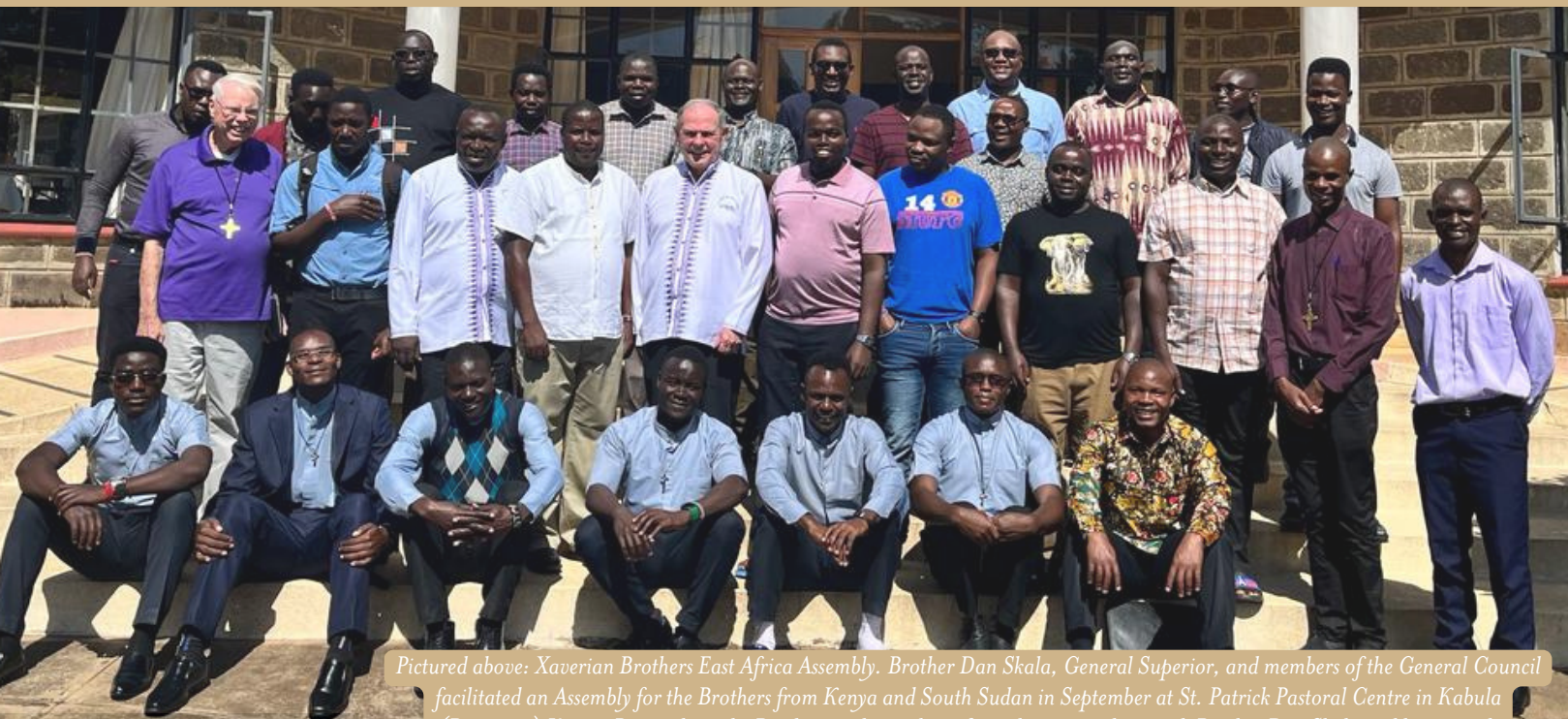


Concordia

FOLLOWING THE XAVERIAN WAY



Pictured above: Xaverian Brothers East Africa Assembly. Brother Dan Skala, General Superior, and members of the General Council facilitated an Assembly for the Brothers from Kenya and South Sudan in September at St. Patrick Pastoral Centre in Kabula (Bungoma) Kenya. Pictured are the Brothers and postulants from the region along with Brother Dan Skala and his council.

