving at The City of Phoenix Veterans Court is one way of living that mission.

The experience challenges me to recognize the sacrifices veterans have made in service to our nation. Their willingness to serve deserves our gratitude, but gratitude alone is not enough. We are also called to support them when they return home and work to rebuild their lives.

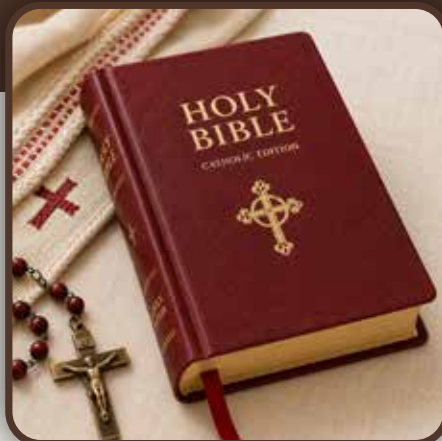
Each time I attend City of Phoenix Veterans Court, which is one Friday morning a month, I am reminded that healing often begins with relationships. A listening ear, a word of encouragement, a gesture of respect or simply being present can make a meaningful difference. These moments reveal the power of community and the importance of walking together through life's struggles.

May we continue to support our veterans with gratitude, compassion and understanding. And may we never underestimate the healing that can occur when we take the time to listen, accompany and remind others that they are valued, respected and never alone. ✠

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

FR. VIRGIL PETERMIER, OSC, inspired by Bible reflection group

By Fr. Virgil Petermeier, osc



In February 2021, the Crosiers in Phoenix asked me to initiate an online Bible reflection group. Today, we have more than 20 participants, mostly from Arizona and Minnesota. Usually, 10 to 12 people participate each week. The group meets online every Thursday from 10 a.m.–11 a.m. AZ/MST.

In the early 1980s, the missionaries in Papua, Indonesia—including me—promoted a simplified communal form of Bible reflection among ordinary villagers throughout the Diocese of Agats. Someone would lead an opening prayer to the Holy Spirit, after which someone read the Gospel for the coming Sunday, first in Indonesian and then narrated in the local tribal language. The next five minutes would be spent in silent reflection to answer one question, "What are you, O God, saying to me personally through this Gospel?"

After the silent reflection, the group facilitator invited group members to briefly share what they heard God say to them personally, using "I" language. For instance, "I hear God calling me to be more loving in some way"; "I hear God affirm me as a good mother when my daughter was ill" or "God asked me to arrange a peace ceremony after a recent village fight."

Finally, the one-hour reflection session closed with a simple prayer of thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit in the group.

Now online, I continue to use the same simple form of Bible reflection. A welcoming letter to newcomers clarifies that we are reflecting on a particular Gospel, not studying the background, as happens in many Bible study groups.

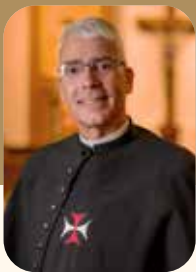
Recently, I asked the Bible reflectors why they continue to participate. They answered, "Hearing the personal ways that God is touching others' lives challenges me personally"; "Sharing our interpretations of the Gospels helps me grow and expand my understanding"; "This reflection gives me hope despite the difficulties I experience"; "When I hear about Gospel peace, I feel called to bring peace to people who aren't at peace"; "I feel prepared for Sunday's liturgy and look forward to the pastor's homily"; "I feel closer to God after listening to God this way" and "As next Sunday's homilist, I feel blessed with so many personal reflections that help me prepare for it."

I promote Bible reflection, affirmed by evangelization expert Alward Shorter, who claimed that routine Bible reflection in a community is the most privileged moment for rooting faith and Gospel values in our lives and culture. Our society today needs such weekly reflection groups in every Christian community to help us become more loving people through God's word, which contains humanity's primary values. ✠

All are welcome to join us! To register, please visit www.crosier.org/events.



Fr. Virgil Petermeier, osc, is a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.



Reconciliation takes on deeper meaning in today's world

Fr. Kermit Holl, osc

During the past Lenten season, our Phoenix Crosier community participated in a multiday workshop provided by the Diocese of Phoenix's Office of Mental Health Ministry.

