



Concordia

Following the Xaverian Way

Graced Crossroads

All of life is a field of formation. And the human call, whether we accept it or not, is to allow ourselves to be formed, as the Brothers' *Fundamental Principles* say, "through the common, ordinary, unspectacular flow of everyday life." This call doesn't cease. As we know from our own experience, life has a way of bringing consistent, sometimes painful, sometimes glorious change.

As Brothers, and in communion with the wider Xaverian family, we are engaging in a process to place us in closer relationship with the charism and

deepest calls of our Congregation. We are using the image of "Graced Crossroads" for this process. The image reveals that, indeed, we are now and always on a path where past and present meet, and where the future is not just a direction, but a concrete choice to live with renewed love for the gift that is our vocation in the world, here, now, and eternally. So, we encounter the crossroads as a question: How do we live our vocation, our love of the world, today? Put another way: What are our unique gifts and where can we serve the world? In local, regional and international meetings of the Brothers in the year ahead we will examine these questions through the lens of mission, the lens of community and the lens of the resources (human resources, spiritual resources and financial resources) that will sustain and nourish our vocation at this crossroad and for the future.

We have a strong faith and belief that our mission and charism transcend culture, as we have Brothers from across the globe and from many different countries and backgrounds. We also see our mission and charism transcending even our vocation, as we have seen the passion with which Collaborators in our schools and Associates around the United States have taken to discovering a liberation and a freedom given by God through the common, ordinary, and unspectacular flow of everyday life. On page 2, you will read about a group of Associates and Brothers who gathered for a retreat this summer to explore what this image of the "Graced Crossroads" could mean for their



In June, Brothers representing the various geographic regions of the Congregation met with facilitator Ted Dunn, PhD (shown above left with Brothers Edward and Patrick Fumbisha) to reflect on a new process that will be initiated throughout the Congregation in the year ahead. (Also pictured above, Brothers Trésor, Philip, and Ghislain.)



In this issue

- Xaverian Associates share their experience of the 2016 Associates and Brothers Retreat
- At the "crossroad" in the Turkana Desert, St. James School is a model of collaboration
- Lowell Catholic, responds to needs for Catholic education and extends their program to pre-K through 12
- The Theodore James Ryken Society is introduced to sustain the mission of the Brothers
- We remember Brothers Peter Donohue, Nivard Scheel and Bede Benn
- Read about Concordia Society members Jim and Joann Marquart's reasons for including the Brothers in their planning

spiritual growth in the present.

The educational mission continues to manifest in new ways. You will read, on page 4, about a new endeavor the Brothers are involved with in Lodwar, in the Turkana Desert of Kenya. Additionally, the study of the Brothers' XBSS structure, as highlighted in the *Spring 2016 Concordia*, continues in very positive and enthusiastic ways. On page 5, you will read about Lowell Catholic, an XBSS school in Lowell, Massachusetts and their endeavor to incorporate an elementary school division into the school in response to the needs of their local community for Catholic education.

Since our last publication, we lost three Brothers that you will read about on page 6, whose lives contribute to our self-understanding as a Congregation, each in his unique way: Brother Peter through life giving

restorative justice in prison ministry; Brother Bede who was the embodiment of ordinariness; and Brother Nivard who faithfully broadened our educational mission through his administrative talents.

Our crossroads are graced because we are not just a "band of Brothers." We have invited, and will continue to invite others to share our charism and mission. On page 5, you will read about our new advancement initiative, the Theodore James Ryken Society, and on page 8, you will read about members of the Concordia Society, Jim and Joann Marquart, who have graciously shown their support for our mission by including the Brothers in their estate plans.

Pray for us as we seek renewal and deeper communion. And may God be with you in the crossroads of your life.