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A Visit to Kenya & South Sudan

The General Superior, Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X., and the General Councilors Brothers Brian Davis, Lawrence Harvey, Patrick Fumbisha, and Dominique Olondo continued their canonical visitation in September to Kenya and South Sudan. These congregational leaders were warmly welcomed and found a deep sense of brotherhood and thriving Xaverian mission in Nairobi, Bungoma, and Lodwar in Kenya as well as at the new mission at St. Patrick's Boys Secondary School in Nadapal, South Sudan. In addition to meeting with each Brother, and holding a regional discernment assembly, the Brothers visited the scholastics in Nairobi, the Postulancy, St. Xavier High School, and the Ryken Rescue Center in Bungoma and St. James Minor Seminary in Lodwar. Crossing the border into South Sudan in the middle of the desert to St. Patrick's, though difficult was a special blessing. The students of Mount Saint Joseph's in Baltimore held a dress down day in which the proceeds were given to St. Patrick's and used to purchase much needed textbooks and library books.

In Bungoma, the Brothers toured the new dining hall / multi-purpose center, met with school administrators and reviewed plans for continued development of St. Xavier's as well as the Ryken Rescue Center. St. Xavier's has been the recipient of a fundraising appeal by the Louisville community and St. Xavier High School in Kentucky. Money raised helps support tuition and fund several projects.

Fall Luncheons Celebrate a Thriving Mission

For the first time since 2019, in-person luncheons were hosted for members of the Theodore James Ryken Society. Due to the global pandemic, gatherings were cancelled for the last two years, supplemented by online events. 2022's much-welcome return of the luncheons provided an opportunity to reunite, reconnect, and celebrate the thriving mission of the Xaverian Brothers and Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools, and the generous support of our benefactors.

On October 5, a luncheon was held at Big Spring Country Club in Louisville, KY, for about 55 attendees. Stephanie Stricker of the Advancement Office welcomed everyone and thanked our kind donors for their backing, which has led to transformed lives and communities across the world. Brother Cornelius Hubbuch, C.F.X. introduced the Brothers who reside at Treyton Oak Towers in downtown Louisville, sharing a brief background of their missions and years of service. Brother Brian Davis, C.F.X. spoke on behalf of the Congregation highlighting his recent travel to Congo and Kenya. Dr. Ben Horgan and Dr. Patrick Slattery of XBSS were also in attendance.

A second luncheon was held on October 25 at the Sheraton Boston-Needham Hotel in MA. Stephanie welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for their generosity.

Pictured below: Associate Dan Minton, Brother Cornie Hubbuch, C.F.X., and XBSS member Gary Ulmer converse at the Kentucky luncheon.



Pictured above: General Superior, Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X. addresses the Massachusetts luncheon.

At both events, an updated video highlighting the Xaverian mission (see back cover) showcased most recent happenings including imagery and video clips from Kenya, Congo, Haiti, and the U.S. Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X., General Superior, expressed his happiness to be back in his home state of Massachusetts, and spoke on behalf of the mission, recanting stories from his summer visits to Africa and answering questions. Brother Richard Lunny, C.F.X., and Dr. Patrick Slattery of XBSS, as well as Communications Director Josh Kinney, were also in attendance.

The Theodore James Ryken Society recognizes friends of the Brothers who are involved in the Xaverian mission through their interest, moral support, prayers, and donations of \$1,000 or more annually.

As the mission continues to touch the lives of the neediest people through human development and education of youth, the question still asked in determining the mission's focus remains the same: "If we don't do this ministry, who will?"

To learn more about the Theodore James Ryken Society and the specific projects and programs that need support, please contact Stephanie Stricker at 410-646-6777 or send her an email at sstricker@xaverianbrothers.org



A Visit to Belgium



Pictured above: Brothers Arthur Caliman and Daniel Skala talk about future plans for SFX Bruges with former board member Mr. Frank Demuyne and Head of School Mr. Tim Coppejans.

Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X., General Superior, led a trip to Bruges, Belgium in November. Brothers Arthur Caliman, Congregational Treasurer, and Lawrence Harvey, General Councilor, accompanied him on the journey which included a visit to the Brothers at Herdershove, a Catholic residential care center.

In the Brothers' community room, facility staff prepared an aperitif and lunch for the American visitors. Since Brother Dan had not been able to visit the Brothers in Belgium since February 2020, because of the global pandemic, it was an exceptionally special occasion and time to share news of the congregation.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with Brothers Adelbert, Gabriël, Eric and Johan," stated Brother Lawrence.

The Brothers visited de Frères (SFX Bruges) and met with Mr. Tim Coppehans, the new head of school, and were able to see the renovations that were done in 2019-2020 in the former residence of the Brothers. Tim expressed a desire to connect more with our Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools (XBSS) in the U.S., seeking to bridge the international gap.

Before the pandemic, Xaverian High School in Brooklyn was involved in an exchange program with de Frères and there is hope for this program to continue. Brothers were given a tour of other schools associated with the congregation by Frank Demuyne.

Overall, the Brothers were grateful for the opportunity to reconnect personally with the Belgian Brothers and the Xaverian mission in Belgium.

Pictured below: Brothers Lawrence Harvey, Arthur Caliman, Daniel Skala adjacent to the statue of St Francis Xavier in the entrance foyer at de Frères.



A Visit to Kenya & South Sudan

Drought has been especially hard in the Lodwar desert which has been blamed for food insecurity and high living costs at St. James. However, through the generosity of Friends of Turkana and the O'Toole Foundation in the U.S., a new library was built at St. James.

Before departing, Brother Dan and the Council held a leadership discernment assembly for two days. At the conclusion, a new leadership team for the region was appointed. The new leadership are: Brothers Bernard Wandera Jumah, Daniel Ongeso Ohola, Daniel Owidhi Ssenyomo, and Francis Wambua Mutiso.

Brother Dominique Olondo will continue to be a member of the team as a liaison with the General and Council. Brother Dan expressed his appreciation to the previous leadership team of Brothers Dan Ongeso, Daniel Ssenyomo, and Ken Wangila for their leadership since 2019. Brother Dan also appointed Brother Daniel Ssenyomo to serve as Director of Formation for the postulants at St. Joseph Centre in Bungoma where he will be assisted by Brother Joseph Mbithi.

For the boys and street children at the Ryken Rescue Center in Bungoma, a Christmas tradition brought our Postulants from St. Joseph Centre to extend their usual street ministry of charity to the boys of Bungoma. Together they played outdoor games and sports, shared meals, and provided new clothes. The Brothers in formation took time to talk to the children about making positive life decisions. Students from Kibabii University also joined the outreach initiative.



Pictured above: Planting a tree and putting down roots in Nadapal, South Sudan. Brother Dan Skala, General Superior, plants a tree at St. Patrick's Boys Secondary School in Nadapal. Pictured with him are Brother Christopher, Kiltegan Father Vincent (pastor) and Brother Festus (principal).



Visiting St. Patrick's Secondary School, Nadapal, South Sudan. Brothers Christopher, Patrick, Brian, Daniel Skala, Father Vincent, Brothers Festus, Dominique, Daniel Owidhi, and Dan Ongeso.

Pictured below: Outside of the new dining hall and kitchen at St. Xavier High School in Bungoma, Kenya.



“Seeing marginalized young people coming together, sharing life, and living in unity regardless of their religion, ethnic background or economic status is one of the many acts only possible through love,” stated Brother Daniel Ssenyomo, Kenya Regional Councilor. “To us the street children show a real image of a loving God who has no boundaries whatsoever. Many of these children come from broken families, some are orphans, and others stay with stepparents and grandparents. What binds them together is poverty that’s deprived them of a chance to live a better life. But as Jesus taught us to love, may we also learn to share. For it is in charity that we fulfill the greatest commandment of them all.”



