

ASSOCIATE NOTES

October 2014

*Remembering Gwen Costello | Regional Updates | Five Ordinary Mysteries Retreat
Interview with Brother John Hamilton | Update on Letter to XBSS Seniors*



Associate Greg Mason (left), Brother Raphael Wanjala, and Kevin Shearer talk at the Five Ordinary Mysteries Retreat in June.

Maryland

A Maryland Xaverian Associates Group met on Sunday, August 24th and included Associates: Mike Buckley, Chuck Ehrman, Ana Lopez, Ann Nichols, Jeannette Suflita, and Peg Weidner and Brothers Bob Arrowsmith, Cornie Hubbuch, Jerry O'Leary, and special guest, Brother Bonaventure Scully. The meeting was hosted by Peg and David Weidner at their home in Monrovia, MD – affording many of us a quiet and peaceful Sunday drive in the country.

We began with a light breakfast and time to catch up on summer wanderings. Peg led us in opening prayer and introduced the theme of transitions and the changes in our lives, both welcome and challenging. Many in the group are facing such transitions: a new teaching job; a child entering high school, a move to Ryken House, a change in health status, etc. We also reflected on transition with the death of Gwen Costello, and the significant part that she and Rich played in establishing the Associates Program. Those who were able to attend the funeral shared their experience with the group.

Participants then were invited to take a selection from a "quote jar" that held a variety of short readings from scripture or texts dealing with transition and change. We quietly considered how the quote spoke to us and applied to our lives and then shared our reflections with each other.

We were treated to a special lunch prepared by Peg and "grill master" David. Our final sharing was a thank you gift and blessing for Brother Cornie who has been with our group from the beginning of the Associates Program. We wished him well as he prepares to move to Louisville, KY.

We agreed to meet again on Sunday, October 26th with Bob, Chuck, Ana, and Ann preparing the session. **Ω**

New England

On Saturday, July 19, Brother Ray Hoyt hosted the New England Associates group at his home in Westwood, MA for a gathering around the theme of "Leisure and Contemplation." Brother Joe Pawlika wrote of the meeting: "The summer offers many of us a chance to relax and recover a sense of direction and perspective for our busy lives. Even so, many of us felt that during the summer break, we just got busy in different ways." The group read a chapter of Br. David Stendl-Rast's *Gratefulness: The Heart of Prayer*, had some time for private reflection, and discussed the chapter as a group. There was a cookout to conclude the day, with goodies supplied by Gail Dennig. The New England group is planning their next meeting for the Fall. **Ω**

Upcoming Meetings

New York Tuesday, September 30, 2014

Maryland Sunday, October 26, 2014



"She is a dream come true!"

Yahara Nayeli Spahr, was born on August 19, 2014 at 7 lbs 14 oz and 20 inches long to Associate Chris Spahr and his wife Nayeli.



In Massachusetts, Associate Steven Ultrino

won the Democratic primary election for State Representative for Malden's 33rd Middlesex District. The next election is to be held on November 4th.



Steve Applegate

Our newest Associate is Steve Applegate!

Steve applied to the Associates after attending the Retreat in June. His familiarity with the Brothers stems from his work in support of missions in Haiti.

While a board member of the McKenna Vocational School, he stayed at Maison Fortune Orphanage with Brothers Harry Eccles, Mike McCarthy, and Bill Griffin. Steve is also a friend of Brother Cos Rubencamp.

Steve is an artist, animal enthusiast, comedian, and cyclist. He is involved with "The Haiti Committee" at his home parish, the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond, Virginia, in addition to his work on the Marketing and Development Committee for the Maison Fortune Foundation and as chair of the Diocese of Richmond Haiti Commission Communication Support Team.

Steve joined the Associates because he desires to share his faith with people who value their own faith and the spiritual life.

Steve will be joining the Southern MD/ Virginia Region. Welcome!



Brother Cornie chats with Brother Pete Mahoney after a session at the summer retreat.

Goodbye...and Hello, Brother Cornie!