Graced Crossroads: 2016 Xaverian Associates & Brothers Retreat

By Mike Buckley & Jeannette Suflita

Brother Paul Murray welcomed 19 Associates and 20 Brothers to the Bon Secours Retreat Center in Marriottsville, MD for the July 8-10 retreat. Participants from Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland, DC, New York, Pennsylvania, New

England, and Lithuania came together to pray, listen, reflect, discuss, re-connect and celebrate the "Graced Crossroads" of our lives. Each day began with prayer led by participants from the various regions. Prayerful readings included scriptural



Nearly forty Brothers and Associates gathered for a weekend retreat in Marriottsville, MD, led by Father Joe Nangle, O.F.M. This is the second Associates & Brothers Retreat of its kind. The last one was held in 2014 and they are likely to continue on a biannual basis.

texts on mercy, the *Fundamental Principles* of the Xaverian Brothers, and excerpts from Pope Francis' "On Care for Our Common Home" (Laudato Si).

Associate Kevin Shearer from Maryland opened the retreat by launching us into thoughtful sharing using as a starting point Micah 6:8: "And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Our retreat facilitator Fr. Joe Nangle, O.F.M., known to the Brothers from his ministry in Latin America, linked the threefold requirement from Micah to the threefold commitment of Xaverian Associates: to commit to daily prayer, to nurture communion with the Brothers, and to serve the poor and marginalized. He graciously shared stories from his life about crossroads he faced in prayer, community, and service. After each presentation, we reflected on questions posed by Fr. Joe:

- How are we invited to a deeper relationship with God at the crossroads in our lives?
- How are we called to walk the road less travelled to strengthen relationships with others?
- How is the Spirit inviting us to choose a deeper sense of justice or a different outreach in service?

After reflection we met in small groups to share our insights and to dialogue with Fr. Joe about the challenges of these crossroads.

We celebrated a joyful Eucharistic Liturgy Saturday evening with Fr. Joe as presider, Chuck Belzner as homilist, and 3 students from Mt. St. Joseph High School leading us in song. Several additional Associates and Brothers from the area



Associate Kevin Shearer is a guidance counselor at Mount Saint Joseph High School. His wife, Carol Shearer committed to be an Associate at the end of the retreat weekend.



Brother Paul Murray, the director of the Associates program, with Associates and spouses Jeannette Sufлита and Mike Buckley. Jeannette and Mike participated on the Retreat Planning Committee.

also joined us for Mass and to renew friendships over dinner.

On our last morning, Associate Jeannette Sufлита engaged participants in a process designed to help us formulate plans for our next steps on the crossroads of prayer, community and service. The retreat formally ended with a Commitment and Renewal Service. We celebrated with Carolyn Shearer as she made her commitment as a new Associate. Each participant received a small wooden cross to remind us that we are companions on the cross/road. Brothers and Associates left renewed and uplifted by the sharing, prayer, and commitment to walk faithfully the path of prayer, communion, and service.

The Associates and Brothers in different regions meet throughout the year to support each other in friendship, prayer, and discussion about our commitment to service on behalf of the poor and marginalized. Currently there are 45 Associates in the program.

Do you feel that the Xaverian Brothers have touched your life in some way? Are you a former student, parent, or friend of the Brothers, and would you like to continue that relationship? Do you want to deepen Xaverian spirituality in your life? Do you feel called to serve the poor and marginalized? If yes, please consider the Associate Program. Contact Bro. Paul Murray at pmurray@xaverianbrothers.org if you have questions or to receive more information.

Photos by Associate Vincent Maligno

A “Graced Crossroad” in Collaboration



Bishop Kimengich and his staff are confident that the three buildings under construction now will be completed by January, and anticipates opening the school for approximately 40-70 students. At that time, the school will be able to house 80 students, and when fully functional, approximately 480 students.

Lodwar, Kenya is itself a “crossroad” town in the Turkana Desert of northern Kenya. The Xaverian Brothers have been ministering in the Diocese of Lodwar for over 40 years. The Brothers were among the first missionaries to begin working in this remote, isolated and extremely hot desert region in 1974. For years, many Brothers taught at St. Kevin’s School. Now, however, Brothers Louis Calmel, Michael Foley and Simon Wasike are engaged in ministry with the young men at St. James Minor Seminary, a residential program for young men considering a vocation to priesthood and religious life, while carrying out other ministries for the Diocese of Lodwar. Brother Louis works in the finance office, Brother Mike, after spending years in South Sudan, serves as accountant and bursar in addition to some teaching, and Brother Simon works in the Development Office of the Diocese as well as at Mary’s Meals, a food program for primary school children.



