CONCOROLA

Rediscovering Our Charism...



Sunday, July 21st, marked the beginning of the Xaverian Brothers International Assembly. It was a glorious day indeed! A group of 28 Brothers, Associates and Partners in Mission traveled from across the globe to Rome where they embarked on a journey of discovery and discernment.

ogether they spent the week celebrating their shared Xaverian Charism, its vibrancy as it is incarnated in a variety of countries, cultures and apostolic endeavors and how it inspires each of us in our daily lives. Throughout their time in Rome, they were ever mindful of being called to journey together with Pope Francis and those who have been involved in the Synod on Synodality.

In preparation for this meeting, Brothers, Associates, Partners in Mission and benefactors spent a year reflecting on the lived reality of the Xaverian Charism today. Over 4,000 individuals participated in the process. The gathering in Rome was a pivotal moment for Brothers, Associates and Partners in Mission to celebrate the gift that Theodore James Ryken bequeathed to all of us and to discern how the Holy Spirit calls us to journey

Karen White (Xaverian Associate, U.S.) and Andrés Pardo (Xaverian Associate, Bolivia)

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Front row: Francis Masicha, Br. Mike McCarthy, Cathy Reynolds, Br. Joe Pawlika, Carolyn Herman, Br. Bernard Wandera Jumah, Rob Peace, Br. Raphael Wanjala, Br. Francis Wambua, Br. Art Caliman, Therese Ngalula, Andrés Pardo, Br. François Kilonda, Br. Ken Wangila. Back row: Kevin Abdo, Limnyuy Konglim, Br. Hubert, Jeff Smith, Greet Van de Cappelle, Ben Horgan, Br. Dominique Olondo, Ed Hardiman, Karen White, Bob Alesi, Patrick Slattery, Chuck Belzner, Br. Adolph Banza, Br. Larry Harvey

together to read the signs of the times and respond with the same faith and trust as Brother Ryken and those men and women who have been inspired by his Charism for 185 years.

The Fundamental Principles reminds us, "Let the developments and changes of your times be a source both of confidence and challenge to you. For as your Founder wrote: 'The Holy Spirit is not bound by rules and models but works where and as the Spirit wills.'"

With these words in mind, the attendees participated in both large and smaller spiritual conversation sessions as well as meetings by constituent groups (partners in mission, associates, brothers.) The first of the week's meetings focused on telling the regional and personal story of the Xaverian Charism... examining the shared experience of all as one Xaverian family. Doing so provided the participants the opportunity to experience the group's internationality while getting to know one another better.

By mid-week, the group was ready to begin to dialogue on the Xaverian reality with the themes that have been emerging in the Catholic Church's Synod on Synodality: communion, participation, and mission. Moving the discussions into discerning the calls, implications and challenges for the future.

The assembly closed on July 26th, and the end product of its good work was a product of discernment — an outline of some next steps as they commit themselves and Ryken's Charism to be of service to the Church's mission of evangelization.



Top: From left to right: Br. Adolph Banza, Tony Costante, Br. Bernard Wandera Jumah, Francis Masicha, Andrés Pardo, Therese Ngalula and Br. François Kilonda

Bottom: Assembly participants at the concluding liturgy.

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU:

How would you answer these questions the International Assembly participants were invited to consider?

"You were created by the God of love, in God's image, according to God's likeness, to be a unique expression of that love. It is through you that God desires to manifest love to the peoples of the world in these times and to offer them the freedom of the children of God."

- 1. How do you experience yourself/selves as unique expressions of God's love in your embodiment of the Xaverian charism?
- 2. In what specific ways do you manifest God's love to those you serve or encounter, and how do you offer them the freedom of the children of God?

Visit xavb.ro/assemblyq or scan this QR CODE to share your thoughts.