Brother Cornie Hubbuch, a coordinator of Associates in the Maryland region, has concluded many years of work at the Xaverian Brothers Generalate in Baltimore. Brother Cornie's eternally positive personality will be missed by the Associates in MD, but it will certainly be welcomed by our Associate group in Louisville, KY, where Cornie moved at the end of September. Louisville is Cornie's childhood home. He is looking forward to being nearer to family, many friends, and his fellow Brothers at Ryken House. Cornie attended a meeting of the L'ville associate group early this year, and is looking forward to being a more frequent participant in the group. Congratulations on your many years of service at the Generalate and all the best in your new endeavors, Brother Cornie! **Ω**

Gwen Costello

Richard Costello remembers his wife and her relationship to the Brothers and Associates.



When Brother Larry told me that they wanted to do an article on Gwen for the Associates Newsletter. I told him I appreciated that idea. I didn't know that a day or two later Chris would email with some questions about Gwen that would make the article more personal. I also didn't realize how difficult it would be to write this piece partly because of the grief that I feel, but also because Gwen was in many ways a complex and beautiful person.

Why did Gwen love the Brothers? The answer to that is easy because she loved me. Through my friendship and love for them, she got to know them herself and came to embrace the uniqueness and giftedness of each. She loved Bro. Cornie's optimistic outlook on life, Bro. Art's compassion during her bouts with cancer over the last 5 years. She admired the love and dedication Bro. Mike had for the poor of Haiti, and for Bro. Harry's commitment to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. She found in Bro. Rich Mazza a gentle loving person who was always so thoughtful of our anniversaries and birthdays. She loved these men and the list of those unnamed could go on and on. Gwen found in the Brothers a compelling simplicity. She commented to me at one of the Associate Retreats that if a stranger walked into the room where the Brothers and Associates were gathered and listened for awhile no one would be able to distinguish the Brothers from the

Associates—there was no sense of hierarchy here.

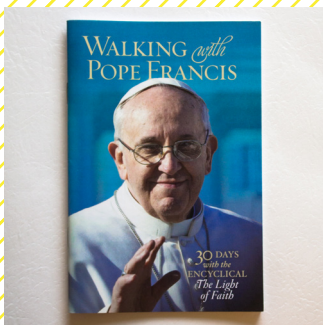
It was because of these friendships that Gwen established with the Brothers that when I was asked to begin the Associate Program, Gwen immediately agreed to help write much of the foundational materials. She knew that it was a dream of Bro. Bonaventure that the Brothers have an Associate Program and that knowledge and her love for Bo made the task even more compelling.

But it wasn't just the Brothers that helped her embrace the Associates program, it was the wonderful men and women who we came to know and love and that was especially true for Brothers Cos and Dan Doherty, Barbara Ives and Brooke Schaab, members of our VA and Southern Maryland Group.

One of the commitments that we as Associate make is to pray daily. Gwen prayed and meditated often during the day. Usually when she prayed she wrote. She also had a small well-worn prayer book that she used daily. It was filled with favorite prayers, pictures of people that she loved, death cards of friends. This morning as I began to think of what to say about her I came across this prayer. She did not write it, but ever the editor, she changed words, inserted others. But if she were standing over my shoulder now I think she would want these to be her final words to all Associates about the importance of prayer in our lives »

Gwen passed away on Thursday, August 7, 2014 just two weeks after having been diagnosed with cancer that had metastasized in her liver.

Learn to listen! The voice inviting you is voiceless.
 Most ancient of all voices.
 Listen within the cells of your being.
 From the marrow of your bones, listen.
 From the deepest source of your life, listen.
 A holy vibration, a gentle movement, a persistent tugging—summons
 you into the deepening places.
 Learn to go deep! Embrace the depths.
 A voice without words calls you to the deepening places.
 Learn to abide. Remain in God as God remains in you.
 Live in God. Abide. Dwell. Inhabit. Reside.
 Trust the deepening places.
 Learn to listen! Silent as the leaves that fall, silent as the blossoming
 flowers, silent as the moment before dawn.
 You are being summoned into the temple of silence.
 Practice silence, for this voiceless voice can be heard only in the
 shrine of silence.
 You are being chosen for the deepening places.



