



IN KIND LOVE

The Road to Sainthood

Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC (1848-1923)

Volume 1, Issue 6

With Hearts Aflame: The Cause Begins

BY: EDWIN V. DONNELLY, CSC—EDITOR

Dear Readers,

I welcome you to a special issue of In Kind Love—a milestone edition marking the official opening of the Cause for Canonization of Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC On Sunday, April 27, at Solemn Vespers in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Bishop Kevin Rhoades will



Devotion to Brother Columba O'Neill throughout the years.

formally open the Cause, a long-awaited moment in the life of our community and Church.

This opening comes after five years of patient, prayerful work—gathering documents, consulting historians and theologians, and building the foundations necessary for this important step. That we have reached this moment is a testament not only to Brother Columba's enduring legacy but also to the faith and perseverance of those who have carried the torch in quiet, faithful ways behind the scenes. The spirit of our founding, characterized by Father Moreau's life of service and trust in Divine Providence, has animated this effort from the beginning.

The timing, too, feels deeply providential. The Cause opens just one day after the ordination of four new priests in the Congregation of Holy Cross—a living witness to the same call to holiness that shaped Brother Columba's life. His legacy is not only a historical one; it is alive and active, inspiring new vocations, new works of mercy, and



Edwin V. Donnelly, CSC

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He would lead thousands of individuals to experience intimately the healing love of "these Two Hearts: The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary."



renewed devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In this issue, we reflect on the significance of this beginning, and how Brother Columba's life continues to speak into our own. Our pages are graced with contributions from those whose lives have been touched by his witness—from the archives to the altar, from letters of healing to moments of personal prayer.

I'm especially pleased to share that, starting this issue, we will include a new feature on page two—a selection of reflections from the late Pope Francis's encyclical on the Sacred Heart, each accompanied by sacred imagery. These quotes invite us to linger with the love of Christ in a tangible, prayerful way. As the Holy Father reminds

us: "The expressive and symbolic image of Christ's heart is not the only means granted us by the Holy Spirit for encountering the love of Christ, yet it is an especially privileged one."

Finally, on a personal note, we give thanks for Brother Philip Smith, CSC, who celebrates his own 60th anniversary this year. I can think of no greater joy than to celebrate him in the context of this new chapter in Brother Columba's journey toward sainthood—a journey we all walk together, in kind love.

In Kind Love,
Edwin V. Donnelly, CSC

Pope Francis 1936-2025

"The expressive and symbolic image of Christ's heart is not the only means granted us by the Holy Spirit for encountering the love of Christ, yet it is an especially privileged one. Even so, it constantly needs to be enriched, deepened and renewed through meditation, the reading of the Gospel and growth in spiritual maturity."



~Pope Francis

*Dilexit Nos Encyclical
October, 2024*



In Kind Love

A bi-monthly newsletter to enlighten readers of the life and spirituality of Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC

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For more information see brothercolumba.com

The Priestly, Healing Heart of Jesus

By: TIM WYMORE, CSC
GUEST COLUMNIST

It was the winter of 2021, during my first year of formation in the Congregation of Holy Cross. Covid had delayed the start of the spring semester. It was a tale of two seasons for me. On the one hand, January loomed, an often bleak month, during a year of far too much distance, disease, and death. And yet I was relieved and eager to finally embark upon a vocational journey with a community I was still getting to know, and I had some extra time to try something new. When a Holy Cross brother I had not met invited us seminarians to help sort some letters attesting to miracles, I jumped at the chance.

That brother was Brother Philip Smith, who introduced me to the thousands of letters, recently rediscovered, that attested to the holiness of Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC. Thanks to Brother Phil's enthusiasm, I quickly became fascinated with the life and work of Brother Columba. I certainly had never heard of him during my four years of college at Notre Dame, nor in the years since. But here was someone who was so close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and who communicated this devotion so well, that by the time of his death hundreds if not thousands of healings were attributed to his direction.