James Laughlin, President, Friends of Turkana; Willomena Esekou, Director of the Diocesan ‘Livelihoods Programme’; Sandra Villegas, Resource Mobilization Manager for the Diocese; Brother Louis; Noreen McKee, Friends of Turkana; and Bishop Dominic Kimengich, Bishop of Lodwar



Bishop Dominic, James Laughlin and Willomena

The young men at St. James have been going out each day to attend classes at one of the local secondary schools, St. Kevin’s or Lodwar High School; however, in terms of their formation and discernment of their vocation, this has been less than ideal. Bishop Dominic Kimengich had a different vision for St. James and shared this vision first with Brother Louis who has had over 20 years experience working with the Turkana people. Bishop Dominic’s vision was the creation of a new campus where the young men enrolled could both attend classes and receive the formation and leadership training that the Brothers have been providing the past 5 years.

Bishop Domenic shared this vision with Friends of Turkana, a Brooklyn based non-profit that has been working to make a positive difference in Turkana by encouraging self-sufficiency in water, health and education. Friends of Turkana were excited to partner with the Diocese and the Xaverian Brothers on this project and worked with us to apply for a grant to the Theresa and Edward O’Toole Foundation. A 3-year grant totaling \$750,000 was awarded last year and construction began in earnest last November. Brother Louis provides some onsite supervision of the construction, while the Friends of Turkana provide additional monitoring. A model of collaboration to serve the needs of evangelization at the “graced crossroad” in the heart of the Turkana Desert.

Lowell Catholic Extends School to Pre-K through 12th Grade

Exciting days are ahead at Lowell Catholic as the school extends its offering to a Pre-K through 12th grade school model. The Elementary school, for students in Pre-K through 8th grade opened in September of 2016. The Lowell Catholic Elementary School Division is located at St. Margaret Hall adjacent to the current upper school.

As a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School, Lowell Catholic Elementary

Division will focus on educating the whole child in a faith based environment, complementing a rigorous and engaging academic program in the STREAM curriculum with religion, fine arts, athletics and co-curriculars, helping to prepare students to be successful 21st century learners.

The XBSS Office prepared a special orientation to Xaverian sponsorship for the faculty, aides and coaches of the new elementary division on August 18, 2016. Presenters included faculty members from other Xaverian schools in the area, Mr. Christopher Vasta from Xaverian Brothers High School, Mrs. Lisa Cenca of Malden Catholic High School and Mr. Jason Larocque of St. John's Preparatory School. Through initiation to the Mission, Vision and Values of Xaverian education, the history of the Xaverian contribution to Catholic Education and the spirituality of Theodore James Ryken, the founder of the Xaverian Brothers, teachers were challenged to embrace the stewardship of this charism in their school.



The Theodore James Ryken Society

Many readers of *Concordia* have been faithful and generous donors to the Brothers for a number of years and so we are excited to let you know about the launch of our new giving society, *The Theodore James Ryken Society*. Through this new society we invite you to become intimately involved in the Brothers' Mission through your interest, moral support, prayers and donations. Members of this society believe so strongly in the Xaverian Mission that they join us at this time of "graced crossroads" by committing to invest \$1,000 or more each year to directly benefit a number of Xaverian Brothers' mission initiatives.

The Xaverian Mission touches the lives of the most needy of people on four continents: Europe, North America and the Caribbean, South America and Africa. The primary focus of our mission is evangelization through human development and education of youth. The question we ask ourselves in determining the focus of our mission is, "If we don't do this ministry, who will?"