This workshop, "Mental Health First-Aid," specifically seeks to empower ministers in the Church toward greater mental health awareness and skills for caring, and it flows from an initiative begun in 2022 by Bishop John Dolan. It is his hope that this new mission will assist the Church, through its many ministers, to respond to a rising level of "anxiety, physiological distress, suicide attempts and other mental health concerns" among people of faith and in society at large. Thus, this initiative is to support ministers attend to people as they "struggle to find meaning, purpose, hope and belonging" in the complex and fast-paced world that surrounds us every day, for the healing grace of love must rest always upon "belonging, relationships, meaning and hope."

As participants in this workshop, we Crosiers, along with conventual priory staff and some Companions of the Holy Cross, received marvelous training not on how to diagnose any conditions, but instead on how to bolster our pastoral and human skills that can help us better be with people as they are, listening to them and offering resources as might be appropriate. In sum, however, the greater lesson conveyed was in simply capturing again the wisdom that all people are, as Bishop Dolan said, "created in the image and likeness of God [and] called to relationship, purpose and communion," and it is to this cause that our belief and practice in faith is to be attuned.

Interestingly, as we grew in awareness of new levels of stress and despair in society as highlighted in workshop materials, I found this broad understanding of our human longings amid our modern cultural reality. It strongly resonates with a shifting dynamic that I've sensed over the past decade in celebrating the Rite of Reconciliation (hearing confessions) with people of many places and varied spiritualities.

Indeed, I can recall the time when the recitation of sins was the usual mode of "going to confession." The penitent would tell me as the priest-confessor what sins they had committed as a list of things that they had done wrong. Most commonly, there would be an admittance of actions either done or avoided that they thought God would be most concerned about in their faith life—missing Mass, gossiping, arguing, forgetting their prayers. (You might see here that most people actually do not commit truly serious sins.) Their intention in the Sacrament, therefore, was to have these "offenses" washed away so that they could be more confident that they were again "good" in the eyes of God.

However, I noticed a change in people's approach to confession across the growing societal stresses of the past decade, including political tensions, economic concerns and the COVID-19 pandemic. This turmoil seems to have put people on their heels in terms of "What am I supposed to do?" and "Where can my spirit find rest?" In response to this, I found that many people's confessions began to change—at least in the communal, face-to-face celebrations with which I was involved. What I noticed, then was that rather than a list or a recitation of what they had done wrong, people instead might say, "I'm really finding it a struggle in my marriage," or "I worry about my kids a lot," or "I just don't know what I'm supposed to be doing." What I heard in this was their expression of fundamental human angst—as in exhaustion, sadness or feeling unsure as to where to turn—more than any particular sin.

Clearly this was a shift in many people's assessment of penitence and righteousness before God, and as a priest-confessor, I was challenged in how to respond to such a confession before the Lord. Surely, some may say that without a clear and numerical listing of one's offenses, the penitent is not performing the Rite of Reconciliation as intended, and that is one cultic way to understand the grace of the sacrament. In my experience, however, this new "form" of confessing one's stance or status or struggle in life is also a new way for penitents to humble themselves before the Lord and seek a broader "reconciliation" with God across all the frustrations, concerns and realities of their daily

lives. In other words, I sense that in this manner of people laying their troubled lives before the Lord, they really are asking for a reconciliation of a different sort, of a more human and integrative sort—perhaps saying in this context, "How am I doing, God? What do you think of me? How can I be more connected to you in faith and do the good that you ask in the struggles of my living? It isn't so easy for me."

Indeed, in hearing such sincere and plaintive pleas, might the grace of the sacrament be embracing them in a more wholesome and fundamental manner regarding their very "being" and not just in what they've "done or failed to do?"

And this is where I see a connection between new faith-based mental health initiatives and the practice and spirit of catholicity. Precisely in a contemporary context of greater self-concern and highly honored individualism, people still at root desire to be connected and healthy and even holy within the human bonds of their living—with spouses, children and neighbors known and afar. There is something "unreconciled" in much of society, and people feel it very personally and sense that part of the cure must be humility before God and an assurance that though they are struggling, theirs can yet be a godly path. In the reconciliation ritual, therefore, I seek to assure the contrite and caring that God is yet with us—with them—as they seek to align their hearts and dedication to the desires of God amid a complex, tumultuous world. In a world where actions and reactions tumble upon us so fast and entangle everything in their path, sometimes we just want so say, "God, are you here? God, am I with you?" And these utterances of penitential lament and sadness are, as I hear them, deep articulations of hope in challenging circumstances both personal, familial and societal, as if people are asking, "How, God, does this all come back together? How does Thy Kingdom come? How is Thy will done?"