Pictured above: Street children and students from Kibabii University in Bungoma.



Pictured here: Brothers and the student body at St. Patrick's Secondary School, Nadapal, South Sudan.

Step Up in Service,



Pictured left: Our Lady of Good Counsel High School students hard at work collecting canned goods for a Thanksgiving food drive.

Pictured below: Holy Communion is served during a Founder's Week Mass.



Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools expressed their gratitude this holiday season in a variety of ways that served, elevated, and demonstrated God's compassionate love. From donated food and clothes, to toy drives, fundraisers, mission trips, and various service activities, our XBSS students, staff, and families followed the Xaverian way, making themselves available to live out a spirit of thanks.

At Lowell Catholic, students in Mrs. Dupre's advisory made cards and lap blankets for the Lowell VA and students collected over 800 needed items for the Salvation Army. Malden Catholic held a turkey fundraiser and prayer service. Saint Bernard School's student council donated nearly 1,000 items weighing 680 pounds to help feed local families. Xaverian Brothers High School, Nazareth Regional High School and Mount Saint Joseph High School also hosted food drives. At Saint John's High School, families gathered hats, gloves, and gift cards for people in need. Xavier High School's Ryken Society hosted a cranberry sauce and gravy drive for the Middletown Community Thanksgiving Project, donating over 200 cans of cranberry sauce and 200 jars of gravy. The entire freshman class at Our Lady of Good Counsel hosted a Thanksgiving basket drive, collecting food to create baskets for a nearby residential house for adults with disabilities. Over 200 blankets were collected by students at St. Xavier High School for Blanket Louisville.



St. Xavier also donated coats and gloves for Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services, gift cards for Norton Children's Hospital, and toiletries for Saint Vincent DePaul. Senior Eric Palazzao, along with his Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron, exceeded a goal of 250 Remembrance Wreaths for Zachary Taylor National Cemetery by well over 300.

Kentucky was also served by St. Mary's Ryken in Maryland who sent their Principal, Dean of Students, and several students on a service trip to Beattyville, an area hit hard by flooding last year.

Step Out in Faith

Pictured right: Students at Lowell Catholic High School hold up lap blankets made for the VA.

Pictured below: A Saint Bernard School student holds bags collected for a Thanksgiving food drive.



The trip's goal was to make Christmas brighter for over 500 residents in the surrounding counties and to decorate Ms. Dora Keystone Croner Ministries for her annual Christmas gathering. The ministry is a distribution center to area families in need of coats, gloves, toys, and food.

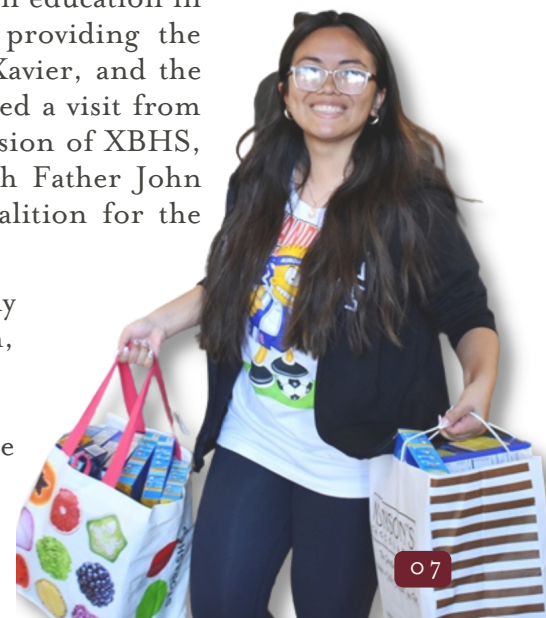
St. John's Prep hosted a gift card drive to benefit local food pantries. Lazarus House partnered with the school to provide their guests with \$25 Market Basket gift cards, helping nearly 2,000 families purchase culturally relevant food for their holiday meals. A clothing drive and bake sale at Xaverian High School helped two organizations that work with women in need while 18 students and four teachers embarked on a service retreat to Camden, NJ at the Romero Center Ministries, helping the disadvantaged.

