

# Concordia

FOLLOWING THE XAVERIAN WAY



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*Pictured: Students from across the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools network gathered at the Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT, for the 2022 XBSS Student Leadership Retreat.*

## XBSS Together Again

The days were long and meaningful. One morning began with an 8:00 a.m. breakfast and an 8:30 prayer service. It would end with a 10:30 p.m. prayer service. The Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools Student Leadership Retreat, March 6-10, at the Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT, managed to pack a lot into its time frame.

After hosting a virtual XBSS Retreat in 2021 due to the pandemic, our schools were thrilled to return in-person, to spend time together, learn, grow, and embrace what so many others who have gone before them experienced.

Small group discussions, guest speakers, thought-provoking activities, shared meals, and daily prayer were just a few highlights of the retreat for the 78 high school juniors, 13 seniors, and 18 adults. Service, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the Xaverian tradition were all explored to create an experience in which students came to realize their “connectedness” to the Xaverian charism.

*Continued next page*

# XBSS Students Reconvene For In-Person Retreat After Last Year's Virtual Experience



“Charity is fantastic,” said one presenter. “It is what you all do on a regular basis. You address the problem head on. We go to the soup kitchen, the shelter, we serve in those capacities and then we go home. The justice part is stopping the root cause, why we have to go to those charities, those homes, those shelters... stopping it in its tracks, and today we will learn about how to do that, at least beginning to talk about that.”

A variety of cultures, backgrounds and experiences were represented by all of the students. Each of the 13 XBSS schools were challenged as to how they should think and how best to serve their respective communities, seeking that justice while serving the marginalized and forgotten.

Ben Horgan, XBSS Formation Director, opened the session on diversity and relayed a few historical stories from the school network, including the time St. Xavier in Louisville reached out and played Louisville Central in football before Kentucky integrated. Central was an all-black school that, at the time, could not play other local schools. The bold move by St. Xavier showcased a deeply rooted belief of the Xaverian Brothers, as stated in the 'Fundamental Principles', of the inherit worth and value that all people are created in God's image.

The retreat, which brought together servant leaders from all across the school network, both called and energized students to return to their home communities to empower others, promote justice, and initiate change.



*XBSS students gathered together in-person for this year's Student Leadership Retreat.*

“One of the most meaningful aspects of the retreat is a sense of being part of something bigger than yourselves,” said Jim Conley, longtime Campus Ministry Director at Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, MA. “It is connecting with the larger XBSS community, and the relationships that result from that, as well as the exchange of ideas about what is happening at the different schools, and giving the students an opportunity to bring those things back to their own school.”

Joe Cucinotta, a senior at Xaverian Brothers High School, was the videographer for this year's retreat which can be viewed on YouTube: [xavb.ro/XBSS2022](https://xavb.ro/XBSS2022)

“Thank you for this lifechanging experience,” he said. “Much love.”



## Construction Site Offers Learning Opportunity for Students in Bungoma, Kenya

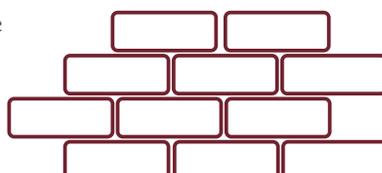
New flooring, rafters, walls, and doors are taking shape, as well as a soon to be finished walkway at St. Xavier High School in Bungoma, Kenya, where construction continues on a new dining hall and kitchen.

"It's a lot of hard work - but the building is sturdy and will last a long, long time," said Brother Dan Ssenyomo. "The foundation has been completed and once the roof is up the rest will go quickly. Our goal now is to have it finished before the new school year begins this Spring. Where there's a will there's a way - and we certainly have the will!"

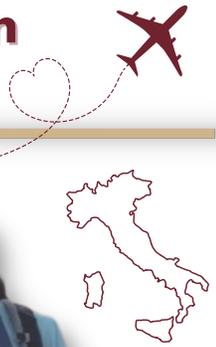
When learning something new, such as cooking or operating a machine, it can be helpful to watch someone demonstrate how to do the same task. Apprenticeship or observation may appear to be a simple teaching strategy; however, the teacher plays a crucial role in involving students and maximizing what they have the potential to learn.

