

Concordia

FOLLOWING THE XAVERIAN WAY



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Pictured above: Brothers Clement, James Connolly, Jeremiah O'Leary, David Mahoney and J. Robert Houlihan (Arnold).

In a World of Change, Mission Remains the Same

In a year of drastic global changes, the mission of the Xaverian Brothers remained the same. Even more poignant in the midst of darkness, the charge of living ordinary lives that give witness to God's unconditional love burned brighter as Brothers throughout the world adapted to new circumstances while continuing to serve others.

Unable to travel due to COVID-19, General Superior Brother Daniel Skala regularly stayed in touch with the Congregation via online Zoom meetings and phone calls. The novitiate was moved to Nairobi due to travel restrictions. Brothers met with each other on video conference calls, from Baltimore to Belgium, Louisville to Kenya, Boston to Congo.

The General Council and the leadership teams in each region met virtually, sharing information about schools, restrictions, regional happenings, and encouraging one another in prayer and supplication. Virtual events were held throughout the year, video messages were made, and online prayer services were held.

cont'd p.6

A Xaverian Journey Through Advent

This year, the Xaverian Brothers were thrilled to share their very first, exclusive Advent Resource Booklet. 'Preparing our Faith – A Xaverian Journey Through Advent' featured daily reflections from Brothers, Generalate Staff, Associates, and XBSS staff. Meetings were held throughout the summer and fall via Zoom to collaborate on the project.

"Producing our own Xaverian Brothers' book of Advent reflections had been a goal of mine for a while," said Brother Lawrence Harvey. "I knew that our benefactors and others appreciated the booklet we sent each year as a thank you for their generosity and I was pretty sure they would appreciate a uniquely Xaverian booklet this year even more so."

For Brother Larry, the collaborative experience of working with other Brothers, Xaverian Associates, and partners in mission was a rewarding experience. The project was approached in a prayerful and reflective way, which for Brother Larry, helped in writing his own reflections for the book.

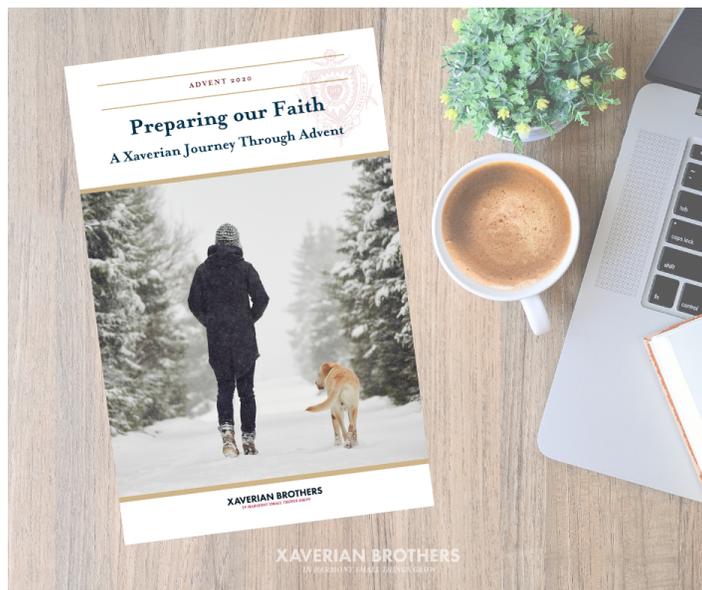
"I was very pleased with some of the common themes of Xaverian spirituality which came through in the booklet," he stated. "The variety of reflections really added to my own prayer during the Advent season."

An inspiring vehicle to help readers pray through Advent in an exclusively Xaverian manner, each individual reflection was posted online and across social media channels and across platforms as well as a full online version of the booklet.

"I felt honored to have been asked to participate in the creation of the book," said recently retired Brother Joseph Pawlika. "I saw it as an opportunity to actually collaborate on a project that joined us in our commitment to a shared Xaverian Charism."

The invitation challenged Brother Joe's willingness and generosity to offer his time and creativity to the planning meetings and to the reflection and writing that would be his part in the process.

"The preparation was a kind of pre-Advent experience which helped to make Advent a bit more meaningful and fruitful for me," he said. Brother Joe confessed that he hesitated a bit in accepting the invitation to contribute to the project because he knew that his prayer and reflection



experiences would be changed by being part of a 'project' that had an end-product in view.