As Richard mentions, Gwen was an avid writer, and worked at the publishing house Twenty-Third Publications. She has left behind for us several spiritual texts, including the recent, *Walking with Pope Francis: 30 Days with the Encyclical The Light of Faith*. The small booklet can be purchased on Amazon, along with several of her other writings. Richard has informed us there is a series of Advent reflections forth coming. We will let you know when that booklet is available for purchase.

A Summer Home

Sister Donna Markham's ordinary mysteries resonated with Associates and Brothers alike.



Sr. Donna Markham, of the Dominican Sisters of

Adrian, Michigan, gave Brothers and Associates a wonderful retreat experience in June. Over two days and in three presentations, Sr. Donna presented what she called "Five Ordinary Mysteries." Vocation, home, displacement, memory, and joy are ordinary by virtue of their presence in each person's life. They are mysterious because they are open to transcendence, encounter with the presence of God. She commented during the introduction to her presentations that "God created human-beings not human-doings," and so therefore, her presentations were not about the mysteries of becoming more functionally efficient, rather, her presentations expressed ideas that press us to understand more deeply what makes us most human, most vulnerable, and open to who we truly are.

THE MYSTERY OF VOCATION

The mystery of vocation, Sr. Donna said, "is where our deepest joy meets the world's greatest need." But discovering our joys and the world's deep needs is not easy. We are often distracted by the things that give us mere pleasure. Sr. Donna commented paradoxically that "It takes a long time to become the persons we've always been."

We wear masks, that hide who we truly are. Sometimes we wear them to fool others and sometimes we don't realize that in putting on "masks" we only fool ourselves. Brother Bob Arrowsmith reflected that it was often in his work that he "felt scared that I would be discovered." We put on masks that make us feel more capable, less vulnerable, like the person we wish we were.

Societal pressures often press us to embrace a "fake it to make it" attitude—to put forth a (false) competence. As a counter to those pressures that shield us from the true

mystery of vocation. Sr. Donna says that "it is important for us to feel 'utterly useless.'" At certain moments in life there is nothing that "I" can do. "It has to be God who works through us," Sr. Donna concludes. It is in this way that we can feel God's presence in our limitedness—the limitedness that makes us human; who we are! Here we can find joy. "When we are true to ourselves, our minds and hearts are open."

Sr. Donna asked that the Brothers and Associates reflect on the following three questions: 1) What are some masks I have worn during stages of my life? 2) Are you comfortable being "useless"? Recall a time when you felt that way? 3) How do you describe your true vocation (not what you do, but who you are)?

THE MYSTERY OF HOME

Home is more than a place. Home is about grace, gratitude, and even holiness. At the heart of the mystery of home is the question: "Where do I belong?" The answer to that question for Sr. Donna seemed to be fundamentally one of relationality. There cannot be home without *being with* others. So, equally as fundamental to the mystery of home is the question: "How do we build a home?"

For one, we cannot be "independent monads" living in the same place. We must encounter each other. As language is a fundamental means of ordinary encounter, Sr. Donna observed, "Failures in community life are due to the inability to say these things: 'I don't know.' 'I'm sorry.' 'I need help.' 'I was wrong.' 'Thank you.'" These things are sometimes difficult for us to say, but Sr. Donna suggests that we need to examine how we feel inside when we say these phrases.

We have to put in effort to build our home with our communities—"We build the home by going the extra ➤"

Sister Donna Markham speaks at her final presentation for Associates and Brothers on Five Ordinary Mysteries.

mile with one another." And it is important to see home as "the place where we share what matters most." As Associates groups, this a wonderful model of understanding who we are communally. Can we be the place where we share what matters most with each other?

Finally, Sr. Donna concluded by looking outward, saying "There must come a time when we realize we [all of creation] are all family." And so, part of building a home is inviting those who are lost.