Following the meeting, participants enthusiastically shared their thoughts on the Assembly:



"Meeting the Xaverian Brothers from the Congo and Kenya, the Associates from the U.S., and the representatives of Belgium was an invaluable opportunity. Listening to their stories, hopes and challenges in their missions opened our minds to a reality that can be transformed with unity and coordinated work."

"I feel enlivened and hopeful about our Xaverian Family's willingness and enthusiasm in continuing to find new ways to live out the Charism with more connection, communication and collaboration."

Livenson Louima, a former student at the Xaverian Center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, recently shared his appreciation for the life-changing help he received thanks to the Xaverian Brothers. He writes,

- My name is Livenson Louima. I spent four years (2019-2023) at the Xaverian Center in
- Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
- When I joined the Sant Zaveryen program, I was welcomed by the Brothers with open arms (and hearts.) They supported me in every way. Their focus on education and instilling a sense
- of community is what made my eventual graduation from the University of Saint François
- d'Assise with a degree in Administrative Sciences possible.
- My spiritual experience with the Xaverian Brothers was quite beautiful. With their help,
- I learned to live in community, to pray and to practice the apostolate. My time in the community and the love
- I experienced rekindled my flame to follow the Lord. So much so that today, I am a seminarian!
- I'm certain my experiences with the Brothers will serve me in my pursuit of Christ and throughout my entire life.

Thanks to friends like you and the presence of the Xaverian Brothers, others like Livenson may receive the help they need to improve their lives and their communities for generations to come.

Parent Day in Kipushi, Congo, Was a Success.

hat parent doesn't enjoy seeing their child thrive and blossom? The parents of the students at the Complexe Scolaire Rijken in Kipushi, Congo, certainly do!

This Spring they were invited to participate in Parent Day where they experienced first-hand an average school day for their children.

They began the day shadowing their children through their lessons in each classroom. Then, they were invited to attend a presentation and demonstration of the skills and talents of students studying Commercial Construction, Fashion Design, and General Electricity. They also had a nutrition demonstration. Everyone in attendance was impressed and delighted to see the progress of their children.







Brother Vital, head of school, addressed the parents.

XBSS New Teacher and Staff Retreat

he annual XBSS New Teacher & Staff retreat took place in Baltimore from August 9-II, bringing together thirty-six educators, administrators, and staff members from across our school network.

During this gathering, participants delved into the rich history, charism, and values that unite our Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools. Students from Mount St. Joseph and Our Lady of Good Counsel shared their enthusiasm, articulating what distinguishes their schools as uniquely Xaverian and celebrating the qualities of those educators who most inspire them to embody the mission of their respective institutions.

Brothers Bill Griffin and Mike McCarthy led a panel discussion on their aspirations for the future of our schools, underscoring the critical importance of understanding one's role as a "partner in mission."

Jenna Vona, a theology teacher at Xaverian Brothers High School, highlighted the profound role of contemplation in both our personal lives and our work within Catholic education. She pointed out that the Xaverian Brothers have long upheld contemplation as a vital practice that enriches and informs our educational endeavors. Drawing from the biblical story of Martha and Mary, Jenna emphasized the need to cultivate a

"Mary" mindset—one that prioritizes reflection and spiritual connection—in a world often consumed by the busyness of everyday tasks.

The three-day retreat also featured a variety of spiritual, academic,



Brothers Michael McCarthy and Bill Griffin led a panel discussion at the retreat.

and social activities, designed to strengthen our enduring, personal relationships and prepare attendees for the upcoming school year. One new XBSS teacher remarked, "This was an absolutely amazing way to start the school year and begin my career in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School. I now see myself not only as an educator but also as a custodian of Xaverian values and charism. I will strive to live those values daily and integrate them into my teaching." Another participant shared, "The best part of the retreat was meeting compassionate, zealous, humble, simple, ordinary yet wonderfully spectacular people!"

The Sponsorship Office is thrilled to welcome our newest educators to the Xaverian family!

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o mark the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of Flaget High School, the Flaget Alumni Association (FAA) hosted a "Legacy Celebration" on June 23, 2024 to a sold-out crowd of 525 alumni, friends, and family of Flaget.