Because of this, students took it upon themselves to avail themselves at the construction site not only to observe the construction but to also actively lend help, in their capacity, and learn from the men at work. The foreman at the site welcomed the idea of turning the new construction into a learning experience, providing students with experiences of real events, phenomena, and processes, helping them learn, raising their interest and motivating those who may wish to pursue such courses in their lives.

"Experience tested is the best teacher as the saying goes so after such exercise our boys would be to carry out their own practical work more effectively in future," stated Brother Dan Ssenyomo.



# Brothers Prepare for Perpetual Vows in Rome



At the Generalate of the Sacred Heart Brothers in Rome, Italy, Brothers Joseph Mbithi and Christopher Mwima, both natives of Kenya, prepare for their perpetual vows. The Xaverian Brothers join the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and work together to accompany candidates of final vows from both respective congregations. Currently, there are 21 candidates from the Sacred Heart Brothers and two from the Xaverian Brothers. These candidates are from a myriad of countries all across the world. They speak Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English.

Brother Daniel Skala, General Superior, asked Brother Dominique Olondo to accompany our two Brothers Joseph and Christopher to Rome, as well as to represent the Xaverian family there. The program started at the beginning of March and runs through the end of May.

Please keep Joseph and Christopher in your prayers throughout the Spring as they pray, study, and seek God in this special and blessed time of preparation.



# A Heartfelt Message From the New Bishop of the Bungoma Diocese in Kenya to the Xaverian Brothers

Recently, a heartfelt message was sent to Brother Michael Foley from Fr. Mark Kadima, a former student of his at St. Peter's Seminary in Mukumu, Kenya, whose secondary high school fees were provided for by the Brothers. He was recently appointed the Bishop of the Bungoma Diocese. The Bishop's consecration was held on Feb. 19, 2022. His message is a testament to the humble and lasting impact of the Xaverian Brothers.



*"I am still aware that I was one among many people whose lives you changed by your vocation, hard work, orderly work ethics, ingenuity, and very intelligent teaching, but above all, by a Godly inspired generosity and an enduring charisma to serve and change the lives of the poor for the better. This is a mission you carried out with distinction, dedication and love that were and are still greatly admired by all those who are here in Kenya. May God reward you, for he is the one who can measure out the crown you deserve.*

*I was posted to South Sudan in July 2018, as a Vatican diplomat in the capacity of charge de affairs to open the first Vatican embassy in Juba and also to identify bishops for an almost dead church, which had no bishops. The rest is history. But when I arrived at the airport, I immediately inquired about you from the priests and the religious who had come to welcome me at the airport. I was told that you had been in Torit for many years but had just recently retired and returned to the U.S."*

# Incoming First Year Postulants Welcomed in Kenya



With immense joy and gratitude, we thank God for the gift of four new young men in Kenya: Clinton Mwavali, from Erusui Parish, Kakamega Diocese, Watitwa Christopher, from St. Paul's Ejinja Parish Kakamega Diocese, Kalibbala Joseph, from Uganda, Masaka Diocese, and Benedict Okoth Mukori from St. Paul's parish Homa- Bay Diocese.

These men are ready to dedicate their lives to follow God more closely as Xaverian Brothers. The theme of the initiation was, "You are precious to me" which challenged all to reflect upon God's love.

"Though we are unique from each other in many ways but in the eyes of God, each one of us is precious and this enables us to respect each other's uniqueness and appreciate our capabilities," said Brother Dan Ssenyomo.

Inter-cultural living and differences in age groups help first-year postulants know and understand one another deeper, as they begin to value community life. They now have enough opportunities to learn, widen their ideas, become aware and know the congregation better.