"My reflections and prayer during the preparation months were colored by the awareness that I would be writing a reflection that needed to be open, inviting and suitable for people in many different lifestyles and in many different life situations," he shared.

Each meeting led the group through a process that began with "What are we trying to do? What procedures and structures would help keep us on track and on schedule and to give each other feedback and advice?" There was a clear understanding regarding the expectations and responsibilities of the collaborating writers, editors, and production staff; providing the contributors with a sense of freedom and creativity without the burden of worry regarding editing, production, and distribution.

Stephanie Stricker, Associate Director of Mission Advancement, expressed her joy in coordinating with the Advent team. She looked forward to each meeting and was inspired by the unique vantage points each member contributed. For Benjamin Horgan, XBSS Formation Director, working with the team was inspiring for both his professional and faith life.

"From the start, our group was on the same page that we had to make this Advent resource personal by reflecting our real-life experiences of this liturgical season," he said. "We had a diverse team of Brothers, Associates, and lay partners in mission on the writing committee and each brought their unique experience of our Xaverian tradition to the project."

Benjamin Horgan was humbled by the vulnerability of his colleagues. The project helped him experience the deeper intimacy with God that he had been craving during the pandemic.

“I appreciated simply being asked to contribute,” said Steve Ruemenapp, Director of Community Formation & Religious Studies Teacher at St. John’s Prep. “My life in Xaverian education has been extremely life-giving, so to be able to have an opportunity to share faith with folks in the Xaverian community was really lovely. I appreciated the community aspect of the meetings and the feeling of inclusion that was fostered by all. It was important for me to try to authentically pray over the readings of Advent and be in prayer with those folks who were taking the time to read it.”

Structurally clean and neat; coherent and inspirational, when Brother Joe got his hands on his printed copy, he felt he had received a gift from the Xaverian Congregation that was likewise a gift from all the Xaverian Brothers, Associates, and collaborators.

“I feel that one of the strongest gifts was the fact that the booklet included a variety of perspectives and voices; Brothers, Associates, collaborators, men, women, single and married, parents and non-parents, those Brothers ministerially retired or active. Because of this variety in the contributors, the booklet provided insights that spoke to people in many different lifestyles, seeking inspiration and encouragement in different ways.”



Pictured above: A screenshot from one of the Advent booklet Zoom meetings as the team brainstorm; sharing thoughts and ideas.

The booklet brought forth an outpouring of positive responses, from personal emails to individual authors to numerous comments and shares online. For Joshua Kinney, Director of Communications, the experience of holding a physically printed book was particularly moving.

“There is something special about holding a book,” he said. “Having stared long enough at the bright glowing

screens of our computers, tablets and phones, it was rewarding to hold and read the final product that we all had worked together to produce.”

Contributor Brother Cornelius Hubbuch was pleased by the responses.

“It says to me that folks are hungry for personal reflections that mirror what we find in the Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers,” he said.

Simple and useable as a daily reflective aid, the booklet provided a variety of perspectives, some of which appealed more strongly than others to a person’s personal life experiences. Many readers went out of their way to express their sincere gratitude.

“I look forward to seeing how this resource will evolve within our Xaverian family,” said Benjamin Horgan.

To view the full Advent 2020 booklet and download a copy to your computer visit: <http://xavb.ro/AdventBook>

Progress Underway at School in Kipushi, Congo

Building progress is underway at the new school in Kipushi, Congo. The company has begun construction of the administrative and sanitary blocks and the brothers' house. We thank the congregation for this financial support for the realization of this project. Parents are already eager to register their children for this new school, though it is not open yet. All schools in the region are closed due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Keep this construction in prayer and pray for its future students and teachers.



Pictured above: Construction progress is underway at the new school in Kipushi, Congo. The name of the school will be determined by the Brothers who will submit their suggestion to the General Council for consideration.

Ministry, Retreat, Nourishment and Reflection



Pictured above: Brother Cornelius Hubbuch stands next to the late Brother Matthew Burke (seated) at Ryken House.

The Coronavirus pandemic “arrived” at Xaverian and Ryken houses in the middle of March 2020, when signs indicating “Please, no visitors; all deliveries to the door at the porch” appeared on exterior doors. “Brothers, please stay in the house,” read new signs on interior exits, and Brother Robert Green’s ‘Barnsider’ newsletter reminded Xaverian House residents in Danvers, MA, to “Please don’t forget to wash hands.” Change came swiftly as Brothers adjusted to a new way of life. Nurses encouraged Brothers to follow guidelines and stay home except for emergencies.

