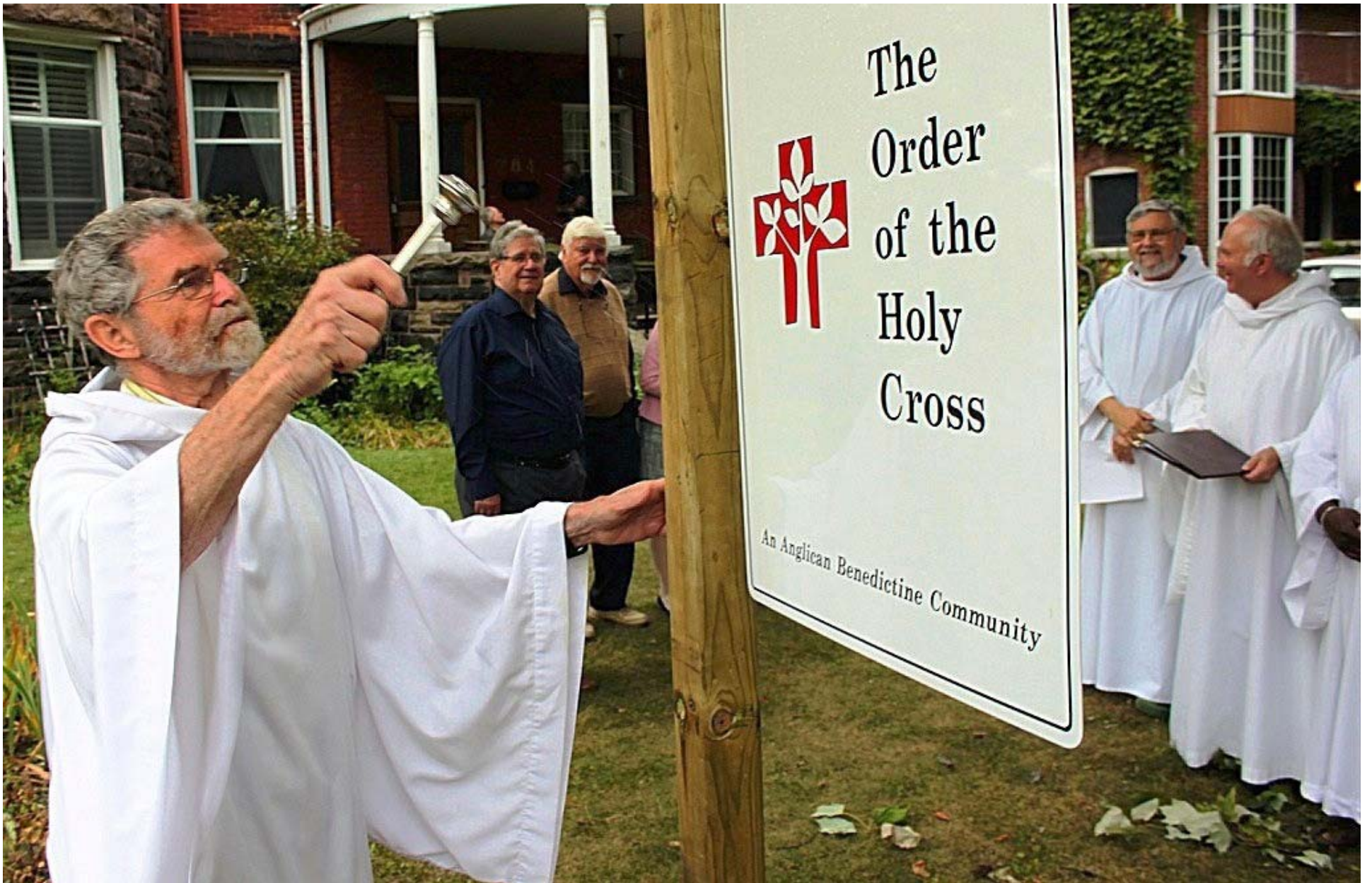


HOLY CROSS:



130 YEARS – 41 in CANADA!

In 1893 an over enthusiastic English lecturer announced that a couple of London clergymen were “practis(ing) celibacy in the open streets!” They were even said to put flowers on the Holy Table! Everyone was suitably shocked. Worse, the accusations were true. The unnamed clergymen were probably two of the early Anglican Franciscans serving in one of London’s poorest parishes.