Flaget High School's rich history began in 1941 in Louisville, KY, when Archbishop John A. Floersh initiated a capital campaign for the construction of new Catholic schools, including a boys' high school in the west end of the city.

The next year, the James Whallen home at 44th and River Park Drive was purchased to house Flaget Memorial High School, named for Benedict Joseph Flaget, the first Catholic bishop of Kentucky. Flaget was to be staffed by Xaverian Brothers, who also taught at St. Xavier High School. Brother Clarence Herlihy, C.F.X., was the first principal.



Brother Michael McCarthy, who taught at Flaget from 1968 to 1971, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the congregation and received a standing ovation.



Brother Peter Mahoney and Marty Carraro, Xaverian Associate and Flaget '69, at a gathering with the Brothers in Kentucky.

MANY GRADUATES WERE THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILIES TO ATTEND COLLEGE. THE SUCCESS OF FLAGET IS MEASURED BY ITS GRADUATES, AMONG WHICH ARE SCORES OF RELIGIOUS CLERGY, PHYSICIANS, DENTISTS, ATTORNEYS, ENGINEERS, BUSINESS PEOPLE, AND EDUCATORS AT ALL LEVELS.

Flaget High School opened in 1942 to classes of 70 freshmen and 50 sophomores. The first graduating class, composed of 32 boys, received diplomas in 1945. In 1944, work began on a new school building, which was first occupied during the 46-47 school year.

In the 70s, Flaget experienced financial difficulties as enrollment declined to several hundred students. In its last year of existence, 1973-74, Flaget admitted female students from nearby Loretto High School, which had closed the previous year. The '74 graduating class included 65 students, of whom 18 were females. Flaget's last principal was Brother Kirby Boone, C.F.X.

In all, 4,187 students graduated from Flaget in its 32-



Marty Purcell, Xaverian Associate and Flaget '72, and Dan Minton, Xaverian Associate and Flaget '65, with Brothers Ward O'Connell, Peter Mahoney and Daniel Conaghan who were teachers at Flaget.

year existence. The most significant contribution of Flaget to Louisville was that it afforded the opportunity of a structured college-preparatory high school education to students who, for the most part, were children of blue-collar families. Many graduates were the first in their families to attend college. The success of Flaget is measured by its graduates, among which are scores of religious clergy, physicians, dentists, attorneys, engineers, business people, and educators at all levels.

Although Flaget closed its doors 50 years ago, the spirit of the school lives on in the form of a very active alumni association founded in 1995. This 800-member social and charitable organization's mission is to first serve as a social organization for Flaget alumni. The second and more important mission is to serve as a charitable and benevolent organization in support of local charities and Catholic secondary education. In doing so, the Flaget Alumni Assoc. (FAA) has donated more than \$1.3 million to support Catholic secondary education and local charities.



The 50th anniversary celebration of Flaget's closure.

The 50th Legacy Celebration will most likely be the last one attended by living alumni. With the last alumni becoming sixty-eight years old in 2024, only those over ninety-three will be living when the seventy-fifth anniversary of Flaget's closing is observed in 2049. By that time, most Flaget alumni will have passed on, but the spirit of Flaget will be alive and well.

"In harmony small things grow" is the Xaverian motto, and no better example of it may be found than in the good works done by the alumni of Flaget High School. They truly are its lasting legacy. Ryken Center for Hope Resident, Ben Bitei, Shares His Story

My name is Ben Bitei. I was picked up from the streets of Bungoma, Kenya where I was living with no hope for the future.

I met the Xaverian Brothers and they invited me to the Ryken Center for Hope, where I was given clean clothes, a bed to sleep in, and food to eat. The Brothers then began the process of enrolling me in school and preparing me to take exams. I am now enrolled at St. Xavier in Bungoma.