“Our lives became quite different,” said Brother Cornelius Hubbuch of Ryken House in Louisville, KY.

Most residents were able to have normal days with Mass six days a week and three meals a day, but when normalcy diminished, changes were noted. Brothers wishing to exercise had to wear masks and restrict themselves to

certain areas. Simple purchases such as toothpaste, shaving cream and greeting cards was assigned to the Director once a week only.

At Xaverian House, what were once weekly visits from St. John’s Prep campus ministers and students were replaced by online Zoom sessions. Additionally, Brothers, Associates, donors, benefactors, and Partners in Mission were able to enjoy being participants in several Zoom prayer services arranged by the Generalate and the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools (XBSS) offices.

Several Brothers in residence at local nursing homes had necessary restrictions on visits: always masked, socially distanced, outside if possible, one or two visitors only, and on specific days unless quarantined. Xaverian House nurse Robin Rowell and Director Brother Robert Green were able to get to Maristhill in Waltham, MA, and Mary Immaculate in Lawrence, only once or twice a month. On New Year’s Eve day, FaceTime allowed

Brothers at Xaverian and Ryken Houses and in nursing homes to see and greet one another.

“During the lockdown I have managed to keep sane by prayer, meditation, life in community, Scripture and Theology courses online, and daily walks on the campus,” said Brother Jim Connolly at Xaverian House.

Prior to the pandemic, Brother Jim ministered three days a week at the Essex County Jail. The prison went into lockdown in late March with many cases of COVID-19 among inmates and staff. The jail began distributing tablets to inmates as a substitute for in-person visitations. Each tablet came with Scriptures of various faiths, books, and magazines. Brother Jim attempted to do online services and classes for inmates, but security interruptions and unit lockdowns frustrated his efforts. Nevertheless, he persevered in his ministry of building loving relationships.

“Each week I write a three-paragraph commentary in the Sunday Gospel which is posted on the tablets, and I compose a pamphlet for those interested in the Scripture courses,” he said.

The Chaplaincy Department and Programs Department are planning for the post-pandemic era and are in the process of developing courses and new units at the jail for men serious about religion, vocational and other courses. Brother Jim takes part in a weekly planning call and assists the Head Chaplain and Faith Coordinator in planning faith, pastoral counseling and Chaplaincy issues at the facility.

“I am looking forward to getting back to ministering in-person once it is safe,” said Brother Jim. He continued, “I ask that the least of our brothers and sisters who are out of sight and out of mind be kept in our thoughts and prayers, especially in this time.”

Seeing the silver lining in the crisis, Brother Cornelius Hubbuch at Ryken House decided to make the most of the difficult circumstances. “I decided to give myself a kind of retreat schedule, which included more time for prayer, lots of reading, and reflection,” he said. “It has been a time to engage in more contemplation and at the same time, I have been impressed by how all of us living with one another have been kind and considerate and patient with the restrictions we need to follow.”

The spiritual life of the communities continued to be nourished by Masses. At Xaverian House, the loyalty of Fathers Robert O’Grady and James Morris were particularly appreciated. Brother Jim Connolly arranged for shared prayer, Advent-Christmas CDs, and regional Zoom gatherings with assistance from Brother Richard Lunny.



Pictured above: Brother Louis Calmel and Resurrectionist Brother Edward Benson decorate the Christmas tree at Ryken House.

“I ask that the least of our brothers and sisters who are out of mind be kept in our thoughts and prayers, especially in this time.”

- Brother Jim Connolly

Holy Cross Father Richard Gribble provided the Brothers with an Advent Day of Recollection. The annual Christmas party with gifts and entertainment provided by St. John’s Prep faculty and staff members could not be held, but the “SPJ Angels” managed to provide generous gifts to the Brothers which were placed under the gorgeous Christmas tree that was only one part of many spirit-lifting decorations provided by Brother Tom Klar. At Ryken House, Brothers Brian Vetter, Richard Angarola, and Associate Mary O’Toole gathered with the Brothers to celebrate Christmas Eve Mass in the St. Xavier High School chapel.

Passionist Father Chris Gibson presided with a masked and socially distanced assembly. A celebratory meal was held afterwards at Ryken House.

The Brothers have been kept safe and well due to the extraordinary dedication of both Xaverian and Ryken house staff members.