So it was that as we learned about "Mental Health First Aid," it connected for me that in growing instances even within the ancient ritual of "going to confession," people are seeking spiritual support and godly concern about their anxieties, isolation, fears and frustrations. And perhaps in this turn, they are seeking to be reconciled to God not just in what they've done or failed to do, but in who they are and who they hope to be. There surely is a holy humanity yet seeking connection, belonging, hope and love before the Lord. With generous grace, the Church and its rites can embrace the Lord's sheep in the ministry of the Good Shepherd who has called them to follow and promised to be with them, even through the valley of the shadow of death. Or, as Bishop Dolan wrote, "In a world searching for direction, perhaps the Church's most important task is helping people rediscover those inner constellations that guide them toward meaning, belonging and the love of God." I think it's what I'm hearing. ✠

Fr. Kermit Holl, osc, is a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.



PRAYER TO ST. DYMPHNA

*Good St. Dymphna,
worker of miracles
in the lives of those who suffer
in mind and spirit,
I turn to you with trust.*

*Through your intercession,
may the Lord grant me peace of
mind and health of soul.*

*Help me to find rest in His love
and the strength to face each day
with hope. Amen.*

FR. STEPHAN BAUER, OSC, CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF PROFESSION



By Fr. Jude Verley, osc

On Aug. 28, 1986, Stephan Bauer, along with three other Crosiers, professed vows to the Crosier Order at the Crosier priory in Hastings, Neb.

At the profession liturgy, one of the scripture readings chosen was from the prophet Jeremiah, “You doped me, Lord, and I let myself be doped!” While the word “entice” might be a better translation, the four Crosiers embraced the glorious Cross in which the Crosiers exalt and went forward to live as Brethren of the Holy Cross. Most of Stephan’s family (15 siblings!) were present for the momentous occasion. Thus, he began life as a consecrated religious under the sign of the Cross!

In remembering the past 40 years, certain highlights stand out. Fr. Stephan mentioned his life in Chicago, ministering in a parish and serving as the superior of the Crosier community. The Chicago community was small then, yet Fr. Stephan said that it was a great time “of sharing life together,” especially around the dining table in the evening. “We loved watching the TV show ‘Frasier’ as we laughed together at what we experienced on the ‘small screen.’ We helped and supported each other.” Another good experience for Fr. Stephan was living and ministering as a Crosier at St. Odilia Parish in Shoreview, Minn.

After a number of other ministries, Fr. Stephan found himself doing ministry at the Newman Center at St. Cloud, Minn., only to be invited by then Prior Provincial Tom Carkhuff, osc, to join the Crosier community in Phoenix. Once there, Fr. Stephan found himself again working with young people at the Newman Center at Arizona State University. The provincial thought Fr. Stephan would help to bring vitality to the Phoenix community. As Fr. Tom told him, “We are a small community, but we are growing and we need people to help the community both communally and liturgically.”

Over his many years in Phoenix, Fr. Stephan has been involved in various ministries, particularly in the community’s liturgical life,



Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc, shares his love of God, faith and ministry with all.

in spiritual direction and in grief counseling. Living in Phoenix has always been a challenge due to the changing transitions of the community. Yet through it all, Fr. Stephan has learned to be more flexible and to realize Crosier life is not always easy, but that God is there and seems to keep changing things! But through many changes, Fr. Stephan has always felt the support of his Crosier brothers.

As this article is being written, Fr. Stephan is preparing to go on a four-month sabbatical. He wants to interact and engage with Crosier confreres around the world and experience the internationality of the Order in living its unique charism and its communal and prayer life.

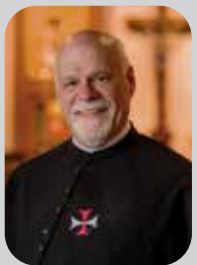
Also, an article on Fr. Stephan cannot be written without acknowledging his gifted singing voice that has graced our Crosier liturgies for more than 40 years—and God willing—will continue to do so for decades to come!