Across the XBSS network, Founder's Week was celebrated with a myriad of activities and events that honored the Xaverian Brothers founder, Theodore James Ryken, culminating with the Feast Day and celebration of the congregation's patron saint, St. Francis Xavier.

St. John's Prep commemorated the legacy of the Brothers and Xavierian education in the U.S. with campus ministry and community formation teams providing the community an opportunity to reflect on Ryken's legacy, St. Francis Xavier, and the Brothers' mission to serve as educators in the world. Activities included a visit from Xaverian Brothers High School students from the Francis Xavier Division of XBHS, an afternoon with Brothers on campus, a Founder's Day liturgy with Father John Unni, and a Build-a-Bed community service effort for the MA Coalition for the homeless.

Founder's Day liturgies reminded XBSS communities of the many blessings they share — rooted deeply in simplicity, trust, compassion, humility, and zeal.

As the schools brought 2022 to a close, all celebrated their unique Catholic and Xaverian Brothers mission.



Sant Students Resilient Amid Crisis of Violence in Haiti

As the world looks on, Haiti has remained paralyzed by demonstrations in reaction to the lifting of government aid on fuel. In a country already struck by extreme poverty, the situation has grown more dire in recent days. With many roads blocked, transportation thwarted, reports of kidnappings, and countless shops and businesses closed for fear of looting, gang violence has taken to the streets, occupying certain territories. Charities and aid groups do what they can to help, but experts say international action is needed to bring about restoration.

Prime Minister Ariel Henry announced that the prices of gasoline and other fuels will continue rising sharply as the state claims it does not have necessary funds to continue government subsidies.

The prices of diesel and kerosene have nearly doubled. This has sparked anger and frustration throughout the population that already experiences food insecurity and destitution.

At Sant Zaveryen, in-person classes have been disrupted by demonstrations. In the Fall, nearly all activities were at a standstill. Brothers Vincent and Adolph organized an outing for some of the young people at the Sant. The opportunity was used to de-stress and to show the young men that the Brothers stand with them despite their challenges.

“Unfortunately, we have had poor internet signal,” wrote Brother Adolph. “Despite this, classes and studies continue online.”

As the gang violence increased, Haiti’s faltering government ordered schools closed. Brother Bill Griffin, a missionary to Haiti, stated that the first question he was asked by one of the children at St. Gabriel’s School in Fontaine, a school opened by a Sant graduate, was, “Will we get any food?” This heartbreaking question spoke volumes to the dire circumstances faced by Haitian families.



Pictured above: Violence in the streets of Haiti as protestors and rioters demonstrate against a failing government, lack of fuel, and food shortages. Gang violence and looting has become a major issue, leading to the closing of in-person schooling and businesses.



Although internet connection continues to waver, the students have remained resilient. On behalf of the students at Sant Zaveryen, Brothers Vincent and Adolph thank all those who help provide opportunities which make a difference in many lives and provide futures with hope amid chaos. They ask for continued prayer.

Pictured left: From left to right – Sant Zaveryen students Livenson, Yvonel, Marconi, and Stanley.

Associates Carry Forth the Mission



In August, over 30 Xaverian Associates, Brothers, and guests gathered to welcome nine new Associates (pictured above). The day of reflection, faith sharing, ritual, and meal took place at the Audubon Country Club in Louisville, KY with greetings and reflections by Brothers Cornelius Hubbuch and Michael McCarthy. The meaning of Xaverian spirituality was expressed in the Fundamental Principles as all were invited to focus on how prayer, relationships, and service are essential elements of who we are. New Associates each received a cross, lighted candle, pin, a copy of the Fundamental Principles, and a book on prayer, each given as a reminder of the Brothers' fraternal love and care for them. Welcomed with great joy were new Associates: Marty O'Toole, Ben Kresse, Rosanna Vessel, Kitty Wagner, Tom Malewitz, Henry Sadlo Jr., Dan Minton, Marty Carraro, and Marty Purcell.