“I do miss my outside volunteer activities,” noted Brother Cornelius, “but I am continuously thankful for living with such thoughtful and kind Brothers.”

Brothers Jim Connolly, Robert Green, and Cornelius Hubbuch contributed to this story

Newly Professed Brothers in Kenya Begin Ministry in Lodwar and Bungoma Communities

The newly professed Brothers Gregory, Douglas, Robert and Kevin from Kenya are going to spend three months in the active communities of Lodwar and Bungoma.

They will be engaged in different ministries, pastoral work with street kids at Ryken Centre for Hope, Saint Xavier High School Bungoma, and at Saint James Junior Seminary.

Brothers Robert and Kevin will join the Brothers community in Bungoma and Brothers Gregory and Douglas will join the community in Lodwar.

Please be sure to keep these Brothers in your prayers as they step out into ministry to serve these communities and live out the example of Christ.

Pictured below: L to R - Brothers Robert and Kevin, Brothers Gregory and Douglas



In a World of Change, Mission Remains the Same

cont'd from p.1

The Theodore James Ryken Society, which usually holds regional luncheons in the Fall, held virtual events in support of the work, ministry and mission of the Xaverian Brothers and the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools (XBSS).

“Though we weren’t able to gather in-person, the feeling of support across our network and the world could be felt as people joined from all across the congregation – a true witness to the connectedness of the Ryken Society and the Xaverian Brothers family,” said Brother Daniel Skala. “We are so grateful for your outpouring of faithful support that helps our Brothers and Partners in Mission carry on Theodore Ryken’s vision.”

A video displaying the mission was presented during the program, which was then discussed in Zoom breakout sessions. Receiving hundreds of views online, the video showcased the vital mission of the Xaverian Brothers from founding to present, and how it has continued to thrive even in the midst of a global pandemic.

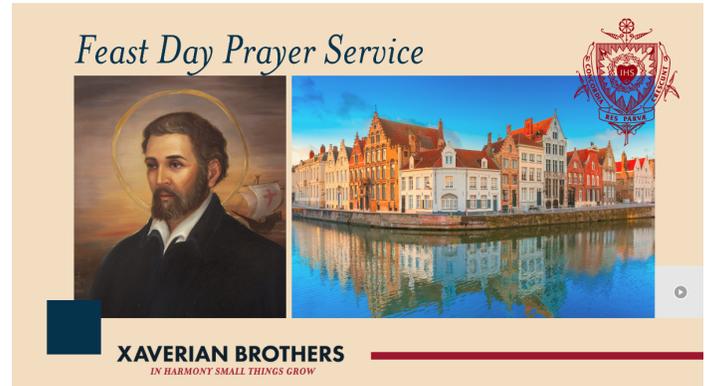
Several Brothers at Xaverian House gather monthly on Zoom to pray the Sunday readings. Brothers Paul Feeney, Rich Mazza, Joe Pawlika, Rich Lunny, Brian Davis, John Hamilton and Leonard also have a monthly shared prayer via Zoom.

The Brothers look forward to sharing the Sunday readings and catching up on any other concerns or stories they may have,” said Brother Richard. “This has been a great opportunity which these Brothers depend upon.”

“Although many Brothers miss the occasional regional gatherings, online events have allowed them to see others who live elsewhere, and strengthen relationships they wouldn’t have had otherwise.

“It’s nice to see and share prayer service with our Brothers in Connecticut, Maryland, and Kentucky,” said Brother Robert Green. “And certainly, those in Belgium, Kenya, and Congo. It leaves us with a sense of togetherness.”

An All Souls Day prayer service was held online with many who watched, prayed along with the service, and



Screenshot of the Xaverian Brothers Feast Day online prayer service held over Zoom.

shared the video with friends, family and colleagues across social media channels. Together, participants honored the Xaverian Brothers, Partners in Mission, Associates and members of the Sacred Heart Union who have passed on to eternal life.

“The service was exceptional,” exclaimed Brother Richard Lunny. “We have never done this before, but it was done so very well and adding the names of those who passed away this year made it more personal to all the lives we touch.”

Mrs. Rosalind Camardella, whose husband Jim (former Brother Thomas) was a member of the Xaverian community for many years and always spoke of his time among the Brothers with affection and gratitude, was moved by the online service.

“I watched and prayed with you during this service in memory of my husband, knowing how much all of you meant to him,” she said.