My life has changed so much. I am doing well in school, and I enjoy playing my favorite sport, soccer. I'm delighted to share that I have represented St. Xavier in various soccer tournaments.

I thank God every day for the teachers at RCH and St. X, and the Brothers for coming to my aid and taking care of me. I am where I'm at today because of them and generous friends like you.



LET'S CELEBRATE!

Three Brothers Arrive in Lodwar, Kenya.



Before arriving in Lodwar, our Brothers enjoyed a festive send-off celebrated at St. Joseph Centre in Bungoma only to be celebrated again upon their arrival in Lodwar.

in north-western Kenya, located west of Lake Turkana.

Once in Lodwar, they were greeted at St. James Seminary by the Vicar General of the Diocese and local Religious and later enjoyed a "Welcome" celebration at the St. James Lodwar Community Center that followed a Mass celebrated by the Diocese's Vicar General Fr. Joseph Elalimon. Later they met with the Diocesan Council who officially introduced and welcomed them to the Diocese of Lodwar.

As our Brothers adapt to the climate and culture of Turkana, they are eager to begin serving those in need. Never absent from their minds are those that went before them...ever aware of the footsteps they walk in... the Xaverian Brothers who labored in Turkana for over 40 years.

Join us in wishing them well as they begin this very important work. Pray for their success and good health.



From left to right: Mr. Wilson Losike, Diocesan Education Secretary; Br. Alexander Brian; Br. Stephen Obara; Fr. Marcelinus Ebenyo, Diocesan Chancellor; Br. Kevin Masese, Fr. Daniel Muhame CSSp, Judicial Vicar and Episcopal Vicar for Religious Men and Women; and Br. Bernard Wandera, Regional Coordinator, Kenyan Region.



Call Fulfilled

Over the last several months, we said farewell to three of our Brothers. As you read the rich history of their lives and the impact they had on our community, please remember them in your daily prayers as you and your loved ones remain in ours.

Brother James P. Eckert, C.F.X.

(Brother Campion)

Perceptive, outgoing yet private, very humorous yet also serious, down to earth, kind and caring these are all qualities of Brother James Eckert. James Eckert was born on June 20, 1944, in Brooklyn, New York to Betty (née Rafferty) and Bill Eckert. Jim was the youngest of their three children. His brother Bill and his sister Joan were both tragically killed while Jim was a student at St. Teresa's Grade school. There he first met the Xaverian Brothers. One can only imagine the trauma that Jim and his parents suffered.

At the end of his sophomore year in high school, Jim entered St. Joseph's Juniorate in Leonardtown, Maryland. Jim developed special relationships with Cosmas, Mauricius and Constantine (Jim Clifton), who had the glee club, which Jim was involved in. Upon graduating from Ryken in 1962, he entered Sacred Heart Novitiate and received the Xaverian habit and religious name Brother Campion. In 1968, Jim graduated third in his class from Catholic University with his BA degree in Latin. He was then

assigned to St. Xavier High School in Louisville. Jim's assignments took him from Louisville to Leonardtown and Baltimore where he taught religion, humanities, Latin, psychology and did a lot of guidance work. Jim also coached basketball, track and tennis.

Brother Jim could fill any room with his warm, humorous, down to earth and caring presence — whether it be a classroom or the community room. He'd ask students and confrères, "Well, how's it going?" They always responded. Jim had a great influence on his students. He knew three secrets about teaching. Make sure the students know they are liked; that they feel they belong; that they feel they have something to offer others. Jim created that type of relationship with his students. That's how he treated kids. He enjoyed them. They enjoyed him.

After 20 years of teaching high school, Jim wanted to minister to the underserved more directly. For the next 15 years he did so. He served at Saint Luke's Parish in Stroudsburg, PA as a Pastoral Associate. Jim also ministered among the very impoverished

in Western Maryland, Genoa, WV, and at St. Raymond's in the Bronx.