Kentucky Xaverian Associates and Brothers convened in October at Treyton Oak Towers in Louisville to welcome XBSS Formation Director, Dr. Ben Horgan, who now also serves as the new Director of the Xaverian Associates Program. Associates Mary Jefferson, Tom Malewitz, Alice Hession, Kitty Wagner, Gary Gruneisen, Joe Bergamini, Jill Tucker,

Rosanna Vessels, Dan Minton, AJ Glaser, Karen White, and seven Brothers attended. Ben listened attentively to the hopes and dreams of present members.

In November, Mid-Atlantic Xaverian Associates hosted a day of prayer and reflection for Brothers, Associates, and friends of the Congregation at the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, MD (pictured below). The joy-filled gathering of 18 Brothers, Associates, and friends celebrated being together in-person for the first time since the start of the pandemic. The efforts of Chuck Belzner, Jeannette Suflita, Mike Buckley, Kevin, and Carolyn Shearer helped bring the special day together.

In December, Brothers in Kentucky were hosted to a special meal in the home of Associate Marty O'Toole, his wife Nancy, and son Martin. Associates and Brothers in Kentucky also gather for a monthly shared prayer and listening session in the chapel at the Brothers' residence at Treyton Oak Towers in Louisville.

The Brothers are blessed by many supportive Associates that have become the hands and feet of the mission in meaningful ways.



Harsh Reality and New Beginnings in Kipushi, Congo



Pictured above: In December, the Kipushi school community celebrated 'World Tree Day' where everyone brought a young plant and learned about collective responsibility.

She had reached the end of her rope. Not knowing where to turn, a young mother in Kipushi, Congo, approached Brothers Jean Paul and Vital Mwenge for assistance. The woman, with her children enrolled at the Brothers' new Rijken school, asked for a \$5 loan to help feed them. She had just given birth a few days prior.

"We were moved deeply," stated Brother Vital, "and we simply helped her."

Some of the poorest among the poor are the families of Kipushi who struggle daily to make ends meet. Faced with abhorrent destitution, many are unable to afford school fees, which are between \$7-12 per month and yearly rates ranging from \$75-125. The new school, which managed to enroll 210 students in secondary, 198 in primary, and 21 in kindergarten, is still facing dwindling numbers because of a few cases of abandonment, mainly due to lack of means to afford school fees.

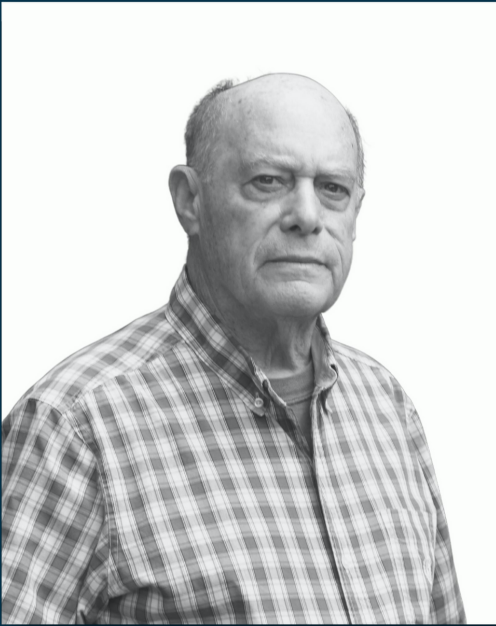
"We hope to find an NGO or benefactors who can help support us," said Brother Vital.

The new school, which was inaugurated in November, employs 19, whose salaries vary between \$75-125. Currently, the school's income does not allow for more than that. Operation, upkeep, and maintenance are always a priority. For lack of electrical energy, the school spends \$10-15 daily for fuel and to draw water from wells and reservoirs. Scarcity of electric current doesn't allow the school to organize practical lessons for students, especially for computer scientists and electricians.