May all of God’s grace and blessings be Fr. Stephan’s as he rejoices in 40 years of Crosier professed life. ✠



Fr. Jude Verley, osc, is a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers in Phoenix.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL DRAWS US CLOSER TO GOD



By Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc

The Prayer of the Faithful is both an act of faith in God and a plea for God’s intercession in the world.

The intercessions become a voice of the concerns of the people. According to the “General Instruction of the Roman Missal,” in the Prayer of the Faithful, “The people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal Priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all” (#69). The goal of these prayers is to help us enter prayer through them and to draw us closer to God.

The content of the Prayer of the Faithful is a series of intentions that include prayers for the needs of universal church, for public authorities and the salvation of the world, for those who suffer and are in trouble, for the local community and for the departed. As a community of faith, we offer these universal prayers to connect us with the universal Church. ✠

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





FAMILY BOND inspires lifelong support for Crosiers



By Elisabeth Wisthoff

Gloria and Pat Bauer are no strangers to the Crosiers; in fact, they are part of the family, as Pat is one of Fr. Stephan Bauer's 15 siblings! Growing up, the Bauer children often played church, using old missalettes from St. Stephen Catholic Church in Anoka, Minn. Pat recalls, "Stephan always played the priest!" It was at St. Stephen's that the entire Bauer clan first encountered the Crosiers, in the person of the pastor. From childhood play to his adult vocation, Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc, as he is formally known, has always been an inspiration for kid brother Pat.

Pat's own vocation path was a little different; he married his high school sweetheart, Gloria, with whom he celebrates 43 years of marriage in 2026, and has since become a nationally respected leader in the dental field. Gloria fondly recalls the Bauer family as she and her family also attended St. Stephen's. The fifth of nine children, Gloria embraced her new siblings-in-law with joy, and most especially Fr. Stephan, of whom she says, "He is passionate about our faith and simply embodies love." Gloria and Pat attended Fr. Stephan's ordination in 1991 and have been stalwart benefactors of the Crosiers ever since.

Apart from the obvious family connection, Gloria and Pat are dedicated to supporting the Crosiers because they are one of the Church's oldest orders of vowed men and commit to a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. As Pat says, "They are just such good people and give everything in the service of God... and that is not easy. If you have ever spent any time with them, you will figure out fast that there is something special about this community."

It is the Crosier charism of accompaniment, rich spirituality and unique fraternal bonds that inspires Gloria and Pat to contribute as members of the annual Apostolate program and support special projects for the Crosiers. Specifically, the Bauers recently made a transformative gift to the priory campaign, which made a significant difference in the project's success at Crosier Village in Phoenix.

As Pat says, "We are so fortunate to have the ability to help. We believe in Catholicism and Stephan's vocation—It is part of our commitment to tithing." Gloria agrees, saying, "We want to help and give to the people and places that mean so much to us and those we love. Supporting the Crosiers does both." The Bauers are thoughtful and consistent about their charitable

giving, recognizing that benefactors and religious orders are real partners in faith, both playing pivotal roles in spreading the Good News.

Fr. Stephan agrees, "My brother Pat and his wife, Gloria, have been a steady source of support for me and for the Crosiers.

They have shared in our Crosier mission in a meaningful way through their prayers, encouragement and generosity. Although Pat is one of my younger brothers, he and his wife are beloved friends of mine. Their kindness reminds us that the work of the Church is strengthened not only by those in ministry, but also by the loving support of family and friends. The Crosiers and I are deeply grateful for them and for the many ways they reflect God's care and goodness."

Clearly, these bonds are reciprocal and enduring: "By helping the Crosiers sustain their life and ministry, we help them evangelize and bring people to Christ," says Pat. Gloria concurs, saying, "We will continue to give to what we love and encourage everyone to do the same in any way they can."

As parents and grandparents, Pat and Gloria can see the future of faith and family unfolding before them. In their giving to the Crosiers, they are melding these twin pillars with sustaining support for the life and ministry of the Crosier Order, and especially that of their beloved brother Fr. Stephan. **Clearly, the spirit of loving generosity runs in the family!** ✠

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



Gloria and Pat Bauer

BUILDING THE CROSS ONE PRAYER AT A TIME

In the fall of 2025, the Crosiers sent an appeal to potential new supporters all over the country. The premise was to present the Crosier charism and share the hope and healing of the Glorious Cross. While that may seem like pretty standard fare, this truly was a mailing with a difference!