"They are each gifted differently," Brother Dan continued. "We are grateful to the congregation and to the General Superior for having accepted these young men. So, we keep them in our prayers as they take another step in the formation journey so that they may be able to persevere and experience God's unconditional love in their daily lives and the people they meet on the way."

## Xaverian House Happenings



On Saint Patrick's day at Xaverian House, in Danvers, MA, after the traditional Irish sing along hosted by Brother Jerry O'Leary, a colorful cake celebrating nurse Robin Rowell's 25 years of dedicated service to the Brothers was enjoyed by all. Robin is pictured left cutting the cake!

The following day on March 18, Brother Joe Pawlika (pictured right) provided conference at Xaverian House's Lenten Day of Recollection.



# XBSS: SERVANT LEADERSHIP



Left: St. Bernard students host diaper drive. Right: XBHS package meals for the homeless.



Xaverian students sponsor a baby shower drive for women and children in need throughout NYC.



Below: Matt Weir, '99 of St. X stands with his statue of Brother Paul Van Gerwen.



The XBSS Sponsorship Office has been hosting a year-long “Emerging Leaders” program with XBSS staff from across the network. Programming began in

the summer of 2021, with virtual/zoom sessions occurring during the academic year. The group met this Spring with a panel of school leaders from the Sacred Heart, Jesuit, Benedictine, and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur school networks. The panel discussion focused on mission-driven leadership, growing as a faith leader in our schools, and fostering leadership in all faculty and staff.

Left: Carson Domey '22 of Saint John's High School is leading the way for mental health advocacy. Below: OLCG students raise funds for blood cancer awareness.



# IN ACTION BUILDS MISSION



Left: Lowell Catholic students deliver donations. Above: Xavier students collect toiletries for those in need and embark on a service trip to Camden, NJ.

Mr. David Palmieri (pictured center) of Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, MA, has won the Lead, Learn, Proclaim Award from the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). The award recognizes individuals whose "dedication, faith, knowledge and skills fulfill the mission of Catholic education." He was selected from a national pool of Catholic school educators.

"Whether it be in the classroom or on the track, David Palmieri embodies our school's mission in all that he does," said Principal Michael Nicholson. "David assists our students in finding God in the 'common, ordinary, unspectacular flow of everyday life.' I could not think of a more deserving individual to be recognized for his commitment to Xaverian and Catholic education."

Congrats to Mr. Palmieri for his tremendous mission-driven leadership manifested daily at XBHS and for representing the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools on the national scene!



Left: Students at St. John's Prep visit the Brothers at Xaverian House for times of weekly fellowship, mentoring, and mutual support. Below: St. Mary's Ryken faculty and staff clean up the Chesapeake Bay shoreline.



Bottom left: XBHS students recognizes for acts of kindness, discipleship, work ethic, humility and generosity. Students have volunteered at a myriad of shelters, soup kitchens, and assisted living centers across the greater Boston area. Additionally, they have raised funds for addiction recovery programs and Boston Children's Hospital.



# 2021 Ryken Award winners

Each year, the Theodore James Ryken Award is presented to a member of the faculty, staff or administration of each of the 13 Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools who exhibits a commitment to the Founder's vision. They are recognized as committed and dedicated individuals who proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They also spiritually nurture members of the school community; are committed to academic excellence; recognize the talents of individuals; know the importance of educating the whole person; and strive to fulfill the Gospel call to peace and justice.