Additionally, a Feast Day prayer service was also held online for The Feast of St. Francis Xavier and Founder’s Week. Many connected online in celebration, prayer, and community.

Each online event appeared to exceed participant number expectations as folks from across the network yearned for communal fellowship. The Generalate and XBSS offices were elated to meet those needs and worked hard to create inspiring and worthwhile online experiences. As the season of change rages on into 2021, so does the calm and quiet calling of humility and simplicity of the Xaverian Brothers; continually receiving the grace to turn toward God and take up service as followers of Christ.

Despite Pandemic, Relationships Endure Among XBSS Communities



Pictured above: While many XBSS annual seasonal traditions went virtual this year, the holiday cheer was as alive as ever! From online concert choirs, gatherings, and holiday parties to winter recitals and activities held over Zoom - XBSS students, families, faculty and staff were able to celebrate the spirit of the season together, albeit virtually.

Each March, student leaders from across the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools are invited to participate in a national retreat. For four days, they reflect on what it means to attend an XBSS School, deepen their personal relationship with God, and develop community with peers from across the network. The retreat concludes with a commissioning of students to return to campus and develop a plan to better their school community. Due to COVID-19, most of these student leaders did not return to campus as our nation entered lockdown shortly after the retreat last March. Seven months later, the Sponsorship Office hosted a reunion prayer service to regather student leaders, remind them of their experience in March, and challenge them to give back to their school communities in new ways. Of the original 105 students on the retreat, 92 joined together online for an evening of prayer, reflection, and community building.

Deacon Greg Thompson, a longtime favorite of the XBSS retreat, dropped in on the virtual gathering to

offer his words of encouragement. After the program ended, students stayed on the call for an additional 90 minutes sharing stories, laughing, and reconnecting with the close friends they had made back in March.

“With challenges of isolation following the move to virtual schooling, one would understand if these students would move past their experience,” said Benjamin Horgan, XBSS Formation Director. “It was clear from this gathering, however, that these students are moved by the fire of the Holy Spirit and are adapting their leadership in new ways to meet the current needs of their school communities.”

In an effort to strengthen relationships and as part of the XBSS New Teacher program, the planning team put together a guided meditation for “tired ministers.” With prayer, scripture, and guided meditations, the video served as an encouragement to XBSS campus ministers and served to build unity among them.

cont'd on p.8

In Massachusetts, the annual Xaverian Brothers High School and St. John's Prep Thanksgiving football rivalry turned into a big score for charity. Despite the cancelled season, the schools kept their competition going by raising money for local food banks through a competition they dubbed "Touchdowns for Turkeys." Combined, they raised nearly \$30,000.00.



Pictured above: Dr. Conca and Mr. Nicholson of XBHS sport St. John's Prep jerseys after the Prep won the "Touchdowns for Turkeys" competition.

In Bungoma, Kenya, St. Xavier High School reopened despite the government's lack of support for private schools, after meticulous planning to properly implement the Ministry of Education's health guidelines. Brother Dan Ongeso reported that despite social distancing and mask wearing, students were pleased to be among each other once again.

COVID-19 had a difficult time silencing Saint Bernard School's Concert Choir. With a proud tradition of performances and concerts, the Connecticut school's choir was unable to sing due to restrictions. Their collective voice was largely hushed, until students found a new way to sing a little louder without making a sound. Emma Lemire '21, taught her peers how to sign the lyrics to the song "Say Something" by 'A Great Big World.'

"We're in such a time where you can't communicate as well, and I think sign language really helped everyone with the thought process and to connect emotions to music which is so important," said Emma, who was inspired by the relationships that were strengthened and built through the unique experience.

Director of Music Anne Tortora said when she came up with the idea, she didn't picture it being professionally produced as a sort of music video, but when she ran into Headmaster Don Macrino's office and urged him to come witness the choir practicing, he felt the performance deserved more recognition. The school's multitalented musicians had found a new, beautiful way to express themselves and earned national acknowledgement from the National Association for Music Education.

In lieu of Lowell Catholic's traditional Veterans Day Prayer Service, the Massachusetts school created a video which was viewed by all students while in their classrooms. The school also released a 'Salute to Veterans' video in which several students participated during the event that honored each branch of the U.S. military. Meanwhile, Xaverian High School's Deacon, Kevin McCormack shared an important video message that received over 30K views.



Pictured above: Screenshot from Saint Bernard School's Concert Choir using sign language to connect emotions and music in a new and creative endeavor amid the pandemic.