Sr. Donna asked Brothers and Associates to reflect on the following questions: 1) What happens inside you when you say: 'I don't know.' 'I'm sorry.' 'I need help.' 'I was wrong.' 'Thank you.' 2) How are you coming home? Sr. Donna's third question in this section, "What matters most to you?," included an interesting exercise that is shared on page 12 of this newsletter.

and dying, but who still mustered the energy to offer her suffering for another sister who was trapped in a dangerous location in the Middle East. This dying sister was asked to do something within her capacity, but something that made her move outside of her own suffering. She selflessly gave of herself in maybe the only way she could. The sister in danger made it to the United States safely, and two weeks later the sister who had offered her suffering for the good of another died having given all she had to give.

When we are willing to be displaced, any place can become "home." We must ask: Am I willing to let go for the greater good?—whatever that may mean in this particular time and in this particular circumstance.

Sr. Donna asked the group to reflect on the following question: How have I been "displaced" (physically, spiritually, mentally) in response to the needs of the mission?

THE MYSTERY OF MEMORY

"We need to remember what is worth remembering and let go of what is not," Sr. Donna said. For when we remember what is not worth remembering, we are wasting precious time being distracted. But when we remember those things worth remembering we grow closer to the mystery of God.

Like Sr. Donna's notion of "home" as the place where you share what matters most, memory and thus storytelling in service of our memory is not wasted when we share those memories that matter most, that illuminate the presence of God within our shared experience. Sentimentality and nostalgia can often be barriers to a memory that is true and deep, so it is worth asking if we are holding onto memories that are keeping us from moving forward or from encountering new life and spirit.

Sr. Donna asked that we reflect on the question: What about your Xaverian life is worth remembering? Tell those stories!

THE MYSTERY OF JOY

"It is in the invisible presence of God that Grace happens," Sr. Donna said as she began her final presentation on the mystery of joy. Sr. Donna went on to say, "True Joy comes from being available for God's work; who I am meant to be in this moment in time." This particular comment circled back to her Vocation presentation, but also seemed to encompass each ordinary mystery that she presented on. Joy, then, was always pervading each mystery, because within each mystery is a presence to God. And in being present to God we find joy. Though, Sr. Donna was quick to point out that this understanding of true joy was no cheap sense of joy. She remarked, "joy never crosses out suffering. They are intimately connected." We need look no further than the cross to see this image of Christian Joy.

Sr. Donna asked that we reflect on the following question: Think of a time when you experienced deep joy. How was that experience reflective of your true self—the person you have always been and continue to make available to others? **Ω**



Associates Ana Lopez (top left) and Peg Weidner discuss Sr. Donna's presentation at the Associate and Brothers Retreat. Associate Michael Buckley (bottom left) poses for a picture with Brother Placide Ngoie, who was visiting from Kenya.

THE MYSTERY OF DISPLACEMENT

The mystery of displacement is really about the capacity to be available for mission. In the context of consecrated life this phrasing might make most sense, but for Associates who live in various contexts there is an analogous way of considering displacement. We might say that displacement is a capacity to respond to The Spirit's call. As people of the gospel, Sr Donna says, "This is what we are called to do; to be uprooted."

Displacement then is not only about our willingness to move physically, but about our willingness to move spiritually and mentally, as well. Sr. Donna recounted a story about one of the sisters in her order who was bed ridden

One-Fold Reflections

An email interview with Brother John Hamilton about his new series of reflections being posted to LivingtheCharism.com.



Associate Notes: Brother John, a couple weeks back Living the Charism began to publish your "Reflections" on the website. What were the origins of this project?

Br. John Hamilton: Thanks for your question. The General Chapter of 2013 approved for the first time a description of the Xaverian Charism and began an articulation of a uniquely Xaverian spirituality. Through historical research, we had begun to discover that Brother Ryken's religious formation and sensibility had been profoundly, even if largely unconsciously, influenced by Middle Dutch mysticism and its very rich understanding of the inextricable bond between true contemplation and action in service to others.