Our General Leadership has put together a list of our

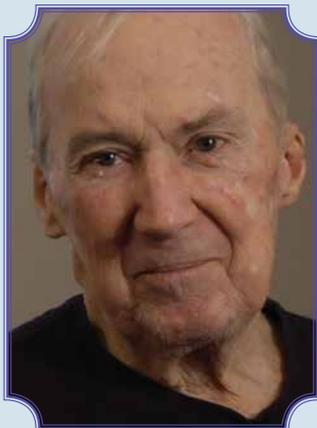
most pressing needs as we strive to fulfill our mission. We invite donors to learn more about the specific projects or programs, and consider various ways that you may offer support. While making an annual unrestricted gift allows General Leadership to assign money where needed, leadership gifts restricted for a specific program or project are ways of helping us sustain our mission or accomplish major capital needs. This is also a way for you to be more closely involved in our mission. As important as your financial support of our mission is, your prayers are also important. Please pray that our work will continue to move forward.

We hope that you will be as excited as we are in creating *The Theodore James Ryken Society* in order to sustain the Xaverian Brothers' Mission into the future.

To learn more about *The Theodore James Ryken Society* and the specific projects and programs for which we are soliciting support, contact our Advancement office at development@xaverianbrothers.org or by telephone at 410-644-0034.

Call Fulfilled

Brother Peter Donohue (Brother Owen) “Well done, good, and faithful servant...Now enter the joy of your Lord” (Mt. 25:21). Born in Manhattan to Mary and Patrick Donohue on February 8, 1927, Peter Donohue was the oldest of their children. Having moved to Brooklyn, Peter first met the Xaverian Brothers as a fifth grader at Holy Cross Elementary School. He recalled with affection his relationship with the Brothers: “My classmates and I were attracted to the Brothers. They were good teachers, but more than that, they knew us and even then seemed to minister God’s healing touch of love through word and deed.”



Upon graduating from Holy Cross, Pete attended Saint Joseph’s Juniate in Peabody, Massachusetts. He entered the Congregation in February, 1944. Peter earned his BA degree in English from Catholic University in Washington, DC and his Masters of theological studies from Saint John’s University in New York. Pete also did post graduate studies at Spalding in Louisville, the University of Maryland and Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Pete’s impulse for our Congregation’s mission became increasingly clearer and stronger throughout his seventy-two years as a Xaverian.

Sharing our Founder’s zeal for our mission, in 1949 Pete embraced his first assignment at Flaget High School, Louisville with his characteristic enthusiasm. With the same desire to contribute to the learning of his students, Peter moved across town to St. Xavier’s and spent the next five years there. He would return once again to Flaget (1960-67). In between these missions, Pete accepted with fervor the very challenging assignment to Mount Loretto, a residential school on Staten Island sponsored by the Archdiocese of New York for youngsters referred by the courts and known by the Brothers

as the ‘Rock’. These youngsters needed Brothers who were strict but also cared about them. Peter also taught at St. John’s High School, Worcester, MA from 1958-1960. Pete served in three Maryland schools: Ryken High School; Leonard Hall and Mt. St. Joseph, serving as head of school at the latter two.

Peter allowed the Spirit to lead him. Responding to a deep call to minister to the poor and marginalized Peter began his second mission in life. From 1973 -1996, Pete was involved in prison ministry. He spent twelve years at the Maryland

House of Corrections in Jessup, MD. From 1989 through 1996 Pete was Director of Detention Ministries for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and served as President of the American Correctional Chaplains Association from 1993-1996. Pete’s conversion to the Lord inspired in him a deep commitment to restorative justice. In a video clip prepared for the close the last General Chapter, Pete talks of restorative justice and the need for those who minister to prisoners, “... to simply love them.”

The following quote from Pete’s personal notes, speaks of his spiritual journey: I am 83 and being treated for cancer at Mass General, but I have never been happier, never felt holier. I pray every day for God to fill me with forgiveness and Love. This doesn’t mean I am not a sinner. I am ... But I have learned to love and forgive myself, to love and forgive others and to let God love and forgive me.

Peter’s life was an ordinary and common life inspired by his quest for God whether teaching in our schools,

working with adults in Eastern Kentucky at the David School or as Executive Director of St. Mary’s Human Development Center in Ridgeland, South Carolina or doing volunteer ministry at Catholic Charities in Brooklyn while taking monthly treatments at Sloan-Kettering. All that he did, he did with love.