"COVID has taken so much from us this year, and there are many well-intentioned folks who say that snow days are unnecessary," he spoke into the camera outside amid what was soon to be the first winter snowfall. "Snow days aren't a gift. They're a right. You see, on a snow day, God gives you the ability to change the schedule, to see things differently." Despite online learning, the school declared a snow day to the enjoyment of all.

Schools found new ways to adapt to challenges with virtual self-guided tours and open houses, complete with 360-degree views of campus facilities including classrooms, performance spaces, athletic facilities, community hubs, and more. Photo galleries helped bring schools to life and some provided opportunities for prospective students and families to meet virtually with headmasters, presidents, and principals, all in an effort to keep a focus on building authentic personal relationships.

Generalate Employee Spotlight

Since September 2003, Stephanie Stricker has been faithfully serving the Xaverian Brothers. As the Associate Director of Mission Advancement, Stephanie has lived into her calling, utilizing her organizational and administrative expertise, savvy business mindset and her passion for building strong and genuine relationships. For nearly 18 years, Stephanie has nurtured and strengthened the bonds that hold together the Xaverian Brothers, Associates, Benefactors, Donors, and Partners in Mission.

Stephanie recalls clearly the feeling she had when first coming onboard into her new workplace at the Generalate. “I was excited about the opportunity to work for a nonprofit organization with a strong and clearly defined mission,” she said. Through Stephanie, that strong mission of the Xaverian Brothers has advanced, grown, and flourished, as she has been gifted with the talents necessary to magnify the mission throughout the years. “It’s been an honor to be able to share the Xaverian mission with benefactors and friends of the Brothers,” she said.

For Stephanie, the Brothers have taught her and shown her what it is like to be a truly compassionate person. She is proud to be a part of an organization that teaches strong values through living example.

“The Brothers have supported and encouraged my professional growth throughout my career,” she stated. “I am extremely grateful for that.”

Stephanie earned her bachelor’s degree in Business at Shepherd University and worked for T. Rowe Price before joining the Xaverian Brothers. A Baltimore-area native, she lives with her husband, Steve, and Schnoodle, Lola. Stephanie enjoys photography, hiking, and traveling. Her professional development includes doing the continuing education to be credentialed as a Certified Fund Raising Executive.

**Stephanie
Stricker,
Associate
Director of
Mission
Advancement**

“Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools are communities that create opportunities and set young people down paths to discover their gifts and talents,” said Dr. Patrick Slattery, XBSS Executive Director. “We seek to challenge students academically and spiritually as they pursue their passions.”

Founder’s Week celebration’s annually invite Xaverian educators to, as the Fundamental Principles state, “prayerfully reflect on the past, assess the present, and ponder the future with one another.” While the celebrations looked different this year, XBSS communities came together to remember the rich history of the Xaverian Brothers and continued to build enduring personal relationships across the network. Through prayer services, panel conversations, and a student leader keynote, encouragement and vision were offered.

Across the network, traditions carried on in new ways. Schools took their seasonal events virtual via Zoom so students, families, faculty and staff could celebrate the spirit of the season together, albeit virtually. Campus ministers led online discussions as students were given the opportunity to bond, reflect, and share over the meaning of Christmas.

“Not unlike the Magis who followed the Christmas star to find their way to the Christ child, Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools have continued to turn to mission as their guiding light, helping them navigate their way during this challenging time,” said Benjamin Horgan.

Memorial Mass Celebrates Memory of Deceased Members of St. Michael’s Diocesan HS Alumni Association

A Memorial Mass celebrated in memory of the deceased members of the St. Michael’s Diocesan High School Alumni Association was held on December 30, 2020 at the Chapel at Xaverian House in Danvers, MA. St. Mike’s was a high school the Brothers staffed in Brooklyn from the 1940s until 1960 when we opened Xaverian High School. The St. Mike’s Alumni remain fiercely devoted to the Brothers and are among our most generous donors. Follow this link to watch the Memorial Mass: <http://xavb.ro/StMikeMemMass>



Call

FULFILLED



BROTHER MATTHEW BURKE, CFX

What is my gift to others?

Over the course of his life, Brother Matthew gradually answered the question ‘What is my gift to others?’

The leadership of the Central Province readily recognized his gifts. Indeed, he was blessed with many talents that served his pursuit of academic excellence and educational leadership. He was a successful teacher; blessed with a personal ‘charisma’ that endeared him to his students. Many remained in touch with him as adults.