**Paul Moran**  
*Malden Catholic*



**Lillian Bernier**  
*Lowell Catholic*



**Marc Hoffman**  
*Mount Saint Joseph*



**Manny Trama**  
*Nazareth Regional*



**Edward Tonelli**  
*Saint John's High School*



**Raisa Carrasco**  
*St. John's Prep*



**Dr. Lalita  
Krishnamurthy**  
*Xaverian High School*



**Mary Beth Baillargeo**  
*Saint Bernard School*



**AnnCoury Mulloy**  
*St. Xavier High School*



**Andy Wyzykowski**  
*Xavier High School*



**Terry Wood**  
*St. Mary's Ryken*



**Jenna Vona**  
*Xaverian Brothers High School*



**Renetta Herndon**  
*Our Lady of Good Counsel*

# Brother Charles Warthen Helps Support Afghan Refugees in Virginia Beach



*Brother Charles Warthen (formerly Brother Dean), pictured second from the left, stands with his new friends from Afghanistan.*

Brother Charles Warthen, now in his 25th year in Virginia Beach, remains an active member of the Church of the Holy Family through its vibrant social ministry program. In addition to his participation in the parish Haiti Twinning program and concern with the local homeless via the Norfolk Catholic Worker, and his active involvement in the parish Prison Reform committee, he is recently supporting Afghan emigres.

The parish is one of two in the diocese of over 140 parishes, to "adopt" Afghan refugees who were "sponsored" by the local Commonwealth Catholic Charities in Newport News, VA. Of these refugees, six young Afghan men who are assisted in travel to ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, as well as job search (all are employed) and other typical daily chores, such as shopping. Their command of English is spotty, but it is a joy to hear them enthusiastically chatting and laughing on their phones with friends and family in Afghanistan and enjoying their pictures.

"Our role is merely transportation, driving them from their ESL class several days a week to their apartment which has been provided by Catholic Charities," said Brother Charles Warthen. "We also drive them to and from work as needed. All have income and send funds back home to Afghanistan."

Brother Charles described the young men as "most respectful" and "showing genuine friendship and consistent good spirits." Part of the transportation ministry includes a stop at the grocery store and sometimes a Mediterranean food store where their language, Farsi, Pashtun or Dari, is used. These young men, age 22-32, are most generous, often offering their drivers food they have bought.

"Their sense of hospitality is admirable," stated Brother Charles. "Recently we observed the 32nd birthday of one, a former translator for our military and with the best command of English. We provided a birthday cake, wrapped gifts, and all sang Happy Birthday. They provided the music on their listening devices. Three of the four are married and with family and show with pride phone pictures of their loved ones at home."

As young men emerge from their classes, greeting Brother Charles with firm embraces and sa'laam aleichem, (our Hello!). They pile into the car, laughing and chatting and on to their phones to contact friends and loved ones a world away.

"It is a most satisfying and rewarding relationship with what the Xaverian charism calls identification with the marginalized and homeless," Brother Charles said. "This personal contact in our little plot of the globe is literally a daily blessing in our too often indifferent and violent world, a reason for daily thanksgiving to our generous God."

*Give to the Mission by*

## SHARING OUR PAGES

Simply sharing our social media pages on your profile and inviting your friends to follow supports our Mission in a meaningful way