The difference was that recipients were invited to write a prayer intention on an enclosed, small wooden tile that they returned to

the Crosiers. The goal was to assemble tiles into the shape of a cross. This was a brand-new approach, and questions abounded. Would the message be relevant? Would anyone participate? Would there be enough responses to build the Prayer Intention Cross?

Well, the result speaks for itself: The positive reaction by people nationwide was heartening. The appeal clearly touched hearts and

inspired so many prayers that the Cross took shape in no time. Today, it stands as an expression of the need for prayer in our time and speaks to the Crosiers' mission of touching suffering with hope.

We thank and welcome these new supporters to the Crosier family of friends—for despite vast geographic distances, we are truly united in the hope and healing of the Glorious Cross.



The Prayer Intention Cross reflects an inspiring symbol of shared faith, hope and healing.

Welcome

The Crosier Apostolate



We are pleased to welcome the newest member of the Crosier Apostolate, who joined. **We hope you will consider adding your name.**

Terrance Harris — Milaca, Minnesota



The Crosier Apostolate is the annual giving program that sustains the life and ministry of the Crosiers in the United States. You may join at any time—membership is for 12 months from the date of commitment. Members are invited to special events like Apostolate Day (*Onamia*) and the Apostolate Tea (*Phoenix*), receive commemorative Crosier cross lapel pins, and their special intentions are remembered at a weekly Mass.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT **Elisabeth Wisthoff**, *chief development officer* at **602-443-7115** or at **ewisthoff@crosier.org**.

NEWS FROM ROME

Crosiers find fraternity, renewal amid Rome's summer heat.

Summer is quite hot in Rome, particularly in July and August. Typically, many Romans set their vacation schedule during these months, including our staff members in the Crosier Generalate house.

Early morning and night are the best times to enjoy the city during summer. One interesting site is along the Tiber (Tevere) River, which is approximately 400 meters from our Generalate house. Many visitors stroll along the riverbank to enjoy unique stores, games and restaurants that are only set up during summer. The river's attractive view and pleasant ambiance help people enjoy the experience and forget the heat of the day.

Other attractions include operas and concerts held in different venues around Rome. The

closest venue to our house is Circo Massimo, a large park area open to the public and often used for concerts, meetings and celebrations. A large stage was built there for that purpose and takes up one-third of the park. During summer mornings, the park is quiet and bright. It is a nice place to get a breath of fresh air or go for a walk or a jog. Master General Emeritus Glen Lewandowski, osc, used to enjoy taking walks almost every morning. In the evening, people gather to enjoy the performances.



The Crosiers in Rome enjoy recreation and fraternal bonding at the Crosier Generalate House.

Most Crosiers in Rome stay home. Only the master general will be traveling this summer to visit the other parts of the Order, beginning with Indonesia, followed by Brazil and then the United States. He may visit the Democratic

Republic of the Congo in September, if it is safe to do so, given the Ebola outbreak. After working hard during the day, our recreation after Evening Prayer is an opportunity for Crosiers at the Generalate House to recharge. We gather and share stories, thoughts and jokes, accompanied by some cold drinks and crispy snacks. It is a simple way to nurture our fraternity and remain faithful to our charism in this super summer! ✝



A variety of vendors line the riverbank offering shopping and entertainment for all who enjoy their evening stroll along the Tiber River.

THE CROSIERS IN ROME WELCOME GUESTS.

Contact Fr. Rosa (rome.community@crocigeri.it) if you plan to visit the Eternal City!



CROSIER WORLD NEWS

Here are the latest news highlights from the Crosiers around the world.

BRAZIL

After consultation with his extended council and with the consent of his general council, Master General Laurentius Tarpin, osc, established the Crosier community in Brazil as a conventual priory, the Priorato Conventual da Santa Cruz in Campo Belo.

Since 2011, the Order's governance in Brazil has been structured as a general delegation. The restructuring is the result of implementing the 2022 General Chapter directive.

This moment marks a new stage in the Order's presence and mission in Brazil. During the first conventual priory chapter in July, General Councilor Pierre-Paul Walraet, osc, was canonically elected conventual prior with the election confirmed by the master general, in accordance with the Crosier Constitutions.