As a seminarian now in my third year of vows and fifth year of formation in Holy Cross, I credit Brother Columba with strengthening my own devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the priesthood. I had long discerned a call to be a priest. And God had patiently awaited my response to his loving call, in part through the examples of so many holy priests I have known in my

life. But the image of the Sacred Heart – the same image that Brother Columba so readily shared on his countless badges – has drawn me closer to Jesus, whose priest I hope to become, and whose heart I hope to imitate. And since “The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus,”¹ it behooves priests especially to ponder the spirituality of this “heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection.”²

The Gospels are clear, especially during Eastertide: Jesus came that we may have life, and have it abundantly. And very often, this means he heals the brokenness we experience. Sometimes this means physical healing; Jesus cured many in first century Palestine, and twentieth century Indiana, and still does today. But just as often it is the reintegration of what has been scattered, toward heartfelt wholeness, which is just as healing and just as miraculous. In these days, one hundred years and more after Brother Columba's death, amid the diseases of the spirit and the deadly distances that remain in our post-pandemic life, I believe Brother Columba is specially interceding for us all. Sacred Heart of Jesus, patron of Holy Cross priests, have mercy on us! ✠

1 St. John Vianney

2 From the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus



• *Tim Wymore, CSC attended the University of Notre Dame after growing up in Madison, Wisconsin. Before entering formation with Holy Cross he taught high school theology for eight years in Tulsa, Oklahoma.*

Intercession Requests

In all future issues of *In Kind Love* any requests for prayers for persons in need of the grace of the Sacred Heart through the intercession of Brother Columba will be included. You may be as specific as you wish when writing your request for prayer.

For example: For the cure of Mary's poor eyesight; For the cure of John who has been diagnosed with lung cancer; For a return to the Church for my son Tim.

Please send all intentions to Brother Philip Smith psmith@brothersofholycross.com by June 16, 2025 to be included in the Volume 2 Issue 1 of *In Kind Love* scheduled for July 11, 2025.



An Exchange of Hearts

By: Rev. Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC

Of Silence and Awe

Brother Columba silently surrendered this earthly life to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He surrendered the physical disability of his clubfoot, which led him to walk with other people's pain and physical needs. He surrendered his difficult childhood to Christ, which opened him to the Congregation of Holy Cross as well as a worldwide community of believers who sought out God's healing grace. He surrendered his gifts as a cobbler and began to welcome people who desired to walk with God.

The Holy Cross Brothers' archive contains boxes filled with handwritten letters that request healing from Brother Columba. In the past five years, thousands of these letters have been read that speak of requests, cures and prayers associated with Brother Columba's earthly life. The letters were sent from people across the globe, including Germany, Canada and Australia. News of healing spread rapidly among the worldwide apostolates of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

The mystery of how the news spread to people in desperate need of healing is itself a miracle filled with awe. What began with silent, humble, and yet courageous personal prayer ended with the beauty of people knowing Christ Jesus in their pain and



*The Sacred Heart of Jesus
[artist Rev. Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC]*

anguish. Columba's prayer life becomes the story of silent surrender to Christ's love, and ends with God offering Brother Columba a gift of healing that spread to the hearts and souls of other people. Silence and awe become the story of this humble servant, Brother Columba, CSC. ✠

• *Rev. Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC serves as religious superior of Holy Cross House, our retirement and medical facility at Notre Dame, Indiana. He is an award-winning author, blogger and visual artist.*

Let us Pray to the Lord

† for his Holiness Pope Francis, may he find eternal rest in the loving arms of Jesus. We pray to the Lord.

† for the continued prayer of the late Pope Francis' consistent message of bringing mercy and hope to a world that yearns for it. We pray to the Lord.

† for the Church and its leaders as the Cardinals gather in Rome to elect the new Supreme Pontiff. We pray to the Lord.

† for unity within our Church as we embrace our new pontiff. We pray to the Lord.



Our Mother's Heart

By: Brother Liam Johnson, CSC

Mary Receives Each of Us into Her Immaculate Heart

“Woman, behold, your son.” Each Good Friday, these words reverberate through the church. Our Mother, beholding her son dying upon the cross, hears these words from his own mouth. As she watches her son die on the cross, Mary receives a new son into her heart. How beautiful and sorrowful this is! Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, has known from the prophecy of Simeon that her son was destined for tragedy and greatness. She has pondered the mysteries of her son in her heart, attempting to reconcile the joy of his miraculous birth and ministry with the prophecy of his death and destruction.

Now, at the moment where all of this comes to completion, her son offers her a new son. The Lord offers us to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Mary receives each of us into her heart and helps to guide us on our journey towards everlasting life with her son. Christ also offers his mother to us. He says to his beloved disciple—and to all of us—on the cross, “Behold, your mother.”