Pete leaves us with a wonderful example of living our charism. For that we thank him. May he rest in the peace that Christ promises us. To view the wonderful video clip of Brother Peter speaking about restorative justice, go to:

<https://youtu.be/ctC-vvF1nCU>.

Brother Nivard (Gerard J. Scheel) A 1943 graduate of Mount St. Joseph, Baltimore Gerard J. Scheel felt the call to be a Religious and a teacher and began his formation as a Xaverian Brother in June following his graduation. He was invested in the Xaverian habit and given the name Brother Nivard on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1944. His life as a Religious Brother and an educator was a life spent making manifest God’s presence in the

world in the person of Jesus, his brother, but also in the wonders of creation and his beloved science, particularly Physics. His natural intelligence was recognized early and after completing his BA at Catholic University he was sent on to graduate work, receiving his MA in 1952 and his PhD in Physics in 1961. While doing his PhD work he taught at Xaverian Col-



lege, Silver Spring; Archbishop Stepinac HS in White Plains, NY and St. Xavier, Louisville. Xaverian folklore has it that for his doctoral dissertation Brother Nivard solved a tremendously complicated Physics problem and explained both the elements of the problem as well as its solution in six pages.

Nivard was a consummate teacher.

From his first mission at Stepinac to Saint Xavier and then back to teach at our College and later at Trinity College, Washington, DC, students who had him as an instructor ranked him among the best. He could engage the students' imagination. His explanations of the most difficult concepts and problems were always clear, and he was supportive of the students without compromising the rigor needed for analysis and problem solving.

His administrative talent was recognized early in his career. He was appointed President of Xaverian College in 1960. A position he held until 1966 when he was sent to serve as Principal at Nazareth HS, Brooklyn. His term at Nazareth was unusually brief as the provincial at the time was lobbied by Fr. John Whalen who had become Acting Rector of Catholic University for Brother Nivard to serve as his Executive Assistant. Brother Nivard would himself become Acting Rector (President) of Catholic University in 1968 and then serve as Vice President at CU until 1980, when he would become the Assistant Director of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men for 2 years. Although an effective and competent administrator, Brother Nivard's passion was teaching and so in 1982, he served as professor and later professor emeritus at Trinity College, Washington from 1982-1996.

In his "retirement years" Brother Nivard would dedicate himself once more to Catholic education on the secondary school level by serving as Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. He would make a significant contribution to establishing and developing governing boards for the schools of the Archdiocese and worked tirelessly with others to create a voucher program for parental school choice for low income families to attend Catholic schools. During his years in Milwaukee, Brother Nivard was an active member and supporter of the Cathedral parish. As old age caught up with him, he reluctantly stepped down from his role in the Catholic Schools Office and in 2014, took up residence at Ryken House, Louisville before being transferred to Nazareth Home.

General Superior Brother Edward Driscoll wrote about Brother Nivard,

"A life grounded in faithfulness to his vocation, Nivard used his exceptional talents in response to the greatest needs of the Church. His call to be a disciple of Jesus in the Congregation of the Xaverian Brothers was clear." He passed away peacefully at Nazareth Home on Sunday, May 1, 2016.

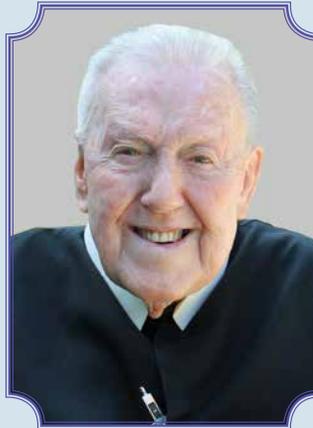
Brother Bede (Joseph Richard Benn) As Brother Bede, at the age of 95 and after 77 years as a Xaverian Brother, was passing from this world to the next on May 10, 2016, Brother Robert Green thought to himself, "this is what it is like to watch a saint die." A few days earlier when our Xaverian House nurse, Robin Rowell, went to visit Brother Bede at Hathorne Hill Rehabilitation Center, he greeted her with the words, "I'm going home." He knew that he was dying and was not afraid. Brother Robert and Robin asked him if he had any message to give them. Having some difficulty breathing, he was able clearly to tell them, "Thank God." Brother Robert would recall all of this in the eulogy he delivered at Bede's funeral.