He did pastoral care as Director of the community at Xaverian, then at the Malden community. Then Jim retired at Xavier High School, Middletown, CT. There his many personal gifts animated the community. In retirement Jim enjoyed solitude. He spent time translating the New Testament from Greek to English.

After being diagnosed with incurable cancer of the esophagus, Jim entered hospice care on April 26th and entered eternal life peacefully Saturday evening, April 27th.

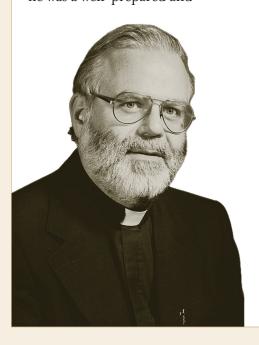
Jim was never a complainer. His faith and humor allowed him to surrender trustingly to our Lord. In his own inimical way, Jim often buoyed up others when they were confronting difficulties. May Jim now enjoy the eternal peace of God's Friendship that he shared with so many in life.

Brother William J. Cushing, C.F.X.

(Brother Henry) 1943-2024

In the summer of 1961, after graduating from St. John's High School in Worcester, Massachusetts, eighteen-year old William Cushing of North Brookfield recognized a call from God to be a disciple of His Son Jesus, as a member of the Brothers of St. Francis Xavier. He left his home, his parents and brother John, and did not live in Worcester County again until 2017, when he joined the retired Xaverian community on the campus of St. John's High School in Shrewsbury. His religious formation was typical for Brothers of that time, with novitiate in Newton Highlands, Massachusetts, and scholasticate in Silver Spring, Maryland. His ministry can be accurately defined as about 30 years in Montvale, New Jersey, and then 20 years as a missionary in Nyeri, Kenya.

Known initially as Brother Henry, the religious name he was given when he entered the novitiate, he was a well-prepared and



demanding teacher of religion and English at St. Joseph Regional High School in Montvale, New Jersey, where he challenged the best students to make good use of their abilities. He was unmerciful to the student continually looking for short cuts, but very patient and encouraging to students doing the work assigned. He taught them that "the only thing you can control in your life is your effort, so never accept less than your best." Brother William was happy to keep his AP English class even after he became the 5th Principal of St. Joe's in 1992.

Among his extracurricular duties were debate coach, student council moderator, golf coach and athletic director. As AD, his efforts helped St. Joe's to become an athletic powerhouse in north Jersey, facilitating a healthy enrollment for the future. His interest in athletics continued throughout his life, enthusiastically supporting the Red Sox and, especially, the Boston Bruins.

In 1997, Brother Bill heeded the call to mission and moved to Christ the King Major Seminary at Nyeri Town in the Eastern/Central Highlands of Kenya, working now for the Vincentians in the Diocese of Nyeri. He took care of the Seminary library and served on the teaching staff as a qualified teacher of Biblical Theology. He was considered a jovial lecturer and, probably more important, as someone who could provide wise advice and encouragement to the seminarians. Bill was regularly able to travel to Nairobi to spend time

with our Xaverian scholastics then in training. Bill was very interested in the future of the Brothers in Kenya. He was a Regional Counselor and later co-Counselor with Brother Raphael Wanjala, and pushed for the development of institutions the Brothers could staff and use for future income and self-sufficiency.

After some years in retirement in the Manor House in Shrewsbury, Brother Bill joined the community at Xaverian House. There his schedule was simple: prayers, Mass, meals with the community, time on the porch with the latest novel and his pipe, time to reflect and study Sacred Scripture, and shopping for the community. Several months before his health issues began, Bill volunteered to lead the Brothers of the North of Boston Region in monthly prayer and discussion, including use of Pope Francis' encyclical Fratelli Tutti.

Bill's last months were very difficult for him as he was unable to be in charge of his life and needs. No doubt he was able to reflect on and find consolation in the words of our Fundamental Principles,

"At times you will discover that God's ways are not your ways, and God's thoughts are not your thoughts. When this happens, try to surrender yourself trustingly into the arms of your Father, who knows you, understands you, and loves you. Perhaps you can repeat with your Founder this simple prayer which he cherished: O Lord, I cannot understand your ways, but I must adore them."