As the newly elected leadership team began its work together, it occurred to me that it could be valuable to offer a reflection on the scripture of the day that was informed by the spiritual tradition of Ryken and of the Middle Dutch Mystics as a context for our work of that day. So, I began to offer each weekday morning my own reflection on the scriptures, usually the gospel, of the day, from that perspective. With the advent of our newly designed websites, we thought it could be worthwhile to share these reflections with all who might find them helpful in their unique living out of the "Xaverian Way."

AN: You use many sources outside of the Xaverian and Middle Dutch traditions, as well. How do you choose these sources?

JH: The other sources come from my study in the area of spirituality plus my own personal reading. I find the classic works of all the great wisdom traditions to be a great source of encouragement, challenge, and consolation on the spiritual path. Poets and writers of both fiction and nonfiction are also real companions on the human and spiritual journey.

Oftentimes, my reflection comes out of the daily scripture reading, but it is also interesting to me how my current reading (as my current experience) informs my reading of the scripture. So, interestingly enough, it is not unusual that something I have very recently read illuminates the scripture reading of the morning and thus the scripture reading more deeply integrates the previous reading experience. So, at times I select a source based on my own reflections and at other times the reading itself actually sources my reflection for the day.

AN: As you are open to and influenced by a multiplicity of spiritual traditions and texts, what have you found to be most distinctive about "Xaverian" spirituality? »

Brother John (left) presents on behalf of the Committee on Governance with Brother Raphael Wanjala at last summer's General Chapter.

JH: Two distinctively and contemporarily relevant insights of Brother Ryken are, I believe, his focus on the ordinary (or one-fold) and the common.

For Ryken, as for Ruusbroec, the heart of the spiritual life is the recognition that the life of each of us, when we are living from our proper and true place, is "the same ordinary ground" as that from which the brightness of the Divine "immeasurably shines forth." This ordinary ground, this true place, is who we are in God, before we begin to remake and redefine ourselves in conformity to society and culture. And so, it is a teaching that our call is to keep "becoming" ourselves as God made us and knows us in our ordinarieness, not in all we have developed to try to make ourselves extraordinary. From the time I was a young student of the Xaverian Brothers I recognized in so many of them the lack of pretension or privilege. I was immediately amazed that these "religious men" were the most ordinary and simple of human beings, who did their work and cared for us. It is this ordinarieness, to which we must return with great spiritual effort, that is the source of a "brotherly" presence and ministry.

The second distinctive insight, I believe, is that of "the common life." This essentially is the understanding that the "heights of contemplation" and the daily run of human activity are not separate from one another. The active life in the world can seem to us to be at odds with the call to communion with God in the contemplative life. Yet, Ryken longed for his followers to come to realize the common life. Ryken understood that falling in love with God requires us to put ourselves in God's service. Love of God is a direction and an action; and the most ordinary of daily acts in service is done in communion with God and is a radiating of the love of the God in whom we are living.

"From the time I was a young student of the Xaverian Brothers I recognized in so many of them the lack of pretension or privilege."

AN: As Associates we are committed to daily prayer. And Xaverian Spirituality, as you point out, calls us to open our hearts to God in the most common of daily experiences. Yet, we are constantly distracted in daily life away from the ordinary (the one-fold). How do you deal with distractions and the frustrations that they give rise to?

JH: The simplest answer to the question is that because our mind is busy, we are always going to be distracted to some degree. However, we can practice "bringing back" our mind to whatever it is we are engaged in each time that we begin to lose our mindfulness and presence. The spiritual tradition speaks of recollection because it recognizes that it is of our nature to become dispersed. A teacher of mine always said that "Human life is life in diaspora." So, when we realize that we are not present where we are, we can bring our attention back. The more we practice this the more we become more "recollected" and fully present. We also become less dispersed through the daily practice of meditation and

mindful living.