**XAVERIAN BROTHERS**  
IN HARMONY SMALL THINGS GROW

# Students Leave Crime-Ridden Neighborhood, Join Sant Zaveryen Community

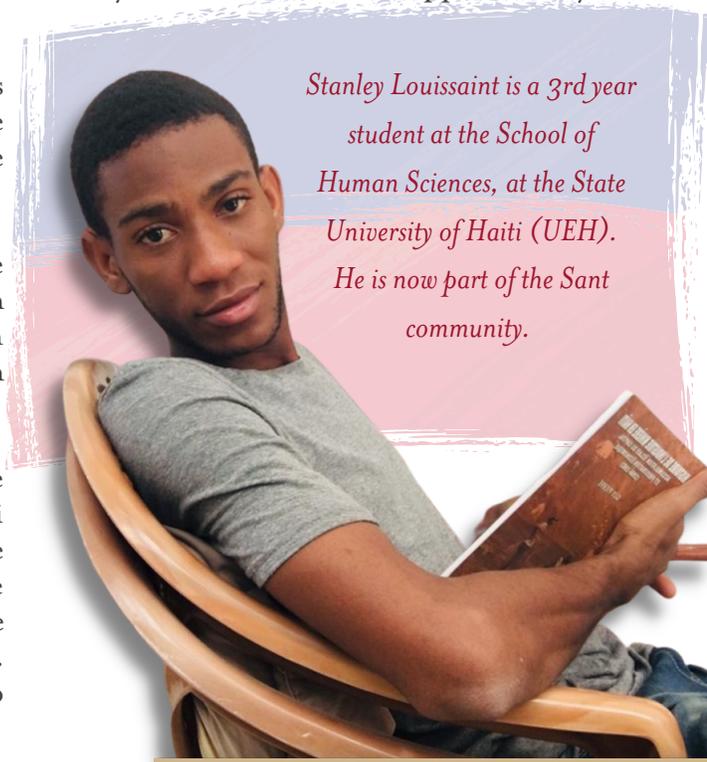
The story of these two students is truly horrifying. They spent almost three years living on the streets, and nights in the auditorium of their school. Being a student in Haiti has been a stressful situation for the last few years, with socio-political issues and crime.

The two newest members of the Sant Community came from a neighborhood called Matissant, occupied by gangs. In this area, armed bandits impose their law. Before venturing out, it is necessary to make sure that they are not in action. Victims of this phenomenon, these students decided to spend the night on benches, or even outside on the ground, because they feared what could happen if they stayed.

Eyes are not closed to see, ears are not closed to hear, arms are not cut to welcome, and hearts are not hardened to love or sympathize. This is the lifestyle that characterizes the Xaverian Brothers, and our mission in Haiti.

Touched by this news, Brothers Vincent and Adolph have started a process of finding one or two students who live in this situation, and welcoming them to the Sant Zaveryen Community, so they can also benefit from the supervision that this center offers young Haitians.

They came across Figaro Cantave, a 2nd year student at the School of Human Sciences, at the State University of Haiti (UEH), and Stanley Louissaint, a 3rd year student, at the same school and university. They have joined the community and are adapting very well. The unfortunate truth is that we found at least 15 students in this situation. Likely, there are many more. The Brothers hope to help others going forward.



*Stanley Louissaint is a 3rd year student at the School of Human Sciences, at the State University of Haiti (UEH). He is now part of the Sant community.*

# Generalate Staff Participate in Day of Prayer & Awareness Against Human Trafficking



On February 8, 2022, for the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking, Brothers and staff at the Generalate office in Baltimore, MD, joined in prayers and solidarity with others all around the world to protect victims of this terrible crime, and for an eradication of it.

"Human trafficking is violence!" stated a message from Pope Francis. "The violence suffered by every woman and every girl is an open wound on the body of Christ, on the body of all humanity; it is a deep wound that affects every one of us too."

# Call **FULFILLED**



**BROTHER WILLIAM LYONS, C.F.X.  
(SABINUS)**

"A gifted teacher and a brilliant scholar" was how one former confrere described Brother William Lyons who succumbed to cancer March 7, 2022 while being cared for at Xaverian House, Danvers, MA. Brother Bill was 84 years old and spent nearly sixty-eight years as a Xaverian Brother.

A native of Worcester and 1954 graduate of St. John's High School, he entered the Xaverian Brothers following graduation and on September 8, 1954 received the holy habit, taking the religious name Brother Sabinus.

He received his bachelor's degree from Catholic University in 1960 and a master's degree in Spanish from Fordham University in 1970. In the mid-1980s he took a well-deserved sabbatical and completed pastoral studies at the Jesuit School of Theology and the Franciscan School of Theology, both in Berkeley, CA.