BROTHER EUGENE L. BEHENNA, C.F.X.

(Brother Edgar) 1928-2024

For almost a hundred consecutive years, men of the Behenna family of Somerville were faithful members of the Xaverian Brothers. Herbert, later Brother Guy, became an aspirant in the Juniorate in Peabody, MA in the mid 1920s, and we have been honored to have Eugene, later Brother Edgar, in our midst a century later. The Xaverian Brothers and the Church were graced and strengthened by the variety of gifts with which God blessed each of them, and us.

Brother Eugene spent his high school years at the Juniorate in Peabody and made his way to Old Point Comfort in Virginia where he was officially accepted as a postulant on February 15, 1946. Six months later, on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he received the religious habit and the name Brother Edgar, a name honoring his father. Gene received formal training as a Xaverian novice for a year, and then moved to the scholasticate in Silver Spring, Maryland, to begin his college studies. On August 16, 1948, he made his profession of religious vows, then continued his collegiate studies at the Catholic University of America. Gene's program was interrupted in early 1949 when he was assigned to the Leonard Hall School in Leonardtown, Maryland, for a semester, teaching middle school students.

Gene received his bachelor's degree in English from Catholic University in 1952 and was then assigned to Mt. St. Joseph High



School in Baltimore where he managed to take courses at Loyola College in addition to his teaching and prefecting duties. Three years at St. John's Prep and at Keith Academy in Lowell allowed him to receive his Master's degree in English from Boston College in 1960, specializing in Shakespearean studies.

Gene's early teaching years in Baltimore, Danvers, and Lowell were followed by busy years at Notre Dame High School in Utica, New York and St. Joseph Regional High School in Montvale, New Jersey. His longest teaching assignment was thirteen years back in Utica where he and Brother Guy were members of the small community there. His final official ministry was at Xavier High School in Middletown, Connecticut, where he coordinated teachers' audio-visual needs for five years. He remained in retirement in Middletown for another fifteen years, finding pleasure as a volunteer at St. Francis of Assisi Parish there and in assorted musical ventures.

In 2017, Brother Gene joined the Xaverian House community and enjoyed being of service to the Brothers - reading and serving at Mass, helping with the cleanup after meals and, especially, in assisting the community's liturgical needs with his years of musical experience. He was also able to enjoy participating at St. Mary's Parish in Danvers as a lector and member of the choir. For most of Gene's seven years at Xaverian House, his physical strength allowed him to go for walks and leap two steps at a time down the staircases. Gene's slowing down indicated a need for more than regular medical attention. Cancer was found in several parts of his body, and consultation with his Primary Care doctor enabled Gene to recognize that further tests and exploration were not worth the discomfort. He entered and enjoyed hospice care at Xaverian House, welcomed family members, and maintained his long-time schedule of prayer and time for eucharistic adoration. Gene eventually moved to Mary Immaculate Health Care Center in Lawrence. He celebrated the seventy-eighth anniversary of his entrance in the Congregation on this past February 15. He had been the oldest member of the Xaverian Brothers for several years and leaves behind a grateful world of Brothers, relatives, former students and friends. We know that he has already joined the heavenly choir, singing praise and thanks to God as he did during life. May he rest in peace.



Their Journey Continues...

Our five Third Year Postulants, pictured here, have completed the international postulancy year in Nairobi, Kenya. They will begin their novitiate year at our international novitiate in Kipushi, Congo.

Please keep these young men in your prayers as they continue their journey.

Left to right: Idesbald Mwanza from Congo, Joseph Kalibbala from Uganda, Clinton Mwavali from Kenya, Benedict Okoth from Kenya, and Yves Banza from Congo.



XAVERIAN BROTHERS
IN HARMONY SMALL THINGS GROW

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