In December, the school community celebrated their first Feast of St. Francis Xavier with a rich Eucharistic celebration, cultural activities, and sharing a small meal. It was a moment of great conviviality, where directors, teachers, workers, and students set aside different roles and titles to share like brothers and sisters: "drawn by the ordinary; called to the common!"

Following Ryken, supported by the missionary model of St. Francis Xavier, the community of Brothers took courage at the call of the regional leaders to settle in their new home, despite many challenges. Brothers Daniel Ndjibu, Albert-Jospin Mwamb'u, Christian Mwewa, Vital-André Mwenge, and François Kilonda, community animator, expressed gratitude for the home which will allow them to be effective in their apostolate, school, and to dwell among the existential realities faced by their students. At the feast, the Brothers prayed and agreed unanimously to name their community after St. Francis Xavier.

"St. Francis Xavier's missionary courage inspires us to the highest degree to go towards the unknown, despite uncertainties," said Brother François.



**BROTHER BRIAN VETTER,
C.F.X.**

(Brother Roger)

After suffering a stroke in early January, Brother Brian Vetter entered eternal life very peacefully on the morning of Jan. 14. In death as in life, Brian exemplified the essence of our Xaverian spirituality.

A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Brian graduated from Saint Xavier High School in 1961, and began his college studies at Bellarmine. In 1964 Brian would respond to God's call to follow Christ as a Xaverian Brother. He entered Sacred Heart Novitiate in Leonardtown, Maryland and on September 8th received the Xaverian habit and religious name 'Brother Roger'.

After finishing his degree at the University of Maryland, Brother Brian taught at both Holy Cross and Holy Name elementary schools in Brooklyn. His ministry would then take him from Brooklyn to Baltimore.

He would spend the next twenty-three years at Mount Saint Joseph High School as a most effective teacher, track coach, counselor, and Dean of Students.

In 1993 Brian responded again to God's call, this time to join our mission in Bolivia. He would spend twenty-five years in Bolivia, first at the Colegio San Francisco Xavier in Carmen Pampa, then at la Escuela de Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Chinguri and finally at la Casa Nazaret, an orphanage in Cochabamba. Upon returning to the United States, Brother Brian asked permission to join those ministering to refugees at the border in El Paso. He returned to Louisville to help his brother-in-law care for his sister. Brian most humbly ministered 'God's healing touch of love to all whom he met' (Fundamental Principles) throughout his journey as a Xaverian.

Brother Brian's prayer life flowed into his relationships and ministries. While at Carmen Pampa he was asked to take charge of a new dorm for about twenty middle schoolers. At times, they were a real handful. During a visit to Carmen Pampa, Brother Michael McCarthy saw that Brian had created community with these young people. They trusted him. He never raised his voice when correcting them. He was always calm and present to them. They ended each night forming a circle in the middle of the dorm for night prayer. As Michael shared with Brian, 'No one else in the Congregation could do what you are doing.' It is so true! And not just true in Bolivia. No one else could do what Brian did—whether with young people in Brooklyn, Baltimore or refugees at the border.

Those who knew Brother Brian well quickly point out that he never drew attention to himself. Brian embodied simplicity. He had very few needs. He could connect with young people others had struggled with. Brian was a gifted listener. His empathy and compassion for what others were going through made a real difference in so many lives.

Brother Brian's spirituality led him most naturally to those in need of 'God's healing touch of love.' (FP) He was especially collaborative with communities committed to advancing peace and justice. Brian found the support needed to live Jesus' mission in these communities—be it his own Xaverian community, the community of the Precious Blood Sisters at Casa Nazaret, or the ecumenical prayer group in Cochabamba. In his quiet way Brian influenced so many people and made lifelong friends.

Confident that Brian is enjoying the peace Christ promises us, we celebrate the wonderful example he gives us on how to live our Xaverian spirituality and charism until the end.

The gift you have received, give as a gift. (FP)

Gracias, Hermano Brian.



XAVERIAN BROTHERS

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THEODORE JAMES RYKEN SOCIETY 2022 PROMO VIDEO

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IN HARMONY SMALL THINGS GROW

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