Will we, like the beloved disciple, welcome our mother into our home? Will we seek to conform our

hearts to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Throughout this past year, our journey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been mediated and guided by our devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May we, through the guidance of Brother



Columba, continue to devote ourselves to the Immaculate Heart of our Mother, Our Lady of Sorrows, as we journey towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus. ✠

• *Brother Liam Johnson, CSC is a temporarily professed scholastic for the United States Province of Priest and Brothers at Moreau Seminary*

Let us Pray to the Lord

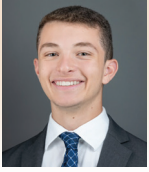
† for a worthy expression of love constantly in our hearts. May God's abundant grace flow through our lives and hearts. We pray to the Lord.

† for people who face difficult decisions. May we find courage to live gospel truth. We pray to the Lord.

† for a new generation of seminarians within our church. May they learn bountiful love, the beauty of faith and dedicated service. We pray to the Lord.

† for people who feel they do not belong in society. May their hearts flourish in Christ's kindness and presence. We pray to the Lord.

† for all who resist change. May reconciliation and peace be constantly on our lips. We pray to the Lord.



History and Lore of the Sacred Heart

By: Nick Tarini, University of Notre Dame Collegian.

Dilexit Nos, Brother Columba, and You

Dilexit Nos, the late Pope Francis’ encyclical from October 2024, provides a look into the role the heart plays in our everyday lives. Our model is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, from which love and mercy poured forth to give us hope in eternal life. This divine love is both the guide and the means by which we are to love others. Brother Columba embodied this call to zealous love in his prayer, ministry, and every aspect of his life.

The fourth chapter of the encyclical dives into how the Sacred Heart is alive and active, present throughout the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments and in the lives of countless saints throughout history. The echoes of the saints’ words and actions throughout the last two thousand years reverberate in the present day, giving credence to observations of the early Church Fathers — that from the wounded side of Christ, where his heart was pierced by a lance, we receive the “source of the water of the Holy Spirit” (*Dilexit Nos* 102). From the wounded side of Christ, we are overwhelmed in a torrent of living water, which sweeps us up and gives us the hope of tasting the Heavenly banquet. From the wounded side of Christ, we receive true life in his Sacred Heart.

In Chapter Five of *Dilexit Nos*, Pope Francis points to the heart as the center of our being, indicating the importance of the heart in revealing our innermost desires and truth. It is in the heart that every relationship is based upon, especially one’s relationship with God. Christ’s Sacred Heart is a model for our own, and as

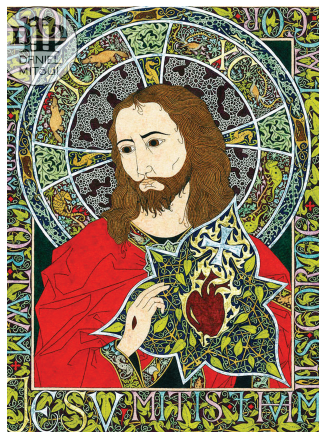


Pope Francis 1936–2025

we strive to mold our hearts to be more like his, we can reflect better the love Christ has poured out for us. As our hearts yearn for Christ, we are better able to become the hands and feet of Jesus and allow him to lead us in transforming the world. The virtues of humility and trust, which Jesus displayed in his passion and death, provide the path to uniting ourselves more fully to his Sacred Heart as these two virtues are integral in reflecting the love of Christ.

Brother Columba gave us an example of a life with these two virtues of humility and trust at the forefront. While he lived a very humble life being uneducated and crippled, he devoted himself to the Sacred Heart and trusted that the Lord’s Will would be done. He entrusted his simple life as a cobbler to the Lord, and it bore abundant fruit. As miracles began occurring, he immediately gave all the credit to the Sacred Heart. The humility, trust, and love that Brother Columba displayed shows us the roadmap to becoming an active witness to the power of the Sacred Heart and conforming our lives to it. ✝

• *Nick Tarini is a sophomore in Old College studying at Notre Dame pursuing a double major in psychology and philosophy.*



*Artwork by Daniel Mitsui
www.danielmitsui.com*

Take Courage and Believe in the Sacred Heart

BY: BROTHER BOBBY MCFADDEN, CSC
GUEST COLUMNIST

When Brother Columba wrote to Father Giglinger on January 17, 1913, he notes that he was on a walk to St. Mary's College and ten Holy Cross sisters mobbed him. They knelt at his feet, looking for healing and restoration. They sought to touch him with their Immaculate Heart of Mary badges or the badges of the Sacred Heart which he had made for him.