Brother Matthew was born in Brooklyn, NY to Cecilia and John Burke. He is survived by three loving sisters: Deborah May, Jacqueline Clifford and Patricia Smith. Two sisters pre-deceased Matthew: Virginia Wenz and Carole Poletto. His mother, Cecilia, died when he was a child. His father remarried. His stepmother was Lucille Connolly Burke.

Upon graduation from William Cullen Bryant High School in Long Island City, Queens, in 1956, Brother Matthew responded to God’s initial call to our way of life. He entered the Congregation at Sacred Heart Novitiate in Fort Monroe, VA. In 1958 he pronounced his first vows as a Xaverian Brother.

He would continue his formation at Xaverian College in Silver Spring, MD, earning his BA in Latin and Greek from Catholic University. He graduated in 1962 with highest honors. That year, Matt was assigned to Nazareth High School in Brooklyn which had just opened.

A life-long learner, Brother Matthew did graduate studies at Catholic University and at Saint John’s University. He earned an MA in Secondary Education from Michigan University (1967) and an MS in Educational Administration from Saint John’s University (1968). In 1967 he was appointed Deputy Principal of Nazareth High School and then from 1969-1975 he served as Nazareth’s Principal. Brother Matt completed his doctoral studies at Fordham University in 1976.

From 1976 to 1983, Brother Matthew served as Principal of Saint Mary’s Ryken High School in Leonardtown, MD where he was responsible for implementing the merger of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth’s Saint Mary’s Academy with our Ryken High School. Brother Cornelius Hubbuch, the outgoing Principal, had arranged for the merger. Indeed, it was an arduous task that benefited from Brother Matt’s gifts, especially his tenacity.

In 1983-84, Brother Matt spent a sabbatical year at the Jesuit Institute for Spirituality and Worship in Berkeley, CA. From 1984 through 2001 he served in congregational leadership. He was the first Director of Xaverian Brothers’ Sponsored Schools (XBSS) having established the program. Then he served as Provincial of the American Central Province from 1988-94 and as General Superior from 1995-2001.

He also volunteered for a year in Romania teaching in a seminary. From 2003 to 2009, Brother Matthew was involved with various ministries in Kenya including serving as Regional Director from 2004-2009. Upon return to U.S., Brother Matthew was guest master at one of our houses in Florida and then returned to Baltimore and was involved with Catholic Charities, setting up a center for Hispanic ministries at the Assisi House at Saint Patrick’s where we once ran the elementary school.

Brother Matthew had many gifts that we needed. His signature talents were his drive to achieve, his ability to organize, initiate and complete a project, his intelligence, his inclination to control his willpower and his stamina. The gifts he brought to others in personal relationships were his ability to listen, concern for others, warmth and an ability to build rapport.

He was strong-willed, clearly the boss. He brought his impatience to his prayer life. His love for our vocation was clear. His strong desire to see Xaverian life continue into the future compelled him to undertake many projects in our name: establishing our Sponsorship (XBSS), encouraging Brothers to go to Bolivia, starting the Bolivian formation, volunteer and associate programs, the initial establishment of regional governance in Congo, the new commitment to Xaverian life in Kenya, along with the Kenyan formation program.

In my Father’s Wake, the Irish writer, Kevin Toolis, makes the point, “The dead belong to those who loved them.” (265) Brother Matthew’s life has been a gift to many people. He is our Brother. Grateful for what Brother Matthew did for the Congregation, we also realize that no gift is perfect. We pray that Brother Matt is enjoying the warm intimacy of God’s love.



**BROTHER PETER FITZPATRICK,
CFX**

Brother Peter Fitzpatrick found God. Those who knew him well, know he was in love with God. Peter's love of God grew to be absolute. His love of life seized his imagination. Peter's love affected his relationships and everything he did.

Peter entered eternal life at 92-years-old. He had just celebrated his 75th anniversary as a Xaverian. He was born in Brooklyn, NY to Anna and Michael Fitzpatrick, Irish immigrants. He had two sisters, Mary and Anna and three brothers, John, Michael and Thomas. It was always with great affection that Peter spoke of his parents and siblings as well as family members living in Ireland. His family was his first novitiate. Mother and father formed him in the unconditional love of God where he learned simplicity, compassion, honesty, hope, loyalty to others and confidence in himself.