A native of Somerville, MA, where he met the Brothers who taught at St. Joseph's Parish, Joe Benn did his high school studies at the Brothers' Juniorate in Peabody, MA and upon graduating entered the Congregation on February 14, 1939. He received the habit and took the religious name Brother Bede on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15th that same year. Although he began his undergraduate studies at Xaverian College and Catholic University, his studies were interrupted so that he could begin teaching first at St. Frances de Sales HS in Utica, NY and later at St. John's HS, Worcester, MA. He would earn his BS in Science from Loyola College, Baltimore with a major in physics and a minor in math, and his M.Ed at Worcester State College in 1955. In addition to his teaching in Utica (1943-44) and Worcester (1944-56), Brother Bede was a well-respected and loved teacher at Malden Catholic (1956-64) and at Xaverian Brothers HS, Westwood, MA. (1964-71). Brother

Bob would note in his eulogy, "The affection of his students in Worcester, Malden and Westwood was always beyond his understanding."

Brother Edward Driscoll wrote, "In the Spirit of Saint Francis Xavier, Bede saw the various teaching assignments he received as an act of obedience. Bede was carrying out the Founder's desire that his Brothers tend to the religious formation of young people, while at the same time providing them a solid education so they could take their place in society. Bede did the former by his example as a joyful and faithful religious and the latter through his love of physics and math and his deep desire to see students learn."

In 1970, Bede was one of a band of Brothers who realized our Founder's unfulfilled dream of ministering among the Native Americans. Bede would be



"sent as a missionary" to the Lakota in South Dakota. Given his very gentle and open disposition, Bede readily related to people of another culture. He ministered and lived among the Lakota for over 25 years (1972-1999). Upon leaving South Dakota, he took up retirement ministry first at St. John's, Shrewsbury (2001-03) and later at Malden Catholic

(2003-2009) where he served as a math tutor and an example of fidelity and the joy of Religious life until moving to Xaverian House, Danvers in 2009.

Brother Edward Driscoll would conclude his notice to the Brothers about Brother Bede's death, writing, "Bede lived for God and God alone. May his life continue to inspire us and bring us closer to Christ. May he intercede for the Congregation he loved so much. May he rest in peace." A video clip of an interview with Brother Bede can be found on-line at:

https://youtu.be/j_m-rbkZCys.



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The Xaverian Brothers Concordia Society

James Marquart graduated from St. Xavier High School in Louisville, KY in 1953. Jim and his wife, Joann, have included the Xaverian Brothers in their estate plans because, as he says, "This is a way for me to pay them back for all that they did for me." Jim also shared with us what the Brothers have meant to him, "They were a dominant factor in straightening out the goals of my life. They inculcated a desire for learning and understanding of the world. They also gave me a lot of discipline and always treated me with respect." The Xaverian Brothers are grateful to Jim and Joann for being members of our Concordia Society.



We invite you to join Jim and Joann as a member of the Concordia Society. Your remembrance of the Brothers assures them that the vibrant mission of the Xaverian Brothers will be sustained in the years to come.

Your generous bequest will help defray some of these escalating costs:

- Our educational efforts in the U.S. through our Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School program
- The care and support of our growing number of aged and infirm Brothers
- Our missionary activities and the growth of the Congregation in some of the poorest areas of our world

For a list of benefits and other information, or if you have already included the Brothers in your estate plans, please contact Stephanie Stricker at the Xaverian Brothers Mission Advancement Office: sstricker@xaverianbrothers.org

Jim and Joann Marquart with Brother Edward Driscoll, General Superior, at Ryken House, Louisville, KY.