The subprior and two other councilors were also elected, in accordance with the statutes of the conventual priory structure: Br. João Paulo Damasceno Silva, osc, will serve as subprior, and Fr. Kahindo Makuko Baudouin, osc, and Br. José Joaquim Alexandre Gomes, osc, will serve as councilors.

The Crosiers of Brazil are most grateful for this gift of God's grace and renew their commitment to serve the Church, the Order and the Brazilian people with fidelity to the charism of the Order of the Holy Cross.



(center) Master General Laurentius Tarpin, osc, and the Crosier community in Brazil happily gather for a quick pic!



CROSIER ALUMNI POTLUCK PICNIC

SUNDAY, SEPT. 6, 2026

ELLISON PARK
811 E. RIVER ST.
MONTICELLO, MN

2 p.m.–5 p.m.

If you attended any of the Crosier schools—join us! Bring along family, friends or other alumni!

Let's gather and enjoy time together at beautiful Ellison Park. We'll have tables and lots of shade.

- Sloppy Joes will be provided.
- Please bring a side dish to share, and your own beverage.
- Bring your fave yard game, a kayak or canoe!



FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:
Pete "Moose" Sherrard at 763-245-8095 or pmoose76@yahoo.com or
Jim "Knob" Meyer at 320-380-4584 or meyerfin616@gmail.com.

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).

Rev. Joseph H. Hennen
Crosier College, 1960

John "Jack" C. Igers
Crosier College, 1958

Rev. Edward E. Erpelding, Capt USN (Ret)
Our Lady of the Lake, 1960



An IRA QCD makes a great gift to both you and the Crosiers!

For retirees with IRA savings, required minimum distributions (RMDs) generally begin at age 73. However, RMDs are taxable income, and the more you take, the higher your tax bill.

There is a tax-advantaged alternative when you make a gift to the Crosiers directly from your IRA.

HOW? Because IRA gifts made directly to a valid charity are Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) and tax-free, up to \$111,000 per person, per year, through 2026. And you can make a QCD as early as age 70½.

Plus, the distribution is excluded from taxable income, which can make a QCD beneficial for you, especially if you take the standard deduction.

Be sure to ask your financial advisor whether a QCD is right for you; it is an easy, tax-advantaged way to support the Crosiers!

PLEASE NOTE: *This is not tax advice; always consult your own 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:

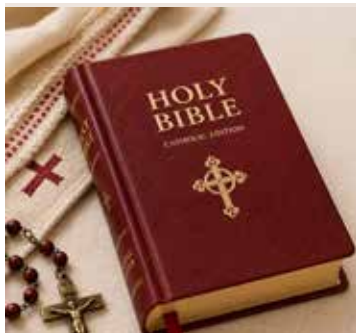
Crosier Fathers and Brothers
attn: Annuities
PO Box 500 • Onamia, MN 56359-0500

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

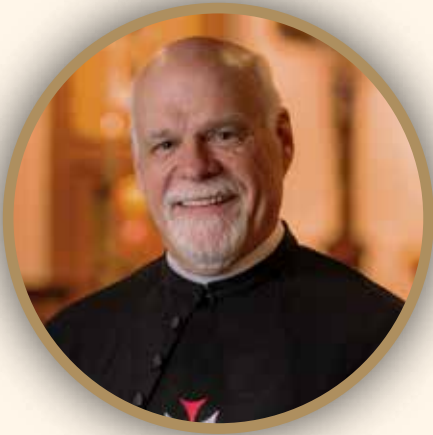


Br. Jim Lewandowski, osc, shares the final part of his series on St. Odilia's life **through art.** In this segment, he focuses on her devotion and miracles resulting from her intercession.

July 17 was a day of celebration as Br. Christopher Erran, osc, renewed his vows. We are grateful for his commitment to God and the Order, and his love of Crosier Religious Life.



The Crosiers' online Bible reflection group, led by Fr. Virgil Petermeier, osc, helps participants prayerfully reflect on the Sunday Gospel, share personal insights and grow closer to God.



WE REJOICE IN THE JUBILEE OF
Fr. Stephan Bauer, osc, who celebrate 40 years of vowed life!



May God's
blessings
continue to
be with him.

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