It is also important to say something about the "feelings" of frustration that our distractions engender in us. Frustration is always an expression of ego or willfulness. We get frustrated because we are who we are and not who we demand of ourselves to be. It is of the very nature of the "one-fold" the simple presence in our own deepest reality and the rest that God would offer us there. So, when we feel frustrated with ourselves perhaps we can learn to smile at ourselves and recognize that our inability to even stay fully present "to the one thing that is necessary" is another reminder of the weak but loved creatures that we are.

AN: Thank you for the interview. One final question: At the Retreat this past June, Sr. Donna Markham spoke about five "ordinary mysteries." Perhaps paradoxically, two of those ordinary mysteries, Home and Displacement, seem to come together in your teacher's quote ("Human life is life in diaspora"). At times we suffer from a sense of "displacement" in life, yet we are also granted a sense of "home" within the displacement. How do you see our Associate communities in light of this image of human life as being "life in diaspora"?

JH: You're welcome. Thank you for the very thought provoking questions.

Sr. Donna, as I recall, said that home was the place where we could share what was most important to us. I think, in this light, we can begin to appreciate the potential for the Associate communities as an aspect of home for each of us. It is by sharing, and by listening to others, that what is most important to us begins to become clarified and embodied in our lives. In light of our earlier questions, it can be a place where we come to recognize and to help others recognize more fully the richness and beauty of our and their ordinarieness. And this recognition is not self-referential and certainly not self-centered but, as common to all, it is a unique call and task to the world.

The sadness of life in diaspora is that we are constantly being pulled out of what is most ordinary and common in us toward a self-definition that is a comparative and competitive product of society and culture. It is an identity that is precisely the opposite of ordinary (in that it wants recognition above all) and common (in that it wants to see ourselves as separate from the others). As St. Augustine wrote in Chapter X of the Confessions: "You were within and I was in the external world and sought you there." The Associate community is a home insofar as it is a place where we create a space where each of us experiences the trust and possibility of sharing what is most important to us so that individually and as a community we might discover through that expression and listening the unique mission to the world at each stage and moment of our lives that is the ordinary and common life of each of us. **Ω**

First Letter to the Alums

A follow up report on the Associate's letter of invitation to XBSS graduating seniors.

In May, you'll recall, we sent out a letter of invitation

to a select number of graduating seniors at each XBSS school—roughly 6 students at each school and the entire graduating class at Mount Saint Joseph in Baltimore. While there were no expectations that the project would yield fruit in any immediate way, we are pleased to report that we received a response to the letter from three students who attended The Mount.

Kevin Shearer and Chuck Belzner, of the Maryland group who originated this idea, were active in bringing the letter to the students and facilitating a response. **Next steps »**

WINTER BREAK RETREAT

All three students that responded expressed interest in attending a retreat during their college winter break. Kevin Shearer has offered his home as a meeting place this winter to plan for a possible retreat. We've invited the three letter respondents and some other XBSS alums to come together and discuss and help plan a Winter Break Retreat for next year (December 2015 or January 2016).

STAYING IN TOUCH

When the students are off at college, it would be nice to place an Associate in touch with the students. A possible program might include pairing an Associate with a student, so that the Associate could reach out with a care package, letter, or prayer card; perhaps once each semester. Or if there is a student away from home, but near an Associate, we could connect them as a potential means of support.