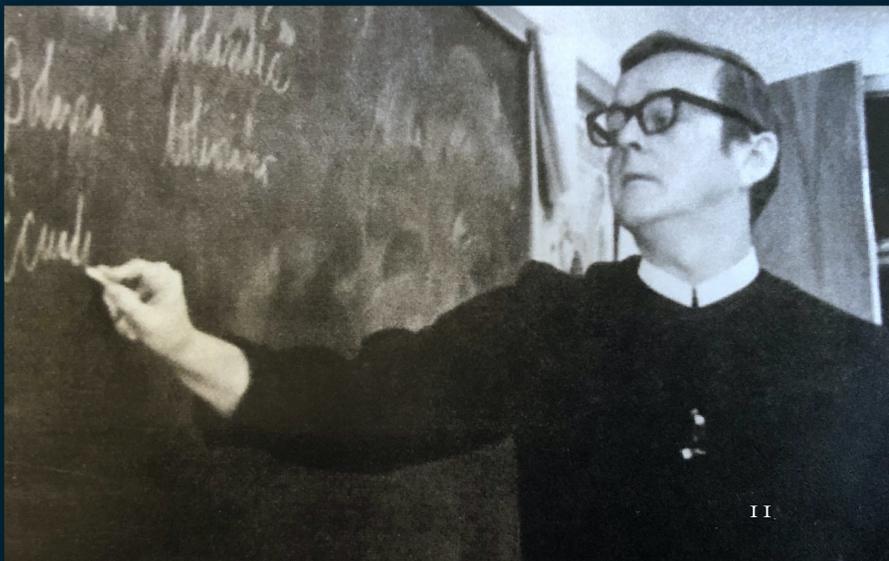
His teaching ministry began in 1960 at Archbishop Stepinac High School in White Plains, NY. In the next decade, he would teach at other New York high schools, Notre Dame in Utica and Cardinal Hayes in the Bronx.

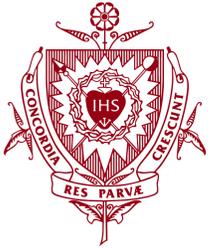
In 1970, he was assigned to Malden Catholic High School, where he would spend the next fifteen years. A gifted Spanish language teacher, Brother Lyons was chair of the foreign language department and a mentor and advisor to faculty and staff colleagues wherever he was assigned. A student from those days, fondly remembered him "as a kind and effective teacher, who commanded great respect, but was also friendly and approachable."

Another wrote, "one remembers sometimes the most peculiar little things, though on reflection there is generally something powerful behind that little snippet. 'Illegitimus non carborundum est' sticks in my mind as the only phrase in Latin I recall from my days in his freshman English class. Beyond this I think about the lifelong love of words Brother Lyons instilled in me. The life of service to God and man that he and the Brothers exemplified has profoundly impacted me as I found my vocation. He and the other Xaverian Brothers showed me the way with their example of selfless devotion and service. I learned the value of hard work towards achieving team goals rather than individual glory. He was truly an inspirational teacher and I remain so grateful."

Brother Bill left Malden Catholic in 1985, and when he returned from his sabbatical in California, taught briefly at Bishop Fenwick High School before joining the foreign language department at Saint John's Prep in 1989. Brother Bill retired from teaching in 2006 and joined the Xaverian Brothers community in Westwood until joining the community at Xaverian House in 2018.

Diagnosed with cancer, he began treatments and eventually made the informed decision to begin palliative care. In his last weeks, he enjoyed wonderful conversations with his confreres, friends and family, thanking them for their love and friendship. As one Brother said after Bill's passing, "he had an ever-deepening sense of the wideness of God's mercy and in our last conversation shared with me that 'it is getting wider and wider.'"





## XAVERIAN BROTHERS

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**XAVERIAN BROTHERS**  
IN HARMONY SMALL THINGS GROW

## PRAYER GUIDE

Wherever there is turmoil, the poor, marginalized, and children often suffer most. In addition to the obvious risk of lost lives, military conflicts can disrupt food and water distribution, interfere with access to medical care, destroy livelihoods and infrastructure, pause education and break families. We invite you to use our prayer guide as you pray for the most vulnerable during this time of conflict in Ukraine.

[xavb.ro/Ukraine](http://xavb.ro/Ukraine)

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