Brother Columba certainly had a difficult time understanding why so many like these sisters came to him for hope and healing. I am sure that it would be even more striking that men and women will swear an oath to investigate his cause to sainthood on April 27, 2025. But the truth is that Brother Columba is a holy man and saint—at least to me—because he has brought the hope of Christ's unconditional love personally to me.

Over these last ten days, I have been in the hospital. I suffered from internal bleeding and news of a possible cancer diagnosis. Although further testing still needs to be done, it now appears that I do not have cancer. Not only do I praise God for this wonderful news, but I also praise the witness of Brother Columba as I have walked in this valley of darkness. Whether I am asking for

Columba's intercession or others who have been praying novenas to Columba for me, his words to take courage in the Sacred Heart have led me to remember that I am God's beloved. Despite my suffering, I have been able to remember that God offers me unconditional love and the true longing of my heart.

Many things separate me and Brother Columba; for instance, I am well educated, and he was illiterate. And yet, one thing binds us together: we are Holy Cross

Brothers who believe in the power of the Sacred Heart. I do not completely understand what God has shown to me in this past week. Nonetheless, because I have heard Columba speak the words of courage and faith in the hope of God's unconditional love, I know that I am beloved

by God and an Apostle of the Sacred Heart! He may not have believed it in 1913, but I can testify in truth that Brother Columba is the miracle man of Notre Dame! ✠

“But the truth is that Brother Columba is a holy man and saint—at least to me—because he has brought the hope of Christ's unconditional love personally to me.”



Brother Bobby McFadden, CSC is a Theology and English professor at Holy Cross College. He strives to be an Apostle of the Sacred of Heart like Brother Columba.

“Mere appearances, dishonesty, and deception harm and pervert the heart. Despite our every attempt to appear as something we are not, our heart is the ultimate judge, not of what we show or hide from others, but of who we truly are. It is the basis for any sound life project; nothing worthwhile can be undertaken apart from the heart. False appearances and untruths ultimately leave us empty-handed”

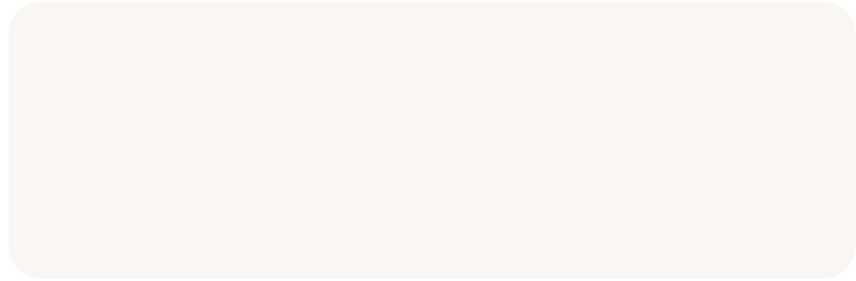
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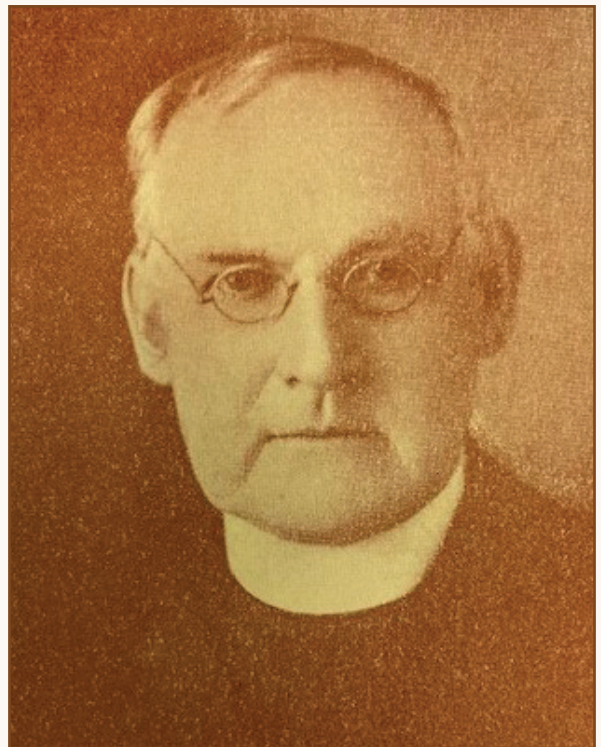
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Postage
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Any information regarding the Servant of God Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC, both personal and private, and any authentic photocopies of documents or letters, etc., can be sent to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46801 USA.



Brother Columba O'Neill, CSC