CONNECTING EARLY

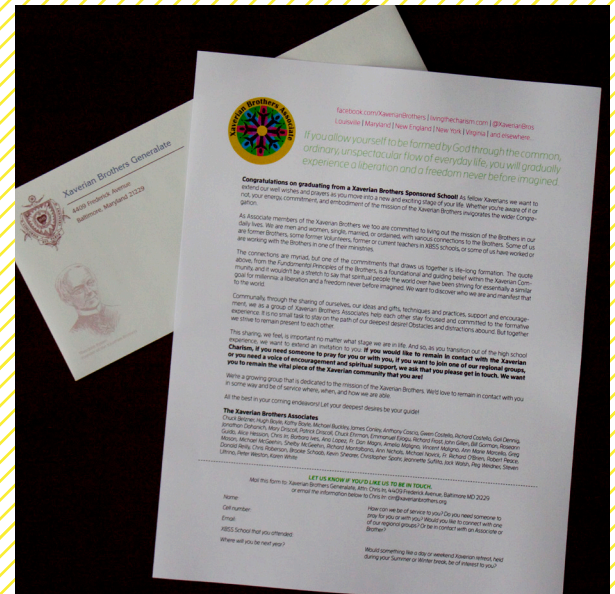
The letter was the first movement in what could be a new way of keeping in contact with those students who are most drawn to the Xaverian Way. We are discussing and seeking new ways to engage the XBSS students earlier, so that they

are aware of the Associate Program and its commitments to daily prayer, outreach to the poor and marginalized, and communion with the Xaverian Brothers. Through an energetic engagement and service to these young people we, as Associates, have an opportunity to not only expand our ranks, but give support to young men and women who are seeking ways to live the gospel life in these times.

GETTING INVOLVED

The letter of invitation to the students was, at least in one way, our saying "this Associates program that we are inviting you to be in contact with is good. It is oriented toward the good!" While we are still discovering what we are and who we are and what we do, all of us are here, not out of obligation, but out of belief that prayer, outreach, and communion are important to us—they matter a great deal. So the first way that we can participate in this outreach to students is to try daily to live out the commitments. Additionally, if you'd like to participate in the winter break retreat planning or in the pairing program, please get in contact with Chris Irr. Also, if you have any ideas, please discuss them in your regions and have your regional coordinators send suggestions along. **Ω**

The letter was handed to the selected students by Associates, if available, or their campus ministry office.



To Volunteer?

What opportunities would an XB volunteer program create for Associates?

In light of the impetus coming from the mission and charism statement, the General Administration wants to explore reconstituting the Xaverian Volunteer program to promote its mission spirituality by witnessing the gospel and serving the poor and those who find themselves on the margin of society. At present we envision small bands of Brothers, Associates, and Volunteers who are willing to commit themselves in mission communities.

From an internal memo by Brother Edward Driscoll on "Reconstituting the Xaverian Volunteer Program."

In a recent memo to the Generalate leadership

team, Brother Edward Driscoll expressed the aspiration to reconstitute the Xaverian Volunteer Program with the hope of Associate participation.

At this early stage there is no telling where this vision for the Volunteer Program might move. But it is clear from the memo that the General Administration has a vision of congregational mission that is not limited to Brothers, but extends to Associates, as well.

The reconstitution of such a program and the invitation to Associates to participate would require many of us to ask whether we are being called in this particular way at this particular stage in our life. Certainly, living in a mission community would require much, and not all, maybe not even many Associates would be in a position to pursue such a path. But, no doubt, there will be some who might be up for this type of reorientation of daily living; and the Associate Program as a whole would benefit much from having this kind of common missionary experience.

Associates Chris Spahr, Greg Mason, Jonathan Dohanich, Michael McGeehin, and Chris Roberson were all XB Volunteers post-college. But a reconstitution of the program would ask current Associates of any age, if they are being called to serve as a missionary.

Brother Edward invites interested Associates to become a part of the effort to reestablish the program. **Ω**



Associate Michael McGeehin (top, left) shares cake with Brother Mike McCarthy (top right) before embarking to Haiti. Brother Cosmas Rubencamp presents Associate Greg Mason with a Bible at his commissioning ceremony (bottom).

What matters most to you?

After her reflection on the ordinary mystery of Home, Sr. Donna offered the exercise below as a personal reflection for Associates and Brothers.

Someone once challenged Ernest Hemingway to write a novel in six words. Always up to the challenge, he wrote "For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn." He is known to have said it was the best thing he ever wrote.

Write your 6 word "novel" on the mystery of what matters most to you. Six words only--nothing more, nothing less.

MY SIX WORD REFLECTION ON WHAT MATTERS MOST

1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____