Nine years before this, in 1884, another Anglican clergyman had also decided to “practise celibacy in the open streets”. That clergyman was the Rev. James Otis Sargent Huntington and, when his bishop agreed to receive his vows, he became the first ordained Anglican priest to take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in North America since the Reformation. Despite such ecclesiastical approval, many people were indeed suitably shocked. In fact, many of them were so shocked that they expressed their outrage in print. Fr. Huntington amassed a tidy collection of hate mail and outraged editorials which he kept in a large scrapbook. That scrapbook resides to this day in the archives of the Order of the Holy Cross.

For Fr. Huntington’s action was not just a “one off”—it was the start of a monastic community, the *Order of the Holy Cross*. But in this respect Fr. Huntington was a follower, not a leader: *women* were the real pioneers of Anglican monasticism. In England they had been fighting for the right to make this same commitment since 1845. People were suitably shocked—as were their bishops. But by the year 1884, this “silent rebellion” had reached Canada. In the same year that Fr. Huntington took his vows in the U.S., Hannah Greer Coome founded the *Sisterhood of St. John the Divine* in Canada. People here were more than shocked—some of them threatened to burn down the convent! Holy Cross still acknowledges its debt to this pioneering role of women in its profession cross. On the day of his profession, the Sisters of the *Community of St. John the Baptist* gave Fr. Huntington one of their ebony novitiate crosses. Though these Sisters began in England, by 1884 they had been in America for ten years. All life professed members of the

**The Monks of
HOLY CROSS PRIORY**
with the Parishes of St. John & St. Martin
invite you to an

ADVENT QUIET DAY

on Saturday, November 29, 2014

from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

at

St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church

151 Glenlake Ave.

Toronto, ON M6P 1E8

(1 block north of the Keele & Bloor Subway Station)

Sr. Anne, SSJD

Donation \$10, Lunch provided

Register: Holy Cross Priory, 416.767.9081, ext. 24

Order of the Holy Cross have worn their cross ever since.

Fr. Huntington was determined that his new Order would be North American, not English. He manifested that personally with a preaching mission to Canada in 1896. That mission is still commemorated in the stained glass of St. Matthias' Anglican Church in Toronto. One very positive additional result was that the Order began to attract Canadian members. Still, it was only in 1973 that we had the resources to establish a monastery on Canadian soil.

That monastery—us—started small, in an apartment. Later, with the help of Archbishop Lewis Garnsworthy, we were able to buy a small house near the corner of St. Clair and Humewood in Toronto, and later, in 1984, a larger one at the corner of High Park and Humberside. That is the present *Holy Cross Priory*. What comes next? We don't know—God knows. What we know is that we are trying to do God's will here in Canada, and are following in the steps of our Holy Cross forebears.

For Fr. Huntington too started small: his first monastery was a mission on Manhattan's lower east side. Later the community moved to a farmhouse in Westminster, Maryland, and then to what is still physically its largest house, Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, New York. In addition there are three others: ourselves here in Canada; Mt. Calvary Monastery in California; and Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery in South Africa. Over the past 130 years our monks have preached missions, opened schools, served as missionaries, been pastors of parishes, and taught in universities and seminaries. The list could go on and on, but the burden of this article is that it is still going on—right here in Canada.

Why? Fr. Huntington put it this way in his Rule: "*Love must act, as light must shine, and fire must burn*". He wanted his community to be an expression of Christ's self-sacrificing love—outside the usual structures. That is what Holy Cross has been trying to do for the last 130 years, and which, with God's help and yours, we will try to continue doing here. We hope people will still be suitably shocked! **RICHARD PAUL VAGGIONE, OHC**



Br. Leonard, a Novice at Bolahun



I was influenced to think of the Religious Life by a cousin of mine who was in a Roman Catholic Teaching Order in Ghana. I was impressed by their Common Life, Common Prayer together, Common meals and Recreation. However, when I wanted to

become a member I was not accepted because I was an Anglican. Nevertheless it was the same Novitiate Director who directed me to the *Order of the Holy Cross*, Anglican, which had a Monastery in Bolahun, Liberia.

Having lived in a city all my life (Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana), I found Bolahun to be in the back woods when I arrived after travelling all day from Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. I found the Novitiate life in Bolahun very different from that in the Roman Catholic Order which I knew. The novices were very competitive in all aspects—except the Divine Offices and the community laundry! After three months I decided to leave, but Fr. Joseph Parsell, who was then the only Life Professed in residence (all the others had gone to the Order's Annual Chapter in the U.S.), would not let me leave because: (1) he did not have my passport, and (2) he was not my Novice master. By the time my Novice master returned, after a period of six weeks, I had made friends with books in the Library, especially "Holy Living" by Jeremy Taylor and the Life of Bernard of Clairvaux.