Peter first met the Xaverian Brothers at Saint Teresa of Avila Elementary School on Sterling Place. 24 of his fellow Xaverians would also enter the Congregation from Saint Teresa's. Upon graduation from St. Augustine High School in 1945, Peter responded to the initial call to 'live a life of love in faith and trust, as a disciple of Jesus in the Congregation of the Brothers of Saint Francis Xavier. (FP)' In 1945, he entered Sacred Heart Novitiate, Fort Monroe, VA. He received the Xaverian habit and religious name, Benedict, on the Feast of Saint Joseph in 1946.

After novitiate, Peter continued his formation at Xaverian College earning his BA in English in 1951 from Catholic University of America.

Peter's first mission was Saint Xavier in Louisville where we get glimpses of his answers to the question, 'What do I love?' Peter loved learning, literature, and especially poetry. He loved the art of teaching, having taught both English and algebra. He loved his students; seeing young people grow, mature and learn. He loved teaching and challenging them to reach their potential. He could be understanding and also strict. There is no doubt Peter heeded our Xaverian Rule that exhorted us to "united suaviter in modo with fortiter in re." (Gentleness in manner with strength in action.) [VII, 20, 1954] It is evident that he also heeded the exhortation, "In imitation of Jesus, devote your heart and soul to the best interests of your pupils." [VII, 12, 1954].

From 1957 to 1959 Peter would teach at Xaverian College in Brighton, England and then return to the U.S. where from 1959 to 1966 he taught at Mount Saint Joseph in Baltimore and was also Assistant Principal. A lifelong learner, Peter would study at the University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins, and earn his Masters from Catholic University 1965. From 1966 to 1969 Peter was back in England helping with the formation program

Peter's leadership was readily recognized. He spent several years in congregational positions. In the former American Central Province, he served as Assistant to the Provincial. He served as Vicar General and later as Provincial of the American Central Province.

Brother Cornelius Hubbuch notes, "Peter had a great ability and willingness to deal with challenges and difficulties. He never turned away. He was a courageous leader. Peter loved being a Xaverian Brother, and he loved the Brothers. He was completely devoted to his friends and he had many."

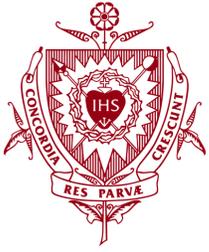
From 1977 to 1982 Peter studied spirituality at Regis College in Toronto, earning a Master's in Spirituality.

He also served on their spirituality team. Peter's study of Ignatian Spirituality at Regis deepened his love of God, captured his imagination and affected everything he was doing.

Peter believed strongly that our growth as a spiritual person was integrally connected to our psychological and emotional development. As Provincial (1982-1988) he promoted intentional communities where we could share more easily our lives with each other in light of the 'Fundamental Principles.' He initiated Area Meetings to help us share responsibility for our way of life. He helped us understand in a more personal way the deeper meaning of the Founder's charism. When asked what Peter placed at the center of his life, Brother Michael McCarthy said, "His unabashed love of God." We got a glimpse of that love at an Area Meeting. Peter raised the question, "Are we dying?" Then we spent time exploring his real question, "Are we really living the way our Founder wants us to live?" While referencing the Founder's conversion, Peter became very emotional sharing his own experience the moment he felt in his heart that God knew him, understood him and loved him just as he is. Ryken's words, 'God is not obliged to give an account to anybody even if he wants to use a sinner (FP)' became Peter's. Are we living with the conviction of God's love for us?

Peter recognized also that the love of God calls us to continual conversion. Peter could lose patience and used sharp words with others. He was very aware of this fault and would readily admit his error and apologize to the individual. Such occasions called him to greater humility and compassion.

It was Peter's love of God that decided his life. May Peter enjoy the fullness of God's love.



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Finishing Touches on Mariastraat

The final touches of renovation at Frères SFX Institute in Brugge are now being completed, the statue of St. Francis Xavier which stood at the entry way on Mariastraat has now been placed in the renovated foyer of the school. New signage has been placed on windows, entrance and foyer walls.



Pictured with the statue are Luc Janssens, Deputy Director of the de Frères, Frank Demon, Alderman of the City of Bruges and Member of the Federal Parliament, Frank Demuyne, a member of the board who oversaw the renovation, and Koen De Klerck, the engineer who worked on the renovation. Also, the furniture for the physics classroom has been installed.

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