I entered the Monastery as a Trained Teacher and was posted to teach in both St. Augustine's Junior and Senior High Schools in Bolahun [a graduation is shown above]. Initially I thought it was a blessing to get away from the competitiveness of the other novices, but after two years of teaching I could feel that I was drifting from the rest of the brothers. Being in charge of sports entailed travelling with any of the school teams and I was often sent down to Monrovia. I therefore approached my Novice Master, Fr. Christian Swayne, to remove me from teaching so that I could stay in touch with the rest of the brothers. To my surprise he accepted my proposal, and I left teaching. I stayed in the Order and, by the grace of God, that was 33 years ago. **LEONARD KOFI ABBAH, OHC**

Pray for the people of Bolahun, students in our former schools, and for all in the surrounding region. So far, there have been no cases of Ebola in Bolahun itself; but it has already reached Vonjama, forty miles away, so it is probably only a matter of time.



Br. David Bryan at the Drop-In Centre

Since 1801 St. James' Church (now the Cathedral) has been on the same site in the heart of downtown Toronto, and is open daily. At intervals during the last 30 years members of the Order of the Holy Cross have been proud to be part of its ministry, notably in the persons of Fr. William Turkington, OHC, Br. Michael Stonebraker, OHC, and now myself. Among other things, on Tuesdays I am privileged to have a share in the ministry of the *Cathedral Drop-In Centre*.



Although St. James' has always offered help and hospitality to those in need, the *Drop-In Centre* was started 20 years ago as an intentional means of reaching out to God's people in the Cathedral neighbourhood. It began with one guest! The next week seven people came, and the week after that twenty. The number continued to grow until the former dining hall of the old Parish House was full. The Centre was begun under the leadership of Dean Duncan Abraham and his wife, Ann; the present Dean, the Very Revd. David Stoute and the Cathedral congregation continue to support it enthusiastically and generously. It now meets in Schnell Hall, a lovely, light-filled room in the new Cathedral Parish House.

The *Drop-In Centre* is open every Tuesday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. and is managed by a Facilitator and several volunteers. I serve as Chaplain. The Chaplain prays before the meal and is available for counsel, spiritual guidance, and friendly conversation. A hearty meal is served. The food is frequently provided by local restaurants. Volunteers prepare a homemade soup. Volunteers greet the guests and serve the food. Professional musicians play during the meal (they too are volunteers).

There is a foot clinic and some nursing assistance (the Cathedral employs a parish nurse). Toiletries and socks are distributed. Hair cutting is provided for men and women. Once a month there is a food box distribution done by *Fresh Direct Foods*. Guests pay a small sum for a large container of vegetables and fruit. A local bakery provides free bread. In the colder months, handmade scarves and hats are given out. Greeting cards and stamps are available for those who wish to send messages to loved ones.

Bible Study is provided by the Chaplain and two Seminary students [pictured above]. This is a popular part of the Tuesday gathering. For several years a trained psychotherapist offered her services to our guests. The afternoon concludes with a 30-minute sing-along (the Chaplain assists with this).

The Centre is also part of special community celebrations such as the Cathedral's annual *Canada Day Barbecue*, an elegant sit-down Christmas Dinner at nearby *Biaggio's Restaurant*, and Epiphany and Easter dinners done in the beautifully decorated Parish Hall. As the Revd. M. Jane Watanabe, the Cathedral's sometime associate priest wrote in 1994: "One of our unforeseen bonuses has been that some of our guests who join with the homeless are visitors to the Cathedral who are able to share our hospitality and witness our very real participation in the downtown community." St. Benedict's counsel of receiving all guests as Christ is thus the real reason for the *Cathedral Drop-In Centre*. Holy Cross Priory is privileged to share in this ministry. **DAVID BRYAN HOOPES, OHC**

+

Community Notes

Holy Cross Day (shown right) was the culmination of a busy Spring and Summer (not to mention Br. Brian's 40th anniversary of life profession!). In Easter Week Richard became a Canadian Citizen; in May Br. Leonard returned from Ghana; in June we all went to Chapter; in July we had a festive Canada Day, and served in a variety of ministries; in August we joined the SSJD Sisters for their Long Retreat; Leonard then returned to teaching in Ghana, and the rest of us took up our Fall duties. The upshot is: we're all trying to let "love act" as Fr. Huntington said we should.



CHECK IT OUT!
We're reconstructing our Website!
You can follow changes as they occur at
www.ohcpriory.com